



# Fall Season 2025

## Referees & Coaches





# AGENDA

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Get to Know Us  
Important Dates  
Coaches  
Referees  
Q&A







# Introduction

At **Dolphins Flag Football League**, our goal is to grow participation by delivering **incredible experiences** that inspire and engage players of all skill levels.

- Our Offerings Include:
- **Leagues:** Competitive and recreational opportunities for players to enjoy NFL FLAG football year-round.
- **Camps:** Partnership with Junior Dolphins allow all participants to receive first notice and major discounts to their events.



# Get to Know Us

**Marcella Araica** – President of Flag Universal  
Owner of Dolphins Flag Football League

**Linsey Osborn** - Sr. League Coordinator

**Octavio Cruz** – Expansion Liaison

**Vanessa Taylor** - Administration

**Aaron Harris** – Miami Dolphins

# Important Dates

## MEET & GREET

- **Sunday, September 21, 2025 (NO REFS)**

## GAME DATES

- **Sundays, September 28 – November 2, 2025**

## MAKE-UP DATE

- **Sunday, November 16, 2025**

## Tots

- **Sunday, September 21, 2025 First Week**
- **Sunday, October 26, 2025 Final Week**

## Locations

- **Hollywood**
- **Boca**
- **Wellington**
- **Stuart**

# Referees & Coaches



## Referees

### Who They Are:

Trained officials responsible for enforcing the rules, keeping the game safe, fair, and on schedule. Hired by third party assignors.

### Key Responsibilities:

- Monitor gameplay and call penalties
- Start and stop the clock
- Ensure player safety
- Maintain a neutral and professional demeanor

### Reminders:

- Ref decisions are final — no arguing calls
- Refs are trained and often younger — show respect
- Coaches and parents should model good sportsmanship



## Volunteer Coaches

### Who They Are:

Parents, guardians, or community members who generously give their time to teach, encourage, and manage a team.

### Key Responsibilities:

- Lead practices and manage games
- Teach fundamentals, teamwork, and sportsmanship
- Communicate with parents and players
- Uphold league values and safety protocols

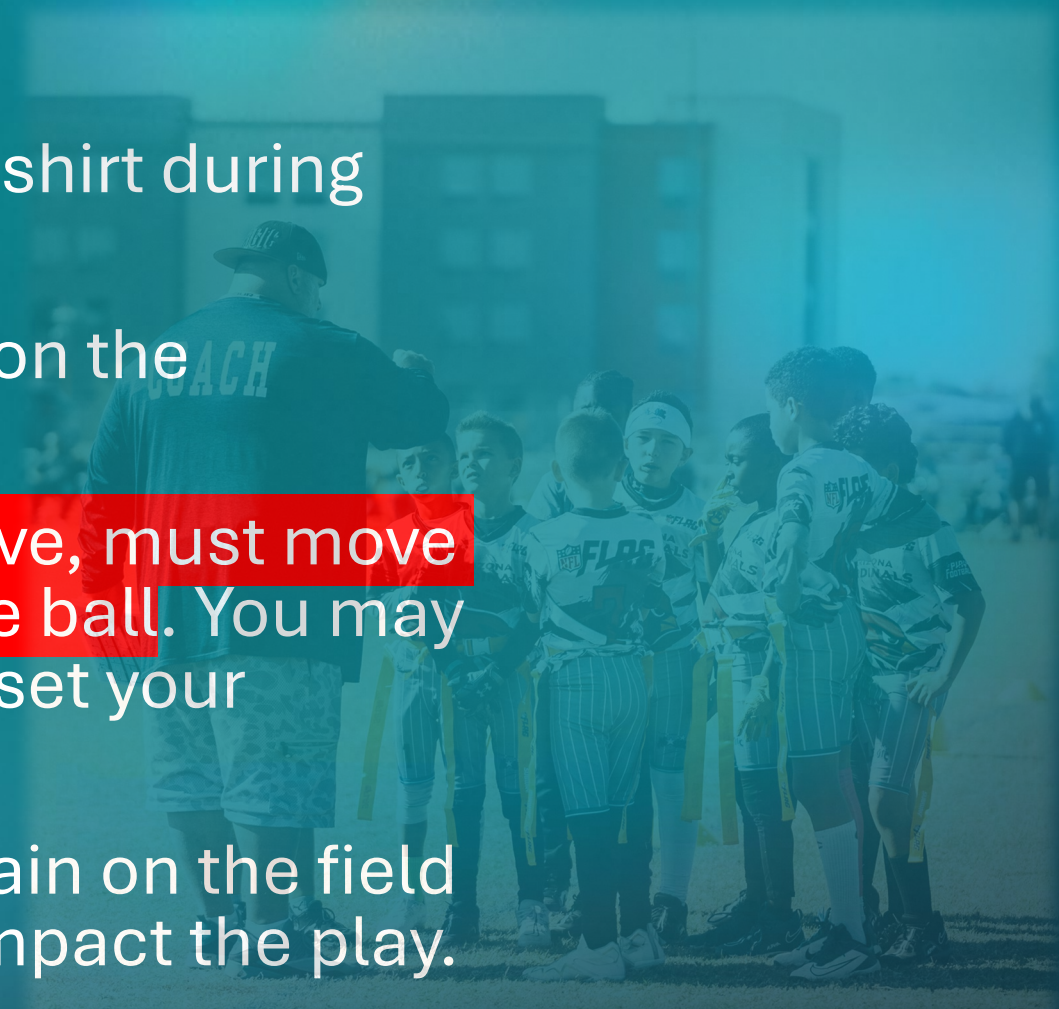
### Reminders:

- Coaches are volunteers — kindness and patience go a long way
- Encourage all players equally
- Always put fun and player development before winning



# COACHING STAFF

- All volunteers **MUST** wear their coach's shirt during GAME DAY practices and game play.
- No more than 3 volunteers are allowed on the sideline.
- All coaches, both offensive and defensive, must move to the sidelines PRIOR to the snap of the ball. You may come on to the field to call your play or set your defense.
- Exception: Lombardi coaches may remain on the field during a play. However, they must not impact the play.





