OXFORD PARK COMMISSION
YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

Sportsmanship

1. While Flag Football is a non contact sport, contact will happen. It is the responsibility of all players to do their best to avoid contact. Any intentional or excessive contact in the judgment of the game officials will be flagged as a penalty.
2. There will be a low tolerance for disputing calls, however coaches are allowed explanations if necessary.
3. Fighting or pushing between players will not be allowed (ejection can occur).
4. It is the coach's responsibility to act as a role model for the players. Players see how the coach acts and they tend to act in a similar manner.
5. **If a player or coach gets ejected, they must leave the park & are suspended for the duration of the current game, as well as the next complete game**.

Game Management

1. Playing format is 6 v. 6. All players must play at least 50% of every game.
2. A minimum of 5 players is required to avoid a loss.
3. Head Coach and/or Assistant Coach and Players only are allowed on the sidelines. There will be a RED LINE 5 yards off of the sideline that parents must stay behind. Failure to do so could result in a penalty against the offending team.
4. Before the game, a captain from each team will meet with the referee for the coin toss. The winner of the toss gets the option of possession of the ball to start the game or to start the second half.
5. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has **four (4)** downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has **four (4)** plays to score a touchdown.
6. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
7. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
8. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
9. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the loser of the coin toss.
10. Game length consists of FOUR 10-minute quarters. The clock will run continuously with the following exception: The clock will stop for all penalties and normal stoppages during the last minute of each quarter. The clock will start on the snap.
11. Overtime Rules: Just like before the game. Winner of the toss has option of offense or defense first. Each team will get possession at the ten yard line with **three (3)** plays to score. All overtime play will be on the same end of the field.

12. Each team has (2) TWO 60-second time outs per half. Time outs do not carry over. One time out per overtime period. Time outs do stop the clock.
13. Teams have a 30 second play clock.
14. Games called due to weather are considered complete if they have reached halftime.
15. Game time is forfeit time. A 5 minute grace period may be granted if the opposing coach agrees before being declared a forfeit.

Equipment

1. No tobacco products allowed by coaches, players and officials.
2. A protective mouthpiece must be worn during play.
3. No hats allowed during play.
4. All players must have flags intact before entering the field of play.
    a. If an offensive player, without flags, gains possession of the ball, the play is dead and the ball will go back to the line of scrimmage to replay the down.
5. Players must wear shoes. Cleats are allowed, however cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
6. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads.
7. Players must remove all watches, earrings and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
8. Any flag worn by an offensive player must be in good working condition at all times. Any flag tampered with, or aided, so that when pulled will not come off will be a violation.

Scoring

1. Touchdowns are worth 6 pts.
2. PAT's are worth 1 point from the 5 yd. line; 2 points from the 10 yd. line.
    a. Once a team declares what its PAT try will be, it cannot be changed unless the team calls a time out.
    b. An extra point attempt may be either a pass or a run.
3. Safety is worth 2 pts.
4. Players celebrating a touchdown in an excessive manner are subject to penalty at game official's discretion. (Hand ball to official)

Live Ball/Dead Ball

1. The ball is live at the snap (between the legs) of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The line of scrimmage will be indicated with a cone. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense crosses the L.O.S. prior to the snap.

3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
4. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
5. Any official can whistle the play dead.

6. Play is ruled "dead" when:
    a. The ball hits the ground.
    b. The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
    c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
    d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
    e. The ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
    f. The ball carrier's flag falls off.
    g. The 7 second pass clock expires.
    h. An inadvertent whistle is blown (at the spot where the ball was whistled dead).
7. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
    a. Take the ball where the whistle blew.
    b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
8. Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground. No intentionally throwing the ball forward beyond the line of scrimmage.
9. **If a snap is muffed, whether in shotgun or under center, the down is REPLAYED from the previous line of scrimmage.**
10. Coach interference - if interference by the defensive coach occurs the play will stand. The coach is recognized as part of the field. However, if there are multiple occurrences, the official has the authority to remove the defensive coaches from the field of play for the remainder of the game.

Offensive Rules

Snap

1. The team has 30 seconds to snap the ball after the ready for play whistle.
2. Snaps must be through the legs of the center.
3. The quarterback can be under center or in the shotgun.
4. The QB can directly run the ball on the snap, unless in the 'NRZ'

Running

1. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball.
2. "No-Run Zones," located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones IF the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder: Each offensive squad approaches only (2) TWO 'No Run Zones' in each drive - one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD 5 yards).
   2a. When in a 'NRZ' the pass must be received beyond the Line of Scrimmage

2b. When in a 'NRZ' any penalty given that would be advantageous by intentionally drawing the penalty, can be refused by the opposing team. i.e. Offensive team in the 'NRZ' intentionally False Starts so penalty yardage would take them out or the NRZ can be declined by the Defensive team.

3. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
4. Laterals/pitches are allowed behind the line of scrimmage only.
5. No center sneaks.
6. Once the ball has been handed off in front or behind the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
7. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving or leaping is considered flag guarding.
8. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
9. Blocking with the hands extended is a penalty. Players in front of the runner must have their hands behind their backs or at their sides and must not obstruct any defender's attempt to reach the ball carrier.

10. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping of head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering flags with the football or jersey.

Passing

1. All forward passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage. Shovel passes are allowed.
2. The quarterback has a seven-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, the down is over and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule no longer is in effect.
    a. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the play will result in a **safety**.

Receiving

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or batted behind the line).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. **Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.**
5. Interceptions are returnable, but not on conversions after touchdowns.

Defensive Rules

Rushing the Passer

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of (7) seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback.
2. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend the line of scrimmage.

3. Once the ball is handed off, the (7) seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
4. A cone will designate a Rush Line (7) seven yards from the line of scrimmage.
5. A team (on defense) who is up by 20pts or greater will no longer be able to rush the passer, until the score is brought back to within 20pts

Flag Pulling

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
4. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.

Penalties- Offense/Defense

General:

1. Unsportsmanlike fouls will result in one warning and then ejection.
2. All penalties will be enforced from the line of scrimmage AND result in a first down on Defense and all penalties against the Offense result in a loss of down. False start and Offside are the only penalties that you replay the same down. Teach the athletes to play by the rules.

Defense:

1. Offside - 5 yards & Replay the Down
2. Pass Interference - 10 yards & Automatic 1st Down
3. Illegal contact - 10 yards & Automatic 1st Down
4. Illegal flag pull - 10 yards & Automatic 1st Down
5. Illegal rushing - 10 yards & Automatic 1st Down
6. Illegal participation (7 on the field) – 10 yards & Automatic 1st Down
7. Stripping or attempting to strip the ball from a player- 10 yards & Automatic 1st Down
8. Unsportsmanlike Personal Fouls- 15 yards & Automatic 1st Down

Offense:

1. False Start or motion - 5 yards & Replay the Down
2. Pass Interference - 10 yards & Loss of Down
3. Intentional flag guarding - 10 yards & Loss of Down – From the spot of the foul.
4. Delay of game - 10 yards & Loss of Down
5. Illegal blocking - 10 yards & Loss of Down
6. Illegal participation (7 on the field) – 10 yards & Loss of Down
7. Unsportsmanlike Personal Fouls- 15 yards & Loss of Down

Penalties:

1. Teams have the options to accept or decline any penalty with the exception of a false start on the offense or unsportsmanlike conduct. These will always be enforced by the officials (exception 2b under Offensive Rules).
2. Declining a penalty will allow the play to stand as is, accepting the penalty will result in 5 or 10 yards gained from line of scrimmage with automatic first down.
3. Declining a penalty will lose team's chance for an automatic first down.

