



**ACREAGE GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL
ACREAGE FLAG FOOTBALL**

**Rules and Regulations Handbook
FALL 2023**

General Rules

Acreege Girls Flag Football League: also referred to as **AGFF**.

Acreege COED Flag Football League: also referred to as **AFF** or **AFF COED**.

“Board” or “the Board” refers to the AGFF/AFF Board.

Must Play Rule:

AGFF/AFF requires that every player registered with the league to have a certain percentage of playing time regardless of their ability. All players are to have either a starting position on Offense or Defense. The intent of the rule is that each player shall participate in 50% of the plays, at a minimum, regardless of skill level. The exception to the rule will be due to an injury or exhaustion. Special Team positions do not count as starting positions.

AFF (COED): Barring in-game injuries, heat exhaustion or other extenuating circumstances, greater than or equal to 50% of a team’s female players present for a game must be on the field at all times. For example, if a team has three or four female players, at least two must be on the field. If a team only has two female players, one must be on the field. A team with only one female player present is addressed by the preceding paragraph. Failure to adhere to these rules will result in an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty.

Scheduled Events:

There will only be 3 allowed events per week. For example, 2 practices and one game or 1 practice and two games etc. Each practice is limited to 90 minutes.

**If a Head Coach is found violating the above requirements, they will be suspended from the next game. Repeated violations will result in removal as Head Coach.

Divisions and Players:

Peewee 4-5 years old

Freshman 6-7 years old

Junior Varsity 8-10

Varsity 11-13

Pro 14-19 (Must be in high school)

Division/Age alignment is subject to change based on final registration numbers. For example, Peewee may be combined with Freshman, or Freshman may be split with 6-year-olds going to Peewee and 7 year olds going to JV.

Cutoff dates (players born on or after the cutoff date play in the younger division):

- AGFF September 1st
- AFF(Coed) February 1st

Sportsmanship Rules

The following rules apply to the enforcement of Personal Foul and Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalties described in **Rule 9**.

1. (Player or Coach) A second Personal Foul or Unsportsmanlike Conduct act in the same game results in disqualification from that game and his/hers next game, including playoffs. The disqualified individual must immediately leave the playing area. They may not remain on the sideline or the immediate vicinity of the field. They may observe the remainder of the game from beyond the end zone or another part of the park. The disqualified individual is also now subject to immediate disqualification and a one game suspension for any subsequent Personal Foul or Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty they receive for the remainder of the season, including playoffs.
2. (Player or Coach) A Personal Foul or Unsportsmanlike Conduct act committed after the clock has expired, including during the last play of the game, carries over to the next game. That individual will begin the next game subject to immediate disqualification and a one-game suspension upon receiving any Personal Foul or Unsportsmanlike penalty in that game.
3. Players or Coaches receiving Unsportsmanlike Conduct/Personal Foul penalties will receive a written warning from the board.

Scheduling of Games:

No later than the draft, head coaches are required to notify the league of any recurring scheduling conflicts that they wish to be taken into consideration when preparing the game schedule. There is no guarantee that these conflicts will be accommodated.

Preliminary schedules will be made available for coach review and comment for a limited time. Once finalized, there will be no changing of the game schedule unless weather or Covid-related, or other extenuating circumstances (e.g. double-booking a coach on two fields at one, field or referee availability, etc.). Schedule changes require AAL Board approval.

Games interrupted because of events beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority shall be considered complete if the interruption occurs after the completion of the first half. In such event, the existing score will be recorded as the final score. If the interruption occurs prior to the completion of the first half, the game will be recorded as rainout. The game may or may not be rescheduled at the discretion of the board, taking into consideration field/referee availability and other scheduling constraints. Exception: Playoff games will be continued from the point of interruption unless the teams agree to terminate the game with the existing score.

Sponsors:

All (Head) coaches are required to have a sponsor for their team. If the coach cannot produce a sponsor for his/her team, their coaching privilege may be withdrawn the following season. The sponsor will have their company name printed on the uniform of their team in their respective division and on the back of all coach's shirt, receive a team plaque and their name will appear on the sponsor board posted in the park and on the league website.

No team will receive any sponsor money back at the end of the season.

Background Checks:

All coaches and parents helping out on the fields must have passed a Background Check and must be certified. Each team has a maximum of (3) background checks at no cost to the individual. Additional background checks will be charged a fee of \$25.00 each, payable by the parent/volunteer. Minors that request to help must be accompanied by their respective coach at all times.

Coach Information:

No later than the draft, all head coaches are required to provide proof of completion of the following items:

1. Background check submittal
2. Complete "Heads-Up" concussion training, a free online course provided by the CDC
3. Complete a NAYS coach certification (annual fee)
4. Complete NAYS Bullying Prevention training
5. Complete NAYS Protecting Against Abuse training
6. Read the current season AFF/AGFF Rules and Regulations and sign an acknowledgement form

An equipment deposit is required at the draft in order to receive a league-supplied equipment bag, which will contain flags, ball(s), and cones. The deposit check will be held (not deposited) and returned to the coach at the end of the season when equipment bags are returned.

AFF (COED): Coaches are permitted one free registration. A check for their child's registration fee is required at the draft. The check will be held (not deposited) and returned to the coach at the end of the season upon completion of their coaching duties.

Team Placement/Refunds:

Once a player is placed on a team, they are considered property of that team. If that player refuses to play for that team, a refund check will not be issued to that player. The player may not be moved to any other team or be placed on a waiting list during that season. If a player chooses to discontinue in the league after the draft a refund check will not be issued.

Miscellaneous Rules:

1. All members and players must shake hands after each game as a show of good sportsmanship towards other members and players. Failure to comply can lead to a suspension.
2. Please remove all trash from playing fields, practice fields, parking lots and other areas directly following use.
3. There will be no use of tobacco products or vaping, alcohol during practices and games on the fields, or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. SEE SPORT BYLAWS
4. No coach, player or member of the AGFF/AFF is permitted to bring any items to a permitted field within the Indian Trail District without approval from Indian Trails. Only approved sports equipment is permitted.
5. It is the intention of AFF/AGFF Boards to maintain their Rules and Regulations congruent (to the extent practical) with each other and with NIRSA flag football rules. The Pee Wee, Freshman, Junior, and Varsity divisions will follow the rules in this AGFF/AFF rulebook. The High School Girls division (**AGFF** only) will follow a combination of the AGFF rulebook, AND Girl's Flag Football High School Rules. The AGFF rulebook will supersede the High School Rule Book when applicable.

Trophy Information:

AGFF/AFF will provide trophies for....

Each Divisional winner

Each Super Bowl runner-up

Each Super Bowl winner

If there are only two teams in a division, only Super Bowl trophies will be provided.

Injured Player Policy

Coach Responsibility:

1. If a player is injured during a game or practice, that player's coach must complete an injury form. Forms must be turned in to a board member within 24 hours of the injury. If protocol is not followed, AGFF/AFF has the right to sit out the Head Coach for the next scheduled game.
2. Any player that was injured and has missed any games and/or practices that required Doctor's care must have a doctor's note to resume playing.
3. Any player that shows any sign of a headache, nausea or shows evidence of limping, or any other signs of illness, may not practice or play in any games.
4. See **Rule 1 Section 4** for additional information regarding braces and padding.

****The health and wellbeing of the children must come first****

AGFF/AFF Board Responsibilities:

1. Copies of the injury report must be given to an AAL Board member within 48 hours.
2. The AGFF/AFF President or Vice-President must receive a doctor's note releasing the player to return to normal activity before the player can resume playing in the league; parent's permission to resume playing is not adequate. Injuries which require a doctor's release are as follows:
 - a. A player wearing a brace or cast that was removed.
 - b. A player who has had stitches or staples/stitches removed.
 - c. A player that was removed from a practice or a game by ambulance.
 - d. A player that was attended to by a Paramedic during a practice or game.
 - e. A player that was ill and missed at least 2 weeks (14 days) of practice or games.
 - f. A player that had broken bones.
 - g. A player that was hospitalized.
 - h. A player that received professional medical attention due to an injury on/off the fields.

For additional information, see the Acreage Athletic League's Injured Player Policy available at <http://www.acreageathleticleague.org/about-us.html>, clicking on the "Sports Bylaws".

AGFF/AFF Injury Report

Date: _____ **Date of Injury:** _____

Player's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone#: _____

Division: _____ **Team:** _____

Coach: _____

Type of Injury: _____

When did injury happen (time and date)?

Practice Game

Did Coach Witness Accident?

Yes No

Describe Incident: _____

Was Medical Care Required? Yes No

Name of Insurance Carrier: _____

Policy #: _____

Name of Insured: _____ **Date:** _____

Coach's Signature: _____ **Received by:** _____

AGFF/AFF League Grievance Policy & Procedures

SEE SPORT BYLAWS at <http://www.acreageathleticleague.org/about-us.html> for additional information

Purpose: To provide parent, players, and other league members an avenue to grieve Bylaws, Policies, Procedures, and other members of this Acreage Girls / Acreage COED Flag Football League.

Policy: Members who are not satisfied with any Bylaw, Policy, Procedure, or other member of the Acreage Athletic League Executive Board must fill out a “Grievance Hearing Application.” This application may be obtained from the League Secretary and must be submitted to the Vice President.

The Grievance Hearing will be held at a special meeting which will be called no later than 2 weeks after the application is submitted, at the convenience of the applicant and the Executive Board. The Parks Director may be asked to oversee the hearing to ensure fairness.

The Board will provide to the applicant any information or documentation requested which pertains to the grievance.

Notice of the meeting will be posted at the concession stand at Community Park for one week prior to hearing and/or social media sites. The hearing will be open to the public.

The committee reviewing the grievance will consist of the Executive Board members less any member to which the grievance may pertain.

The applicant must be present at the grievance hearing. He/she is responsible for bringing along any witness and supportive documentation pertaining to the grievance.

The outcome of the meeting will be based on a majority vote of the Board of Directors less any member to which the grievance may pertain.

If, after completing this procedure, the applicant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, then and only then, he/she may apply for a Grievance Hearing with the Indian Trails Improvement District.