# COACHING PRACTICE

- DEVELOPMENTAL
  - 2 hour commitment
    - 1 hour of practice before your game
    - 1 hour game
- ELITE
  - 2+ hour commitment
    - 1 hour of practice before your game
    - 1 hour game
    - External practices are on your own time and schedule (no limit)
      - When securing field space you are NOT allowed to use DFFL or Flag Universal as your reason. All outside practices are not covered by our insurance nor are they mandatory.





# COACHING PRACTICE

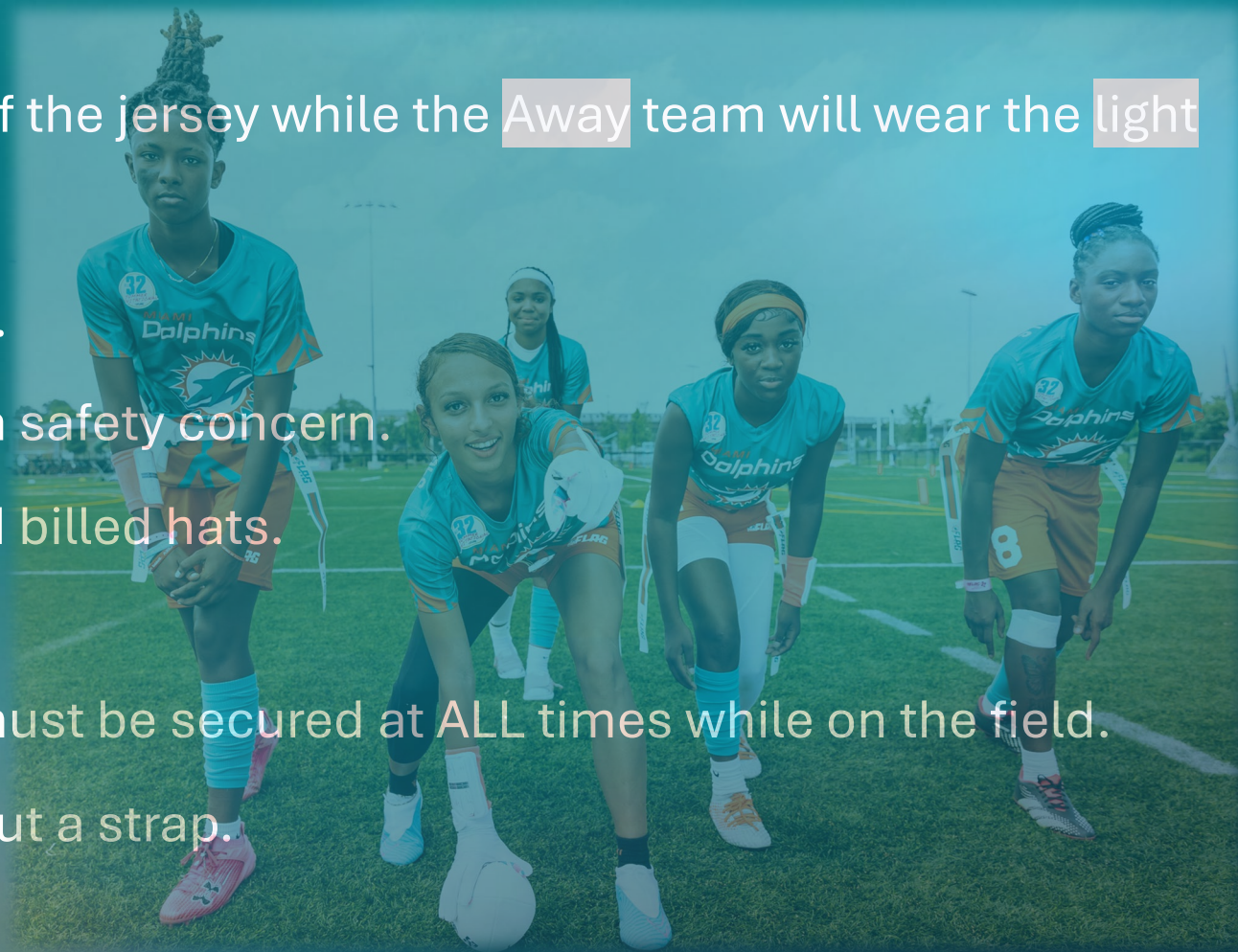
- TOTS
  - 1 hour commitment
    - Instructional Handbook
      - Guided practice for each day
      - Word of the day
      - Stickers each Sunday for awards
      - Learn the sport through games, skills and drills, competitions
  - T-shirt provided (Junior Dolphins T)





