

2007-2008 LaGrange College Intramurals

Flag Football Rules

I. Game, Field, and Equipment

1. Shirts must be long enough to tuck in so that they remain tucked in the pants/shorts during the entire down.
2. Pants or shorts with **BELT LOOPS** and **POCKETS** are prohibited.
3. Towels may not hang from a player's waist.
4. The game shall be played between two teams of 7 players (roster of 15 including coach) on each rectangular field. Each team must have 5 players on the field in order to begin the game.
5. Teams must be present within 5 minutes of the designated starting times or will forfeit the game
6. The field is divided into 4 zones of 20 yards each and 2 end zones of 10 yards each
7. Shoes must be worn; **METAL SPIKED CLEATS ARE PROHIBITED!**
8. If any fighting shall occur; the players will be ejected from the game and suspended for the rest of the season. If an entire team fights, they will forfeit the rest of the season. (**NO EXCEPTIONS!**)

II. Periods, Time Factors, and Substitutions

1. The winner of the pre-game toss shall have the first choice of options:
 - i. Offense/defense
 - ii. Which goal to defend
 - iii. Defer their choice of A or B until the second half
2. Games shall consist of 2 halves with a 3-minute intermission. Each half shall consist of 20 minutes. The clock will run continuously during the first 18 minutes of each half. During the last 2 minutes of each half, the clock will stop such as in college football.
3. Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 17 points at the two-minute mark in the second half, the game is over.

4. Kickoffs: The ball will be kicked off to begin each half. All kick-offs will take place on the 20 yard line. After each score, the ball will be kicked off. The ball must be kicked, it **cannot** be thrown.
5. Each team is allowed 2 timeouts per half. (1 minute timeouts). Timeouts that are not used in the first half will not carry over to the second half
6. Free substitution is allowed after any whistle provided the substitution does not delay the game.
7. Tied Games will be broken by the “Texas Tie Breaker”
 - i. A coin toss will precede the “Tie Breaker”. The team winning the toss has 3 options: Offense, Defense, or Direction. The opposing team has the remaining choice
 - ii. The object is to score a touchdown and subsequent extra point (1 or 2 points). The team on Offense first will start 35 yards from the opposing teams’ goal line and has 4 plays to score. After team A scores, team B then has 4 plays in which to score. IF no team scored after their respective plays the process is repeated.
 - iii. When a pass is intercepted the defense becomes the offense and begins their series of 4 plays. If the interception is returned for a touchdown, the game is over.

III. Definition of Play Terms

1. Removal of flag belt: When the flag belt is clearly taken from the ball carrier the down shall end and the ball is declared dead. player who removes the flag belt from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag above his head to assist the official in locating the spot where the capture occurred. A player may dive to remove a flag belt as long as no contact is made with the opposing team
2. The position of the ball when a player is deflagged determines the spot of the next line of scrimmage
3. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock down the ball carrier in attempt to remove the flag, nor shall an offensive player hold, block, or run through a defensive player trying to remove the flag belt.

4. When a runner loses his/her flag belt, either accidentally or inadvertently, play continues. The deflagging reverts to a one-hand tag of the runner.

IV. Ball in Play, Dead Ball, and Out-of-Bounds

1. The ball is declared dead when the ball touches the ground: A) On a fumble, B) On a Lateral, C) on a pass, D) after a punt or kick
2. The sideline and end lines are considered out of bounds. **ONLY** one foot needs to touch in-bounds in order for the pass to be complete.
3. Once an offensive or defensive player steps out of bounds, that player is no longer eligible to touch the ball.
Penalty: 5 yards

V. Series of downs and number of downs

1. In a series of 4 downs, the ball must be advanced forward into the next zone in order for a new series of downs to be awarded. Yardage lines are considered part of the forward zone.

