



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA CAMPUS RECREATION – INTRAMURAL SPORTS

FLAG FOOTBALL Revised 10/18/07

PLAYERS AND ATTIRE

Each team will consist of seven (7) players with a maximum of sixteen (16) players on the roster. Each team must have a minimum of five (5) players to start a game. Teams having less than five players are subject to forfeiture of the game.

Each team shall designate a captain. The captain will act as the spokesperson for the team and make all decisions. Only the captain may talk to officials. Team representatives, including players, spectators, team managers, coaches, score keepers, and group members are subject to these rules.

Shirts must be A) long enough to tuck in so that they remain tucked in the player's pants/shorts during the entire down or B) short enough so there is a minimum of 4 inches from the bottom of the shirt to the player's waistline.

Players MAY NOT wear pants or shorts with any belt loops or pockets. They are prohibited. Players must be removed until an equipment change is made. They must sit out one play. **Penalty: 10 yards.**

Towels may not hang from a player's waist or otherwise interfere with the possible removal of a flag. Towels however may be used and kept on the ground fifteen yards behind the offensive line of scrimmage before and during the play.

All jewelry must be removed, including watches, earrings, bracelets, etc. Players may wear soft, pliable basketball or wrestling kneepads on legs, knees, and/or ankles. **Penalty: 10 yards and loss of down; automatic 1st down if found on a defensive player (if noticed on a player making a play). Player will be asked to leave the game and remove the jewelry.**

PLAYER EQUIPMENT-OPTIONAL

Ace Bandage. Players may use an ace bandage no more than two turns thick in any given area. It can be anchored at each end by tape not to exceed two turns.

Gloves. Players may wear gloves which must consist of a soft, pliable and nonabrasive material.

Headwear. Players may wear a headband no wider than 2" and made of non-abrasive cloth, elastic, fiber, soft leather or rubber. Rubber or cloth elastic bands may be used to control hair.

Knee Pads. Players may wear soft, pliable basketball or wrestling knee pads on the leg, knee and/or ankle.

Mouth Piece. It is strongly recommended that a mouth piece be worn by all players.

Play Books.

a. Players may carry a play book inside their clothing as long as it is not made of an unyielding material and is not visible. If carried on the field, a player must keep it rather than throw it on the ground.

b. Players may wear a soft, pliable wrist/forearm band that contains plays.

Sunglasses. Players may wear pliable and non-rigid sunglasses.

GAME, FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

The rectangular field is divided into four (4) zones, each 20 yards in length; and two (2) end zones, each ten (10) yards in length.

The use of dangerous equipment is prohibited. Shoes must be worn at all times. Cleated shoes must have rubber or polyurethane cleats. Metal or screw-on cleats are **NOT** allowed. Player will be removed until an equipment change has been made. The player must sit out one (1) play. **Penalty: 10 yards.**

Men will use the regular size football, while women will use the intermediate size football. Game balls will NOT be provided, so teams must provide their own. The referees will not handle the football; the offensive team is responsible for the ball at all times.

Winners of each division will receive an Intramural Champion T-shirt.

INITIAL POSSESSION, LENGTH OF GAME, AND TIME CONSTRAINTS

The winner of the pre-game toss shall have the first choice of the following options: A) offense or defense; B) which goal to defend; or C) to defer their choice of A and B until the beginning of the second half.

A game shall consist of two (2) 20-minute halves, with a 5-minute intermission in between halves. Each half will have a continuous clock, for the first 18 minutes of each half. The only time the clock will stop in the first 18 minutes of each half is for injury and referee's timeout. In the last 2 minutes of each half the referee will inform both teams that there is 2 minutes remaining in the half or game and that the clock has stopped. The clock will stop on:

- Incomplete legal or illegal forward pass - starts on the snap.
- Out-of-bounds - starts on the snap.
- Safety - starts on the snap.
- Team time-out - starts on the snap.
- First down - dependent on the previous play.
- Touchdown - starts on the snap (after the Try).
- Penalty and administration - dependant on the previous play
 - EXCEPTION: Delay of game - starts on the snap.
- Referee's time-out - starts at his/her discretion.
- Touchback - starts on the snap.
- Team A is awarded a new series - dependant on the previous play.
- Team B is awarded a new series - starts on the snap.
- Either team is awarded a new series after a legal punt - starts on the snap.
- Team attempting to conserve time illegally - starts on the ready.
- Team attempting to consume time illegally - starts on the snap.
- Inadvertent whistle - starts on the ready.