Grievance Application

Date: _____

Name of Applicant: _____

Applicant Address: _____

Applicant Phone #: _____

Grievance:

Applicant Signature: _____

Received by: _____ **Date:** _____

AAL Sports COVID-19 Addendum

1. Anyone with a Positive COVID-19 diagnosis will not be allowed to be present at any AAL events for the CDC recommended quarantine timeframe and then (Players will require a “return to school/normal activities” note from doctor).
2. Sport League will keep a log with all individuals name and dates of positive and negative COVID results and dates.
3. A copy of these reports is to be filed and forwarded to AAL’s secretary as cases are identified.
4. Coaches, Team Moms and players must socially distance.
5. There will be **no** refunds due to COVID-19 circumstances
6. There will be no challenges and no grievances accepted to this order.

Draft/Freeze Rules:

Freezes

Freezes will be evaluated against the field of players in their respective division. These evaluations may be performed by independent evaluators, board members, randomly selecting coach evaluation sheet after the evaluations are complete, or some combination thereof. Any player frozen that does not attend the evaluations will automatically carry a grade of the strongest player.

Coaches are required to turn their list of freezes to the board no later than 48 hrs prior to the draft. Freezes will be announced to all coaches prior to the draft. AGFF/AFF requires written parental consent before their child may be frozen by a coach.

AGFF: Each team is allowed a maximum of TWO freezes unless a sibling link is applicable.

AFF (COED): Each team is allowed a maximum of TWO boy freezes and TWO girl freezes. The number of girl freezes may be subject to change on a division-by-division basis depending on the final player registration count. Sibling links count against a team's allotted freezes.

If a coach does not freeze their own child before the draft, they cannot pick them during the draft. Their child will be placed with a different coach and they are not allowed to freeze any other players.

Siblings

Siblings are defined as children that live in the same household. When the first sibling is drafted or frozen, all siblings of that family are assigned to that team.

When there is a single sibling link, the accompanying sibling is assigned to the next available draft slot of the appropriate gender, regardless of their evaluation performance.

When there are three or more siblings from the same family in a given division/draft, all will be graded during evaluations. When the first sibling is drafted, the accompanying siblings will fill that team's next available draft spots of the appropriate gender at the corresponding evaluation strength (or lower if none are available). **AFF COED:** The requirement to keep all siblings on a single team supersedes the above freeze rule regarding sibling links. However, a team may not have more than the total allotted number of freezes. For example, a coach may freeze three boys from the same family but would then be limited to one girl freeze.

Blocking

A player cannot block a coach that he/she has not played for already. To block a coach, a player must have a valid reason stated in writing to the AGFF/AFF board. The letter must be signed by a parent. After review, the board will determine if a block is warranted.

Hat Picks

Any player that does not attend the tryout will be placed on a team by a “hat pick”. Hat pick players are NOT allowed to block the pick of any coach. A coach may “pick from the hat” during any round of the draft.

Draft

Following evaluations, all divisions (except Pee Wee division) will have a draft to determine teams.

The draft order will be determined in advance of the draft by the board according to the evaluation strength (numerical score) of each team’s freezes from weakest (first) to strongest (last).

AFF (COED): boys and girls will be drafted separately (boys first), with the draft order for each gender being determined separately by the evaluation strength of each team’s freezes for that gender. If two teams have the same evaluation strength of freezes for one gender, the team with the weaker freezes for the other gender will draft first.

After the freezes have been evaluated and ranked (numerically scored) against the other players in the division and the draft order determined, they are given a rating of A, B, or C, with the top third in each gender being considered “A” players, the middle third as “B” players, and the bottom third as “C” players. The coaches draft sheet will then be filled out with their freezes taking the first available opening/openings in the appropriate round being either A, B, or C (see example below).

The draft order is the same for every round, i.e. “left to right”. There is no “snake draft”.

No players will be added to a roster after the draft unless determined to be a special circumstance voted on by the board.

| Coaches | | | | | Rank of Round |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------------|
| | coach 4 | coach 2 | coach 3 | coach 1 | |
| R O U N D | 1 | | A | A | A |
| | 2 | | | A | A |
| | 3 | | | | A |
| | 4 | B | B | | B |
| | 5 | | B | | B |
| | 6 | | | | B |
| | 7 | C | | C | C |
| | 8 | | | | C |
| | 9 | | | | C |

| COACH FREEZES | | | |
|---------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Coach 1 | Coach 2 | Coach 3 | Coach 4 |
| A | B | A | B |
| A | B | C | C |

RULES OF THE GAME

Rule 1: The Game, Field, Players and Equipment

SECTION 1: THE GAME

ART.1.....It is the object of the game for one team to carry or pass the ball across the opponent's goal line. The game is won by the team which accumulates the most points.

ART.2.....The game of flag football is played with an inflated ball by two teams on a rectangular field 240 by 120 feet (80 by 40 yards). While the ball is live, an interval called a down is in progress and the team in possession attempts to advance the ball by carrying, kicking, or passing it. If a foul occurs, the penalty loss, if not declined, is enforced during the interval between downs. The team in possession has a series of four downs numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4 to advance the ball to the line-to gain. Points are scored by touchdown, successful try, safety, or defensive return of a try.

ART.3.....Each team must begin the game with at least 5 players, but each team normally plays with 7 players. Opposing team must match other team. For example, a game will not be permitted to be played (7 vs. 6) or (6 vs. 5) etc. If for any reason a team cannot produce (5) players for a game, the team must forfeit that game. If during a (5 vs. 5) game a player is lost due to injury the game will NOT be allowed to continue with (4 vs. 4) and therefore that team must forfeit the game.

ART.4.....The game is administered by officials whose duties are stated in Rule 8. The use of two officials is recommended, but the game shall never be officiated with less than one official.

ART.5.....The referee has authority to rule promptly, and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. The referee's decisions are final in all matters pertaining to the game.

ART.6.....Protests are not recognized by the League.

ART.7.....Forfeiture. If offended team is ahead at the time of forfeiture, the score stands.

Otherwise, the game score is:

Offended Team.....1

Opponent.....0

SECTION 2: THE FIELD AND MARKINGS

ART.1.....The field shall be a rectangular area with dimensions, lines, zones, goals and markers.

ART.2.....Yard line markers, constructed of soft, pliable materials, are placed on the sideline by the game officials. One official is to mark the line of scrimmage, and the other official is to mark the closest point the defense may line up opposite the ball.

ART.3.....Lines and other markings:

- a. Lines shall be marked with a non-caustic material. Neither lime, hydrated lime, nor other chemical derivatives of lime, nor caustic material of any kind may be used.
- b. End lines and sidelines should be at least 4 inches wide. All other field dimensions lines should be marked 4 inches in width
- c. Team boxes shall be marked on each side of the field between the 20-yard lines. All players and team representatives shall remain in this area during the game.

ART.4.....Each goal line mark shall be entirely in its end zone so the edge toward the field of play and its vertical plane is the actual goal line.

ART.5.....A soft, flexible pylon, which shall not constitute a safety hazard, 4 inches square and 18 inches high, orange or red in color, is recommended to be placed at the inside corner of each of the intersections of the sidelines with the goal lines and the end lines, as well as with each intersection of the inbounds lines extended and the end lines. When properly placed, the goal line pylon is out-of-bounds at the intersection of the sideline and the goal line extended. A soft, flexible cone orange or red in color may be used as a replacement for the above-mentioned pylon.

SECTION 3: GAME EQUIPMENT

ART.1..... A league-supplied football will be used by all teams at all games.

ART.2.....A timing device referred to as “the game clock” shall be the scoreboard clock. The clock operator will be a game official designated by the referee.

SECTION 4: PLAYER EQUIPMENT

ATR.1.....Flag belts:

- a. The player’s flag belts must be the “triple threat” flag belts provided by the League. This flag belt may never be altered or secured other than according to the manufacturer’s instructions. Any alterations to or improper securing of the flag belt is prohibited.
- b. The flag belt must be worn only on the waist. The flags must hang loosely below the waist on each side of the player.
- c. The flags must sharply contrast with the color of the player’s shorts or pants.
- d. The entire flag belt assembly must be completely visible at all times. No part of the flag

belt may be obscured or camouflaged.

ART.2.....Jerseys, shirts, and top coverings: Team players must wear the jerseys provided to them by the League. The jersey must be kept tucked inside a player's shorts or pants. A second shirt may be worn under the jersey, provided that it does not present a safety hazard. For example, sweatshirts with exposed hoods or drawstrings are prohibited.

ART.3.....Shorts and pants: Players must wear shorts provided by, or approved by the League/Board and not have any other items that could cause injury to a player attempting to pull an opponent's flag, e.g. pockets, external strings or ties, etc.

ART.4.....Shoes:

- a. A player must wear cleats.
- b. May have cleats that screw into a recessed hole in the bottom of the sole area.
- c. Any shoe that has steel tipped cleats or steel reinforced toe or heel, or a squared toe is prohibited.
- d. No player may participate barefooted, or sock footed.

ART.5.....Towels:

- a. The offensive team may have a full-sized towel in the huddle between downs. During plays, the towel may remain on the field only if kept at least 5 yards behind the furthest offensive player.
- b. The defensive team may have a full-sized towel in the huddle between downs. Leaving the towel on the field during a play is prohibited.

ART.6....Prescription, shatter-proof eyewear may be worn if it is secured by a soft band. Caps, hats, and non-prescription sunglasses are not allowed.

ART.7.....Tape, gloves, bandages, braces, and padding:

- a. Tape or any type of bandage worn on the hand or a finger may only be worn to protect an existing injury.
- b. Gloves are permitted.
- c. Ace bandages, "wet suit" rubber wraps, and similar materials are permitted.
- d. Knee braces or knee supports are permitted provided all hard surfaces are covered by some type of padded material.
- e. Soft padding is permitted.
- f. Hard plastic surfaced or hard plastic reinforced pads or equipment are prohibited. No helmets, shoulder pads, thigh or forearm pads, or other devices permitted.
- g. Any type of hard cast that covers any part of a player's arm, wrist, or hand is not

permitted.

- h. No player may wear any pad, brace, support, splint, or any type of device that has any metal that is, or has the potential to be exposed.

ART.8.....All jewelry other than medical is prohibited. Exception: rubber nose rings/studs may remain in place.

