

## Rule1 - The Game, Field, Officials, Players and Equipment

### Section 1 - The Game Objectives

- Article 1)** Each team shall have an opportunity to play offense and they will begin a new series of four downs to:
- a) Cross into the opponent's end zone in possession of a live ball for a touchdown
  - b) Obtain a first down by crossing the midfield first down line.
- Article 2)** The Defensive team shall try to legally prevent the offensive team from crossing into their end zone or from obtaining a first down.
- Article 3)** The winning team is the team who accumulates the most points in regulation play or in any overtime periods
- Article 4)** A minimum of a single game official or a maximum of three officials shall enforce the rules

### Section 2 - The Playing Field

- Article 1)** The game shall be played on a field that is:
- a) 50 yards long from goal line to goal line with two 10-yard end zones at each end of the playing field.
  - b) 30 yards wide from sideline to sideline.
  - c) Divided in half at the midway point with a solid line that designates the line to gain (or first down line).
- Article 2)** Additional field markings shall include:
- a) A Short hash line five yards into the field of play from the goal line that designates:
    - (1) Where team possession will start after an unsuccessful or successful try after a touchdown
    - (2) Where team possession will start after a punt is declared
    - (3) The line of scrimmage for a one-point conversion attempt after a touchdown is scored
    - (4) The start of the no-running zone when an offensive team snaps the ball headed toward that end zone.
  - b) A short hash line 5 yards on each side of the line to gain that serves as the line used for the "no-running zone" when a team is headed toward the first down line
  - c) A short hash line 12 yards into the field of play from the goal line that serves as the "two-point conversion" line and the initial rushing marker line.
- Article 3)** The referee(s) shall use two markers during play:
- a) The first marker is used to mark where the line of the scrimmage is located for penalty enforcement and for returning the ball to the spot after an incomplete pass.
  - b) The second marker is used to designate the line from which a rusher must begin his/her rush and this marker is **always** seven yards toward the defensive team's goal line.
  - c) Protests of any of an official's rulings will not be recognized

- Article 4) The league will provide a single game ball for each field**
- a) Teams may elect to use the SFEA provided game ball OR they may elect to use their own game ball provided the following conditions are met.
    - (1) The team takes responsibility for getting their game ball off and on the field.
    - (2) The ball they provide is legal. The referee shall determine if a game ball is of legal size and meets specifications for play.
    - (3) The opponent is allowed to use the game ball if they so choose.

<b>Section 3 - Teams and Players</b>
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- Article 1) A team shall consist of:**
- a) Four players participating in the game.
  - b) Any number of substitutes as approved by the league president or announced policy.
  - c) Only players listed on the team roster as maintained by the league president.

**NOTE:** Teams playing with non-roster players will be subject to forfeiting the game in which non-roster players were used. Captains are responsible for keeping the league president updated on any roster changes and roster updates must be approved by the league president.

- Article 2) Teams are expected to be at the game site at the scheduled start time. The following rule procedures shall be used.**
- a) The minimum number of players to start a game is 3 team members
  - b) If a team has 3 members and the game is scheduled to begin, the game must be started.
  - c) If a team fails to field at least 3 players within five minutes of the start time, the team (or teams) failing to field a team will incur a loss (forfeit).

- Article 3) The following is a list of player designations:**
- a) Team Captain: The team captain is the single spokesperson for the team and only this person may address an official about a possible misapplication of a rule.
  - b) Team Spokesman: Each player is responsible for providing a team spokesman who will make all decisions regarding penalties. Team spokesman may change during the game depending upon personal in the game