VI. Kicking the Ball

1. 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 is punted. Defensive and offensive teams must have 4 players on the line of scrimmage until the punt is made. After receiving the ball the punter must punt the ball within 5 seconds. Quick kicks are illegal.
2. When kicking off, if the ball is kicked out-of-bounds the ball will be played on the 35 yard line of the receiving team. On a punt that goes out of bounds, the ball will be placed where the ball went out of bounds.
3. On punts and kick-offs, if the ball hits the ground the ball is spotted where the ball first hit the ground.

VII. Snapping, Handling, and passing the Ball

1. The ball may be snapped between the legs or the side of the snapper.

2. The player who receives the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the offensive scrimmage line. Direct snaps are **ALWAYS ILLEGAL!!!**
3. It is defensive pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged prior to touching the ball on a forward pass attempt. **Penalty: 10 yards and automatic 1st down**
4. During the interval between downs, when 2 or more consecutive encroachments are committed by the same team, the **penalty will be 10 yards** for the second encroachment foul.
5. The offensive team must have a minimum of 4 players on the line of scrimmage
6. All players are eligible for a forward pass. The passer may pass from anywhere behind the **LINE OF SCRIMMAGE !!**
7. The passer shall not intentionally ground the ball in order to avoid a sack. **Penalty: 5 yards and a loss of down**

VIII. **Scoring Plays and Touchbacks**

1. A team is given the choice of going for 1 or 2 points after scoring a touchdown (6 points). Once the captain makes the choice, it may only be changed if a time out is called. Ways of scoring successful point-after-attempt: A) by running or passing from 3 yards (1 point) or B) By running or passing from 10 yards (2 points)
2. 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 waived off. If this occurs twice with the same player, then that player is **DISQUALIFIED**. Penalty: 10 yards from the previous spot and loss of down.
3. Play after safety. After a safety is scored, the team that is awarded 2 points will automatically gain possession at their own 15 yard line.

IX. **Player's Conduct**

1. 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 a ball carrier, not to steal the ball. **Penalty: 10 yards from the end of the run.**

2. Roughing the passer: defensive player must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear that the ball has been thrown and may not make contact with the throwing arm. **Penalty: 10 yards and automatic first down, tack on to the end of the play (if positive yards have been gained), if not, 10 yards from the original spot and automatic first down.**
3. Guarding the flag belt. Ball carriers shall not guard their flags by blocking with arms, hands, or ball, the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. **Penalty: 10 yards.**
4. The defensive player shall not (intentionally or accidentally) hold, grasp, or obstruct forward progress of ball carrier when in the act of removing the flag belt. **Penalty: 10 yards**
5. The flag belt removal: intentionally pulling or removing a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball by a defensive player is illegal. **Penalty: 10 yards**
6. Offensive screen blocking: The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen block shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of the arms, elbows, legs, or knees to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her feet in order to gain position before, during, and after screen blocking. **Penalty: 10 yards.**
7. Screen blocking fundamentals: a player who screens shall not:
 - i. when he/she is behind a stationary opponent, take position closer than normal step from him or her
 - ii. when he/she assumes a position at the side or in front of stationary opponent, make contact with him/her
 - iii. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take his/her stationary position. This position will vary and may be one to two normal steps or strides from the opponent.
 - iv. After assuming his/her legal screening position, move to maintain it, unless he/she moves in the same direction the path of his/her opponent **Penalty: 10 yards.**

8. Blocking and Interlocked Interference: Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for him/her screen blocking, but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner. **Penalty: 10 yards.**
9. Use of Hands or Arms by the defense: Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used to grab or push the opponent aside. The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgment of the official. A rusher may use his/her arms or hands to break a fall or retain his/her balance. **Penalty: 10 yards.**
10. There shall be no bumping, checking, or other intentional contact between a defender and no offensive pass receiver. Both offense and defense are limited to screening an opponent.
11. If a player, attempting a diving flag removal trips the ball carrier there is a **penalty of 10 yards** from the spot of the foul.