

**1 - GAME START AND FLOW**

1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.
3. 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) downs to score a touchdown.
4. If the offense fails to score, after crossing midfield, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
5. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.
6. There is NO PUNTING.

**II. Terminology**

|                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Boundary Lines</b>          | The outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines and back of the end zone lines.                                                                                                           |
| <b>Line of Scrimmage</b>       | (LOS) an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.                                                                                                             |
| <b>Line-to-Gain</b>            | The line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Rush Line</b>               | An imaginary line running across the width of the field seven yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.                                                                                        |
| <b>Offense</b>                 | The team with possession of the ball.                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Defense</b>                 | The team opposing the offense to prevent it from advancing the ball.                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Passer</b>                  | The offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Rusher</b>                  | 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.                                                                |
| <b>Live Ball</b>               | 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. |
| <b>Dead Ball</b>               | Refers to the period of time immediately before or after a play.                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Whistle</b>                 | Sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for a timeout, halftime or the end of the game.                                                             |
| <b>Inadvertent Whistle</b>     | Official's whistle that is performed in error.                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Charging</b>                | An illegal movement of the ball-carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head or initiating contact with a shoulder, forearm or the chest.   |
| <b>Flag Guarding</b>           | An illegal 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, arm or ball.        |
| <b>Shovel Pass</b>             | A legal forward pass across the LOS underhand, backhand or by pushing the ball forward.                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Lateral</b>                 | A backward or sideways toss of the ball by the ball-carrier.                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Unsportsmanlike Conduct</b> | A rude, confrontational or offensive behavior or language.                                                                                                                                                       |

## **2 – COACH DUTIES**

1. Assure players remain safe, and that game play is fair and fun.
2. Ensure each player plays at least 15 minutes of the game. Exceptions are made for injured/sick players.
3. Head Coaches are solely responsible for communicating with officials during games. Assistant coaches may only approach officials in case of emergency.
4. Directing any comments to officials, fans, opponents, and players in a respectful manner. Any foul language can result in penalties or ejection/suspension.
5. Control player and fan actions and comments by communicating and demonstrating proper sportsmanship behavior.
6. Conduct a competitive and sportsmanlike game for their sole team.
7. Coaches' positioning
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grade:
    - i. Teams may have one coach on the field during games to coordinate play.
    - ii. All other coaches must be on their sidelines and leave 3 feet (1 yard) of space on the sideline for officials to move along and view sidelines.
  - b. 5<sup>th</sup> grade and older:
    - i. Coaches CANNOT be on the field during games (except during timeouts).
    - ii. Coaches, players and fans must be on opposite sides of the field from their opponents.
    - iii. ALL coaches must be on their sidelines and leave 3 feet (1 yard) of space on the sideline for officials to move along and view sidelines.

## **3 – PLAYER DUTIES**

1. Ensure fair play and good sportsmanship.
2. Equipment is ready when:
  - a. Jersey is on and tucked into shorts/pants.
  - b. Wearing a belt provided by or approved by league.
  - c. Belt is worn at hip level, worn over clothing, flags at each side, and no excess belt is dangling (a.k.a. tail).
  - d. Shoes are non-spiked, not metal cleats or other closed toes shoes that are tied or fastened without any tripping hazard (i.e. laces dragging).
  - e. Jewelry is removed. Medical bracelets are fine if taped. Religious wear must be cleared with league to ensure safe accommodation.
  - f. Casts and hard braces must be encased in ½" padding secured to the player. Doctor's authorization will be required as well.
  - g. NO billed hats, offensive graphics/written language, or inadequate clothing coverage will be worn or displayed.
3. No foul language or offensive displays. Doing so will result in penalties or ejection/suspension.
4. Have fun!

#### 4 - EQUIPMENT

1. All players must always wear their flag belts while on the playing fields.
2. Players must wear shoes. Cleats may be used, however cleats with exposed metal are never allowed and must be removed.
3. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads and knee pads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
4. Players must remove all jewelry, hats and do-rags. Winter beanies are allowed.
5. Players' jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants if they hang below the belt line.

