

## **Equipment Football**

Each team is responsible for supplying their own football. They must be NCAA or NFL regulation size except in the COED divisions.

## **Equipment/Uniforms**

Teams must wear matching shirts or jerseys. Pop Flag are allowed and two flags must be worn, one on each hip. Flags must be on the outside of the shirt and the entire flag belt must be visible/exposed. No uniforms or body parts may cover any part of the flag belt. If the belt is covered the referee's may declare the player to be touch instead of flag pull to be down. Any players wearing a hat with a bill must have the bill facing backwards.

## **Team Captains**

The team captain(s) will be the only player(s) who is/are allowed to address the referees regarding a call. Players may ask a ref a question but if any player, including a captain, disrespectfully addresses a referee the team may be penalized and the player ejected. If the objected behavior continues the ref will call the game and the team will be given a loss regardless of score.

## **Players**

A team consists must have 5 players minimum to play and can have a roster of up to 12 players. All players will need to be added to the team's online roster, which is located on their respective team page. Also, all players will need to fill out the online waiver at the beginning of each season. Subs can be added to the roster for each game up to 24 hours before game time. Subs must play 4 games to play during playoffs. A player may only play on one team per division during playoffs.

## **Scheduling**

Forfeits will be given to teams who give less than 24 hours' notice of not being able to make their game, if I am unable to find a replacement opponent. If you forfeit, your team will be fined (\$30 for 5 on 5). You will also be given a loss for that game. Your team may be removed from the schedule until the fine is paid. One of your remaining games may be taken to pay for the fine, if the fine is not paid.

## **Length of the Game**

Two 20 minute halves, with a 5 minute intermission. The clock stops in the last one minute of each half for all dead balls, out of bounds, change of possessions, and incomplete passes. Game clocks will start at game time, post coin toss.

Example: clock will start to run at game time, once it is at one minute in a point will be awarded to the team who is ready to play.

There are no automatic run offs of time on any penalties. The clock will not stop for first downs. If a team is ahead by more than 16 after the 1 minute warning in the second half the game is over. If a team is ahead by more than 35 points at any time the game is over. IF TIME PERMITS, refs may allow the teams to finish the final 1 minute on a running clock ONLY if there have been ABSOLUTELY NO sportsmanship issues throughout the game. IT IS NOT a legitimate argument to say that you "paid" for the last minute. All the other teams paid as well, and we have a responsibility to keep the league functioning for all teams. There are legitimate & obvious reasons for having a mercy rule (for the sake of both teams), but more importantly, in the past, the police have told us, in no uncertain terms, that if we did not completely eliminate serious

sportsmanship issues, they would not hesitate to shut our league down permanently. When there have been sportsmanship issues during a game, it is usually at the end where the frustration of losing, etc., have resulted in serious incidents. This is why we are NOT going to allow 17+ point margin games to continue beyond the 1 minute mark if there have been ANY sportsmanship issues WHAT-SO-EVER during the game. We will also not hesitate to disqualify players or end games even earlier than the 1 minute mark if serious sportsmanship issues warrant such an action, at the referee's discretion. Please keep yourselves and your teammates under control so that we don't have to make tough decisions such as this and so that your league can continue to thrive.

### **Extended Playing Time**

A period or half may be extended by an untimed down, only when during the last timed down one of the following occurs:

1. A touchdown was scored and the try for point is attempted as a part of the same half.
2. There was an inadvertent whistle and the down is to be replayed as a part of the half.
3. A penalty was committed by the defense at expiration of a half.
4. There was a fair catch interference and the offended team accepts an awarded fair catch, the half may be extended and the ball put in play by a snap.
5. If there was fair catch interference and the offended team accepts the distance penalty, the half will be extended by a replay of down.

### **Size of the Field**

The playing field is 30 yards wide and 50 yards in length, with two 8 yard end zones. Total field size is 30 x 66 yards. One first down at midfield. The field dimensions may be modified due to the space available. The field shall not be smaller than 25 yards wide and 40 yards in length, with two 7 yard end zones.