ART.9.....Mouthguards are required to be worn by players when the ball is live. Clear mouthguards are not permitted.

ART.10.....Long hair that extends below the middle of the back must be placed in bun or tucked into the jersey so as not to interfere with play.

ART.11.....Each player shall properly wear the mandatory equipment outlined above while the ball is live.

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|-------------------|-----------------|--|
| Illegal Equipment | 1 through 11 | 10 yard penalty. Player will be removed until proper uniform is worn. |

Rule 2 Definitions of Playing Terms

SECTION 1: BALL – DEAD, LIVE, LOOSE

ART.1.....Dead ball is a term used to indicate it is a period between downs.

ART.2.....Live ball, or ball in play, is a term which indicates that the ball has been legally snapped and that a down is in progress. A live ball is always in possession of a team.

ART.3.....A loose ball is a pass, fumble or a kick. The terms “pass,” “fumble,” and “kick,” are sometimes used as abbreviations when the ball is loose following that acts of passing, fumbling or kicking the ball. A loose ball is one in which it has not yet touched the ground and is in flight.

SECTION 2: BATTING

Is intentionally slapping or striking the ball with the arm or hand.

SECTION 3: CATCH

ART.1.....A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball in flight. If a player attempts a catch, interception, or recovery while in the air, they must contact the ground inbounds with the ball in their possession prior to touching out-of-bounds. 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.

ART.2.....A simultaneous catch is a catch in where there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are inbounds.

SECTION 4: DEFENSIVE CHARGING

Occurs when a defensive player runs into the offensive player and makes either no attempt to dislodge the flag of the offensive player who is in possession of the ball, or the defensive player makes no attempt to avoid a teammate of an opponent who has the ball.

SECTION 5: DOWN – LOSS OF DOWN

ART.1..... A down is action which starts with a legal snap (beginning a scrimmage down). A down ends when the ball next becomes dead.

ART.2.....Loss of a down is the loss of the right to replay a down.

SECTION 6: ENCROACHMENT

Encroachment is a term to indicate a player is illegally in the neutral zone during the time interval starting when the ball yard markers are placed in the proper position by the referees and

before that ball is snapped. For the purposes of enforcing encroachment restrictions, an entering substitute is not considered to be a player until they are on their team's side of the neutral zone.

SECTION 7: EXTENDING THE BALL

Is the legal act by the ball carrier to elongate the forward progress of the ball carrier. Diving is prohibited.

SECTION 8: (Removed)

SECTION 9: FIELD AREAS

ART.1.....The end zones are 10-yards in depth and are located one at each end of the field between the goal line and the end line. The goal lines are in the end zone and a team's end zone is the one it is defending.

ART.2.....The field of play is the area within the boundary lines other than the end zones.

SECTION 10: FIGHTING

Is any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage an opponent in a combative manner unrelated to flag football. Such acts include, but not limited to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), or the act or the attempt to fight (ex: balling up the fist and raising the hand) whether or not there is contact.

SECTION 11: FORMATIONS

ART.1.....A scrimmage formation requires all team members on or behind the line of scrimmage at the snap.

ART.2.....All offensive players must be within 15 yards of the ball at the snap.

ART.3.....A team may run a "no huddle" offense without informing game officials or opponents prior to the snap.

ART.4.....A minimum of four (4) players is required to be on the line of scrimmage at the snap. In the case of a game of game with less than (7) players each, a minimum of (3) will be allowed

SECTION 12: FORWARD PROGRESS

ART.1.....Forward progress is the end of advancement of a runner toward the opponent's goal and determines the dead ball spot.

ART.2.....When an airborne player makes a catch, forward progress is the furthest point of advancement after they possess the ball if contacted by a defender.

SECTION 13: FOULS

ART.1.....A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed.

ART.2.....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.
- b. Double – one or more live ball fouls (other than unsportsmanlike) committed by each team at such a time that the penalties offset.
- c. Live ball – a foul which occurs during a down.
- d. Multiple – two or more live ball fouls (other than unsportsmanlike) committed by same team at such a time that the offended team is permitted a choice of penalties
- e. Non-player or unsportsmanlike –a non-contact foul while the ball is dead or during the down which is not illegal participation and does not influence the play in progress.
- f. Player – a foul (other than unsportsmanlike) by a player in the game hereafter referred to as a foul.
- g. Simultaneous with the snap – an act which becomes a foul when the ball is snapped.

ART.3.....No foul causes loss of the ball.

ART.4.....No live ball foul causes the ball to become dead.

ART.5.....Game situations which procedure results somewhat similar to penalties, but which are not classed as fouls are: disqualification of a player, incompleteness of a forward pass, and forfeiture of a game.

SECTION 14: A FUMBLE

Is any loss of player ball possession other than by legal kick, passing or handing. Ball is dead when it hits the ground.

SECTION 15: HANDING

ART.1.....Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one player to a teammate in such a way that the ball is still in contact with the first player when it is touched by the teammate. Handing the ball is not a pass.

ART.2.....Forward handing is when the runner releases the ball when the entire ball is beyond the yard line where the runner is positioned.

ART.3.....Backward handing is when a runner releases the ball when any part of the ball is on or behind the yard line where the runner is positioned.

SECTION 16: HUDDLE

Is two or more players of the same team grouped together before a snap.

SECTION 17: HURDLING

Is an attempt by a player to jump (hurdle) with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent WITHOUT CONTACT who is contacting the ground with no part of his/her body except one or both feet.

SECTION 18: AN INTERCEPTION

Is the catch of an opponent's fumble or pass.

SECTION 19: KICKS

ART.1.....A kick is the intentional striking of the ball with the knee, lower leg, or foot.

ART.2.....A kick ends when a player gains possession or when the ball becomes dead.

ART.3.....A punt is a legal kick by a player who drops the ball and kicks it before it has touched the ground.

SECTION 20: LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

ART.1.....The line of scrimmage for each team is a vertical plane of the yard marker nearest the team's goal line. It is determined when the yard markers are set on the sidelines by the game officials.

ART.2.....An offensive player is on their line of scrimmage when they face the opponent's goal line with the line of their shoulders approximately parallel thereto and with their head or foot breaking the plane of an imaginary line drawn parallel to the line of scrimmage through the waist of the snapper.

ART.3.....A defensive player is on their line of scrimmage when they are within 1 yard of their scrimmage line at the snap.

SECTION 21: LINES

ART.1.....The boundary lines are the end lines and sidelines and are out-of-bounds.

ART.2.....The end line is the outer limit of each end zone.

ART.3.....A goal line is the vertical plane which separates the field of play from the end zone.

When related to a live ball in a runner's possession (touching inbounds) while the ball is over the out-of-bounds area, the goal line includes the extension beyond the sidelines. A team's own goal line is the one it is defending.

ART.4....The line-to-gain is the yard line (20, 40 or goal line) that is closest to the offensive team's direction of advancement.

ART.5....The sideline is the lateral limit of the field of play and the end zones. It extends from one end, line to the other.

ART.6....A yard line is any line and its vertical plan parallel to the end lines. The yard lines marked or unmarked, in the field of play are numbered in yards from a team's own goal line to the middle of the field.

SECTION 22: A MUFF

Is the touching of a loose ball by a player in an unsuccessful attempt to secure possession. An accidental kick is a muff.

SECTION 23: NEUTRAL ZONE

Is the space between the two scrimmage lines during a scrimmage down. The neutral zone is 5 yards or less for a scrimmage down and is established by the game officials.

EXCEPTION, AGFF High School Girl's Division: Neutral zone is 1 yard.

SECTION 24: OUT-OF-BOUNDS

ART. 1....A player or other person is out-of-bounds when any part of them is touching anything on or outside the sideline or end line.

ART.2....A ball in player possession is out-of-bounds when the runner or the ball touches anything outside a sideline or end line.

ART.3....A loose ball is out-of-bounds when it touches anything, including a player or game official, who is out-of-bounds.

SECTION 25: PASSING

ART.1....Passing the ball is throwing it. In a pass, the ball travels in flight. The initial direction determines whether a pass is forward or backward.

ART.2....A forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction toward the opponent's end line. NOTE: Prior to releasing the ball on a pass, if the potential passer is contacted, and the ball

is released, it is a forward pass if their arm was moving forward on contact.

ART.3.....A forward pass has gone beyond the neutral zone if at any time during the pass; the entire ball is beyond the neutral zone.

ART.4.....A forward pass ends when it is caught, touches the ground or is out-of-bounds.

ART.5.....A backward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the runner's end line.

ART.6.....A backward pass end when it is caught, touches the ground, or is out-of-bounds.

SECTION 26: PLAYER DESIGNATIONS

ART.1.....A player is one of the team members who are designated to start either half of the game or who replaces another player. A player continues to be a player until a substitute enters the field and indicates to the player that they are replaced, or when the substitute becomes a player.

ART.2.....A player of Team A is A1 and teammates are A2 and A3. Other abbreviations are B1 for a player of Team B, K1 for a player of the kickers and R1 for one of the receivers,

ART.3.....A back is any Team A player, except for the player under the snapper, who has no part of their body breaking the plane of an imaginary line drawn parallel to the line of scrimmage through the waist of the nearest teammate who is legally on the line.

ART.4.....A captain of a team is a player designated to represent their team during:

- a. The pre-game toss ceremony.
- b. Penalty decisions following a foul.
- c. Overtime session

ART.5.....A disqualified player is a player barred from further participation in a game.

ART.6.....A kicker is any player who legally punts. They continue to be the kicker until they have had reasonable opportunity to regain their balance.

ART.7.....A non-player is a coach, trainer, or other attendant, or a substitute who does not participate by touching the ball, hindering an opponent, or influencing the play.

ART.8.....A passer is a player who throws a forward pass. They continue to be a passer until the pass ends or until they move to participate in the play.

ART.9....A replaced player is one who has been notified by a substitute that they are to leave the field. A player is also replaced when the entering substitute becomes a player.

ART.10....A runner is a player who is in possession of a live ball or is simulating possession of a live ball.

ART.11....A snapper is the player who snaps the ball.

ART.12....A substitute is a team member who may replace a player. A substitute becomes a player when they enter the field and communicates with a teammate or an official, enters the huddle, is positioned in a formation or participates in the play. An entering substitute is not considered to be a player for encroachment restrictions until they are on their team's side of the neutral zone.