**Section 4 - Player Equipment**

- Article 1) Mandatory Equipment. Each player who participates shall participate in the game while wearing the following equipment:**
- a) A flag belt provided by the league that is to be worn in such a way that the flags themselves are completely exposed.
  - b) Athletic shoes that completely cover the toes , top of the foot, and heel of the foot.
- Article 2) The following equipment may be worn if the referee determines it does not present a hazard to other participants.**
- a) Non-metal cleats that are designed for playing sports on grass.
  - b) Batting, golf, or receivers gloves that are not sticky or tackified to enhance contact with the football.
  - c) Mouth protectors.
- Article 3) Illegal Equipment: The following equipment may NOT be worn by any players who participate:**
- a) Hard substances in its final form such as leather, rubber, plastic, plaster, or fiberglass when worn on the hand, wrist, forearm, or elbow even if padded.
  - b) Any splint or other device made out of metal on the hands or arms.
  - c) Jewelry or watches of any kind except for a ring that does not have an edge that can cut.
  - d) Shorts, pants or sweats that have pockets unless the pockets are taped shut.
  - e) Hats with bills or sun visors
  - f) Shirts that are un-tucked if they are long enough to reach the top of the shorts
  - g) Football pads of any kind.
- Article 4) The head official for the game has sole power to determine if equipment is legal.**

**PENALTY SUMMARY: – Wearing illegal equipment during a live ball -  
Illegal Game Equipment – 5 yards (always from previous spot)**

## Rule2 - Definitions of Playing Terms

### Section 1 - Ball – Dead, Live, Loose

- Article 1) A dead ball is a ball not in play. The ball is dead during the interval between downs.
- Article 2) A live ball is a ball in play. A ball **ONLY** becomes live after it has been legally snapped.
- Article 3) A loose ball is a pass or fumble. A loose ball continues to be loose until a player secures possession. A loose ball that has touched the ground is grounded. A loose ball in flight is not grounded.

### Section 2 - Batting and Kicking

- Article 1) Batting is **INTENTIONALLY** slapping or striking the ball with the arm or hand and is illegal only when the ball is in possession of a player.

### Section 3 - Blocking.

- Article 1) Blocking is the act of intentionally impeding the progress of an opponent when a teammate has possession of a live ball.

### Section 4 - Catch

- Article 1) A catch is the act of establishing possession of a live ball that is in flight, and first contacting the ground inbounds with any part of the body (hand, foot, knee, etc) and thereafter maintaining possession.

### Section 5 - Charging

- Article 1) Charging is the act of attempting to run over or attempting to drive through an opponent who is set. Charging is always illegal. A player is allowed to maintain his spot on the field.

### Section 6 - Deflag

- Article 1) A player is deflagged when his/her flag belt comes detached at the buckle.
- Article 2) A player is deflagged by an opponent or because the flag belt comes off the person.

### Section 7 - Diving

- Article 1) Diving is the act of leaving both feet and the head is nearly parallel with the body. Diving to deflag an opponent, diving while in possession of a live ball, or diving and making any contact with an opponent is illegal

### Section 8 - Down – Loss of Down

- Article 1) A down begins only when the ball is legally snapped. It ends when the ball becomes dead by rule.
- Article 2) Loss of down is shorthand, meaning loss of the right to replay a down.

<b>Section 9 - Encroachment</b>
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- Article 1) Encroachment occurs when a player is illegally in the neutral zone or begins a rush from inside the 7-yard rush marker without retreating behind the marker.**

<b>Section 10 - Field Boundaries</b>
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- Article 1) The end lines and sidelines themselves are out-of-bounds.**  
**Article 2) The line-to-gain is obtained if the ball penetrates the front side of the line.**

<b>Section 11 - Flag Guarding</b>
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- Article 1) Flag guarding is an illegal action that prevents an opponent from pulling the flag. Such acts include but are not limited to:**
- a) Accidentally or intentionally hitting the hand of an opponent who is trying to deflag the ball carrier when the opponents hand is in the vicinity of the flag.
  - b) Holding the flag belt itself..
  - c) Lowering the shoulder
  - d) Stiff arming
  - e) Jumping, leaping or diving.

