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# GAME

1. Each game will begin with a coin toss between captains from each team in order to determine who shall start with the ball. The visiting team will call the coin toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss will choose the direction they would like to start. Teams may not choose to defer to the second half.
3. The offensive team will take possession from their own 5-yard line for K/1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>. The offensive team will have four plays to cross midfield for a first down. Once the offensive team crosses midfield they will have four plays to score a touchdown. 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> will begin on their own 20-yard line. The offensive team will have four plays to obtain a first down. For 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>, first downs are every 20 yards (20,40,40,20).
4. If the offense fails to score or obtain a first down, the opposing team will start their offensive drive on their own 5/20-yard line.
5. All possession changes, EXCEPT interceptions, start on the offenses 5 or 20-yard line. The ball will be spotted where the runner was pulled/downed on interceptions.
6. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.
7. Mercy Rule- If a team is winning by 28 points, the opposing team will have one possession to score. If they fail to score, the game will be recorded as the score is and the game will go into scrimmage mode. Scrimmage mode will consist of a running clock and no additional score will be added to the score when in scrimmage mode.
8. If a false start is committed while in the no run zone, you will still be considered in the no run zone after the penalty is assessed. You cannot use a false start penalty to get out of the no run zone. Once in the no run zone, you must make a forward pass in front of the line of scrimmage and the player must gain the first down before you can run again. There are no run zones on the 5-yard lines of every field by the endzones, as well as 5 yards on each side of the midfield mark for the smaller fields.
9. All girl divisions will be played 5 on 5. The other divisions will be played 7 on 7.

# TERMINOLOGY

**Line of Scrimmage-** (LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.

**Line-To-Gain-** the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.

**Rush Line-** an imaginary line running across the width of the field 7 yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.

**Offense-** the squad with possession of the ball.

**Defense-** the squad opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.

**Passer-** the offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.

**Rusher-** the defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.

**Downs (1-2-3-4)-** the offensive squad has four attempts or “downs” to advance the ball. They must cross the line to gain to get another set of downs or to score.

**Live Ball-** refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties, live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.

**Dead Ball-** refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.

**Whistle-** sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of a play or a stop in the action for a timeout, half time, or the end of the game.

**Inadvertent Whistle-** officials whistle that is performed in error.

**Flag Guarding-** an act by the ball carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball carrier’s flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head, or by blocking access to the runner’s flags with a hand or arm.

**Shovel Pass-** a legal pass attempted beyond the line of scrimmage by throwing the ball underhand or pushing it towards a receiver in a shot-put type manner.

**Lateral-** a backwards or sideways toss of the ball by the ball carrier.

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct-** a rude, confrontational, or offensive behavior or language.

**No Run Zone-** the 5-yard space on the field where teams cannot run the ball

# EQUIPMENT

1. The league will provide each player with an NFL flag belt and NFL Flag jersey. Teams will use footballs provided by the league. Teams can use their own ball if it is an approved ball by the league.
2. Players must wear shoes. Football cleats are encouraged, however, cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
3. Players may tape their forearms, hands, and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metal are not allowed.
4. Players must remove all watches, earrings, and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
5. Official NFL Flag jerseys are required to be worn during the game.
6. Player's jerseys must be tucked into their pants/shorts. Holding penalties will not be called if a player's jersey remains untucked after being warned by the officials.
7. Shorts/Pants must have NO POCKETS. Players are not allowed to tape their shorts or flip them inside out.
8. All players are required to wear a mouth piece during the game. After a player has been warned about not wearing their mouthpiece, failure to do so again will result in a penalty.
9. Home teams will wear their dark colored jersey, Away teams will wear their light-colored jersey.

# FIELD

1. The field dimensions are 70 x 30 yards with two 10-yard end zones and a midfield line to gain for age groups K-5<sup>th</sup>. The field dimensions are 120 x 50 yards, with two 10-yard end zones for age groups 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>.
2. No Run Zones are located on the 5-yard lines near the endzones as well as near the midfield line on the smaller fields. No Run Zones are used to prevent teams from running power run plays. While in the No Run Zone, teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be passing plays, even with a handoff.
3. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
4. There will be marked off areas on the sidelines for parents, friends, and family to spectate. Spectators must follow policies as to where they can and cannot stand.