### **Coin Toss**

The winner of the coin toss shall have the choice of one of the following options: 1) Receive 2) Designate a goal to defend 3) Defer choice to second half. The loser shall make a choice from the remaining options. Before the start of the second half the choosing of options will be reversed.

### **Possession**

Starts at the 10 yard line. Team has: 4 attempts to make a first down at the 25 yard line (or 20 yard line if the field is modified), then 4 attempts to make a touchdown. After a safety a team starts at the 15 yard line (or 10 yard line if the field is modified). Once a team achieves a first down, they may not achieve the same first down again on the same series due to loss of yards and then an automatic first down penalty. Clarification: If a team achieves a first down on a play and they also were flagged for a penalty that occurred during the play, the penalty will be marked first and then once the ball has been placed the referees will determine if it is a first down or not. This means if you reached two yards past the first down on 3<sup>rd</sup> down, which would be 1<sup>st</sup> and 23 and a 2 ½ yard penalty occurred during the play, which would bring the offense back, about 1 yard from the first down, it will not be 1<sup>st</sup> and 26 it would be either 3<sup>rd</sup> and short or 4<sup>th</sup> and short (depending on which penalty).

### **Kicking/Punting**

No kickoffs or kicking field goals. Live punt returns are allowed. Muffed (dropped) punt returns are dead at the spot. Receiving team must have three players within 5 yards of line of scrimmage. Punting team is not required to snap the ball. Once the referee has signaled the start of the play clock and the punting team has declared a punt, they may punt the ball. Both teams may not move at the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. Returning team players may attempt to jump and block the punt without crossing the line of scrimmage. Game clock will start rolling once the ball makes contact with the punter's foot.

### **Time Outs**

Each team will have 3 time outs (30 seconds in length) per half. Teams may call consecutive time outs.

### **Play Clock**

The offensive team shall have 25 seconds between plays to snap the ball. After any pre snap penalty (false start, delay of game, etc.) the play clock is reset to 15 seconds. As a courtesy the referees give a 10 second and 5 second warning.

### **Touchdown**

When any part of the ball, legally in possession of a player inbounds, breaks the plane of the opponent's goal line, provided it is not a touchback. The plane of the goal line extends outside of the field of play.

### **Formation**

The offensive team must have 3 players on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap.

### **Running/ Passing**

There will be no running plays. All plays must consist of a legal forward pass. A forward pass does not have to cross the line of scrimmage. A forward pass that is caught behind the line of scrimmage must be an overhand pass. A shovel pass must cross the line of scrimmage or will be penalized as an illegal forward pass. Only one forward pass may be thrown per down. You can lateral the ball as often as you like. NOTE: There must be separation between the ball and quarterbacks hand before the receiver catches the ball. Handoffs are **not** considered a legal forward pass. Forward handoffs can still be thrown for a forward pass. Also, to be considered an illegal forward pass by crossing the line of scrimmage the Passer's entire body must cross the line before the ball is thrown.

Exception: if the line of scrimmage is close enough to the goal line that the quarterback can reach the ball into the end zone and still have part of his body behind the line of scrimmage, and does so, then the play will be immediately dead and a loss of down will occur. No penalty yardage will be assessed.

### **Legal Catch**

One foot inbounds with possession of the ball. If a player goes out of bounds on their own and comes back in, they may not be the first player to touch/catch the ball. If so, the play will be declared incomplete pass, no further penalty. If a defender pushes/forces a player out of bounds, they may come back in bounds make a legal catch/be first to touch the ball.<sup>4</sup>

### **Flag Falls Off**

If a player's flag falls off without the aid of a defender, that player must simply be touched.

