

FLAG FOOTBALL RULES – SPRING 2017

# For clarification, illegal equipment consists of:

1. Headwear containing any hard, unyielding, stiff material, or items containing exposed knots.
2. Jewelry.
3. Pads or braces worn above the waste.

# Shoes with metal, ceramic, plastic, screw-in, or detachable cleats.

1. Shirts or jerseys that do not remain tucked in. Any hood on a coat, sweatshirts, or shirt that does not remain tucked in.
2. Pants or shorts with any belt(s), belt loop(s), or exposed drawstring(s).
3. Leg and knee braces made of hard, unyielding material, unless covered on both sides and all edges overlapped.
4. Any slippery or sticky foreign substance on any equipment or exposed part of the body.
5. Exposed metal on clothes or person.
6. Towels attached at the players waist.

**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** Each team should start the game with 7 players; a minimum of 6 is needed to avoid a forfeit. A player may play on only one team per sport.

**Protects:** Each Head Coach may protect 2 players each year in the lower age of his division. Head Coach’s kid does not count toward the protects. Coach must turn in his two player names for protects by Feb 16th by 10pm. Physical Protection forms are due on Evaluation Day and will only be accepted if the names match the names that have already been turned in. No exceptions. New Coaches ( Coaches that have never coaches in our league before)may fill out their two protections forms the day of evaluations.

**Drafts/Evaluations:** The only players that are exempt to drafts are players that are returning to the same division and will remain on the same team and all protections that have been turned in by the Head Coach previously on the protection form by following the protection process. ALL other players must be evaluated on evaluation day Feb 18th. If a player does not show up to evaluations and was not exempt then they will be entered into a BLIND DRAFT(name in a hat and drawn blindly by coaches) There are no exceptions to this rule for any reason. 15-17 age division may bring their own team with maximum of 10 players. Single players will be decided by the committee on evaluatioins.

**Age Divisions:** Ages divisions are 4-6;7-8;9-10;11-12;13-14;15-17 (18 if Senior in Highschool). The age is determined by the age of the child on Feb 28th of each year. If a child chooses to play up in the next division then the child must be the older age in his current division and can only be moved up if evaluated by the Football Director and be able to play up to the level in the next division. Under no circumstances will a child be able to play up in the 15-17 age divisions.

**Ejections in the 15-17 Age Division:** This division is very competitive. In the event a player in this division is ejected from a game at any time then this player will be reviewed by the Director and the Head Referee the following day of the game and the situation will be discussed. Depending on the reason for the ejection the player may be removed from the Team for the remaining of the season and no refund will be issued.

**Ejections in all other age Divisions:** If a child is ejected from the game at any time then he will be suspended and not be allowed to complete the current game and must leave the facilities immediately with a Parent. Player will not be allowed to practice with the team for one week and will miss the next game and may not come on premises.

All Coaches have 12 hours from the time you have a player or coach ejected from the game to report to your Commissioner of your Age Division by email, text, or phonecall.

* If you wait past 12 hours -- You will be suspended for 1 game.
* If you wait past 24 hours-- You will be suspended for 2 games
* If you wait past 36 hours—Don’t show back up as you will be expelled indefinitely.

**Coaches :** Age division of 15-17 must be the age of 25. Teams may have a maximum of 4 Coaches on the roster,

**Each team is required to do a $50.00 Concession Buyout and can do this by asking for sponsors or collecting from your parents.**

**Referees:** All Referees must be ages of 18 and older and may not Referee any team that he has a conflict of interest in.

**Shortage of Players:**  When a team is short a player for a game then they may pull a player from the lower age division. If a Team pulls a player from a lower age division then that player must be 1 year in age less than that division in which they want to play up in. (example… A 10 yr old may play up in the 11/12 division but a 9 yr old may not.) This includes all season games, playoffs and Championships.

**Equipment Malfunction:** If a player has their shirt untucked at the beginning of the play then the Referee can call a penalty for equipment malfunction and there will be a 5 yard loss from the line of scrimmage.

 Shirts must remain in the players shorts at all times.

**Communication:** Only the Coach on the field can communicate with the Referee.

 **TIME OUTS:** Each team shall be allowed 2 timeouts per half (consisting of 30 seconds each).

If a Coach calls a time out in the last two minutes of a half after scoring a touchdown then the clock will not start on the xtra point play. Clock will start on the next teams possession.

**LENGTH OF GAME:** Playing time shall be 40 minutes, separated into two halves of 20 minutes. Half- time shall be 5 minutes. There will be a continuous running clock the entire game, save for the last 2 minutes of the second half. The clock shall only stop for timeout(s). A fumble does not stop the clock.

