



Legacy Sports 5v5 Tournament

Rules of the Game

(Updated 05/01/23)

Legacy Sports 5v5 Tournaments are considered “recreational fundraisers” to help support the youth programs offered throughout the year. Four (4) to Eight (8) teams will compete in 3-5 pool play games (24 minutes) followed by 1-2 full games (34 minutes) to determine overall placement for the day (first, second, third, etc.).

Flag Football is not tackle football or “power” football. Rather than trying to defeat or crush the opponent, teams should strive together to challenge each other by using speed, agility, quickness, and appropriate deception. This is a “no contact” event meaning both offensive and defensive players should try to avoid making intentional contact with an opposing player at any time.

1. BASIC INFORMATION

- a. Number of Players: 5v5 at all times (cannot play with less than 5 on the field)
- b. Field Size: Approximately 60 yds X 30 yds plus end zones
- c. Football Size: Youth or Regulation (offensive team decides, can use either size)

2. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- a. Men Only (no females allowed)
- b. Players must be born in 2006 or earlier to be eligible

3. GROUP PLAY GAME DURATION & TIMING

- a. 24-Minute game with running clock
- b. No halftime, no clock stoppages, one (1) timeout per team
- c. Only change direction at the 12-minute mark if sun and/or wind is a factor

4. GROUP PLAY SCORING

- a. One (1) point for each touchdown scored
- b. No extra point attempts
- c. Games **cannot** end in a tie, Overtime Rules (#7) apply
- d. In the event of a safety, the defensive team will be awarded no points and will gain possession of the ball on their own five (5) yard line (essentially a safety is just a turnover with no other benefit awarded to the defense)
- e. There is no Mercy Rule during group play

5. PLAYOFF GAME DURATION & TIMING

- a. Two (2) 17-Minute halves with running clock unless otherwise noted below
- b. A **PRO CLOCK** will be used in the final one (1) minute of the second half
 - a) This means the clock will stop at the following times: incomplete passes, player runs out of bounds, extra point attempts, penalties, change of possession
 - b) If the offensive team achieves a first down, the clock will stop momentarily while the ball is being spotted but then restart as soon as the referees are ready (will not wait for the ball to be snapped)
- c. Each team will have two (2) “stop the clock” timeouts per game that can be used at any time

6. PLAYOFF SCORING

- a. Six (6) points for each touchdown scored
- b. After a touchdown is scored, clock stops, and the offensive team selects one of the following extra point conversions to attempt:
 - a) 1-Point Conversion – from the five (5) yard line, No Run Zone rules apply
 - b) 2-Point Conversion – from the twelve (12) yard line
 - c) Interceptions returned for a touchdown on extra point attempts are worth two (2) points regardless of which conversion the offense selected
- c. In the event of a safety, the defense will be awarded two (2) points and possession of the ball back on their own five (5) yard line
- d. There is no Mercy Rule during playoff games

7. OVERTIME

- a. First Overtime
 - a) Each team will have one (1) play
 - b) Coin Flip winner decides whether to be on offense or defense first
 - c) Offensive team selects to go for either a 1-Point conversion (from 5-yard line) or a 2-Point conversion (from 12-yard line)
- b. Second+ Overtime
 - a) Each team will have one (1) play
 - b) Coin Flip winner decides whether to be on offense or defense first
 - c) Both offensive teams must go for a 2-Point conversion (from 12-yard line)

8. PUNTING & KICKING

- a. No will be no punting or kickoffs
- b. The offensive team will always start with the ball on their own five (5) yard line except after an interception in which case the ball should be spotted at the location of the flag pull
- c. After an interception, No Run Zone and First Down rules apply if applicable (just need to get to midfield regardless of where you start)

9. FIRST DOWNS & TOUCHDOWNS

- a. When the offensive team starts with the ball on their side of the field (anywhere), they will have four (4) downs to get across midfield to gain a first down
- b. Once across midfield (anywhere), they will have four (4) downs to score -- no more first downs except via penalty
- c. If the offensive team starts with the ball already across midfield after an interception, they will have four (4) downs to score (unable to get a first down except via penalty)

10. PLAY CLOCK & SUBSTITUTIONS

- a. Once the line referee determines the spot of the ball, the offensive team will have **twenty-five seconds (25)** to snap the ball
- b. Failure to snap the ball within the allotted time will result in a loss of down and stoppage of the clock during the final one (1) minute of a playoff game
- c. The line referee will indicate with **the raise of one hand** that the play clock has started, and the offense team is free to snap the ball
- d. "Free Substitution" is allowed between plays but the offense does not have to wait on a defensive substitution as long as the referee has given the signal that the offensive team is free to snap the ball

