

# REC Sports

## Flag Football Rules

**Revised Date: March 18, 2004**

*All leagues and tournament swill follow the N.I.R.S.A. flag and touch football rules unless addressed below. It is every team's responsibility to be familiar with, and abide by, these rules.*

### START OF THE GAME/FIRST DOWNS

1. A coin toss will start each game. Winner of the flip will take the ball or defer. If a team defers, they have the choice in the second half.
2. Offense begins on their own 20-yard line (No Kickoff).
3. A first down occurs when a team advances the ball beyond the next yard line.
4. If a team is down 14 points or more, they will receive the ball in the second half.
- 5.\* **MERCY RULE: If a team is behind by 17 points or more they may play with an additional player. If they bring the game to within 17 points or less, this additional player must leave the game. If the game goes back to a 17- point or more lead, then the additional player may come back in the game. If a team is behind by 24 or more points, they may play with two additional players.**

### TIME LIMIT/SCORING

1. Games will consist of two 20-minute halves. The clock will only stop for time-outs (one per team/half), injuries, and referee time-outs. During the final 2 minutes of the second half, if the game is within 16 points, the clock will stop for a:
  - incomplete pass
  - out-of bounds play
  - first down
  - penalty and administration (exc. delay of game-starts once set)
  - team time-out
  - inadvertent whistle
  - change of possession
2. PLAY CLOCK allows 25 seconds after the ball is spotted to run a play.
3. TIME OUTS: Each team is allowed one time-out per half.
4. A touchdown is worth 6 points. Conversion from the 3-yard line is one point. Conversion from the 10 -yard line is two points. The referee will ask the captain if he/she wishes to go for a 1-, or 2-point conversion. The only way to change is to call a time out.
- 5.\* After each score the scorer must lift his arms to the nearest referee to check the belt. If the belt is illegally secured, a 15 yd. penalty and loss of down penalty will be enforced, and the player may be disqualified **or made to sit out a certain period of time.**
6. It is the offensive teams responsibility to return the ball to the referees after each play. Penalty: 10 yd. dead ball penalty.

### EQUIPMENT

1. All teams must have a designated team color approved by REC Sports.
2. No jewelry.
- 3.\* No belts, belt loops pockets, exposed draw-strings **or any other article of clothing that would interfere with the flag. Illegally securing a belt will result in a 15-yard penalty and loss of down. This includes tying a belt or tampering with the belt in any way to make it more difficult to remove. The player may be disqualified or made to sit out a certain period of time.**
4. Shoes: No metal, ceramic, screw-in (unless screw is part of the cleat) or detachable cleats. No boots.
5. All shirts must be tucked in or hang at least 4 inches above the wais- line.
6. Leg braces must be covered with at least 1/2 inch of closed cell slow recovery rubber or other material of similar thickness and physical properties.
7. Failure to have belt attached at the snap of the ball will result (if accepted) in a live ball foul, 5 yd. from previous spot, repeat down.
8. **Mouth pieces are strongly recommended.**

### GENERAL RULES

1. All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass.
2. SNAPS: The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position with a quick and continuous motion. Doesn't have to be between legs.
3. At the snap of the ball, all players must be within 15 yards of the ball. No deception along sidelines is allowed.
4. One foot is needed in bounds for a catch. If contact disabled the receiver to come down in bounds, the catch is permitted.
5. INTENTIONAL GROUNDING: A player may not intentionally throw a ball away to avoid a loss of yardage. Pen. 5 yards and loss of down.
- 6.\* NO CHUCKING is allowed at the line of scrimmage **or down field.** It is also pass interference to deflag a receiver before he touches the ball. **Any of these infractions will result in a 10-yard penalty and automatic first down.**
7. SIMULTANEOUSLY CAUGHT BALL is the offense's ball.

8. PUNTS: On fourth down the captain will be asked if they are going for it, or punting (no fakes). If punting, no player may advance beyond the scrimmage line until the ball is kicked. A player may advance the punt only if caught in the air.
9. ROUGHING THE PASSER must be avoided even after the pass has been thrown. Penalty: 10 yd. from the line of scrimmage, automatic first down.
10. In case of injury, a player must sit out at least one play.
11. FUMBLES: There are no fumbles! If the ball hits the ground it is dead, every time. DO NOT DIVE ON A LOOSE BALL!

### **BLOCKING/RUSHING & MOTION**

- 1.\* Blocking will be as follows:
  - A. No blind side blocks (clipping)
  - B. No full speed blocks
  - C. No blocks below the waist or above the shoulders
    1. No shoulder blocks
    2. **Down field blockers (beyond the line of scrimmage) may not initiate contact at full speed. This will result in a 10-yard penalty from the point of infraction. Down field blockers can stalk block. This is similar to setting a pick in basketball.**  
All blocking must be done with extended arms, in a pushing/guiding motion once hands are gently put on chest. No punching motion or stiff blows to the chest. Any unnecessary roughness as called by an official will result in a 10-yard (or 15 yard if deemed flagrant or extensive) penalty.
- 2.\* RUSHERS MUST ATTEMPT TO GO AROUND THE BLOCKERS. NO BULL RUSHING! There will be a maximum of two rushers on each play. In order to cross the line of scrimmage, rushers must meet the following criteria: (1) **There is a maximum of two down lineman and these are the only players that may rush.** (2) Any rushers must be in a three point or four point stance and within one yard of the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball. Any violation will result in a 10-yard penalty. (3) Rushers must be lined up between the tackles. (4) The offensive team must have a least 4 players on the line of scrimmage at the snap (more than four is acceptable). (5) All blockers must be on the line of scrimmage. (6) One offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion toward the opponent's goal line. Other offensive players must be stationary in their positions without movement of the feet, body, head, or arms.

