



# FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

## **THE GAME**

### **1. GAME TIME EQUALS FORFEIT TIME.**

2. In forfeited games, the score will be recorded as 21-0. In ALL cases of forfeits, individuals present at the game site need to still check in with the official/scorekeeper to receive participation credit.
  - A. If one or more team members are present but don't have the minimum to start play, the team ready for play can decide to take the forfeit win or they can choose to wait up to **10 minutes past scheduled start time** for the other opposing team members. The opposing team will be penalized by the following.
    - i. Every 5 minutes past game time (**Up to 10 minutes**) will result in 7 points for the team ready for play. So, if the teams other players show up 15 minutes after, the team ready to play will begin the game up 7 to 0, and the half will only be 8 minutes.

### **3. PLAYERS:**

- A. **Only players on the official team roster and score sheet can participate in the game.**
- B. Player can check in the game at any time during their scheduled game time.
- C. Seven (7) players shall constitute a team. A game may be played with a minimum of five (5) players.
- D. Unlimited substitutions permitted during any dead ball situation.

### **4. CLOCK MANAGEMENT:**

- A. There are two 18-minute halves with running time.
- B. Clock stops the last two (2) minutes of the second half for the following situations: an incomplete pass; when the ball carrier goes out of bounds; on the first downs until the official has placed the ball for the next play; after touchdowns and during P.A.T.'s; (Points After Touchdowns are un-timed downs) on changes of possession; on penalties; and on time outs.
- C. Two (2) 1-minute time-outs per half, per team, are permitted. Time-outs will stop the clock at all times. Unused time-outs do not carry over into extra periods.

### **5. MERCY RULE:**

If a team is down by 19 or more points (25 or more for Co-Rec) at the two-minute warning, or at any time after the two-minute warning in the second half, the game will be called.

### **6. CAPTAIN'S MEETING:**

- A. The game shall be started by a coin flip for choice of "Kick, Receive or Defer" and "Goal to Defend." Home team calls on the coin flip. The winner of the pre-game coin toss shall have the first choice of offense/defense (kick or receive). The loser of the coin toss was choice of which goal to defend. If the winner chooses "the ball" (be on offense first), they will have the ball first down from the 14 yard line (there will be no kick-offs at any point). If a team chooses to defer until the second half, then the opposing team should choose the ball (if you choose to defend, your team runs the risk of not getting the ball for either half).

### **7. PROTESTS:**

A team captain may protest an interpretation of rules, but may not protest a judgment call by the official. At the time of the protest, the protesting team shall inform the official, the Supervisor, and the opposing team captain immediately.

### **8. PLAYING FIELD:**

- A. The playing field will be 100 yards long and 40 yards wide with yard markers dividing into four equal zones of 20 yards.
- B. The end zones will be 10 yards deep and 40 yards wide.

### **9. OVERTIME: TIE BREAKER**

#### **a There are no overtimes in regular season**

- A. All overtime periods are played toward the same goal line.
- B. Each team will start 1<sup>st</sup> and goal on the 20-yard line and the goal line shall be the line-to-gain in overtime. The object will be to score a touchdown. The overtime shall consist of a series of 4 downs by each team.
- C. If the score is still tied after one overtime period, play will proceed to a second period or as many as are needed to determine a winner.
- D. If the first team which is awarded the ball scores, the opponent will still have a chance to win the game. Unless moved by penalty, they will start 1<sup>st</sup> and goal.
- E. If the defense intercepts a pass and returns it for a touchdown, they will win the game. If they do not return the interception for a touchdown, the series is over, the ball will be placed at the 1<sup>st</sup> and goal for the team that intercepted the ball unless said team was on offense first, scored during their series of downs, and made the interception while on defense—in which case the overtime period and game would be over.

- F. Each team is awarded one timeout for the **entire** overtime period.

### **EQUIPMENT**

1. Regulation shoes include gym shoes or tennis shoes, or ½ molded cleats. NO screw-in cleats or metal cleats.
2. Shorts/Pants cannot have pockets of any type. If a participant shows up with pockets, he/she will be asked to sit out until they find shorts without pockets. Shorts can not be turned inside out, be taped up, or a player can not replace shorts with pockets with undergarments. (This policy is for the safety of the opposing players, many participants have broken fingers when reaching for a flag, and instead, getting a finger caught in a pocket).
3. All shirts must be completely tucked in with the flags belted around the outside of the shirt. A participant's shirt should never be tied into knots for any reason.
4. Team captains are responsible for checking out jerseys, footballs, and any other equipment at the BRIC Equipment Checkout.
5. No jewelry, no hats with bills, and bandannas will be allowed when playing. **EXCEPTION:** head coverings worn for religious purposes and beanies/skullies worn for warmth.
6. Towels are permitted but must be tossed aside during plays and not worn by players.