# UNIFORM

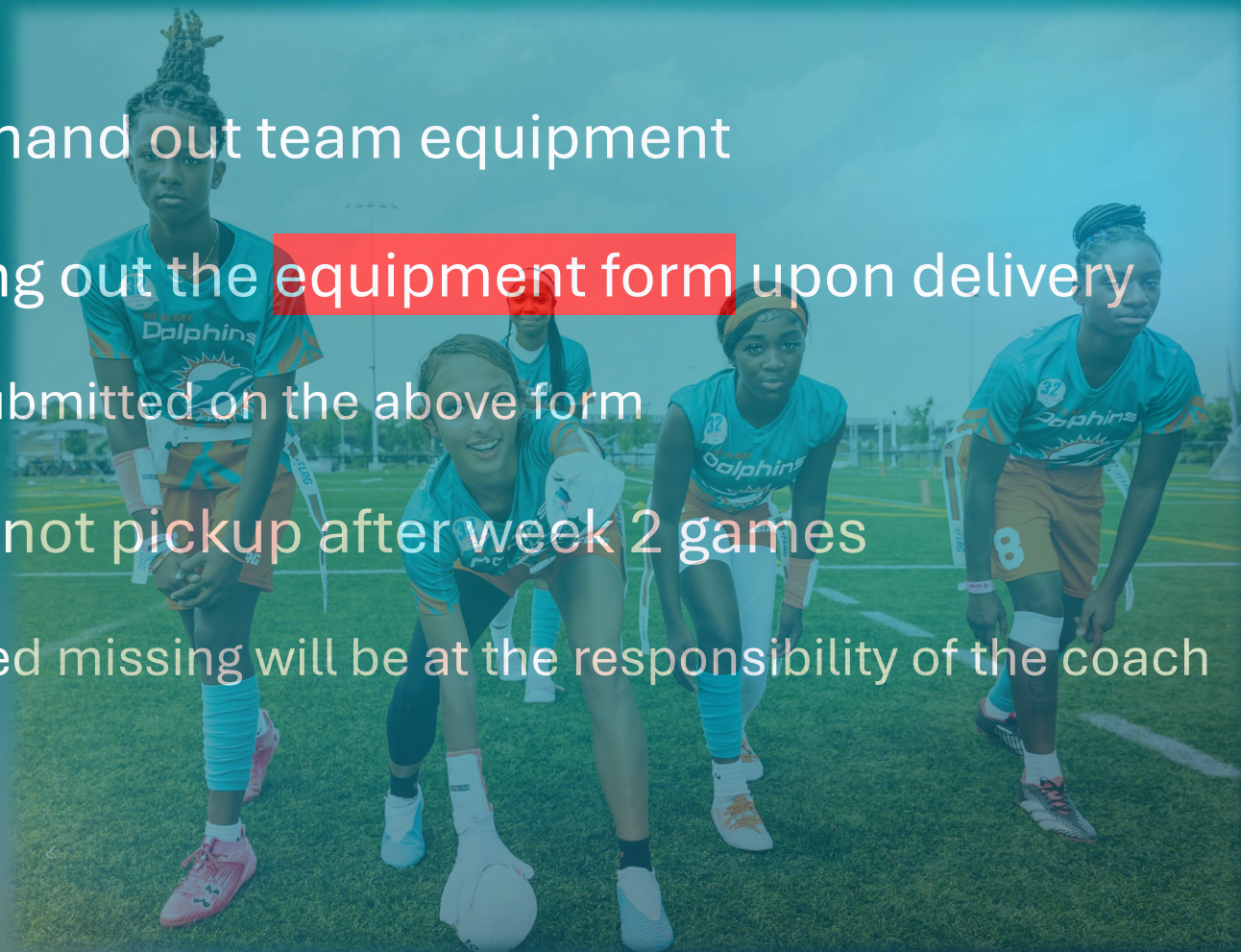
- The **Home** team will wear the **dark** side of the jersey while the **Away** team will wear the **light** side of the jersey.
- Mouthpieces **MUST** be worn at-all-times.
- No shorts or pants with pockets. This is a safety concern.
- Players must remove all jewelry and hard billed hats.
  - Winter beanies are allowed.
- Players may wear sunglasses, but they must be secured at ALL times while on the field.
- Prescription glasses are permitted without a strap.





# UNIFORM DISTRIBUTION

- All coaches will be responsible to hand out team equipment
- All parents are responsible for filling out the equipment form upon delivery
  - Any issues with equipment can be submitted on the above form
- Coaches will return all equipment not pickup after week 2 games
  - All equipment not returned by deemed missing will be at the responsibility of the coach





# RULES OF THE GAME

## • LEAGUES:

**TOTS:**

**DEVELOPMENTAL:**

**ELITE:**

Instructional Handbook (no games)

Recreational (no playoffs, except Madden)

Competitive (playoffs all divisions)

*"Regional Support from Junior Dolphins for Champions" – Aaron Harris*

## • DIVISIONS:

**Lombardi:**

1st grade and younger (5U & 6U, no playoffs)

**Shula:**

2nd and 3rd grade (8U, no playoffs)

**Madden:**

4th grade and older (10U, 12U, 14U, playoffs)



# RULES OF THE GAME

- **SCHEDULE:** All teams will play 6 games each season.
- **Developmental:** There are no playoffs for Lombardi and Shula; however, in the Madden Division, there will be.
- **Elite:** Playoffs for all divisions
- **AWARDS:** Lombardi and Shula participants will receive a participation award (certificate).
- The Top 2 teams in each Madden division will receive 1st and 2nd place awards.

# RULES OF THE GAME

- The goal of this **recreational** program is to **teach** the **fundamentals** of the game while having **fun**! Teams are created by grade, buddy, and coach requests. Average team size ranges from 9 to 12 players, ensuring all participants have ample playing time and opportunities to contribute.

- **GAME FORMAT: 5 v 5**

Click  
on for  
the  
rules





# Official "No Show" Policy

While rare, there may be instances when an official does not arrive for a scheduled game. In such cases, the following plan will be implemented:

## Coaches as Co-Officials Roles and Responsibilities:

- One coach from each team will co-officiate the game.
- **Coach 1:** Responsible for keeping time (24-minute halves).
- **Coach 2:** Responsible for keeping the score.
- Coaches must print their names legibly on the referee card.

Coaches will work together to monitor key game elements, including:

- Downs and their progression.
- **7-second passing clock** to maintain gameplay flow.
- **Rush marker** placement at **7 yards** (Madden Division only).