11. BLOCKING & SCREENING

- a. No form of blocking, screening, shielding, or running with the ball carrier is allowed (this is a tricky rule that causes much confusion)
- b. Neither offensive nor defensive players are permitted to initiate contact with opposing players
- c. Offensive players may complete their "route" and act as decoys to draw the attention of the defense but should not be instructed to block in any form for the ball carrier

12. SPOTTING THE BALL

- a. The ball is spotted where the ball is located at the time of the flag pull which means players are able to "stretch" the ball across the first down line or goal line
- b. If an offensive player with the ball leaves his feet to dive forward, the ball will be spotted at the point he jumped, not where the ball ends up
- c. In short, players can reach the ball out in front of them to gain an extra yard or two but cannot jump or dive forward
- d. The offensive team can set the cone and "spot the ball" at the location the line referee designates but must wait to snap the ball until the line referee gives the signal (useful if running a hurry up offense)
- e. The ball must be placed within ten (10) yards of the "center of the field" along the line of scrimmage.

13. CENTER/QB EXCHANGE

- a. There must be a Center/QB exchange where the ball is snapped backwards at any angle in an appropriate manner (between legs, from the side, etc.)
- b. **The first player to receive the ball from the center is considered the quarterback**
- c. One player must line up behind the Center in the "quarterback position" even if the ball is going to be snapped to another player (the intended quarterback)
- d. If there is a fumble on the exchange, play will be ruled dead immediately, down counts, and the ball will be placed at the spot where the football hit the ground
- e. If the fumble occurs in the end zone, it will be ruled as a safety

14. PASSING

- a. The quarterback has **five (5) seconds** to pass the ball if there is no rush (hand count by the referees)
- b. If the ball is not thrown, the play is ruled dead and considered a sack which means during the final minute of a playoff game, the clock will continue to run
- c. Once the quarterback gives the ball up to another player, the five (5) second count no longer applies
- d. As soon as a defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage (eligible or ineligible) the five (5) second count no longer applies
- e. The quarterback can only run the ball after a defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage (eligible or ineligible)

15. RECEIVING

- a. All players are eligible to receive a pass – including center and quarterback
- b. The quarterback can only receive a pass from another player (cannot throw a pass to himself)
- c. Players must have at least one foot/hip/knee/shin in bounds and complete control of the ball when making a catch
- d. If an offensive player unintentionally runs out of bounds, he must regain both feet in bounds before touching the ball to become an eligible receiver
- e. If an offensive player intentionally runs out of bounds, he will not be eligible to catch a pass
- f. Only one (1) player is allowed to be in motion at a time; motion must be lateral to the line of scrimmage

16. HANDOFFS

- a. The center is eligible to receive an initial handoff provided there is a clear exchange between the quarterback and the center
- b. The quarterback is not eligible to receive an immediate “return” or direct handoff meaning the read option play with the quarterback running the ball is not permitted (can still fake the handoff and pass)
- c. In order for the quarterback to regain possession of the ball, the ball must clearly be possessed by another player who can then pitch the ball backward or throw the ball forward to the quarterback
- d. Handoffs, passes, laterals, and pitches of any kind behind the line of scrimmage are allowed
- e. Laterals beyond the line of scrimmage are allowed
- f. Once the ball has been handed off from the quarterback to another player, then all defensive players are eligible to cross the line of scrimmage

17. NO RUN ZONES (PASS ONLY)

- a. When the offensive team is within **five (5) yards** of getting a first down or scoring a touchdown, the following rules apply:
- b. There must be a clear forward toss, forward pass, or forward shovel pass **across the line of scrimmage**
- c. The first player to gain possession of the ball on the snap will be considered the quarterback
- d. A second offensive player can possess the ball behind the line of scrimmage but still must execute a legal forward pass in order to advance the ball
- e. The defense is allowed to blitz/rush but the offense **cannot advance the ball** across the line of scrimmage via a run, a legal forward pass must still be thrown

18. WHEN RUNNING WITH THE BALL

- a. Runners are not allowed to stiff-arm, run over defenders, flag guard, or use any other means to physically keep the defender from attempting to pull the flag belt (penalty will be assessed)
- b. Ball carriers cannot initiate contact with any defender but everything else is permitted that would not be considered flag guarding (jumping, spinning, dipping, etc.)
- c. If a player is in possession of the ball contacts the ground with anything other than the “hand not carrying the ball” the player will be ruled down and the play is dead regardless of whether or not the player’s flag has been pulled