### **GENERAL SUMMARY OF INTRAMURAL FLAG FOOTBALL RULES:**

1. Each team will be allowed four downs to cross one of the first down zone lines, or to score, depending on the location of the ball on the first down. The first down will be declared when a team moves the ball across any of the zone lines.
2. The last play of the game must be free from foul by the defensive team. Games can and will end on offensive penalties.
3. Any time the ball hits the ground, it is a dead ball (fumbles, dropped pass, muffs); **Exception:** A punt may roll on the ground and be picked up by a receiving player. If the ball touches the receiving player and then hits the ground then the ball is dead at the spot.
4. A player is out of bounds when he touches on or outside of the boundary line.
5. Once an offensive or defensive player steps out of bounds, that player is no longer eligible to touch the ball. **PENALTY:** Ineligible Receiver; 10 yards from line of scrimmage.
6. Offensive teams have approximately 25 seconds to get a play off from the line of scrimmage. **PENALTY:** Delay of Game; 5 yards from the line of scrimmage. Play clock begins on the Official's ready for play whistle.

#### **7. FORMATIONS AND OFFSIDES/ENCROACHMENT:**

- A. No direct snaps. The player who receives the snap must be two yards behind the line of scrimmage. **PENALTY:** Illegal Formation; 5 yards from line of scrimmage.
- B. Only one offensive player may be in motion at a time the line is set but the player in motion cannot motion towards the opponent's goal line at the snap. When turning to the LOS (line of Scrimmage) the player must take a 1 sec stop before the ball is snapped (illegal motion, 5 yards).
- C. When the offense makes a shift (the action of two or more offensive players who, after the huddle or after taking set positions, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap), the offensive players must again become "set" for at least one (1) second. **PENALTY:** Illegal Shift; 5-yards from the line of scrimmage.
- D. Before the ball is snapped, all offensive players lined up on the line of scrimmage must remain stationary for a full second. **PENALTY:** False Start; 5-yards from the line of scrimmage.
- E. No offensive or defensive player may be lined up in the neutral zone—one yard zone between the line of scrimmage and the spot where the defensive team lines up—when the ball is snapped. **PENALTY:** Offsides; 5 yards from line of scrimmage.
- F. All neutral zone infractions for both offense and defense will be dead ball fouls (there is no such thing as a free-play).
- G. No player may cross the line of scrimmage and make contact with a player on the opposing team. **PENALTY:** Encroachment; 5-yards from the line of scrimmage.

#### **8. PLAYING THE FLAG:**

- A. A player shall be "downed" when either flag is seized or pulled free. **If a flag is inadvertently lost, or a player has no flags, he/she will be downed by a touch with one hand between the shoulders and the knees.**
- B. No player may tie a knot(s) in his/her flag belt or intentionally swat away the outstretched arms/hands of opponents going for the flag to capitalize or gain an advantage on the opposing team. **PENALTY:** Flag guarding; 10-yards from the spot of the foul and replay down. If a player is found guilty of illegally tying their flag belt, they will be ejected for the game (Ignorance is not an excuse).
- C. Intentionally pulling or removing a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball by a defensive player is illegal. **PENALTY:** Unsportsmanlike Conduct; 10 yards from the end of the play.
- D. It is illegal to steal or attempt to steal (strip) the ball from a player in possession. The object of the game is to deflag the ball carrier, not steal the ball. **PENALTY:** Striping; 10 yards from the end of the play.
- E. A player can not hurdle an opponent in attempt to gain an advantage on the opposing team. A player may dive, but can not dive through an opposing player or between two people. **PENALTY:** Illegal Contact; 10-yards from the spot.

#### **9. PUNTING:**

- A. If a punt is to be made, the team punting must announce it before the down starts. After the announcement, the punt must actually be made, and neither team may move until after the ball has been punted. All players may not cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. After receiving the ball, the punter must punt the ball in one fluid motion. **PENALTY:** Delay of Game; 5 yards from line of scrimmage. The player punting may not take any steps backward, and he/she may only take steps forward. **PENALTY:** Illegal Procedure; 5 yards from line of scrimmage. If the ball hits the ground off the snap, it shall be declared dead and the receiving team will take possession at the spot.

- B. The defensive team may not build a pyramid or support each other in any manner in order to block or attempt to block a kick. **PENALTY:** Illegal Procedure; 5 yards from the line of scrimmage.
- C. The kicker may not be rushed on a free kick. **PENALTY:** Illegal Procedure; 5 yards from line of scrimmage.
- D. Ball must be centered on all kicks.
- E. When the ball is clearly in the possession of the receiver and then fumbled, the ball is dead at the spot and the receiving team maintains possession.
- F. A punt that lands directly in, or is dropped by the receiving team and lands in the end zone will result in a touchback (ball placed at the 14 and ½ -yard line).
- G. \*A player returning a punt may not signal a fair catch (Penalty: Deception= 5 Yards)

**10. OFFENSIVE RUSHING:**

- A. The quarterback is allowed to run the ball.
- B. The offensive team is allowed use straight-ahead running plays. Rushing is allowed up middle but the offensive must avoid contact with the defense.