# REFEREES

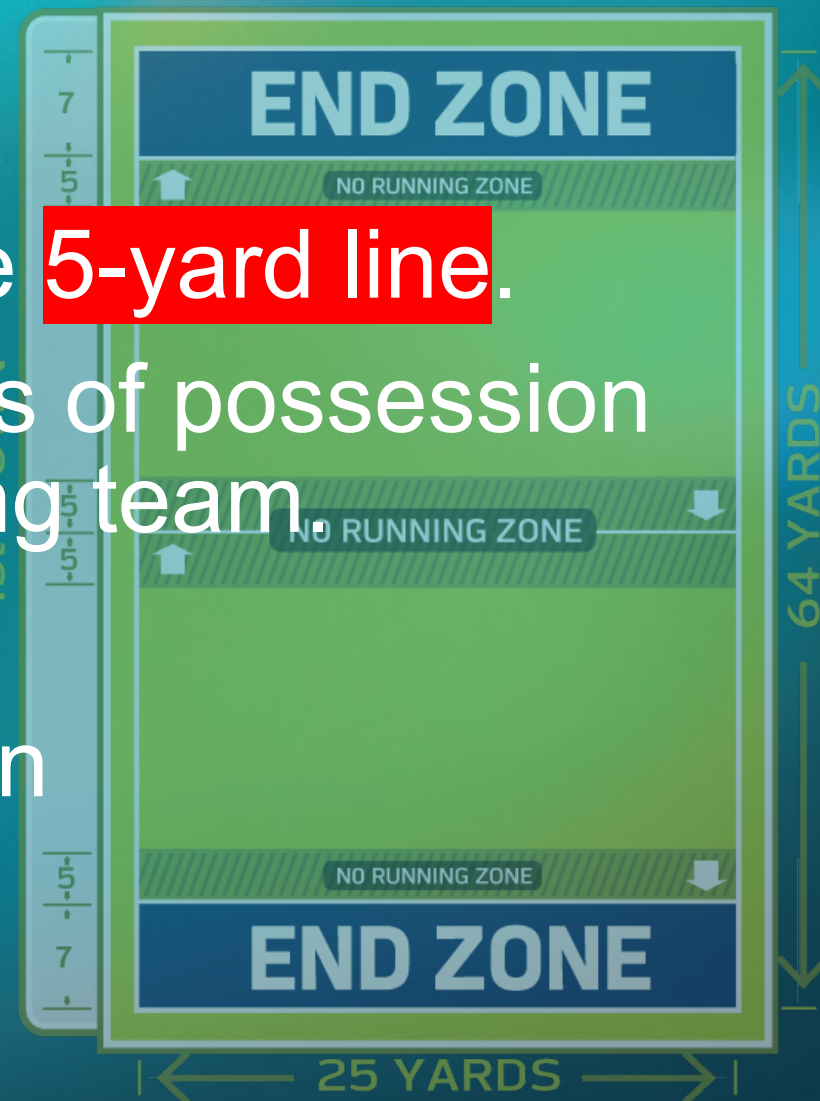
- Flag football is an easy setup
- Simple Rules (this is not 7v7 or tackle)
  - Start at the 5 yard line
  - You get 4 downs to get a first (mid-field)
  - On 4<sup>th</sup> down you must declare:
    - “Going for it”
      - Team makes the first, then team gets 3 more down
      - Team doesn’t make the first down, it’s a turnover on downs at the last LOS
    - “PUNT”
      - Opposing team starts on their own 5-yard line
  - In order to change the decision a coach must use a timeout
- You then get 3 downs to get a Touchdown
  - On 3<sup>rd</sup> down you must declare





# TWO WAY FIELDS

- Starting possession will begin at the **5-yard line**.
- There are safeties. The result is loss of possession and **2 points** awarded to the opposing team.
- Interceptions can be returned.
- Home and away teams should be on opposite sidelines



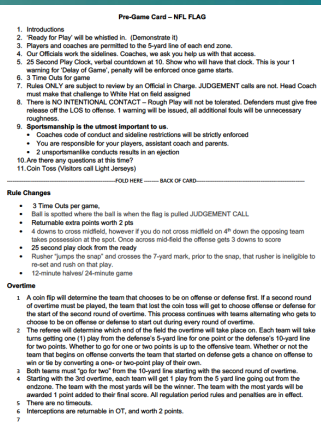


# REFEREES EQUIPMENT

- Stop Watch, Yellow Flag, Bean Bag or Cone
- Score Card
- Pre-Game Rules Card
- Penalty Reference Card

NFL FLAG	
Defensive Penalties	
Offsides	5 Yards from LOS & Auto 1st Down
Illegal Rush	5 Yards from LOS & Auto 1st Down
Illegal Flag Pull	5 Yards from LOS & Auto 1st Down
Illegal substitution	5 Yards from LOS & Auto 1st Down
Roughing the Passer	5 Yards from LOS & Auto 1st Down
Taunting	5 Yards from LOS & Auto 1st Down
Unsportsmanlike	10 Yards & Auto 1st Down
Unnecessary Roughness	10 Yards & Auto 1st Down
Pass Interference	SPOT FOUL 5 Yards & Auto 1st Down
Holding	SPOT FOUL 5 Yards & Auto 1st Down
Stripping	SPOT FOUL + 5 Yards & Auto 1st Down

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FIELD #	TIME	NFL FLAG	DIVISION
1 2			1 2
T.O.	SCORE	CARDS	T.O.
HOME - TEAM NAME		AWAY - TEAM NAME	
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	
17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30		17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	
31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44		31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44	
45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58		45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58	
X	COACH SIGNATURE	SCORE	X
COACH SIGNATURE	SCORE	COACH SIGNATURE	SCORE
OFFICIALS SIGNATURE: X			



# REFEREE GEAR RULES

- Referee
  - Official football referee shirt
  - Black shorts / pants
  - Fox 40 whistle
  - Pencil / Score Card (located at the GDR tent)
  - Black hat (optional but recommended)
- Players
  - Players must have shirts tucked in
  - No pockets
  - Must have a mouthpiece in correctly at all times
  - No jewelry
  - Flag belts must be worn correctly and fitted correctly