### **Ball Spotting/ Flag Pulling**

The ball is marked at the spot where the ball is at the time the flag is pulled (clip on belt comes apart). If a player bobbles the ball and the flag is pulled after the ball is first touched, but before the player ultimately gains possession, the ball will be marked down at the spot where the flag was first pulled (it would be an unfair advantage to the player with possession if they can bobble it on purpose to avoid a flag pull). If a player pulls another player's flag before the ball is touched by that player the player will not be considered down until they are touched (as if the flags fell off). **If a player intentionally pulls another player's flag away from the ball it is a penalty of 2 1/2 yards from the end of the play.** Receiver can advance the ball if he falls down and is not touched or flags pulled. A player must simply be touched if they are on the ground or a knee is on the ground.

### **Flag Guarding, etc.**

Ball carriers shall not protect their flags by guarding them with their hands, arms or ball, cannot straight arm, and cannot lower their head or shoulder while running into a defender. The offensive player must avoid contact (no lower shoulders or upper body and attempting to run through defenders). Spinning is allowed, but the ball carrier cannot intentionally jump or dive to advance the ball. They are permitted to jump or dive to avoid injury/contact. That will be determined at the referee's discretion.

### **Illegal Contact**

Defensive players may not hold, grasp, push, or tackle the ball carrier. If a defender grabs clothing, they must let go immediately.

### **Fumbles**

Most fumbles are dead at the spot the ball hits the ground. Exception: Muffed snaps behind the line of scrimmage are live until the Quarterback or other player has gained possession. Then normal fumble rule applies.

### **Motion**

One offensive player is allowed to be in motion, horizontally, at the time of the snap. They may not turn up field before the snap. All other offensive players must be set for one second before the snap.

### **Pushing out of Bounds/ Stripping**

There will be NO pushing out of bounds and no stripping the ball while in a player's possession. Also, there is no pushing a receiver out of bounds while they attempt to make a reception. NFL rule permits this, we are a flag football league and you must play the ball or the flags. A catch will be awarded if the official determines a legal catch would have been made without the push.

### **Pass Rush**

Defensive rushers must start 5 yards beyond the line of scrimmage. If the offensive team throws a lateral (a pass or pitch behind the QB) the 5 yard rule is nullified and

anyone can rush regardless of where they started. But no defensive player, who did not start 5 yards from the line of scrimmage, may cross the line of scrimmage until the lateral is thrown or handoff takes place. If the rusher starts early they can reset and start again 5 yards back without penalty unless they cross the line of scrimmage before the snap. The offense must avoid running into the rusher. Offensive player must be running a route (no shielding, mirroring, screening or blocking). Rushers must also avoid interfering with the center's or other receiver's route.

If a Quarterback's arm/hand comes in contact with a defending player's body unintentionally (defending player not attempting to block the pass, but reaching for flags) it will be ruled as incidental contact. Judgment will be Referee's discretion.

\*NEW RULE: if at any point one team has a 17 point or greater lead, it will nullify the 5 yard rushing rule for the team whom is losing by 17 points or more. Once the lead is 16 points or less, the 5 yard rush rule will be back in effect.\*

### **Blocking/Contact Downfield**

Absolutely no blocking or setting picks down field. Receivers must be running routes. Defensive backs are permitted ONE bump within five yards of the line of scrimmage. That contact must be between the waist and shoulders. All other contact will be penalized as illegal bump.

### **Extra Point Attempts**

You are awarded 1 point from the 5 yard line and 2 points from the 10 yard line. A turnover on an extra point may be returned for two points by the defensive team.

### **Field Goal**

If a team has crossed midfield you can declare field goal on any of your 4 downs and you will get one play from half the current distance for 3 points. If you miss the defense takes over from the original location. If you are successful a normal change of possession occurs. It is run like a normal play, not like an extra point or onside kick. Clock will run, normal play clock, defense can return it for 6 points (touchdown), and penalties will be slightly different. Spot foul penalties by the defense will be marked at half the distance and replay the field goal. Once teams have tried the field goal, they may not change to going for a touchdown after a penalty has been marked.