SECTION 27: PLAYS- FOR PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

ART.1.....A loose ball play is action during.

- a. A legal forward pass.
- b. A backward pass (including the snap) or fumble made by Team A from in or behind the neutral zone prior to touching the ground.
- c. The run or runs which precede such legal forward pass, legal kick or fumble.

ART.2.....A running play is any action not included in Article 1.

SECTION 28: POSSESSION

ART.1.....A ball in player possession is a live ball held or controlled by a player after it has been handed or snapped to them, or after they have caught or recovered it.

ART.2.....A ball in team possession is a live ball which is in player possession or one which is loose following loss of such player possession.

SECTION 29: READY-FOR-PLAY

Is a term which signifies the referee has signaled the ball may be put in play by a snap or free kick.

SECTION 30: RESTRAINING LINE

ART.1.....The defensive restraining line is 5 yards closest to the goal line of team “B” except:

- a. If the line-to-gain is less than 5 yards, the defense’s restraining line is the next line-to-gain.
- b. On a 1 point try, the goal line is the defense’s restraining line.
- c. On a 2 point try, the 5-yard line is the defense’s restraining line, unless affected by penalty.

EXCEPTION, AGFF High School Girl’s Division: Defensive restraining line distance is reduced to 1 yard, with no exceptions. For example, if the ball is spotted one half yard from the goal line, the restraining line will be in the end zone, one half yard inside the goal line.

SECTION 31: A RULE

Is one of the groups of regulations which govern the game. A rule sometimes states what a player may do, but if there is no such statement for a given act, it is assumed that the player may do what is not prohibited. In like manner, a rule sometimes states or implies that the ball is dead or that a foul is involved. If it does not, it is assumed that the ball is live and that no foul has occurred to affect the given situation. If a foul is mentioned, it is assumed that it is not part of a double or multiple foul unless so stated or implied.

SECTION 32: SCRIMMAGE

Is the action of the two teams during a down which begins with a snap.

SECTION 33: 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.

SECTION 34: SNAP

ART.1.....A snap is the legal act of passing or handing the ball backward from its position on the ground.

ART.2.....The snap begins when the snapper first moves the ball legally away from the line of scrimmage other than in adjustment.

ART.3.....The snap ends when the ball touches the ground or any player.

SECTION 35: SPOTS

ART.1.....The basic spot is a point of reference for penalty enforcement. It is the previous spot for a loose ball play and the end of the run for a running play. The ball will be placed on the center of the field to where the ball became dead by rule

ART.2.....The dead ball spot is the spot under the foremost point of the ball when it becomes dead by rule.

ART.3.....The inbounds spot is the intersection of the inbounds line and the yard line:

- a. Through the foremost point of the ball when the ball becomes dead in a side zone.
- b. Through the foremost point of the ball on the sideline between the goal lines when a loose ball goes out- of-bounds.
- c. Through the spot under the foremost point of the ball in possession of a runner when they cross the plane of the sideline and go out-of-bounds.

NOTE: If a penalty measurement leaves the ball in a side zone, the new inbounds spot is fixed by the yard line through the spot of the ball after measurement.

ART.4.....The out-of-bounds spot is where the ball becomes dead because of going out-of-bounds.

ART.5.....The spot of foul is where the foul occurs. If a foul occurs out-of-bounds, the spot of the foul is at the intersection of the inbounds line and the yard line extended on which the foul occurs.

ART.6.....The previous spot is where the ball was last snapped or free kicked.

ART.7.....The spot where the run ends is where the runner loses possession or where the ball becomes dead in their possession.

ART.8.....The succeeding spot is where the ball would next be snapped or free kicked if a foul had not occurred.

SECTION 36: DEFLAGGING

Is the detaching of the ball-carrier's flag by a defensive player or one hand touching the player between the shoulders and the knees in the event of a flag falling off inadvertently.

SECTION 37: TEAM DESIGNATIONS

ART.1....The offense is the team which is in possession of the ball, the opponent is the defense.

ART.2.....Team A is the team which puts the ball in play, the opponent is Team B.

ART.3.....Team K is the team which legally kicks the ball during the down, the opponent is Team R.

SECTION 38: TOUCHING

Refers to any contact with the ball: i.e., either by touching or being touched by it.

SECTION 39: TRIPPING

Is the illegal contact of the lower leg or foot by a player to obstruct an opponent below the knee who is either a runner or teammate of a runner.

Rule 3 Periods, Time Factors and Substitutions

SECTION 1: LENGTH OF HALVES

ART.1.....The clock running time for a game shall be 40 minutes with (4) quarters, (2) halves and intermissions as indicated. If, at the end of the second half, the teams have identical scores, an attempt to resolve the tie will be utilized. The overtime is considered part of the second half.

ART.2.....The playing time for each quarter will be as follows:

- a. The first, second and third quarter of the game the clock will continuously run and the first 8 minutes of the fourth quarter. The only times the clock will be stopped during this time is for team time outs, also for injuries that keep a player from being removed immediately, and for any other unusual situations that may occur. The 2-minute warning will then be issued to both teams by the referee at the end of the second and fourth quarter. However, once the teams have been notified, the 25 second ready for play clock will start.
- b. The final 2 minutes of the fourth quarter the clock will stop on incomplete forward passes, scoring plays, penalty enforcement's, out-of-bounds situations, once a punt has been announced, time outs (official or team), and first downs achieved. In this circumstance, the clock will begin on the referee's ready for play signal.
- c. The teams will switch directions at the start of the second and fourth quarters.

ART.3.....Halftime intermission will be 5 minutes. At 4 minutes, the referee will blow his whistle to inform both teams that they need to be on the field, ready to play in 1 minute.

ART.4.....Charged time outs shall be 45 seconds in length.

ART.5.....The game officials shall assume authority for the contest, including penalizing unsportsmanlike acts, 10 minutes prior to the scheduled game time, or as soon thereafter as they are able to be present.

ART.6.....A period or periods may be shortened by any emergency by agreement of the team captains and the referee. By mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee, any remaining period may be shortened at any time or the game terminated.

ART.7.....Removed

ART.8.....When weather conditions are construed to be hazardous to life or limb of the participants, the crew of officials or any board member is authorized to delay or terminate the game in accordance with Article 7.

ART.9.....The referee shall have authority to correct obvious errors in timing if discovery is prior to the second live ball following the error unless the period has officially ended.

SECTION 2: STARTING EACH HALF

ART.1.....Each half of the game shall be started by placing the ball on the 14 yard line on the center hash mark. Before the scheduled game starting time the referee, in the presence of the field captains, shall toss a coin which the visiting captain shall call. If the coin toss is held on the playing field, it shall be held 3 minutes prior to the scheduled game starting time.

EXCEPTION, COED PRO DIVISION: See Rule 6 Section 2, Kickoffs

ART.2.....The winner of the toss shall have first choice of options for the first half or to defer and have first choice in the second half. The loser shall have the first choice of options for the half the winner of the toss did not select. The options for each half shall be:

- a. To choose whether their team will start on offense or defense.
- b. To choose the goal their team will defend.

The captain not having the first choice for a half shall exercise the remaining option.

SECTION 3: ENDING A HALF

ART.1.....Approximately 2 minutes before the end of each half; the referee shall notify the field captains of the time remaining. If time is not out, the referee shall order the clock stopped while he does this.

ART.2.....If time for any period expires during a down, play shall continue until the down ends.

ART.3.....A period must be extended by an un-timed down, except for unsportsmanlike or non-player fouls, if during the last timed down, one of the following occurred:

- a. There was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted.
- b. There was a double foul.
- c. There was an inadvertent whistle and the down is to be replayed at the spot of where the play was blown dead.
- d. If a touchdown was scored, the try is attempted unless the touchdown is scored during the last down of the 2nd half and the point(s) would not affect the outcome of the game or play-off qualifying.

If (a, b, c, or d) occurs during the un-timed down, the procedure is repeated.

ART.4.....If a dead ball occurs after time expires for any period, the penalty shall be measured from the succeeding spot.

SECTION 4: STARTING AND STOPPING THE CLOCK

ART.1.....The clock shall start for a half when the ball is legally snapped.

EXCEPTION, COED PRO DIVISION: See Rule 6 Section 2, Kickoffs

ART.2.....The clock shall run continuously for the first three quarters and 8 minutes of the fourth quarter except for the following situations:

- a. For an official's time out.
- b. For a team's time out.
- c. Because of an inadvertent whistle that cause an unusual delay in the game.
- d. An injury that causes a player not to be immediately removed.

ART.3.....The clock shall be stopped and shall not start until the snap, providing the time remaining for the second half is under 2 minutes because:

- a. The ball goes out of bounds.
- b. A fair catch is made.
- c. The ball becomes dead behind the goal line.
- d. A forward pass is incomplete.
- e. Once a punt has been announced.
- f. A request for a charged time out is granted.
- g. The penalty for a delay of game foul is accepted.

SECTION 5: CHARGED AND OFFICIAL'S TIME OUTS -INTERMISSIONS

ART.1.....Two (2) time outs only may be charged to a team during each half of a regulation game. Unused 1st half time outs may not be utilized in the 2nd half. One (1) time out is permitted during overtime games during the regular season, and one (1) time out is permitted for each additional overtime period during the playoffs.

ART.2.....A charged time out occurs when the ball is dead and a player's request is legally granted.

ART.3.....A single charge time out shall not exceed 45 seconds in length. Charged time outs shall be reduced only if both teams are ready to play prior to the 25 second ready for play signal by the referee.

ART.4....Successive charged timeouts may be granted during the same dead ball period. When a team’s permissible charged timeouts during a half have been used, its captain should be notified.

ART.5.....After a team has used its permissible charged timeouts in a half, any subsequent request shall be denied.

ART.6.....An official’s timeout occurs during a dead ball without a time out being charged to either team:

- a. When captains are notified of 2 minutes left in each half.
- b. For a player who appears to be injured, bleeding, has an open wound, or has an excessive amount of blood on their uniform.
- c. A water break for unusual heat or humidity which may cause a health risk to the players and/or officials.