**11. PASSING:**

- A. The offense may [only] make one forward pass on each scrimmage play and that pass must be thrown from a point behind the line of scrimmage. If more than one forward pass is made while behind the line of scrimmage, or an offensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before releasing the ball during a passing attempt, the penalty is as follows: **PENALTY:** Illegal Forward Pass; 5 yards from the spot and loss of down.
- B. NO forward lateral may be made by any player—offensive or defensive player (during a reception, kick return, interception or fumble caught out of the air before hitting the ground). **PENALTY:** Illegal Forward Pass; 5 yards from spot of foul and loss of down; Exception: If defense intercepts a ball and then is flagged for an illegal forward pass, the team will be penalized 5 yards from the spot, but will still start on first down (A team should never start an offensive series on second down).
- C. All players in the huddle shall be eligible to receive a forward pass.
- D. If a pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams inbounds, the ball becomes dead at the spot of the catch and belongs to the offensive team.
- E. No player may pass either forward or laterally to himself.
- F. A pass may be touched consecutively by any number of offensive or defensive players before being caught and still in play.
- G. The ball will be put into play at the original line of scrimmage after any incomplete pass attempt.
- H. **Only one foot** must touch inbounds for a valid pass reception (Any other body part counts as one foot).
- I. When the quarterback is in the middle (pocket)—2 yards to either side of center—he/she may not discard the ball with the sole intent of avoiding a sack. However, a quarterback may purposely spike the ball in order to stop the clock in the last two (2) minutes of the game. **PENALTY:** Intentionally Grounding; 10-yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.

**12. FUMBLES:**

All fumbles are dead balls when they hit the ground (including laterals). The ball is declared dead and is spotted where the ball hit the ground except when a fumble is caught in the air by the defense. In that case, the recovering team may advance the ball. Teams can not gain an advantage by fumbling the ball forward.

**13. INTERCEPTIONS:**

All interceptions made by the defense may be advanced. At least one foot must touch inbounds for a valid interception.

- 14. A pass or fumble that has not touched the ground is a live ball and may be advanced by either team. **Exception:** a muffed punt may not be advanced.

**15. DEFENSIVE RUSHING AND OFFENSIVE SCREEN BLOCKING:**

- A. The offensive plays may run up the middle and a defensive player may rush through the middle. However contact must be avoided (positioning is key).
- B. Offensive blockers may not hold or use their hands while blocking. **PENALTY:** Holding/Illegal Contact; 10 yards.
- C. Defensive rushers may not intentionally charge over, push, tackle, or swat at the arm of the quarterback or another offensive player who has just released the ball after a pass attempt. **PENALTY:** Roughing Passer; 10-yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down (If the pass is completed, then the penalty will be tacked on to the end of the run).

**16. CHARGING AND TACKLING:**

- A. The ball carrier may not charge or run over/through an opposing player but must attempt to evade the opposing player. An opposing player may not run through, push or tackle a ball carrier, but must “play the flag”, not the man.” **PENALTY:** Illegal Contact/Unnecessary Roughness; 10-yards from the spot—if foul committed by offensive player, **OR** 10 yards from end of play (if on a running play)—if foul committed by defensive player. The player can be ejected if the contact is considered excessive.

**17. A Safety is scored in all of the following situations:**

- A. When a ball carrier, already outside of or advances out of his/her own end zone, then proceeds backwards behind his/her goal line and is downed;
- B. When a snap from an offensive play from scrimmage or punt is dropped in the offensive team's own end zone; or

- C. When a punt/snap/ or backwards pass goes through an offensive team's own end zone. After a safety, the ball is put into play on the 14 yard line.
- D. If an offensive penalty is committed in a team's own end zone.

#### 18. TOUCHDOWN VERIFICATION:

The player scoring the touchdown must raise his/her arms so the nearest official can deflag the player. If the player is not deflagged with one good pull, and the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed.

**PENALTY:** Illegally Secured Flag Belt; 10 yards from the previous spot and loss of down (The player will also be ejected).

#### 19. P.A.T.'s:

1 point-conversion attempt made from the 3-yard line.

2 point-conversion attempts made from the 10-yard line. 3 point-conversion attempts made from the 20-yard line.

\* A team may **not** return a P.A.T. for points (Ball is dead once turnover occurs).

\* Live ball penalties that result in a successful touchdown, the penalty will assessed on the P.A.T.