### **Onside Kick**

After a touchdown is scored and immediately after the extra point is played a team may declare to go for an onside kick (this must be declared before the referees mark the change of possession). An onside kick will be one play (untimed down) following an extra point. It will be from the offense's 20 yard line (5 yards from midfield). If a team scores successfully they will maintain possession of the ball and start on their own 20 yard line. If they are unsuccessful the defending team will take possession of the ball on the defense's 20 yard line (5 yards from midfield, 1st down achievable). If the defending team intercepts the ball and returns it for a score it is worth 2 points, otherwise the onside kick is no longer worth any points. A team may only go for an onside kick if they are losing and it is 5 minutes or less left in the game.

### **Rule Clarification/Challenge**

At any point during the game a designated Team Captain can request clarification of rule application or challenge a ruling on the field by calling a Timeout. Once the Timeout is granted, it is the responsibility of the designated Team Captain to identify to the Referee his/her discrepancy with the ruling and how it was applied in disfavor of them. The Referee will then report the matter to the Field Supervisor or League Director for final ruling (also may be decided by referring to a rule book). If the decision is reversed the challenging Team will not be charged a timeout. In the event a call is upheld, the challenging team will be charged one of its three timeouts.

If the challenging team has no timeouts remaining it will be assessed a delay of game penalty of 7 ½ yards and a loss of 10 seconds if under two minutes of either half. Teams are permitted one (1) challenge per half. Judgment calls are **NOT** for challenge.

### **Overtime**

A coin toss shall determine which team gets the ball first. Each team will decide to go for 1 point (5 yard line) or 2 points (10 yard line). Each team will have up to 3 attempts to score during regular season play, before ending in a tie. After both teams have had try if either team is a head that will end the game. Also, teams alternate who goes first at the start of each round. Ex. Team who went first in the first round will go second in the 5 second round and first in the third round. During the playoffs the overtime process will continue until there is a winner. Interceptions may be returned for a touchdown resulting in victory.

Alternate - Each team will be given a series of 4 downs from the 20 yard line to score. If a team scores they will be given an extra point attempt. During the regular season the game will end in a tie if both teams are still tied after each team has had one possession. During the playoffs the overtime process will continue until there is a winner. A turnover ends the series of downs. Interceptions may be returned for a touchdown resulting in victory.

### **Sportsmanship Policy**

If a single player is responsible for two unsportsmanlike penalties in a single game they will automatically be ejected for the game. Fighting with other players or touching, belittling or demoralizing referees will result in ejection from the game. The entire team may also be ejected from the game at the discretion of referees. All ejections will be reviewed by the board and commissioners and further action may be taken (fines or ejection for multiple games or the season). Excessive taunting or "trash talking" could also result in disqualification from a game. If a team is disqualified/ejected from the league their entrance fee will be forfeited. There will be an additional penalty called an unsportsmanlike minor. Things that constitute this penalty include excessive complaining, belittling or degrading refs, inappropriate language or behavior, etc. The enforcement will be 10 yards and it will be marked off as a dead ball penalty. Multiple unsportsmanlike minor penalties may lead to ejections.