**LAST 2 MINUTES OF THE GAME**: Clock stops for Out of Bounds, Incomplete Passes, normal Team Time Outs/Referee Time Outs and defensive penalties.

**PRIOR TO GAME:** A coin toss will determine who shall receive the choice of possession or end zone to defend. A representative of the visiting team shall be granted the opportunity to call the coin toss. Winner of the coin toss can elect to choose possession of the ball or end zone to defend. There is no option to defer to the second half. In the event that only one team is present at the coin toss, that team will automatically be given the choice.

**Chains:** Down marker must be held by a 16yr old or older. Chains can be held by a 10 yr old or older.

Sidelines: Only players that are on the roster of the game that is being played may be on the sidelines.

All Team Moms must do a background check to be on the sidelines.

**GAMEPLAY:** There are no kickoffs—drives to begin each half will start at the receiving team’s 20 yard line. Drives after a score will also begin at the receiving team’s 20 yard line. Each team will have 30 seconds to start play. Failure to start a play within the 30 second game clock will result in a Delay of Game penalty of 5 yards that is marked from line-of-scrimmage.

**PUNTING:** There will be no punting. Each team shall have the choice of trying for the first down or counting off an automatic 30 yard simulated punt by the referee. The head coach of the punting team must declare his/her intentions prior to the play. Any time a team opts to punt within the 40 yard line of the opposing team’s end zone, the ball will be placed on the 10 yard line.

**LINE OF SCRIMMAGE:** A Center is the only required stationary position. The center must hike the ball to a QB or RB. No picking up the ball and running. All other positions may be in motion during the ball count as long as it is side to side. No forward motion. Any play configuration is allowed as long as the players are on or behind the line of scrimmage (with the exception of the Center). Once the ball is snapped all players are eligible to receive. ***Illegal motion by the Center prior to the ball snap will be a loss of 5 yards. Center must hike the ball between players legs or sideways. Ball is in play as soon as It leaves the ground.***

**BACKWARD PASSES AND FUMBLES:** Any ball that is fumbled during a down will be dead by rule once it has touched the ground. A backward pass may be caught or intercepted by any player inbounds and advanced. A backwards pass and/or fumble are considered running plays, thus they will not stop the clock.**Once a ball has touched the ground the ball is considered dead.**

**FORWARD PASSES AND INTERCEPTIONS:** If a player is in the air attempting to catch a ball, the player must contact the ground with at least **one foot in-bounds** with the ball in their possession prior to going out of bounds, unless contact by an opponent causes the player to first touch out-of-bounds. If possession of the ball is lost simultaneously when they hit the ground, it is not a catch. ***Interceptions CAN be returned for a score.***

**PASS INTERFERENCE:** Any contact that, in the view of the official, interferes with the attempt to catch a pass (offensive or defensive player) is pass interference unless, in the view of the official, it occurs when two or more eligible receivers makes a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch, or bat a pass.

***A pass interference will result in a 15 yard penalty from the line of scrimmage. If the pass interference by the defense is intentional and/or unsportsmanlike, the defense may be penalized an additional 10 yards.***

# SCORING:

Touchdowns = 6 points

**EXTRA POINTS:** Coach must declare from which yard line his/her team would like to start from (5, 10, 20).

Extra Points = 1 point if successful play from the 5 yard line. Extra Points = 2 points if successful play from the 10 yard line. Extra Points = 3 points if successful play from the 20 yard line.

**SAFETY:** If a player carries the ball across the goal line they are defending and the ball becomes dead while in their team’s possession, it is a safety. If the team commits a foul in the end zone where the spot of the enforcement is designated as the spot of the foul, it will be declared a safety. **A team recording a safety will receive two points, and the ball shall be snapped by the scoring team at their own 20 yard line, unless moved by a penalty.**

Exception - Momentum Rule - When a player intercepts a forward pass between their five yard line and their goal line and their momentum carries them into the end zone where the ball becomes dead, the ball will belong to the receiving team at the spot fo the catch or reception.

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**MERCY RULE:** If a team is 25 points or more ahead when the Referee announces the 2 minute warning for the second half, the game shall be over. If a team scores during the last 2 minutes of the second half and that score creates a point differential of 25 or more points the game shall end at that point.