#### 20. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:

A. Abusive language toward an opponent, official or Evening Supervisor is prohibited. If determined to be severe by the official or Evening Supervisor, an ejection will be made. **PENALTY:** Unsportsmanlike Conduct; 10-yards from line of scrimmage.—if foul committed by offensive player, **OR** 10 yards from end of play—if foul committed by defensive player.

B. **Any player that throws a punch or purposely kicks at another player, hit or miss, is IMMEDIATELY EJECTED from the game.** **PENALTY:** Unsportsmanlike Conduct; 10-yards from line of scrimmage.—if foul committed by offensive player, **OR** 10 yards from end of play—if foul committed by defensive player **AND** ejection. **The incident will be reported for further disciplinary action to be taken.**

#### 21. INTERFERENCES:

During a down in which a legal forward pass is thrown, any contact which interferes with an eligible player who is beyond the neutral zone is pass interference, except: When two or more eligible players make simultaneous attempts to reach, catch, or bat the ball. Eligible players of either team have equal right to the ball.

22. Forward pass interference regulations are in effect whether or not the pass crosses the scrimmage line.

A. Interference by offensive players is prohibited from the time ball is snapped until it is touched by any other player after the pass.

B. Interference by the defense is prohibited from the time the ball is passed until another player touches it.

**PENALTY:** Interference by offense: 10-yards from the line of scrimmage plus loss of down.

**PENALTY:** Interference by defense: 10-yards from the line-of-scrimmage; automatic first down.

#### 23. Co-Rec

1. Co-Rec teams consist of four (4) males and four (4) females. A team may play with uneven numbers of men and women so long as the difference between genders does not exceed 2. A minimum of six (6) players is needed to begin and continue play.
2. Open/Closed Plays- After any change of possession, a team will begin their offensive series with an "open" play. In "open" plays, any gender passer may complete a pass to any gender receiver. During a "closed" play, either the passer or receiver (or both) **MUST** be a female if the pass is completed.
3. During the offensive team's possession there may not be 2 consecutive forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. If a male passer completes a forward pass to a male receiver, the next play will be closed. During a closed play, the next forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards. If a female is involved as the passer and/or receiver during a completed legal forward pass for positive yardage, the next play will be open. A running play or any other play where a forward completed pass is not involved will not open the next play. The spot where the ball becomes dead must be beyond the offensive team's scrimmage line. This rule also applies to the try-for-point. Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot where the second consecutive male to male completed forward pass is released, and a loss of down. Any penalty, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the play from scrimmage is "open" or "closed".
4. Male ball carriers are prohibited from advancing the ball across the offensive line of scrimmage prior to the ball being beyond the offensive team's scrimmage line (this rule does not apply after a change of possession). Penalty: Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot.
5. If a female throws a forward pass to a male receiver behind the offensive team's scrimmage line and he runs beyond the scrimmage line, it is an illegal forward pass.
6. A regular, intermediate, junior or youth size football may be used. The offensive team is responsible for getting the desired ball in play.
7. The offensive team must have 1 player on the line of scrimmage, including the snapper. If a player is in motion, he/she is not considered to be on the line of scrimmage.
8. During a punt, the offense must have 1 player on the line of scrimmage. Players can not advance beyond the scrimmage line until the ball is kicked. Males may advance the ball on a punt.
9. If a female player scores a touchdown, the point value is nine. If a female player throws a legal forward pass and the end result of the play is a touchdown for that team, the point value is nine. All other touchdowns will be worth six points.

10. If at, or following, the two (2) minute warning in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half one team is ahead by 25 or more points, they will be declared the winner and the contest will end.

## **SUMMARY OF PENALTIES**

### **Loss of 5 Yards:**

1. Delay of Game
2. Illegal Formation
3. Encroachment
4. False Start
5. Illegal Motion
6. Illegal Shift
7. Illegal Procedure
8. Illegal Run
9. Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of Down)
10. Illegal Snap
11. Helping the runner
12. Improper Equipment
13. Illegal Participation
14. Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down)

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

1. Holding
2. Illegal Contact
3. Kick / Catch Interference
4. Offensive Pass Interference – Offensive (Loss of Down)
5. Defensive Pass Interference – Defensive (10-yards from the LOS Automatic First Down)
6. Flag Guarding
7. Unsportsmanlike Conduct
8. Roughing Passer (Automatic First Down; Tack on to the end of the run).

### **Disqualification Associated With Certain 10 Yard Penalties:**

1. Abusive Language
2. Intentionally Kicking at or Swinging an Arm, Hand, or Fist at any Opposing Player
3. Flagrant Spiking, Kicking, or Throwing Ball
4. Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Player, Coach, Substitutes, or Others Subject to the Rules
5. Illegally Secured Flag Belt