# REFEREE SCORING RULES

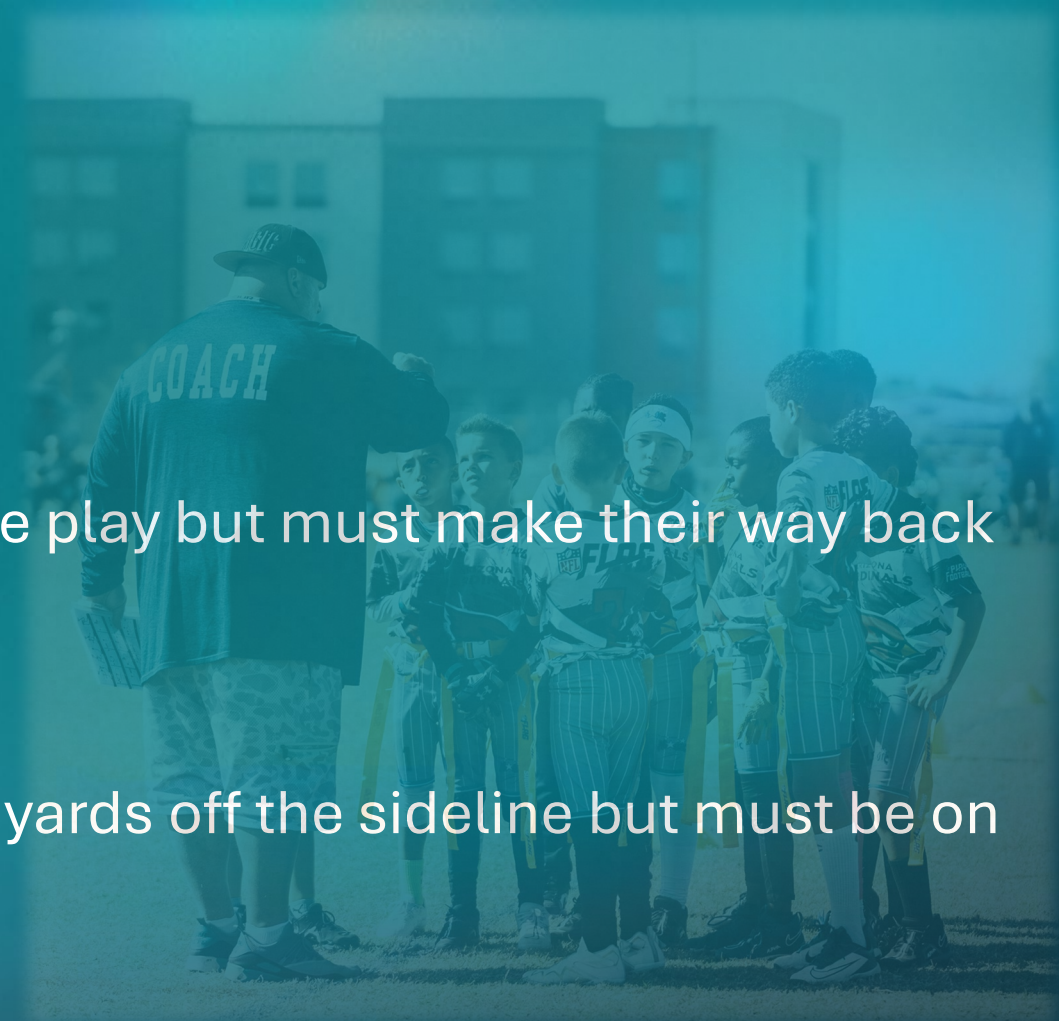
- Touchdowns are 6 points
- 1 point (5 yard line)
- 2 points (10 yard line)
- 2 points for safeties
- 35 point mercy rule stops all scoring (play can continue)
- Both Head Coaches and Referees must sign the score card
- There is NO overtime in season play





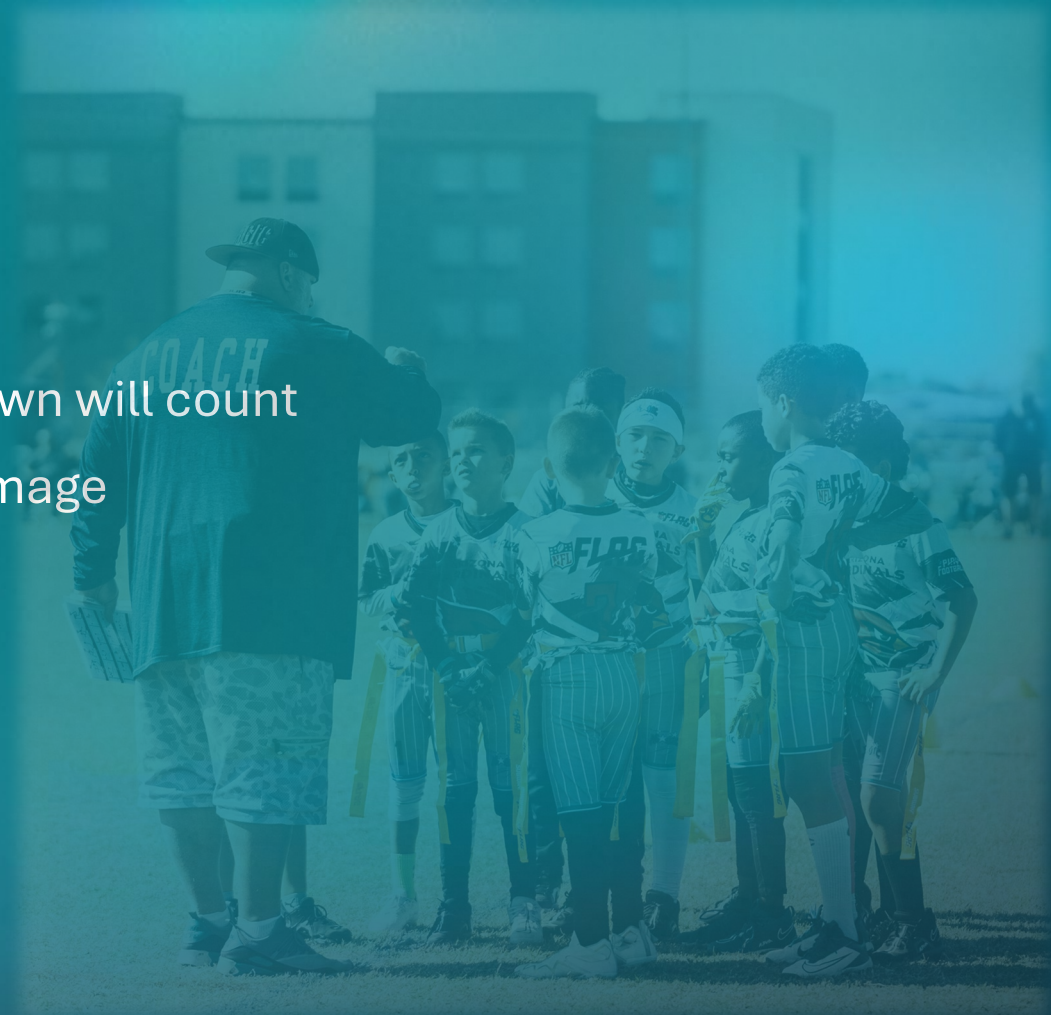
# REFEREE COACHING RULES

- Coaches for Lombardi:
  - (1) One coach can be on the field at a time
    - Coaches can not interfere in the play
- Coaches for Shula:
  - (1) One coach can be on the field before the play but must make their way back to the sideline
- Coaches for Madden:
  - (1) One coach can call the plays from 5-10 yards off the sideline but must be on the sideline before the play starts