SECTION 6: BALL READY FOR PLAY AND DELAY

ART.1.....The ball is ready for play when the whistle is blown by the referee signaling the end of the previous play, or when the referee gives the ready for play signal after:

- a. An official’s time out.
- b. Penalty enforcement.
- c. An inadvertent whistle.
- d. A charged time out to either team

ART.2.....The ball shall be put in play within 25 seconds from the time the referee gives the “ready to play signal”.

ART.3.....Failure of a team to play within 2 minutes after being ordered to do so by the referee shall result in forfeiture.

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Delay of Game | 2 | 5 yards |

SECTION 7: SUBSTITUTIONS

ART.1.....Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players. Replaced players shall leave the field immediately.

ART.2.....A replaced player, or a substitute who has been unable to complete the substitution, is required to leave the field at the side on which his team box is located and go directly to their team box.

ART.3.....Illegal Substitutions are defined as follows:

- a. A substitute player entering the play during a down.
- b. If an injured player is not replaced for at least one down; unless the halftime or overtime intermission occurs.
- c. To use a player, replaced player, or substitute in a substitution or pretended substitution to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap.
- d. For a replaced player or substitute to hinder an opponent, touch the ball, influence the play, or otherwise participate.
- e. During the down, no player shall intentionally go out of bounds and return to the field, intentionally touch the ball, influence the play, or otherwise participate.

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Illegal Substitution | 3 | 5 yards |

SECTION 8: OVERTIME PROCEDURES, REGULAR SEASON

ART.1.....A coin toss will be held similar to Rule 3 Section 2, with the team in possession of the ball at the end of the second half making the call with regards to right of first possession or goal to defend.

ART.2.....The team awarded first offensive possession, “A”, will execute one play in accordance with Rule 8 Section 3 “Try (Extra Point Attempt)”, with the exception that they may only try for one or two points.

ART.3.....Upon completion of “A’s” try, “B” must make their try in an attempt to score more points than “A”. For example:

- a. “A” tries for one point and succeeds. “B” must go for two (or three) points.
- b. “A” tries for two points and succeeds. “B” must go for three points.
- c. “A” tries for two points and fails. “B” may go for one, two, or three points.

ART.4.....If both “A” and “B” fail in their tries, the process described in Articles 2 and 3 repeats until a winner is declared, alternating the team of first offensive possession with each repetition.

SECTION 9: OVERTIME PROCEDURES, PLAYOFFS

Teams will play a series of (4) downs from the 10-yard line each. The teams will continue to play overtime series until there is a point’s winner alternating possessions. There shall be a (1) minute break between the last play of the second half until the opposing captains are required to be present during the subsequent coin toss to begin the overtime. No additional breaks between overtimes are permitted unless a team is granted a time out.

ART.1.....The team in possession of the ball at the end of the last play during the second half shall call the coin toss.

ART.2.....The winner of the toss shall have first choice of options for the overtime. The loser shall have a choice of the option that remains. If any additional overtimes are played, the first-choice option will alternate between teams-for example the loser of the toss during the first overtime will have first choice in the second overtime, etc. The options for each overtime shall be:

- a. To choose whether your team shall be on offense or defense first.
- b. To choose which end zone the entire overtime session will be played in. Both teams will attempt to score in the same end zone.

ART.3.....The ball shall be placed at the opponents 10 yard line for team “A” to attempt to score a touchdown. If, at the end of the possession, the team fails to score, they lose possession and team “B” acquires possession. The ball is then returned to the 10-yard line for their attempt to score a touchdown. If team “B” then fails to score, the process shall be repeated.

ART.4.....If the defensive team intercepts the ball during overtime the play is dead and the possession is over.

ART.5.....If a team scores a touchdown during overtime, a try for point is permitted providing the try has a direct influence on the outcome of the game.

ART.6.....After a touchdown is scored; a team may select to go for 3 points, 2 points, or for 1 point on a try in accordance with Rule 8, Section 1.

ART.7.....Each team receives one time out during each overtime series.

Rule 4 Ball in play, Dead Ball and Out Of Bounds

SECTION 1: PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY

ART.1.....To start each half the ball shall be placed at the 14 yard line at the center hash mark.

EXCEPTION COED PRO DIVISION, see Rule 6, Section 2 “Kickoffs”.

ART.2.....After a score the ball will be put in play at the following spots:

- a. Touchdown: offensive team’s 14-yard line at the center hash mark.
- b. Safety: offensive team’s 30-yard line at the center hash mark.

ART.3.....A snap shall put the ball in play.

ART.4.....A snap shall be started between the inbounds lines.

ART.5.....After being put in play; the ball remains live until the down ends.

ART.6.....The ball remains dead and a down is not begun if there is an illegal snap or other snap infraction.

SECTION 2: DEAD BALL AND END OF THE DOWN

ART.1.....An official shall indicate the ball remains dead by sounding his whistle immediately when a foul occurs before a snap or free kick.

ART.2.....The ball becomes dead and the down is ended:

- a. When a runner goes out-of-bounds, their flag becomes unattached from their body by a defensive player grasping their flags, being one hand touched down if the ball carrier’s flag inadvertently falls off, or allows any part of their person other than hand or foot to touch the ground.
- b. When a live ball goes out of bound
- c. When any forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete or is simultaneously caught by opposing players.
- d. When any legal kick (punt) touches anything while the kicked ball is on or behind R’s goal line (plane) or is muffed by the receiving team.
- e. When any loose ball:
 - i. Is simultaneously caught or recovered by opposing players.
 - ii. Is on the ground motionless and no player attempts to secure possession
 - iii. Touches, or is touched by, anything inbounds other than a player, substitute, replaced player, an official, the ground, or authorized equipment. In this case the

ball will be put in play in accordance with the procedure for an inadvertent whistle as in 4.2.3.b below.

- f. When the kickers are first (i.e. before any touching by the receivers) to touch a punt after it has come to rest beyond the neutral zone and between the goal lines.
- g. Following a valid or invalid fair catch signal given by any member of the receiving team when a punt is caught or recovered by any member of the receiving team beyond, in, or behind the neutral zone.
- h. When a touchdown occurs.
- i. When an official sounds his whistle inadvertently.

ART.3.....Inadvertent Whistle. During a down, or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, if an inadvertent whistle occurs while:

- a. A legal forward pass or snap is in flight, or during a legal kick, the down shall be replayed.
- b. The ball is loose following a backward pass, fumble, illegal pass, or illegal kick, the team last in possession may choose to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.
- c. The ball is in player possession, that team may choose to accept the play at that spot or replay the down.

SECTION 3: OUT-OF BOUNDS AND INBOUNDS SPOT

ART.1.....When a loose ball goes out-of-bounds, the out-of-bounds spot is fixed by the yard line where the flag became legally detached by a defensive player. When the ball becomes dead in the field of play because of touching a person who is out-of-bounds, the out-of-bounds spot is fixed by the yard line through the belt line of the player in possession of the ball.

ART.2.....When the out-of-bounds spot is between the goal lines, the ball shall be put in play at the inbounds spot unless a forward pass is involved. If the out-of-bounds spot is behind a goal line, it is a safety, or touchback. If the ball touches a pylon, it is out-of-bounds behind the goal line.

ART.3.....When a runner goes out-of-bounds, the inbounds spot is fixed by the yard line through the belt line of the player in possession of the ball at the time the runner crosses the plane of the sideline.

ART.4.....When the ball becomes dead between the inbounds lines, play is resumed at the dead ball spot, unless it is a legal forward pass incompleteness in which case the ball is returned to the previous spot.

ART.5.....When the ball becomes dead in the side zone or is awarded to a team there or is left there by a penalty, play is resumed at the inbounds spot. This does not apply to:

- a. A legal forward pass incompleting.
- b. A replay due to inadvertent whistle
- c. A replayed try.
- d. A snap which follows a fair catch or awarded fair catch in a side zone.

ART.6.....Before the ready-for-play signal. Team “A” may designate the spot from which the ball is put in play anywhere between the inbounds lines:

- a. Following a safety.
- b. Following a fair catch.
- c. Following an awarded fair catch.
- d. Following a touchback.
- e. For the start of each series using the 20-yard line overtime procedure.

Rule 5 Series of Downs, Number of Down, and Team Possession after Penalty

SECTION 1: SERIES OF DOWNS

ART.1.....The team which puts the ball in play from scrimmage following a start of half, touchdown, touchback or fair catch is awarded a series of four consecutively numbered downs in which to advance the ball to the line-to-gain.

ART.2.....When a scrimmage down ends with the ball in the field of play or out-of-bounds between the goal lines, a new series is awarded to:

- a. Team "A", if the ball belongs to "A" on or beyond the line-to-gain.
- b. Team "B", if the ball belongs to "B" at the end of any down.
- c. Team "B", at the end of the 4th down, the ball belongs to "A" behind the line-to-gain.
- d. The team is possession at the end of the down, if there is a change of team possession during the down, unless the penalty is accepted for a foul which occurred before the change of possession.
- e. Team "R", if "K" legally kicks during any scrimmage down and the ball is recovered by "R", is in joint possession of opponents, or goes out-of-bounds, or becomes dead with no player in possession.
- f. The team in possession at the end of the down, if "R" is the first to touch a punt while it is beyond the expanded neutral zone, unless the penalty is accepted for a foul which occurred before the kick ended.

The loss of down aspect of a penalty has no significance following a change of possession of in the line- to-gain is reached after enforcement.

ART.3.....When a punt ends with the ball in the field of play or out-of-bounds between the goal lines, a new series is awarded to:

- a. Team "R" at the inbounds spot if "R" is the last to touch the kicked ball before it goes out-of bounds.
- b. The team in possession of the ball when the down ends, if the ball is recovered beyond "R"'s scrimmage line with no first touching by "K".
- c. Team "R" at the spot of recovery if "K" recovers the kicked ball before a player of team "R" gains possession.
- d. Team "R" if there is joint possession by "R" and "K" of a recovered kick.

ART.4.....If the kickers recover a punt in or beyond the neutral zone and the ball had not been in player possession of team "R", it is a dead ball.