**OVERTIME (TIE GAME):** If the game score is tied after regulation time, then a coin toss will determine who will get the ball & side. The home team shall call the toss. If additional overtime periods are needed to decide the outcome of the game (more than first overtime), captains shall alternate choices. Each team will have the chance to score in series of four downs from the 10 yard line. If the score is still tied after each team has had a try (including extra point attempts), a second series is played from the 20 yard line, and play continues until a winner is determined. Teams must go for two points on the third series. **(Exception: Regular season games will end in a tie if teams are tied after the third series).**

PERSONAL FOULS: Any act listed below or any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. Players shall not:

* Punch, strike, strip, steal, or attempt to steal the ball from a player in possession.
* Trip an opponent.
* Contact an opponent who is on the ground.
* Throw the runner to the ground.
* Contact an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead.
* Make any contact with the opponent that is deemed unnecessary.
* Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player.
* Clip an opponent.
* Position themselves on the shoulders of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage.
* Tackle the runner (warrants ejection).
* Hurdling or jumping over a player.
* “Juking” is not considered Jumping.
* Diving into the Endzone, out of bounds or for a first down.

EACH PERSONAL FOUL WILL BE A LOSS OF 15 YARDS.

BLITZING: Blitzing will only be allowed 5 yards from the line of scrimmage. The “Blitzing Line” will be designated by the Mid Field Official with the use of an orange flat cone.

-Any blitzing in front of this cone is an illegal blitz and will result in a penalty of 5 yards from the LOS.

-If the ball has been snapped and the quarterback is still behind the line of scrimmage (in the pocket or not), no blitzing shall be allowed until the ball has been handed off to another player or the blitzer started his/her blitz from behind the Blitzing Line. Violation of this rule will result in a 5 yard penalty from the LOS.

SCREEN BLOCKING: Legally obstructing an opponent without using any part of the body to initiate

contact. Screen blocking shall take place without contact. The blocker shall have their hands and arms at their sides or behind their back. A screen blocker cannot use their hands, arms, elbows, leg or body to initiate contact. If they do use contact it will be called a personal foul.

Screen blockers may NOT:

 Spread arms out to their sides to initiate a block.

 Take a position closer than a normal step when behind a stationary opponent.

 Make contact when assuming a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent.

 Take a position so close to an opponent that they cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing
 direction.

STIFF ARMING: Stiff arming is not allowed; a personal foul will be called, and if warranted, an unsportsmanlike conduct or ejection will result. Personal Foul = 15 yards from LOS

OBSTRUCTING THE RUNNER: A defensive player shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of the runner when attempting to remove the flag belt. Penalty = 10 yards from the spot of the foul.

THE FLAG BELT: All shirts must be tucked in, and are not permitted to hang over the flag belt. Should a
player lose their flag belt legally or illegally during a down and should that player gain possession of a live
ball, that player will be considered down when a legal tag (one hand touched by the defense between the shoulders and knees, including the arm and hand) is made. When a player scores they must immediately
raise their hands and allow an official to remove their flag belt. This is done to ensure that the flag belt
has not been illegally secured. If the belt has been illegally secured, the score is disallowed, the
player ejected and a 10 yard Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty will be administered from the
previous spot.

Players must have possession of the ball before they can legally be deflagged. It is
illegal for a defensive player to intentionally pull a flag from a offensive player who is not in possession of
the ball (Personal Foul = 10 yards).

GUARDING THE FLAG BELT: Runner shall not flag guard by using any part of the body or ball to deny
the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes but is not limited
to:

 Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging.

 Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging.  Lowering the shoulders in such a manner that flag guards. Penalty = 5 yards from the Spot of the foul

OFFICIAL’S AUTHORITY: An official assumes authority 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time, and until they have left the field. The officials have the authority to rule on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. His/her decision is final. The official has the right to eject players or have them sit out of part or all of the game.

COACHES RESPONSIBILITY: Each Head Coach shall be responsible for his/her players, parents, and coaching staff actions. This includes any behavior deemed disruptive to gameplay or harmful to other players, parents, coaches, or Civitan staff. The Head Referee shall have full authority to assess penalties related to team, parent, or coaching staff behavior.

Coaches will be dismissed immediately if they allow and do not attempt to stop a parent belittling or disrespectful to any Flag Leadership. Coach will not be allowed to finish the season or be allowed to come back and Coach in any Civitan Sport.

Any rules not addressed in these rules will defer back to the NFHSA rulebook.

**The Flag Football Committee composed of officers listed below hereby reserve the right to review, adjust, or change rules by providing a 48 hour notice.**

**Tony Cline**

**Cherie Cline**

**Ryan Clair**

**Michelle Clair**

**Cameron Goss**

**Frank Mayberry**

**Tim Hancock**

**Lance Brinkerhoff**

**Gary Moore**

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