# TIMING/OVERTIME

1. Games will consist of 4 10-minute quarters with a 3-minute halftime in the middle.
2. The clock stops only for timeouts and injuries. It also stops on incompletions, spikes, and out of bounds plays in the final two minutes of the game.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, teams will have a 30 second play clock to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced.
4. Each team has 2 30-seconds timeouts per half.
5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
6. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
7. If the score is tied at the end of the 40 minutes, the game should be determined as a tie.
8. In playoff situations, an overtime (OT) period will be used to determine a winner. The OT Format is as followed:

- A.) Each team is allowed a minimum of one possession. The only exception is if the first offensive team throws an interception and the intercepting team scores.
- B.) First possession choice goes to the winner of the coin toss
- C.) All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
- D.) Each team will have one timeout.

## **Change of Possession**

Change of possession takes place when Teams A's forwards progress is halted on downs or scores a touchdown. Team B takes possession on the same 50/20-yard line regardless of whether Team A's possession ended in an interception.

## **Multiple OT Periods**

1<sup>st</sup> OT: Shown above, teams can go for a 1 or 2-point PAT.

2<sup>nd</sup> OT: First possession goes to the loser of the coin toss. The ball will start on the 10-yard line, where the team will have one play to score. Scoring teams must go for a 2-point PAT.

3<sup>rd</sup> OT: First possession goes back to the team who possessed the ball first in the 1<sup>st</sup> OT. The ball will start on the 5-yard line, where the team will have one play to score. Scoring teams must go for a 2-point PAT.

4<sup>th</sup> OT: First possession goes to the loser of the coin toss. Teams will start on the 5-yard line facing away from the endzone. Each team will have one play to gain as many yards as possible. The team who gains the most yards will be determined the winner.

# SCORING

1. Touchdown: 6 Points
2. PAT (Point After Touchdown): (K/1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>): 1 Point (5 Yard Line), is a must pass play. 2 Point (12 Yard Line), is a run or pass play. 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>: 1 Point (5 Yard Line), is a kick. 2 Point (12 Yard Line), is a run or pass play.
3. Safety: 2 Points. Awarded when the ball carrier is declared down in their own endzone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or elbow. A safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the endzone.
4. Fields Goals/PAT Kicks: 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> only. Field goals are worth 3 points, PATs are worth 1 point. Field goals cannot be returned by the opposing team. You can block a field goal if you jump straight up behind the line of scrimmage. There is no rushing allowed during a field goal or PAT attempt. The placeholder must catch the ball then put his knee down to hold the ball for the kicker.
5. Conversion Returns: 2-point Conversions are returnable on both fields.
6. The BALL and ONE FLAG are required to be pass the first down and touchdown for it to count.

# COACHES

1. Coaches are volunteer parents or family members helping the players learn and enjoy the game. Parents are encouraged to always support the coach.
2. One Coach is allowed on the field for K/1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>. The coach can direct players in the huddle and help them lineup. Before the ball is snapped, all coaches on the field must get out of the way during the play. Failure to do so may result in a penalty.
3. Coaches are expected to adhere to NFL Flag coaches' guidelines and codes of conduct.
4. Coaches are responsible for controlling their sideline, players, and parents.
5. Coaches may not make any contact with an official, failure to do so will result in an ejection.
6. Each team may have a max of 3 REGISTERED Coaches on the sideline.

# LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. Regarding the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
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. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals, by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
7. Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - a) The ball hits the ground
  - b) The ball carriers’ 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 receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or more flags
  - g) The 7-second pass clock expires
  - h) Inadvertent whistle

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet were at the time of the fumble.

8. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
  - Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew and the down is consumed.
  - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
9. A team is allowed to use a time out to question an official’s rule interpretation. If the official’s ruling is correct, the team will be charged a time out. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.



# RUNNING

1. The ball is spotted where the runner is deemed down when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
2. The Quarterback CANNOT directly run with the ball. The quarterback has the ability to scramble in the backfield, but cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
3. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Hand offs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
4. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
5. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
6. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull will result in a flag guard.
7. Spinning is allowed; however, players cannot leave their feet. Lateral moves left and right are permitted. Jumping to avoid a flag pull is not allowed.
8. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that they are doing so to avoid a collision with another player.
9. No blocking or screening is allowed. Offensive players must stop moving when the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. Blocking down field will be called if the officials deem an offensive player running downfield affected the play.
10. All jerseys must be tucked in before the play begins as well as the belt. If the belt strap is pulled it constitutes a flag pull. The flags must be on the players hips and free from obstruction.