19. FUMBLES

- a. Any time the ball is fumbled and touches the ground after being in a player's possession, the ball is considered down and the play dead
- b. The team that fumbled retains possession at the spot where the football hit the ground
- c. If there is a fumble on the Center/QB exchange, play will be ruled dead immediately, down counts, and ball will be placed at the spot where the football hit the ground
- d. If a fumble occurs in the end zone, it will be ruled as a safety

20. BLITZING/RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- a. Rushing the quarterback will be allowed on all downs
- b. If no defensive player rushes the quarterback, the five (5) second count applies
- c. Players who blitz/rush the quarterback must be a minimum of **ten (10) yards** from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped
- d. All defensive players behind the **designated rush line** (marked by one of the referees) when the ball is snapped will be eligible to rush the quarterback
- e. As soon as any defensive player intentionally or unintentionally steps across the line of scrimmage with any part of their body, the quarterback is eligible to run the ball and the five (5) second count no longer applies
- f. The quarterback cannot run on a "fake" rush or no rush
- g. If an ineligible defensive player comes across the line of scrimmage, the offense will have the option to either accept or decline the *Illegal Rush* penalty
- h. The quarterback can throw a legal forward pass while on the run as long as he releases the ball from behind the line of scrimmage
- i. Offensive players cannot purposely impede/block any defensive player attempting to rush
- j. Offensive players are permitted to "run their route" which may create an obstacle for rushers to maneuver around
- k. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, **no contact** can be made with the quarterback in any way
- l. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a *Roughing the Passer* penalty

21. DEFENSIVE & FLAG PULLING RULES

- a. Anything hanging from the "belt" of a player is considered a flag and can be pulled for a legal tackle (flag belt, towel, shirt, etc.)
- b. If the flags of the ball carrier or any other player fall off during a play, then the "one-hand touch" rule applies to only the player(s) without flags; play continues until the whistle is blown
- c. Defensive players are permitted to jump and dive (have both feet in the air) when attempting to pull an opposing player's flag belt
- d. Defensive players are permitted to jump when attempting to break up or intercept a pass
- e. Defenders are not allowed to attempt to strip or take the ball out of the hands of a player who has possession (penalty will be assessed)

22. PENALTIES

- Teams may **decline all "live ball" penalties** meaning the result of the play stands
- Dead ball penalties must be accepted
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it
- Offsetting penalties result in replay of down

OFFENSE	YDS	Where is the Penalty Assessed?	Result
Illegal Substitution	5	Previous spot	Replay Down – dead ball
Illegal Shift or Illegal Motion	5	Previous spot	Replay Down – dead ball
Flag Guarding	5	Spot of foul	Loss of Down
Illegal Advancement/Run	5	Spot of foul	Loss of Down
Illegal Forward Pass	5	Previous spot	Loss of Down
Pass Clock Violation	0	Previous spot	Loss of Down
Impeding the Rusher	5	Previous spot	Loss of Down
Offensive Pass Interference	5	Previous spot	Loss of Down
Delay of Game	5	Previous spot	Replay Down **LOD, if 2 min or less
False Start	5	Previous spot	Replay Down **LOD, if 2 min or less
DEFENSE	YDS	Where is the Penalty Assessed?	Result
Defensive Pass Interference	10 Spot	10 from previous spot or spot foul (whichever the offense chooses)	Automatic 1st Down
Roughing the Passer	10	Previous spot	Automatic 1st Down
Encroachment/Illegal Rush	5	Previous spot	Replay Down - live ball
Stripping or Attempted Stripping	5	Spot of the foul	Automatic 1st Down
Early Flag Pull	5	Previous spot	Automatic 1st Down
GAME PLAY	YDS	Where is the Penalty Assessed?	Result
Personal Foul/ Unnecessary Roughness	15	End of the play or previous spot	By the Offense: Loss of Down By the Defense: Automatic 1st Down
Unsportsmanlike Conduct (First Infraction)	15	End of the play or previous spot	By the Offense: Loss of Down By the Defense: Automatic 1st Down
Unsportsmanlike Conduct (Second Infraction)	15 DQ	End of the play or previous spot	Same Result as First Infraction Player Disqualified for Rest of Game
Unsportsmanlike Conduct (Third Infraction)	15 DQ	End of the play or previous spot	Same Result as First Infraction Player Disqualified for Rest of Day
Illegal Contact (blocking, pick, holding, etc.)	5	Previous spot or spot of the foul	By the Offense: Loss of Down By the Defense: Automatic 1st Down
Cool Down Period	0	No foul	Player must sit out 5 plays
Illegal Participation	5	Previous spot	Loss of Down
Charging	5	Spot of the foul	Loss of Down
Last Man Rule	15 TD	Spot of the foul	Automatic 1st Down or TD if inside the 5-yard line