<b>Section 12 - Forward or Backward Pass</b>
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- Article 1) A forward or backward pass is determined by where the pass is first contacted by any player or by where it hits the ground.**

<b>Section 13 - Fouls</b>
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- Article 1) A foul is any infraction of the rules for which a penalty is prescribed.**  
**Article 2) Types of fouls are:**
- a) Dead ball – A foul that occurs before a ball becomes live and after the ball becomes dead in the interval between downs.
  - b) Double – one or more live-ball fouls (other than Unsportsmanlike) committed by each team at such a time that the penalties offset and the down is replayed.
  - c) Live ball- A foul that occurs while the ball is live and a down is in progress.
  - d) Multiple – two or more live-ball fouls (other than Unsportsmanlike) committed by the same team. The offended team is awarded a choice of which foul to accept or may decline all fouls.
  - e) Non-player and Unsportsmanlike – a non-contact foul while the ball is dead or during the down which is not illegal participation and does not influence the play in progress.
  - f) Player – a foul other than Unsportsmanlike by a player in the game hereafter refereed to as a foul.
  - g) .Simultaneously with the snap – an act which becomes a foul when the ball is snapped.
- Article 3) No foul causes loss of ball.**  
**Article 4) No foul causes a live ball to become dead.**

<b>Section 14 - Fumble</b>
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- Article 1) A fumble is the loss of player possession other than by handing, or passing the ball.**

**Section 15 - Handing**

- Article 1) Handing the ball is transferring possession of the ball from one player to another in such a way that the ball is still in contact with the first player when it is touched by a teammate.**
- Article 2) Handing the ball is NOT a pass.**

**Section 16 - Holding**

- Article 1) Holding is the intentional act of grasping a player and is illegal.**

**Section 17 - Huddle**

- Article 1) A huddle is two or more players of the same team grouped together before a down.**

**Section 18 - Hurdling/Jumping/Leaping**

- Article 1) Hurdling, jumping, and leaping are terms used to describe the acts of jumping over a prone opponent, jumping upward, or jumping up and in another direction. Hurdling is always illegal. Jumping and leaping are only illegal by a player who is in possession of the ball.**

**Section 19 - Momentum**

- Article 1) If a player intercepts a pass inside the 5-yard line and his/her original momentum carries him/her into his/her own endzone where he/she is downed, the ball shall come back out to the spot where he/she possessed the ball.**

**Section 20 - Player designations**

- Article 1) A player is any one of the 8 members of a team who start a game or replace another player.**
- Article 2) The Center is the player who snaps the ball**
- Article 3) The Quarterback is the player who first receives the snap from the Center regardless of whether or not he is lined up directly behind the center.**
- Article 4) A runner is a player in possession of a live ball or is simulating possession of the ball.**
- Article 5) A disqualified player is a player who is no longer eligible to participate in the game.**
- Article 6) A substitute is a player who is eligible to fill a player vacancy.**
- Article 7) A replaced player is a player who has been notified by a substitute that he is to leave the field.**

**Section 21 - Possession of the ball**

- Article 1) A player is in possession of the ball after it has been handed or snapped to him/her or after he has completed a catch.**

<b>Section 22 - Plays – For Purposes of penalty Enforcement</b>
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- Article 1) A loose-ball play is action during:**  
 a) A legal forward pass  
 b) A backward pass  
 c) The run or runs which precede the legal forward or backward pass.
- Article 2) A running play is any action not included in Article 1 above.**

<b>Section 23 - Pushing</b>
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- Article 1) Pushing is contacting an opponent with hands or body to move them in the direction of the push and is illegal.**

<b>Section 24 - Ready for Play</b>
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- Article 1) The ready for play signifies that the ball may be snapped and the 30-second play clock has begun.**

<b>Section 25 - Rush Line</b>
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- Article 1) The rush line is the spot behind which a defensive rusher(s) must begin his/her QB rush either before or after the ball is snapped.**

<b>Section 26 - Spinning</b>
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- Article 1) Spinning is the act of twisting the body around while standing on one foot and is legal.**