SECTION 2: DOWN AND POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY

ART.1.....When a penalty is declined, the number of the next down is the same as if the foul had not occurred. If a double foul occurs during a down, the number of the next down is the same as that of the down in which the foul occurred. After a distance penalty, the ball belongs to the team in possession at the time of the foul. Team possession may then change if a new series is awarded.

ART.2.....When a foul occurs during a scrimmage down and before any change of team possession, and before a receiver is first to touch a punt while it is beyond the neutral zone, the ball belongs to “A” after enforcement. The number of the next down is the same as that of the down during which the foul occurred unless penalty acceptance includes a 1st down or loss of down, or the enforcement of the advance results in a 1st down.

ART.3.....When a foul occurs prior to a scrimmage down, or simultaneously with the snap, the number of the next down after enforcement is the same as the number established before the foul occurred unless enforcement for a foul by “B” results in a 1st down.

ART.4.....Following a foul, a series of downs ends when:

- a. The acceptance of the penalty includes the award of a 1st down.
- b. Acceptance or declination of any penalty leaves “A” in possession beyond the line-to-gain.
- c. Declination of any penalty leaves “A” in possession behind the line-to-gain after 4th down.
- d. Declination of any penalty leaves “B” in possession.
- e. There is acceptance or declination of the penalty for any foul which occurs after team possession changes during the down, or after “R” is first to touch a punt while it is beyond the neutral zone, unless the foul occurs before the kick ends and the penalty is accepted.
- f. Acceptance of a penalty on 4th down which carries a loss of down leaves “A” in possession behind the line-to-gain.

After a series of down ends, a new series with 1st and the next line-to-gain (either Team “A”'s 20-yard line, or the 40-yard line, Team “B”'s 20 yard line) is awarded unless one of the following is involved: a try; or awarded fair catch. The 1st down is awarded to the team in possession when the foul occurs unless, declining the penalty leaves the other team in possession, or as in [c] and [f], accepting or declining the penalty leave the other team in possession after 4th down.

SECTION 3: THE LINE-TO-GAIN

ART.1.....The line-to-gain is Team “A”‘s 20 yard line, the 40 yard line (midfield), and team “B” ‘s 20 yard line when a new series of downs is awarded. The line to gain is established at the end of the down in which a new series is awarded and after considering the effect of any act which occurs during that down other than a non- player or unsportsmanlike foul. The line-to-gain than remains fixed until the series ends, and a new line-to-gain is established.

ART.2.....To start a new series of downs, the “tackle” by the defensive team must be on or ahead of the line- to-gain. To start a new series of downs after:

- a. A change of team possession, which does not involve a 4th down incomplete forward pass, a safety or touchback, the foremost point of the ball at the time it became dead becomes the rear point when the direction of the offense is changed. The ball will be placed in the middle of the field.
- b. A 4th down incomplete forward pass, the ball is placed as it was at the start of the down so the rear point becomes the foremost point.
- c. A safety, the foremost point of the ball is placed on the 30-yard line.
- d. A touchback, the foremost point of the ball is placed on the 14-yard line.

Rule 6 Kicking the Ball, Touchback, Fair Catch

SECTION 1: PUNTS

ART.1.....The offensive team must announce their intention to kick the ball at least 10 seconds prior to any punt. The punt will take place from the spot following the previous play. After such announcement, the ball must be punted in accordance with the Rule 3 Section 6 (play clock).

Exceptions:

- (a) an A or B time-out is called,
- (b) the period ends,
- (c) a foul occurs, or
- (d) an inadvertent whistle is blown anytime prior to or during this down that results in the kicking team having the right to repeat the down.

ART.2.....Team “A” may punt from in or behind the neutral zone before team possession has changed.

ART.3.....No offensive player may go downfield until the ball is kicked by the punter.

ART.4.....Any receiver may catch or recover a punt in the field of play and advance unless any member of the receiving team has given a valid or invalid fair catch signal. “R” may catch or recover a punt in “K”’s end zone.

ART.5.....When any scrimmage kick is out-of-bounds between the goal lines or becomes dead inbounds between the goal lines while no player is in possession, or inbounds anywhere while opponents are in joint possession, the ball is awarded to “R”. Following an out-of-bounds, the ball is put in play at the inbounds spot unless “R” chooses a spot of first touching.

ART.6.....Players on the receiving team can be aligned anywhere on the field behind their line of scrimmage. No players are required to be directly on the line.

ART.7.....The center, after snapping the ball may move away from the punter to avoid being accidentally contacted by the punter or the ball.

ART.8.....If any punt touches anything while the kicked ball is on or behind “R”’s goal line or goal line plane, it becomes dead and is a touchback.

ART.9..... While any punt is in flight beyond K’s scrimmage line, K shall not touch the ball or R, nor obstruct R’s path to the ball, unless the punt has been touched by R. K may catch, touch, muff, or bat a punt in flight beyond K’s scrimmage line if no R player is in position to catch the ball.

ART.10.....If any punt becomes dead in the kicker’s end zone while no player has possession, it is a safety per Rule 8 Section 5.

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|----------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Delay of Game | 1, 4 | 5 yards * |
| Encroachment | 2, 3 | 5 yards |
| Illegal Procedure | 6 | 5 yards |
| Kick Catching Interference | 10 | 10 yards |

* **Note:** Violating the requirements of Rule 3 Section 6 by “K” while attempting to fulfill the “10-second” requirement in Article 1 results in a Delay of Game.

EXCEPTION, PEEWEE AND FRESHMAN ONLY: “K” has the option of punting the ball in accordance with Articles 1-10, or electing to have the referee advance the ball 20 yards in the direction of “R’s” goal line, where the ball is dead and “R” is awarded possession with a new series of downs.

SECTION 2: KICKOFFS (COED Pro Division ONLY)

ART.1..... Coin toss precedes the game. The winner of the toss has choice to defend a goal, to receive, to kick-off or to defer choice of options to second half. If the choice is to defer, the loser of the toss has choice to defend a goal, to receive or to kick-off to start the game.

ART.2..... Kick-offs will take place only at the start of the first and second halves. The kicking team kicks off from their 20-yard line. The ball must be kicked off of either a tee or the ground only. The receiving team has to remain on their side of the 40-yard line until the ball is kicked. After a score, the opposing team takes possession on their 14-yard line; there is no kickoff.

ART.3.....Out-of-bounds: Out-of-bounds kick-offs are not re-kicked. If the kick-off goes out-of-bounds, the receiving team will choose to put the ball in play either from its 30-yard line or from the yard line where the ball went out-of-bounds. If a penalty occurred which resulted in the kicking team kicking from behind the 20-yard line, the receiving team may take the ball at the spot it went out-of-bounds or at the 30 plus the penalty yardage.

ART.4..... On-side Kicks: There are no on-side kicks. However, the kicking team may down the kick-off once the ball hits the ground. The ball is dead at the spot and belongs to the receiving team. The clock does not restart until the center snaps the ball on the subsequent play.

SECTION 3: TOUCHBACK

ART.1.....A touchback is declared when:

- a. A legal kick touches anything while the kicked ball is on or behind “R’s” goal line other than being caught and advanced.
- b. An attempt to catch and advance a legal kick is muffed by “R” on or behind “R’s” goal line
- c. A forward pass is intercepted in “B” ‘s end zone and becomes dead there in “B” ‘s possession.

ART.2.....The team whose goal line is involved shall put the ball in play at the center hash mark on its 14 yard line by a snap.

Rule 7 Snapping, Handing and Passing the Ball

SECTION 1: BEFORE THE SNAP

ART.1.....No player shall encroach on the neutral zone after the ball is ready-for-play by touching the ball or an opponent or by being in the neutral zone to give defensive signals. There is no provision for a player to retreat from the neutral zone prior to the snap in order to avoid a penalty.

ART.2.....Following the ready-for-play or after the snapper has placed their hand(s) on the ball, encroachment occurs if any player, other than the snapper breaks the plane of the neutral zone.

ART.3.....The snapper may be over the ball but their feet must be behind the neutral zone and no part of this person other than a hand(s) on the ball may be beyond the foremost point of the ball.

ART.4.....The snapper may lift the ball for later rotation but may not rotate end-for-end or fail to keep the long axis of the ball at right angles to the line of scrimmage. The ball may be moved with approval by the Referee due to poor field conditions.

ART.5.....Following the ready-for-play or after touching the ball, the snapper shall not:

- a. Make any movement that simulates a snap.
- b. Fail to clearly pause before the snap.
- c. Following adjustment, lift or move the ball other than in a legal snap. An illegal snap or other snap infraction causes the ball to remain dead.

ART.6.....After the ball is ready-for-play or before the snap, no false start shall be made by any “A” player.

It is a false start if:

- a. A shift or feigned charge simulates action at the snap.
- b. Any act is clearly intended to cause “B” to encroach.

If the false start causes “B” to encroach, only the false start is penalized.

ART.7.....A team may not use more than the allotted time between plays

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|-----------------|---------|-------------|
| Encroachment | 1, 2, 3 | 5 yards |
| Snap Infraction | 4, 5 | |
| False Start | 6 | |
| Delay of game | 7 | |

SECTION 2: POSITION AND ACTION AT THE SNAP

ART.1.....No later than 10 seconds prior to the snap, each player of team “A” must have been, momentarily, within 15 yards of the ball.

ART.2.....Team “A” players may stand, crouch, or kneel.

ART.3.....A snap shall be such that the ball immediately leaves the hand or hands of the snapper and next touches a backfield player or the ground before it touches a Team A lineman. The movement must be a quick and continuous backward motion of the ball during which the ball immediately leaves the hand(s) of the snapper and touches a back or the ground before it touches a Team A lineman.

- a. A scrimmage down must start with a legal snap.
- b. The snappers entire body must be behind the neutral zone.
- c. The snapper may use one or both hands to snap the ball.
- d. The snap must pass between the legs of the snapper.

EXCEPTION, FRESHMAN and PEEWEE DIVISIONS: There is no requirement that the ball pass through the legs of the snapper provided that the player receiving the snap is greater than two yards behind the line of scrimmage, i.e. “side snaps” are allowed from a “shotgun formation”.

- e. An illegal snap causes the ball to remain dead.

ART.4.....After a huddle or shift all seven players of team “A”, except the player in motion shall come to an absolute stop and shall remain stationary simultaneously without movement of hands, feet, head, or body for at least one second before the snap.