## Penalty Enforcement

**There is no auto run off of time at any point during the game from a penalty.**

- ☐ Delay of Game - 2½ yards
- ☐ False Start - 2½ yards
- ☐ Illegal Motion (2 or more in motion at time of snap) - 2½ yards + replay down
- ☐ Illegal Formation (less than 3 on the line of scrimmage at snap) - 2½ yards + replay down
- ☐ Illegal Rush - 2½ yards + replay down
- ☐ Offensive Pick Play – 2 ½ yards + replay down
- ☐ Stripping - 2½ yards at the end of the play
- ☐ Running into Rusher/Center - 2½ yards + replay down
- ☐ Pulling a player's flag away from the ball - 2½ yards at end of the play
- ☐ Holding on to ball carrier and/or ball carrier's clothes - 2½ yards at end of run
- ☐ Not going for flags and pushing ball carrier (when it doesn't constitute unnecessary roughness) – 2 ½ yards at end of run
- ☐ Holding on to QB's clothes – 2 ½ yards + replay down
- ☐ Illegal Participation (player runs out of bounds and is 1st to touch ball) - Loss of Down
- ☐ Flag Guarding, Stiff Arming - 2½ yards from spot + down counts (on 4<sup>th</sup> down/extra points its 5 yards from original line of scrimmage & replay the down. NOTE: the reason for this is because it is often a questionable call.)
- ☐ Jumping into and making contact with an opposing player or Diving to advance the ball - 2½ yards from spot + down counts
- ☐ Defensive Holding (DB holding a receiver before ball is thrown) - 2½ yards + automatic first down
- ☐ Illegal Bump/Contact down field by Defender - 2½ yards + automatic first down
- ☐ Illegal forward pass/Second forward pass - 2½ yards + loss of down
- ☐ Illegal play (running play/no pass) - 2½ yards + loss of down
- ☐ Flag Tying (enforced from original line of scrimmage) – 7 ½ yards + possible 7 ejection
- ☐ Blocking, Illegal Pick - 5 yards
- ☐ Tackling - 5 yards from end of play
- ☐ Contact with center before they stand up - 5 yards + replay down
- ☐ Offensive pass interference - 5 yards from original line of scrimmage + loss of down
- ☐ Roughing the passer - 7½ yards added to the end of the play + automatic first down
- ☐ Defensive pass interference (face guarding is no longer a penalty) - Spot of the infraction
- ☐ Unsportsmanlike Minor - 10 yards [Dead Ball Penalty]
- ☐ Unsportsmanlike Conduct - 14 yards
- ☐ Personal Foul (unnecessary roughness, etc.) - 14 yards
- ☐ Taunting, "Trash Talking" - 14 yards + possible ejection
- ☐ Fighting – Ejection + possible disqualification, police action. Mandatory 1 game suspension for throwing a punch (even if it does not connect).
- ☐ Touching, belittling, and demoralizing referees - Ejection + possible

disqualification and police action.

☒ Begging the Call - "The team captain(s) will be the only player(s) who is/are allowed to address the referees and the captain addressing the referees should be done so in a respectful manner and really should just be in the form of a question, rather than complaining. If any player, including a captain, disrespectfully addresses a referee the team may be penalized and the player ejected. Referees have the authority to call a "begging the call" penalty that increases in enforcement.

If a player is disrespectful, or 'begs for a call', or excessively complains, a "begging the call" penalty may be called progressively (for the team, not a particular player) starting with a warning on the first infraction, to 5 yards on the 2<sup>nd</sup> infraction (by the team), to 10 yards for the 3<sup>rd</sup> infraction (by the team), and then any additional infractions would be 15 yards. Once the referee gets to the 15 yard penalties individual players will be instructed to sit out for a designated period of time during the game. Any subsequent infractions will be subject to a player sitting out the remainder of the game. These penalties would be dead ball penalties marked off after the end of the play. If a particular player is responsible for repeated infractions of this penalty they may be asked to sit out for a certain number of plays, series, a half, or even ejected from the game."

**Modified Multiple Team Policy:** There are some players who have played on multiple teams and since some of these teams have moved up divisions, some of these players are playing on multiple teams within the same division. As long as they play on both teams all season (minimum of six games on each team), we don't have a problem with that, but we don't want to see players switching teams or playing on multiple teams only at the end of the season. When it comes time for playoffs the policy will be that the players need to pick one team if their multiple teams are in the same division. However, if (before the game) your playoff opponent agrees to let you play on a 2<sup>nd</sup> team then it's ok, but again, ONLY if you've played on both teams all season. This is the fairest compromise that we could come up with.

**Playoff Policy:** To participate with a team in the playoffs you need to be listed on the official online roster and have played at least four regular season games. Also refer to the Modified Multiple Team Policy above. Changes/additions may be made through UFL Officials, ahead of time.

### **Division Policy**

Players can play in both A and B division or B and C division. A players can not play in C division.