#### 5 - TIMING

1. Games are played on a 40-minute continuous clock with two 20-minute halves. Clock stops only for timeouts or injuries **unless** one team gains a 25-point advantage, in which the teams will be allowed to finish the game without any time stoppage and the scoreboard will be disabled.
2. Halftime is one minute and thirty seconds.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
4. **Each team has ONE 30-second timeouts per half.**
5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
6. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
7. 2-Minute Warning: The 2-minute warning is a suspension of play that occurs when two minutes remain on the game clock in each half of a game. This is not a timeout. Rule is in place strictly as a clock stoppage.
8. **NO OVERTIME IN REGULAR SEASON.**
9. PLAYOFF OVERTIME RULES:
  - Overtime Rules There is no overtime during the regular season (games may end in a tie). During the playoffs, a version of the Kansas playoff (college style) OT is used. Play starts at the 15-yard line and each team will have one possession (4 downs) to attempt to both score a touchdown and complete an extra point conversion. If the game remains tied after both teams complete their initial possession, each team is required to attempt a two-point conversion upon every touchdown scored thereafter. This method is repeated until the tie is broken.

#### 6 - SCORING

1. All touchdowns are 6 points.
2. PAT:
  - a. 1 point: 5 yards from end zone (PASS-ONLY)
  - b. 2 points: 10 yards from end zone (Run or Pass)
3. Safeties are 2 points.
4. TEAMS CANNOT RETURN PATS
  - a. This means, if the defending team gets the ball during a PAT the ball is called **dead immediately**.

## 7 - LIVE and 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.
3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered In-bounds as long as ONE-foot contacts the ground in the field of play.

## 8 - LIVE and DEAD BALL (Cont.)

4. **Any official can whistle the play dead.**
5. Play is ruled "dead" when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground.
    - i. **If the ball hits the ground as a result of a bad snap or is fumbled, the ball is then placed where 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 out.
  - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
  - h. The 7 second pass clock expires.
  - i. Inadvertent whistle.
6. If an inadvertent whistle occurs the offense has two options:
  - a. Take the ball where the whistle blew, and the down is consumed OR
  - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage. If it occurs on the last play of the half or game, the offense will be awarded one untimed down and given those two options.

## 9 - RUNNING

1. **The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball UNLESS RUSHED by the designated defensive player(s).** The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
2. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs 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.
3. **Laterals are allowed down field.**
  - a. **Please note that laterals can cause other penalties such as blocking to occur, and teams will be penalized accordingly.**
4. No-run Zones are 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 team approaches only TWO no-run zones in each drive - one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
5. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
  - a. NOTE: throw clock is still counting down until the player who received the handoff passes the line of scrimmage (SEE PASSING RULE 3; 10.3)
6. Spinning/Jump Cuts are allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
  - a. Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.

## 10 - PASSING

1. **All FORWARD passes must be thrown BEHIND the line of scrimmage and received BEYOND the line of scrimmage.**
  - a. Passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage will ALL be considered runs and can be eligible for penalties in the no run zone if the ball carrier passes the LOS (unless they are rushed by the defense).
  - b. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. The quarterback has a 7-second "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within seven seconds, the play is dead, the down is consumed, and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is thrown, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect so long as the ball carrier makes effort toward the line of scrimmage and continues to cross it.

## 11 - 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. Lateral passes are LEGAL downfield any number of times. Defense are able to contest lateral passes until players gain control of the ball (just like a forward pass).
3. 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 toward the line of scrimmage.
4. **A player must have at least one foot in bounds, contacting the ground first to be deemed a fair reception.**
5. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.

## 12 - RUSHING THE PASSER

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback can 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. **The referee will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage.** Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
4. 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 penalty.
5. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. 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 to avoid contact.**

## 13 – PENALTIES

### General

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. (Spot fouls)
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question 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.

### ii. Defensive spot fouls

|                             |                                    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Defensive pass interference | Automatic first down               |
| Holding                     | +5 yards and automatic first down  |
| Stripping                   | +10 yards and automatic first down |

### iii. Offensive spot fouls

|                                              |                            |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Screening, blocking or running with the ball | -10 yards and loss of down |
| Charging                                     | -10 yards and loss of down |
| Flag guarding                                | -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                                                   | +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 (i.e. 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                                                  | +5 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                                                                                                                  | -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 (i.e. More than one player moving in motion)                                                                            | -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 |

**NOTE: Penalty cheat sheets will be provided at each game to the referees to review when needed during gameplay.**

## Field Dimensions