The offensive team has 25 seconds to put the ball in play after the referee signals "ready for play."

Each team is allowed two (2) 1-minute timeouts per half. Any timeouts not used during the first half do NOT carry over into the second half. The clock will stop on all timeouts.

SUBSTITUTIONS AND TIEBREAKERS

Free substitutions are allowed after any whistle, provided the substitution does not delay the game. However, no offensive substitute may enter unless he/she joins the huddle and is part of the huddle at the time when it breaks.

Tie games will be broken using a "Texas Tiebreaker":

- 1) A coin toss will precede the tiebreaker. Team winning the toss has three (3) options: A) offense; B) defense; or C) direction. The opposing team has the remaining choice.
- 2) Play will begin on the 10-yard line and each team will have four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If Team A scores on its four plays, then Team B will have four (4) plays to score. If no team has scored after their respective plays, then the process is repeated. If Team A started the overtime on offense then in the second overtime Team B will start on offense.

- 3) When a pass is intercepted, it can be returned. If an interception is returned, then the game will be over. If the interception is not returned, then the team that intercepted the ball will then have possession of the ball and begin their series of four (4) plays on the 10-yard line.
- 4) Penalties are assessed similar to the regular game. A team shall be given a new series of four (4) plays when an automatic first down penalty is accepted. Dead ball penalties after a touchdown are penalized on the extra point attempt. Live ball penalties committed by either team after Team B gains possession during an attempt or overtime shall be enforced at the succeeding spot. Dead ball penalties following a successful attempt will be penalized from the succeeding spot, Team B's 10-yard line, if accepted.
- 5) Tiebreakers will be played on one side of the field throughout the whole overtime.

DEFINITION OF PLAYING TERMS

Scrimmage Line: The scrimmage line for Team A is the yard line and its vertical plane, which passes through the point of the ball nearest its own goal line. The scrimmage line for Team B is the yard line and its vertical plane, which passes through one yard from the point of the ball nearest its own goal line.

Removal of Flag Belt: When the flag belt is clearly taken from the ball carrier the down shall end and the ball is declared dead.

The position of the ball when the player is deflagged determines the spot of the next line of scrimmage.

A defensive player may not hold, push or knock down the ball carrier in an attempt to remove the flag, nor shall an offensive player hold, block or run through a defensive player trying to remove the flag belt.

When a runner loses his/her flag belt, either accidentally or inadvertently, play continues. The deflagging attempt reverts to a one-hand tag of the runner above the waist and below the shoulder.

BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL, OUT OF BOUNDS

The ball is declared dead when the ball touches the ground A) on a fumble, B) on a lateral, C) on a pass, or D) after touching a player on a punt.

The ball becomes live once the official blows the ready to play whistle.

The sideline and the end lines are considered out of bounds. Only one foot needs to touch in bounds in order for a pass to be completed.

Once an offensive or defensive player steps out of bounds, that player is no longer eligible to be the first person to touch the ball. **Penalty: 5 yards and replay of down.**

SERIES OF DOWNS

In a series of four (4) downs, the ball must be advanced to the next zone before a new series of downs can be awarded to the offensive team. Yardage lines are considered part of the forward zone.

HANDLING THE BALL (PUNTS, SNAPS, HANDING, CATCHING, AND PASSING)

PUNTS:

If a punt is to be made, the team punting must announce it before the down starts. After the announcement, the punt must actually be made; NO FAKE PUNTS. The offensive team making the punt must have four (4) men on the line of scrimmage; the defensive team does not need anyone on the line of scrimmage. The receiving team may have

blockers for the punt, but the blockers may not pass the line of scrimmage at any time; they may only jump in a vertical plane, never passing over the line of scrimmage. The offensive team may not move until the ball is punted away (except for the punter, who may take steps to punt the ball away). After the punter receives the snapped ball, he/she must punt it within five (5) seconds. **Penalty – Stalling: delay of game. Penalty – Offensive movement before the ball is snapped: false start.**

The defensive team may not build a pyramid or support each other in any manner in order to block or attempt to block a punt.

Kick Catch Interference: While any punt is in flight beyond the kicking team's scrimmage line, the kicking team shall not touch the ball or the receiving team, nor obstruct the receiving team's path to the ball, unless the punt has been touched by the receiving team. The kicking team may catch, touch, muff or bat a punt in flight if the ball is beyond their scrimmage line and if the receiving team is not in position to catch the ball.