# REFEREE RULES

- Dead Ball
  - Ball carriers flag falls out
  - Inadvertent whistle
    - Take the ball where the whistle blew and the down will count
    - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage
  - Fumbles / loss of possession
- Spotting the Ball
  - Where the ball is when the flag is pulled





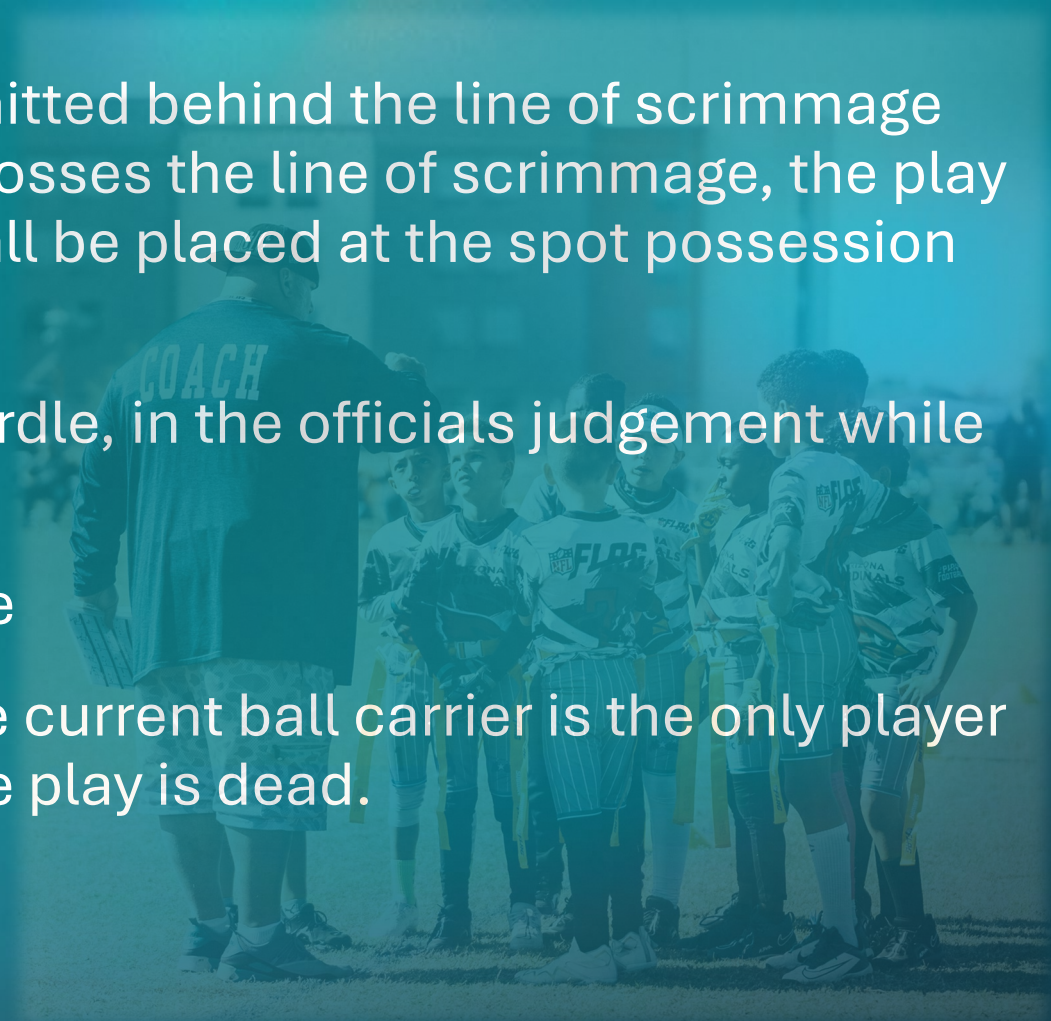
# OFFENSE

- No intentional contact of any kind is permitted.
- Downfield blocking is illegal.
- Ball must be snapped between the center's legs.
- There is a 40 second huddle clock.
- Diving to ADVANCE the ball is illegal.



# REFEREE RUNNING RULES

- Direct handoffs, pitches, and laterals are permitted behind the line of scrimmage only. If this takes place, after the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage, the play is to be blown dead by the official. The ball shall be placed at the spot possession was lost for the next play.
- Runners are not permitted to jump, leap, or hurdle, in the officials judgement while advancing the ball. Ball is dead at that point.
- No blocking or screening is allowed at any time
- Once the ball is advanced beyond the LOS, the current ball carrier is the only player allowed to have possession of the ball until the play is dead.







# REFEREE PASSING RULES

1. Only **1 forward pass**, thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, is permitted each offensive play. The ball must be released prior to crossing the line of scrimmage. There can be unlimited backward passes behind the line of scrimmage.

- **There is no intentional grounding.** The quarterback may throw the ball anywhere across the line of scrimmage to avoid a sack.
- **All forward passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage are illegal forward passes**, unless touched by a defender. All forward passes must go beyond the line of scrimmage.

2. **Shovel passes** are allowed and must be a forward pass, from behind the line of scrimmage, and received beyond the line of scrimmage.

3. The quarterback has a **7 second "pass clock."** If a pass is not thrown within 7 seconds, the play is dead, the down counts and the ball is **returned to the line of scrimmage**. Once the ball is handed off, pitched or lateraled behind the line of scrimmage, the 7 second rule is no longer in effect.

- If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7 second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS) and it will be the next down.
- If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated like an incomplete pass.