ART.5.....Not more than one team “A” player may be in motion at the snap and then only if such motion is not towards their opponent’s goal line. Except for the player “under the snapper”, the player in motion shall be at least 1 yard behind their line of scrimmage at the snap if they started from any position not clearly behind the line and did not establish themselves as a back by stopping for at least one full second while no part of their body is breaking the vertical plane through the waistline of their nearest teammate who is on the line of scrimmage.

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Illegal Procedure/Formation | 1 | 5 yards |
| Illegal Snap | 3 | |
| Illegal Shift | 4 | |
| Illegal Motion | 5 | |

SECTION 3: HANDING THE BALL

ART.1.....Any player may hand the ball backward at any time.

ART.2.....No player may hand the ball forward except during a scrimmage down before a change in possession, provided both players are in or behind the neutral zone and it is to a teammate who was not the snapper, unless the snapper steps back 1 yard off of the line of scrimmage after the snap.

ART.3.....During a scrimmage down after a change of team possession, no player may hand the ball forward to a teammate.

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Illegal Handling | 2, 3 | 5 yards and loss of down. |

SECTION 4: FUMBLE AND BACKWARD PASS

ART.1.....During any down, any player in possession may make a backward pass or may lose player possession through a fumble.

ART.2.....If a fumble or backward pass is caught by a player, she may advance.

ART.3.....If a fumble or backward pass goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines or becomes dead while no player is in possession or while opponents are in joint possession, the ball belongs to the passing or fumbling team unless lost after 4th down.

ART.4.....If a fumble or backward pass is out-of-bounds behind a goal line, the ball belongs to the team defending that goal and the result is either a touchback or a safety.

SECTION 5: FORWARD PASS CLARIFICATION

ART.1.....It is a legal forward pass, if during a scrimmage down and before team possession has changes, a player of Team “A” throws the ball with both feet of the passer in or behind the neutral zone when the ball is released. More than one forward pass may be thrown during the down.

EXCEPTION, AFF COED PRO and AGFF High School Girl’s Division: only ONE forward pass may be thrown during the down.

ART.2.....An illegal forward pass is a foul. The illegal forward passes are:

- a. A pass after team possession has changed during the down.

- b. A pass from beyond the neutral zone.
- c. A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an offensive player.
- d. A pass intentionally thrown incomplete to save loss of yardage or to conserve time.
EXCEPTION: It is legal to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving a direct hand-to-hand snap.

ART.3.....If the penalty for an illegal forward pass is accepted, measurement is from the spot of such forward pass. If the offended team declines the distance penalty, it has the choice of having the down counted at the spot of illegal incomplete forward pass or (if the illegal forward pass is caught or intercepted) of having the ball put in play determined by the action which followed the catch.

ART.4.....A forward pass, legal or illegal, is complete and the ball may be advanced when caught by any player of “A” or “B”. If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by two opponents, then the ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team. It is counted as a completion or interception as long as the first part of the receiver to make contact with the ground after the catch, usually 1 foot, touches inbounds.

ART.5.....A forward pass, legal or illegal is incomplete and the ball becomes dead when the pass touches the ground or goes out-of-bounds. It is also incomplete when a player in the air possesses the pass and their flight causes the first contact with the ground or with anything other than a player or game official to be on or outside a boundary. When an incompleteness occurs the down counts unless the pass is after a change in possession. If the pass is legal the passing team next snaps the ball, unless lost after 4th down, at the spot of the previous snap.

ART.6.....All players are eligible to receive a pass.

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Illegal Forward Pass | 2.a | 5 yards |
| Illegal Forward Pass | 2.b | 5 yards and loss of down |
| Intentional Grounding | 2.c, 2.d | 5 yards and loss of down |

SECTION 6: FORWARD PASS INTERFERENCE

ART.1.....During a down in which a legal forward pass crosses A's scrimmage line, contact that interferes with an eligible receiver who is beyond A's scrimmage line is pass interference unless it occurs when two 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 a forward pass thrown beyond A's scrimmage line.

ART.2.....Offensive Pass Interference.

After the ball is snapped and until the pass has been touched by any player there shall be no offensive pass interference beyond A's scrimmage line.

ART.3.....Defensive Pass Interference.

After the pass is thrown and until the pass has been touched by any player there shall be no defensive pass interference beyond A's scrimmage line while the pass is in flight.

ART.4.....Not Interference.

Contact by B that is obviously away from the direction of the forward pass is not pass interference but may be a personal foul.

ART.5.....Catchable/Uncatchable.

Whether a pass is catchable or uncatchable has no bearing on offensive and defensive forward pass interference.

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|-----------------------------|----------------|--|
| Offensive Pass Interference | 2 | 10 yards * |
| Defensive Pass Interference | 3 | 10 yards from the previous spot * NOTE: If the ball is caught despite the infraction, the ball is advanced 10 yards from successive spot. |

NOTE *: If the pass interference by either player is intentional or unsportsmanlike, their team shall be penalized an additional 10 yards at the discretion of the referee.

Rule 8 Scoring Plays

SECTION 1: POINTS

Points are scored as follows.

TOUCHDOWN.....6 Points

SAFETY – points awarded to the opponent.....2 Points

SUCCESSFUL TRY FOR AN EXTRA POINT ATTEMPT

Touchdown from the 20-yard line.....3 Points

Touchdown from the 10-yard line.....2 Points

Touchdown from the 5-yard line.....1 Point

EXCEPTION, AGFF High School Girl’s Division

Touchdown from the 3-yard line.....1 Point

DEFENSIVE RETURN OF AN EXTRA POINT ATTEMPT.....Dead ball

SECTION 2: TOUCHDOWN

ART.1.....It is a touchdown when a runner advances from the field of play across the goal line in possession of the football with both flags attached.

ART.2.....It is a touchdown when a loose ball is caught or recovered by a player while the ball is on or behinds their opponent’s goal line.

ART.3.....If a foul by the opponents of the scoring team occurs during a touchdown, the penalty is automatically declined and no penalty is assessed on the try.

SECTION 3: TRY (EXTRA POINT ATTEMPT)

ART.1.....After a touchdown, the scoring team shall attempt a try during which the ball is snapped from a spot designated by Team “A” anywhere between the inbounds lines. This involves a scrimmage down which is neither numbered nor timed. The ball shall be placed on the:

- a. The 20-yard line, if the scoring team elects to score 3 points
- b. The 10-yard line, if the scoring team elects to score 2 points.
- c. The 5-yard line, if the scoring team elects to score 1 point.

EXCEPTION, AGFF High School Girl's Division

The 3-yard line, if the scoring team elects to score 1 point

NOTE: If a touchdown is scored during the last down of the 2nd half, the try shall not be attempted unless the point(s) would affect the outcome of the game or playoff qualifying.

ART.2.....The try begins when the ball is ready-for-play. It ends when:

- a. "B" secures possession or scores a defensive touchdown.
- b. The try is successful
- c. The ball becomes dead for any other reason

ART.3....If during a successful try, a loss of down foul by "A" occurs, there is no score and no replay.

ART.4.....If during an unsuccessful try, a foul by "A" occurs, the penalty is obviously declined, the results of the play stand and there is no replay. If "B" fouls, the down is replayed after enforcement.

ART.5.....If a double foul occurs, the down shall be replayed.

ART.6.....When a try down is replayed, the snap may be from any point between the inbounds lines on the yard line through the spot of the ball.

ART.7.....An interception on a try results in a dead ball.

SECTION 4: CHANGE OF POSSESSION AFTER A SCORE

ART.1.....After a touchdown and subsequent try, the scoring team may elect to either grant possession of the ball to the opposing team at the opposing team's 14 yard line, or attempt to maintain possession by performing an onside play.

ART.2.....An onside play begins on the scoring team's 14 yd line and must reach midfield (40 yd line). If the offense fails to reach the 40 yd line on a this play, possession of the ball is granted to the opposing team where the play ended. Possession may not be retained by penalty. If a penalty occurs, yardage will be assessed and the onside play will be repeated. Onside plays are limited to one attempt per half, with a total of two attempts per game.

SECTION 5: SAFETY

ART.1.....It is a safety when:

- a. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across their own goal line, and it becomes dead then in their team's possession.

EXCEPTION: When a Team "B" player intercepts a forward pass or catches a punt between their 5-yard line and the goal line and their original momentum carries them into the end zone where the ball is declared dead in their team's possession or it goes out-of-bounds in the end zone, the ball belongs to Team "B" at the spot where the pass was intercepted or the kick was caught.

- b. A player, who is either in the field of play or in their end zone, forces a loose ball from the field of play to or across their goal line by their kick, pass, fumble, snap, or by a new force with their muff or bat or illegal kick, provided the ball becomes dead then in their team's possession (including when the ball is declared dead with no player in possession), or the ball is out-of-bounds when it becomes dead on or behind their goal line. This 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 the spot in their end zone; or throws an illegal forward pass from their end zone and the penalty is declined in a situation which leaves them in possession at the spot of the illegal pass and with the ball having been forced into the end zone by the passing team.

SECTION 6: MERCY RULE

ART.1.....If a team is 17 or more points ahead when the Referee announces the 2 minute warning for the 4th quarter, the game shall be over.

Rule 9 Conduct of Players and Others

SECTION 1: NON-CONTACT UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

ART.1.....No player shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner.

- a. Baiting or taunting acts or words or insignia worn which endangers ill will. **NOTE:** The League disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender, or national origin.
- b. Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
- c. Any delayed, excessive or prolonged act by which a player attempts to focus attention upon themselves.
- d. Using disconcerting acts or words prior to the snap in attempt to interfere with “A”s signals or movements. **NOTE:** Some players will make statements designed to upset or ridicule a team or official(s) such as “Good play. Run that one again” on a play that has failed. These actions along with many others should not be ignored and should be penalized accordingly.
- e. Intentionally kicking at the ball, other than during a legal kick.
- f. Leaving the field between downs to gain an advantage unless replaced or unless with permission of the referee.
- g. Refusing to comply with an official’s directive.
- h. When the ball becomes dead in possession of a player, they shall not:
 - i. Intentionally kick the ball.
 - ii. Spike the ball into the ground.
 - iii. Throw the ball high into the air or from the field of play.
 - iv. Intentionally delay returning the ball so the next play can continue.
- i. Introducing alcohol or drugs into the game.