# PASSING

1. A pass /toss can be thrown behind the line of scrimmage. The only time it cannot be thrown behind the line of scrimmage is in the no run zone, in which the ball must go at least one yard in front of the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. The quarterback has a seven second “pass clock” to throw the ball. Once the seven seconds runs out, the quarterback will be “sacked” and the play will be blown dead. Once the ball is handed off, the seven second rule is no longer in effect.
4. If the QB is standing in the endzone at the end of the seven second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.

# RECEIVING

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
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 a least one-foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
5. 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.
6. Interceptions are returnable for an extra point on the point after touchdown (PAT).

# RUSHING THE PASSER

1. All players who rush the passer must be minimum of seven yards, ten yards if you are playing full field, from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A special marker or the referee will indicate where the 7 or 10-yard rush line is located. Defensive players should verify with the ref if they are in the right position each play.
4. A legal rush is:
  - a. Any rush from a point 7 or 10 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
  - b. Any rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
  - c. If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7 or 10-yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset, and then legally rush the quarterback, (must be done pre snap).
  - d. If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, they may legally rush the quarterback.
5. A penalty may be called if:
  - a. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass-illegal rush.
  - b. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped-offside
  - c. Any defensive player, not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off-illegal rush
6. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass, however, NO CONTACT can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block a pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.
7. Impeding the Rusher: The offense CANNOT impede the offense in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback. The rusher CANNOT line up on top of the center. If a moving offensive player occupies the "path" or "line," then it is the offensive players responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rushers path and or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rushers responsibility to go around the offensive player to avoid contact. Impeding the Rusher is not in effect if the rusher lines up 5 yards on either side of the center.
8. A sack occurs if the quarterbacks' flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterbacks was when the flag was pulled. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.

# FLAG PULLING

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold, or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, he/she must be touched for the play to come to an end (one hand). If not touched, the player can run all the way to the end zone.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm, or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

# FORMATIONS

1. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
  - a) One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
  - b) No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.
  - c)
2. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.
3. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
4. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

# UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!
2. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
3. Ball carriers MUST try to avoid defenders with an established position. defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
4. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams. Keep comments clean and profanity free. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the end zone area. Fans must remain in the marked off areas if they want to spectate. Any fan not following the leagues policies may be ejected by the officials or field marshals.

# PENALTIES

1. The referee will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted.
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question judgment calls.
5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

## Spot fouls:

Defensive Pass interference	Automatic first down
Holding	+5 yards & Automatic first down
Stripping	+10 yards & Automatic first down
Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards & Automatic first down
Screening, blocking, or running with the ball carrier	-5 yards & loss of down
Charging	-10 yards & loss of down
Flag Guarding	-10 yards & loss of down
Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards & loss of down

**Defensive Penalties:**

Offside	+5 yards from LOS – Defensive Off sides are a 5-yard penalty. Offense will replay the down. This will be a Dead ball foul.
Illegal Rush	+5 yards from LOS & Automatic first down
Illegal Flag Pull	+5 yards from LOS & Automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+10 yards from LOS & Automatic first down
Taunting	+10 yards from LOS & Automatic first down. If a touch down is scored during a taunting play the touch down will count and the ball will be placed on the 30-yard line.
Defensive Pass Interference	SPOT FOUL, Automatic first down
Holding	SPOT FOUL, +5 yards & Automatic first down
Stripping	SPOT FOUL, +10 yards & Automatic first down
Defensive Unnecessary Roughness	SPOT FOUL, +10 yards & Automatic first down

**Offensive Penalties:**

Offside/False Start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & replay the down
Illegal Forward pass	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of down
Offensive Pass Interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of down
Illegal Motion (more than one person moving)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of down.
Delay of Game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of down. 30 seconds to snap the ball.
Impeding the Rusher	-5 yards from LOS & Loss of down
Screening, Blocking, or Running with the Ball Carrier	- SPOT FOUL, -5 yards & Loss of down
Charging	- SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of down
Flag Guarding	- SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of down
Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	- SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of down