# MADDEN RULES

- At 4th grade (10U, 12U, 14U), the game changes with these two rule additions:
- **NO RUN ZONES** – Designed to avoid short yardage power situations.
  - "No Run Zones" are located 5 yards before midfield and 5 yards before the end zone. If you have a starting position in this zone, you must throw the ball to advance it.
  - "No Run Zones" are identified by discs and the **official** will let you know if you are in this zone before the play.
- **RUSHING THE QB** – You **MAY RUSH** the QB in the Madden division as long as you **are 7 yards back from the line of scrimmage** at the snap of the ball.



# PASSING GAME

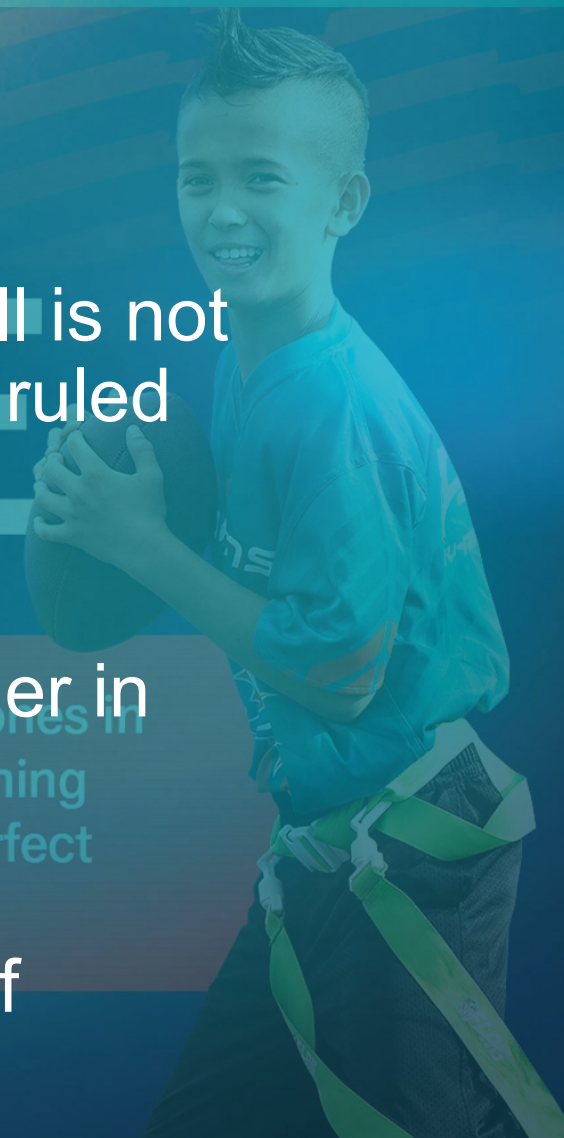
- No QB's sneaks allowed.
- The QB has a **seven (7) second** "pass clock". If the ball is not handed off or thrown within seven seconds, the play is ruled dead with a loss of down.
- Once the ball is handed off, the "pass clock" is no longer in effect.
- All forward passes must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.

 NFL FLAG

NO-RUN

ZONE

End zones are not zones in flag football. No running allowed - time to perfect that pass!





# REFEREE RECEIVING RULES

1. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.





# DEFENSE

- No intentional contact of any kind is permitted.
- Defensive players cannot cross the line of scrimmage until the ball has been handed off.
  - Exception: Madden Division (we will discuss this in a second).
- **LOMBARDI** defensive players MUST give a five-yard cushion off the line of scrimmage.
  - **LOMBARDI**: The defensive 5-yard alignment cushion will be reduced to 3-yards any time the ball is spotted on or inside the 5-yard line.
- **FLAG GUARDING** – Any attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, arm, or shoulder, or covering the flags with the football jersey.



# REFEREE BLITZING RULES

## MADDEN RULES ONLY

All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. (1) One player can rush the quarterback. The rusher MUST identify by raising their hand before the snap. The rusher MUST rush the passer immediately after the snap. Delayed rush is NOT permitted. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend the line of scrimmage

A special marker, or the game official, will designate a rush line 7 yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.

Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, contact to the QB, unless ruled incidental by the official, would result in a roughing the passer

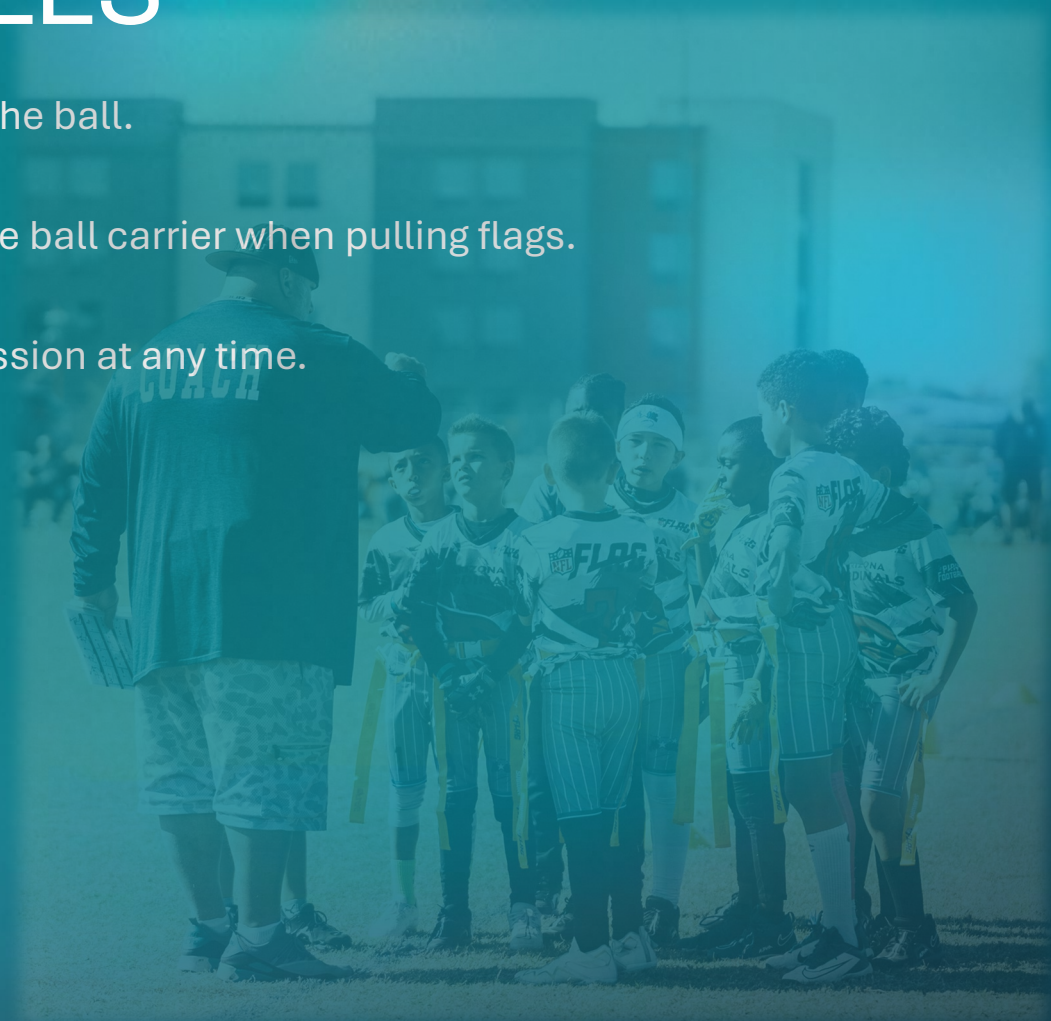
The offense cannot impede the rusher's PATH to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. The PATH is set pre-snap from the rusher or rushers directly to the QB. PATH does not move once the quarterback moves. If the "path or line" is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense's responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher's 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 rusher(s) responsibility to go around the offensive player and avoid contact.