PENALTY: Kick Catch Interference, 10 yards (S33). Receiving team may choose a 10 yard penalty from the previous spot with the kicking team retaining the football and the down replayed, or they may accept an awarded catch at the spot of the interference.

SNAPS:

The ball may be snapped between the legs or to the side of the snapper, from the ground.

The player who receives the snap **MUST** be at least two (2) yards behind the offensive line of scrimmage. Direct snaps are illegal; it may not be directly under the center.

If an eligible player is deflagged prior to touching the ball on a forward attempt, it is defensive pass interference.

During the interval between downs, two (2) or more consecutive encroachment fouls are committed by the same team. **Penalty: 10 yards for the second encroachment foul.**

The offensive team must have a minimum of four (4) players on the line of scrimmage.

HANDING:

Any player may hand the ball forward or backward at any time.

CATCHING:

Forward pass that is caught or intercepted in bounds. If the pass is caught simultaneously by members of the opposing teams inbounds, the ball becomes dead at the spot of the catch and it belongs to the offensive team.

PASSING:

All players are eligible for a forward pass. The passer may pass the ball from anywhere **BEHIND THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.**

The passer shall not intentionally ground the ball in order to avoid a sack. **Penalty: 5 yards from the spot of foul and loss of down.**

SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACKS

Touchdowns will be worth six (6) points.

A team is given the choice of going for 1, 2, or 3 points after scoring a touchdown. Once the captain makes a decision, it may only be changed if a timeout is called. Ways of scoring a successful point after attempt are: A) by running or passing from the 3-yard line = 1 point; B) by running or passing from the 10-yard line = 2 points; C) by running or passing from the 20-yard line = 3 points.

Touchdown Verification: The player scoring the touchdown must raise his/her arms so the nearest official can de-flag the player. If a player is not deflagged with one good pull by the official, and the official determines the flag belt has

been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed. The player is disqualified, and it is a foul. Penalty: 10 yards from the previous spot and loss of down.

After every score, the ball will be placed on the new offensive team's 14-yard line.

After a safety is scored, the team that is awarded two (2) points will automatically gain possession at their own 14-yard line.

If the defensive team returns an interception on a point after attempt, the defensive team will be awarded three (3) points.

Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by twenty-eight (28) anytime under 10 minutes remaining in the game, the game will be over.

PLAYER CONDUCT

It is illegal to steal or attempt to steal (strip) the ball from a player with possession of the ball. The object of the game is to deflag a ball carrier, not to steal the ball. Penalty: 10 yards from the spot or the end result of the play.

Roughing the Passer: Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after has clearly been thrown. The defensive player may not make contact with the throwing arm of the passer.

Flag Guarding: Ball carriers shall not guard their flags by blocking (with their hands, arms or the ball) the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt.

The defensive player shall not (intentionally or accidentally) hold, grasp or obstruct forward progress of a ball carrier when in the act of removing the flag belt.

Flag Belt Removal: A defensive player intentionally pulling or removing a flag belt from an offensive player is illegal.

Penalty: 10 yards from the line of scrimmage.

Offensive Screen Blocking: The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her sides or behind his/her back. Any use of the arms, elbows, legs or knees to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her feet in order to gain position before, during or after screen blocking.

Blocking and Interlocked Interference: Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for him/her by screen blocking, but shall not used interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any matter.

Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense: Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used to grab or push the opponent aside. The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgment of the official. A rusher may use his/her arms or hands to break a fall or retain his/her balance.

There will be no bumping, checking, or any other intentional contact between a defender and offensive pass receiver. Both offense and defense teams are limited to screening an opponent.

Defensive players may not trip ball carriers in an attempt to remove their flag belts.

At half time the field is reserved for players and coaches only. Any other spectators/fans on the field will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. ***Penalty: 10 yards assessed at the beginning of the second half.***

CO-REC FLAG FOOTBALL STIPULATIONS

Co-rec games will be played with two (2) teams of eight (8) players each (4 males and 4 females). If playing with seven (7) players, a team may either have four (4) males and three (3) females or four (4) females and three (3) females. Six (6) players are required to start the game and avoid a forfeit (3 males and 3 females). In the case of an injury, the game may be continued with less than six (6) players, given the team has the opportunity to win.

Either size football will be used for co-rec games (regular size or intermediate size).

Games will consist of two (2) 20-minute halves and a 5-minute half time period.

Minimum Line Players: The offensive team must have at least five (5) players on their line of scrimmage at the snap.