Notes:

1. In ART. 1a, the player must remove the offending item before they are allowed to participate.

ART.2.....No non-player shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner.

No coach, substitute, trainer or other team attendant shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner, including during a half or intermission. Examples include, but are not limited to

- a. Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
- b. Attempting to influence a decision by an official.

- c. Disrespectfully addressing an official.
- d. Indicating objections to an official's decision.
- e. Using any unauthorized communication equipment.
- f. Holding an unauthorized conference or being on the field illegally.
 - i. Between downs, communications between players and coaches near the sidelines are not an unauthorized conference. Coaches can be a maximum of 5 steps on the field for coaching purposes only.
 - ii. Coaches may not be on the field during live balls.

EXCEPTIONS:

- a. **PEEWEE DIVISION:** Two coaches per team are allowed to be on the field when the ball is live.
- b. **FRESHMAN DIVISION:** For the first two games, two coaches per team are allowed to be on the field when the ball is live, after which it is reduced to one coach.
- c. **PEEWEE & FRESHMAN DIVISIONS:** Offensive and Defensive Coaches must be at least 8 yards behind their deepest respective players prior to the snap. Coaches are to ensure that they do not interfere in any way with the play, including being used intentionally or un-intentionally as a screen, pick, or blocker.
- g. Failures of the head coach or captain to have their player(s) wear legal and/or required equipment.
- h. Being on the field except as a substitute or replace player.
- i. Being outside the team box but not on the field during a live ball.
- j. A substitute who leaves the team box during a fight.
- k. Introducing alcohol or drugs into the game.
- l. **AFF (COED):** Barring in-game injuries, heat exhaustion or other extenuating circumstances, greater than or equal to 50% of a team's female players present for a game must be on the field at all times. For example, if a team has three or four female players, at least two must be on the field. If a team only has two female players, one must be on the field. A team with only one female player present is addressed by the preceding paragraph.

ART.3.....No parent or spectator shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner.

Examples include, but are not limited to

- a. Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
- b. Attempting to influence a decision by an official.
- c. Disrespectfully addressing an official.
- d. Being on the field illegally.
- e. Introducing alcohol or drugs into the game.

PENALTY:

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|-------------------------|---------|---|
| Unsportsmanlike Conduct | 1, 2 | <p>10 yards. Ejection if flagrant.</p> <p>PLAYERS: The second unsportsmanlike foul a player receives in a <u>game</u> results in disqualification from that game and his/her next game, including playoffs.</p> <p>COACHES: The second (and all subsequent) unsportsmanlike foul a coach receives in a <u>season</u> results in disqualification from that game and his/her next game-including playoffs.</p> |
| | 3 | <p>10 yards. If repeat or flagrant, removal from the vicinity of the playing field for the remainder of the game AND the next game, including playoffs and Super Bowl. They may watch these games from the end zone or the pavilion but may not be present on or near the team sideline.</p> |

SECTION 2: UNFAIR ACTS

ART.1.....A player or non-player or person not subject to the rules shall not hinder play by an unfair act which has no specific rule coverage.

ART.2.....No team shall repeatedly commit fouls which halve the distance to the goal line.

ART.3.....Neither team shall commit any act which, in the opinion of the referee, tends to make a travesty of the game.

PENALTY:

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|----------------|----------------|---|
| Unfair Act | 1, 2, 3 | The referee enforces any penalty he considers equitable up to and including the award of a score. Repeated fouls: the game may be forfeited. |

SECTION 3: PERSONAL FOULS

Article 1. Restrictions.

No player or nonplayer shall commit a personal foul during a period or an intermission. Any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. Any player or nonplayer commits a personal foul when they take any of the following actions:

- a. Strips or attempts to strip the ball from a runner by punching, striking, or grabbing the ball. NOTE: Any player who controls a pass with both feet off the ground becomes a runner when the 1st part of the player touches the ground.
- b. Hurdles an opponent.
- c. Contacts an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead.
- d. Makes contact of any nature with an opponent that is deemed unnecessary including using fists, locked hands, elbows, or any part of the forearm or hand, except according to the Rules
- e. Drives or runs into an opponent. Example, a defender running through an offensive player who has established a legal position on the field.
- f. Positions their body on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage
- g. Be in the restricted area and cause unintentional contact with a game official.
- h. Tackles the runner by grasping or encircling with the hand(s) or arm(s) and taking the opponent toward the ground as in tackle football
- i. Fights an opponent
- j. Intentionally contacts a referee or board member in a malicious manner

Article 2. Roughing the Passer.

Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear the ball has been thrown forward legally. No defensive player shall contact the passer who is standing still or fading back as they are considered out of the play after the pass. Roughing the passer restrictions do not apply if the forward pass is thrown from beyond A's scrimmage line.

PENALTY:

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|---------------------|----------------|---|
| Personal Foul | 1.a – 1.g | 10 yards. If flagrant, the offender will be disqualified. |
| | 1.h | 10 yards. If flagrant, the offender will be disqualified. Referee may award a touchdown if one would have been scored. |
| | 1.i | Removal from game. |
| | 1.j | Removal from game and one-game suspension. If a referee is involved, the offender may be subject to Florida Statute 784.081 as well. |
| Roughing the Passer | 2 | 10 yards, automatic 1 st down. Removal of offender at discretion of referee. |

SECTION 4: SCREENING and BLOCKING

ART.1.....Screen Blocking

An offensive player shall not screen block a defensive player when the offensive player is within 4 yards of the player in possession of the ball.

GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL DIVISON ONLY: Distance is reduced to 1 yard.

An offensive screen block may occur anywhere on the field provided that the screener is greater than the specified distance from the player in possession of the ball and shall take place without contact. The screener shall have their hands and arms at their sides or behind their back when screen blocking. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact that displaces an opponent during a screen block is illegal. A blocker may use their hand(s) or arm(s) to break a fall or retain their balance.

ART.2.....Screen Blocking Fundamentals

A player who screens shall not do any of the following:

- A. Initiate contact when blocking a stationary opponent from any direction.
- B. Prevent an opponent from avoiding contact by
 - i. taking a position closer than a normal step when behind a stationary opponent or
 - ii. taking a position within 1 or 2 steps of a moving opponent so that the opponent cannot stop or change direction before contact.
- C. After taking a legal position, move to maintain it, unless the screener moves in the same direction and path as the opponent.

ART.3.....Interlocking Blocking

Teammates of a runner or passer may legally screen block, but they shall not use interlocked blocking such as grasping or encircling one another in any manner.

ART.4.....Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense (Holding)

Opponents must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to displace the opponent. A defender may use their arms or hands to break a fall or retain their balance.

PENALTY:

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Illegal Screen/Contact | 1-4 | 10 yards |

SECTION 5: RUNNER

ART.1.....Helping the Runner

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

ART.2.....Flag Belt Removal.

- A. Players must have possession of the ball before they can be deflagged legally by an opponent.
- B. When a runner loses their flag belt either accidentally, inadvertently (not removed by grabbing or pulling), or on purpose, play continues. The deflagging reverts to a 1 hand tag of the runner between the shoulders and knees by an opponent.
- C. In circumstances where a flag belt is removed illegally by a player, play should continue with the option of a penalty on the play.
- D. An opponent intentionally pulling a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball is illegal.
- E. Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage, including tying, using foreign materials, or other such acts, is illegal.
- F. A nonplayer deflags or interferes with a runner.

NOTE: A player in possession of the ball who touched the ground with any body part other than a hand or foot is considered down at the point of contact.

ART.3.....Guarding the Flag Belt.

A runner shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball in a manner that causes contact between the runner and an opponent that denies the opponent the opportunity to pull or remove the flag belt. Examples of flag guarding include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 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 shoulders in such a manner that places the arm over the flag belt

ART.4.....Stiff Arm

The runner shall be prohibited from contacting an opponent with extended hand or arm. This includes the use of a “stiff arm” extended to ward off an opponent attempting to deflag/tag.

ART.5.....Charging

A runner shall not charge into nor contact an opponent in their path nor attempt to run between 2 opponents or between an opponent and a sideline, unless the space is such as to provide a reasonable chance for them to go through without contact. If a runner in their progress has established a straight line path, they may not be crowded out of that path, but if an opponent is able to legally establish a defensive position in that path, the runner must avoid contact by changing direction.

ART.6..... Obstruct the Runner

An opponent shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner or any part of their uniform when in the act of removing the flag belt or making a legal tag.

ART.7..... Diving

A runner may not dive as a means of advancing the ball.

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|--|---------|--|
| Helping the Runner | 1 | 10 yards |
| Illegal Flag Removal | 2.a-2.d | 10 yards |
| Tampering | 2.e | 10 yards, loss of down. Player removal for repeat offense. |
| Interfering with Runner (by non-player) | 2.f | 10 yards. Referee may award a touchdown and disqualify the non-player at their discretion. |
| Flag Guarding | 3 | 10 yards from spot of the infraction, loss of down |
| Charging | 4, 5 | 10 yards Player removal for repeat offense. |
| Illegal Contact/Holding | 6 | 10 yards, automatic first down |
| Diving | 7 | 10 yards |

SECTION 6: PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

ART.1.....No player may play for more than one team in a given season, including playoffs.

PENALTY:

| Penalty | Article | Enforcement |
|-----------------|---------|--|
| Illegal Players | 1 | Team forfeits all games won while illegal player(s) were on the team's roster or game when player participated in. |

Rule 10 Enforcement of Penalties

ART.1.....When a foul occurs during a live ball, the referee shall, at the end of the down, notify the offended team captain. He may also notify the offending team captain, but it is not mandatory. He shall inform the captain of the offended team regarding the rights of penalty acceptance or declination and shall indicate to them 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 foul, there is no loss of distance. In case of a double foul, the captains are not consulted since the penalties offset. The captain's choice of options may not be revoked unless the referee gave incorrect information to the captain. In this case the captain's decision may be changed providing the next play has not taken place. Decisions involving penalties shall be made before any changed time-out is granted either team.