### **DEFLAGING/FLAG GUARDING**

1. A person is declared down when a defender removes the ball carrier's flag without physically grasping the ball carrier. If a flag falls off with no contact from a defender and no whistle from a referee, the ball carrier will be called down when touched by a defender.
2. **Any jumping or spinning by the ball carrier that may initiate contact will result in a 10-yard flag-guarding penalty. If jumping or spinning does not threaten to initiate contact in any way, then it will be allowed**
3. If a player attempts to deflag the ball carrier and grasps the flag/belt momentarily, but the flag does not fall off until a few yards down field, the ball is spotted where the original attempt was made.
4. Flag guarding and stiff-arming are not allowed. This includes placing the ball over the flag, and lowering your shoulder's which places the arm over the flag belt. Penalty - If accepted, 10 yards from the point of infraction, repeat the down.
5. A ball carrier is not allowed to put his head down while running. Penalty - If accepted, 10 yards from the point of infraction, repeat the down.
6. Contact between a ball carrier and deflager will be determined on the basketball-blocking rule. If the defender has stationary position, the foul is on the ball carrier who must attempt to go around the defender. Offense: 10 yds. from the spot of foul, repeat down. Defense: 10 yds. from the spot of foul.
7. No stripping or grabbing for the ball, you must go for the flag. Penalty: 10 yds. from spot of foul.

**OVERTIME** - Each team will get four downs in which to score from the 20 yard line. This takes place until one team out scores the other.

### **ROSTERS**

1. There is no limit on the amount of people you may have on your roster. No player can play on two teams within the same league. (Unless in a substitution situation where the other team and the referees permit).
2. Rosters are frozen (except in special circumstances approved by league coordinator) after the third game.

### **PENALTY ENFORCEMENT**

1. Illegal block; 10 yds from spot of foul if **beyond the** line of scrimmage, if **behind** L of S use the Line of scrimmage for penalty enforcement. Repeat down.
2. Flag guarding, stiff-arm, headhunt; 10 yds from spot of the foul, Repeat the down.
3. Defensive pass interference; 10 yds from line of scrimmage, Automatic first down.
4. Offensive pass interference; 10 yds from line of scrimmage, Loss of down.
5. Defensive Holding, stripping; 10 yds from spot of the foul.

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| 6. Illegal forward pass;                  | 5 yds from spot of the foul, Loss of down.                               |
| 7. Illegally secured flag belt;           | Offensive Infraction: 10 yds from line of scrimmage and loss of down.    |
| 8. Defensive Infraction:                  | 10 yds and automatic first down for the offense.                         |
| 9. Unsportsmanlike conduct;               | 10 yds; second offense is a disqualification.                            |
| 10. Spiking, kicking, not returning ball; | 10 yds from line of scrimmage. This is an unsportsmanlike penalty.       |
| 11. Roughing the passer;                  | 10 yds from line of scrimmage, Automatic first down.                     |
| 12. Intentional grounding;                | 5 yds from spot of the foul, Loss of down.                               |
| 13. Offsetting fouls;                     | Possession remains and all penalties are declined.                       |
| 14. Illegally securing the belt           | <b>15 yard penalty and loss of down. Possible removal from the game.</b> |
| 15. Chucking                              | <b>10-yard penalty and automatic first down.</b>                         |

**Fouls Prior to Snap:** - False Start, - Leave the field, - Illegal snap, - Delay of game, - Player not within 15 yards of the ball, - encroachment (2nd consecutive is a 10 yard penalty.) Line of scrimmage violation.

**Blow whistle immediately, 5 yard - Repeat Down**

**Fouls Simultaneously w/ snap:** - Motion, - Minimum # of players on line, - Illegal substitution, - Illegal snap, - Illegal shift, -Illegal participation.

**If accepted, 5 yards from previous spot and repeat the down.**

### **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:**

Only the team captain can question a ruling. Any other person questioning a call will receive a 15-yard penalty; the second offense by the same player will result in an ejection.

If a player is ejected twice in a season, the second ejection is for the remainder of the season. A person may be ejected for unnecessary roughness, arguing, poor sportsmanship, excessive swearing, and any other reason deemed by the referees. A person ejected may be asked to leave the premises. If he does not comply his team will lose that game by forfeit. Failure to control a player on your team may result in ejection of a team for the remainder of the season.

**Throwing a punch is an automatic ejection from the league whether the first or second punch thrown.**

### **ROUND ROBIN PLAYOFF INFORMATION**

**PLAYOFF FORMAT FOR TOURNAMENTS:** Double Elimination. Teams with one loss will come back and play other teams within their division without a loss.

1. If there are two teams with one loss, they will play each other. The winner must then play the undefeated team and beat them twice in order to win the tournament.
2. If there is one loss, they will play the undefeated team and must win twice in order to win the tournament.
3. If there are three teams with one loss, there will be a coin toss and the odd man will get the bye. The other two teams will play each other. The winner will then play the team with the bye for the tournament championship.
4. If there are two undefeated teams left, we recommend they play one regulation to determine the champion.
5. If two teams are undefeated and one team has one loss, then the two undefeated teams will play each other. The loser will play the team with one loss. The winner of that game plays the undefeated team and must beat them twice.