# REFEREE FLAG PULLING RULES

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 the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.

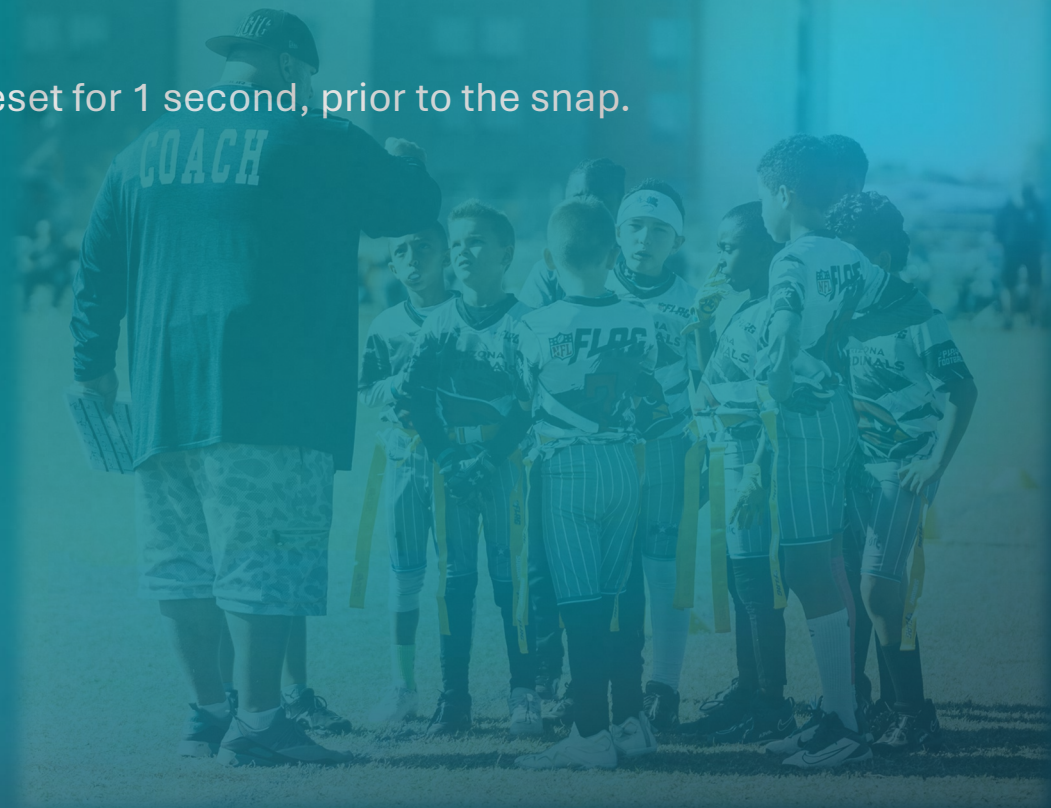




# REFEREE FORMATIONS RULES

\*Only one player is allowed in motion when the ball is snapped. The player MUST be in motion, off the line of scrimmage. All motion must be parallel or backwards to the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

\*\*Players may shift positions on offense at any time, all players must still reset for 1 second, prior to the snap.





# TIME SITUATIONS

- Games are scheduled to be played every hour on the hour.
- Games are played with two 24-minute halves with a two-minute halftime.
- Each team is allowed one (1) 60 second timeout per half.
- Timeouts do not carry over to the second half.
- The clock will only stop for time-outs and halftime.

# PENALTIES

## ii. Defensive spot fouls

Defensive pass interference	Automatic first down
Holding/Illegal Contact	+5 yards and automatic first down
Stripping	+5 yards and automatic first down

## iii. Offensive spot fouls

Screening or blocking	-5 yards and loss of down
Charging	-5 yards and loss of down
Flag guarding	-5 yards and loss of down
Holding/Illegal Contact	-5 yards and loss of down

## iv. Defensive penalties

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and automatic first down
Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards and automatic first down
Offside / illegal substitution	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (Before the receiver has the ball)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	+10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

## v. Offensive penalties

Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards and loss of down
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards and loss of down
Offside / false start / illegal substitution	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal forward pass (Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Offensive pass interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal motion (More than one person moving)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Procedure	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Taunting	-10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down







# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