Penalty – Illegal Procedure: 5 yards from the line of scrimmage.

Open Play: A male QB (quarterback) is able to pass to a male or female receiver. Everyone is eligible to receive a pass.

Closed Play: Only a female may gain yardage from a pass thrown by a male QB. A female is allowed to pass the ball to a male or female receiver beyond the line of scrimmage. These are the only possible ways for the following play to become open.

Illegal Forward Pass: (Co-rec only) If a male were to throw to another male on a closed play. If a crew of officials erroneously indicates the “open/closed” status of a down, then the defense has the option to repeat the down or take the result of the play. This must be done prior to the next snap.

Male Runner: A team’s male runner cannot advance the ball through their scrimmage line. He may receive a pitch only after the ball has been brought through the line of scrimmage by a female runner. **Penalty: Illegal Advancement: 5 yards from the previous spot.**

Touchdown Values: If a female player scores a touchdown, the offensive team receives nine (9) points. If a female player throws a legal forward pass (to a male or female receiver) and a touchdown is scored, the offensive team receives nine (9) points as well. Those are the only 2 ways (9) points could be scored.

Points After Attempt: If the play was closed on a touchdown, the extra point play will automatically be open. If the play was open on a touchdown, the extra point play will be closed if it was a male to male play. The extra point will remain open if it was a male to female play. The point values for point after attempts will remain the same as single-sex league rules.

Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by thirty-seven (37) points anytime under 10 minutes remaining in the game, the game will be over.

FOULS AND PENALTIES SUMMARY

Loss of 5 Yards

1. Required Equipment Worn Illegally
2. Delay of Game (Dead Ball)
3. Illegal Substitution
4. Punt Formation and Snap
5. Punting the Ball
6. Encroachment (Dead Ball)
7. False Start (Dead Ball)
8. Illegal Snap (Dead Ball)
9. Offensive Player Not Within 15 yards of the Ball
10. Illegal Formation
11. Player Out-of Bounds When the Ball is Snapped

12. Illegal Motion
13. Illegal Snap
14. Illegal Shift
15. **Advancement by a Male Runner (Corec Only)**
16. Intentionally Throwing a Backward Pass or Fumble Out-of-Bounds
(Loss of Down if by Team A)
17. Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of Down if by Team A)
18. Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down)
19. **Illegal Forward Pass--2 Consecutive Male to Male Forward Pass Completions
(Loss of Down) (Corec Only)**
20. **Illegal Forward Pass--Male Catches Pass and Runs Beyond the Scrimmage Line
(Loss of Down) (Corec Only)**
21. Help the Runner

Loss of 10 Yards

1. Illegal Player Equipment
2. Quick Kick
3. Kick Catch Interference
4. Two of More Consecutive Encroachments During the Same Interval Between Scrimmage Downs
5. Offensive Pass Interference (Loss of Down)
6. Defensive Pass Interference (Automatic First Down)
7. Illegally Secured Flag Belt on a Touchdown (Loss of Down if by Team A)
(Automatic First Down if by Team B)
8. Unsportsmanlike Player Conduct
9. Spiking, Kicking, or Throwing the Ball During a Dead Ball
10. Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Players and Nonplayers
11. Strip or Attempt to Strip the Ball
12. Contact With Opponent on the Ground
13. Throw the Runner to the Ground
14. Hurdle any Player
15. Contact Before or After the Ball is Dead
16. Unnecessary Contact of Any Nature
17. Drive or Run into a Player
18. Position Upon Shoulders or Body of a Teammate
19. Tackle the Runner
20. Fight an Opponent
21. Roughing the Passer (Automatic First Down)
22. Illegal Offensive Screen Blocking
23. Interlocked Interference
24. Defensive Use of Hands
25. Illegal Flag Belt Removal
26. Guarding the Flag Belt
27. Stiff Arm
28. Obstruct or Hold the Runner
29. Batting a Loose Ball

30. Illegal Kicking
31. Illegal Participation
32. Illegal Substitute/Replaced Player
33. Pretended, Unfair Substitution

Disqualification Associated With Certain 10 Yard Penalties

1. Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Player Conduct
2. Flagrant Spiking, Kicking or Throwing the Ball
3. Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Players and Nonplayers
4. Intentionally Contacting an Official
5. Flagrant Personal Fouls
6. Tackle the Runner
7. Fight an Opponent
8. Intentional Tampering With Flag Belt--Offense (Loss of Down)
9. Intentional Tampering With Flag Belt--Defense (Automatic First Down)