<b>Section 27 - Spots</b>
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- Article 1) The basic spot is a point of reference for penalty enforcement. It is the previous spots for a play in which there was a pass and the end of the run for a running play or after a player secures possession of a backward or forward pass.**
- Article 2) The enforcement spot is the point from which the penalty is enforced.**
- Article 3) The dead-ball spot is the spot where the ball becomes dead by rule.**
- Article 4) The previous spot is the spot where the ball was last snapped.**
- Article 5) The spot of the foul is the spot where the foul occurred.**
- Article 6) The spot where a run ends is where the runner loses possession of the ball due to a fumble or where the ball becomes dead in his/her possession.**
- Article 7) The succeeding spot is the spot where the ball would next be snapped if a foul had not occurred.**

<b>Section 28 - Tackling/Tripping</b>
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- Article 1) Tackling/Tripping is the act of pushing, pulling, or tripping the ball carrier so he/she is downed and is always illegal.**

### **Rule3 - Periods, Time Factors, and Substitutions**

<b>Section 1 - The Coin Toss</b>
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- Article 1)** The captain winning the coin toss has his choice of one of these two options:
- a) Going on Offense/Defense First
  - b) Which goal to defend.
- Article 2)** The captain losing the toss will select from the other option.

<b>Section 2 - Length of Periods</b>
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- Article 1)** The total clock running time shall be 40 minutes with two twenty minute halves.
- Article 2)** Teams captains may mutually agree upon shortening one or both periods in the event of an emergency or impending darkness.
- Article 3)** The clock shall be a running clock except for the last minute of each half when the clock shall only stop:
- a) For a charged team timeout.
  - b) When a team obtains a first down.
  - c) If either team scores (safety or touchdown).
  - d) For a change of possession (including after a team declares a punt).
  - e) For any penalty.
- Article 4)** The clock shall be started on the snap.
- Article 5)** If during the last timed down of a period there is a penalty that is accepted, a double foul, a touchdown, or an inadvertent whistle, the period will be extended by an untimed down. If any of the above occurs in the untimed down, the down is again repeated.

<b>Section 3 - Charged and Official's timeouts</b>
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- Article 1) Officials are allowed to use their discretion for stopping and starting the clock at any point during the game.
- Article 2) Teams shall be given two timeouts for each half and they are to be no longer than 1 minute in length. Unused timeouts do not carry over from the first half to the second half. Unused timeouts do not carry over to any overtime periods.
- Article 3) Requests for charged team timeouts after a team has used their allotted timeout must be denied.
- Article 4) A player may request and be granted a timeout for the purpose of reviewing the possible misapplication of a rule. Judgment calls may NOT be questioned. If referee does not alter the ruling, the team loses its timeout. If a team does not have any timeouts, the team will be charged with delay of game.

<b>Section 4 - Ball Ready for Play and Delay</b>
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- Article 1) The ball is ready for play when, after it has been placed for a down, the referee gives the ready-for-play signal. A team then has 30 seconds to put the ball in play.
- Article 2) A team shall not delay the game by:
- a) Failing to snap the ball within 30 seconds of the ready-for-play.
  - b) Failing to notify the official of their punt decision on 4<sup>th</sup> down after the ready-for-play is whistled.
  - c) Unnecessarily carrying the ball after it has become dead.
  - d) Failing to immediately place the opponents flag belt immediately on the ground or giving it back to the opponent.
  - e) Calling a conference with the referee and the referee failing to alter his ruling after a team has used its allotted timeouts.
  - f) Failing to properly wear required equipment when the ball is about to be snapped.
  - g) Snapping the ball before the ready-for-play.
  - h) Acting in any way that unduly prolongs the game.

**PENALTY SUMMARY: Dead Ball – Delay of Game – 5 yards.**

<b>Section 5 - Substitutions</b>
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- Article 1) No substitute shall enter while the ball is live or participate in any play.
- Article 2) A replaced player must leave his/her huddle before the team breaks the huddle.

**PENALTY SUMMARY: (Art 1.) Illegal Participation - 10 yards and loss of down if by offense. Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down if by defense.. (Art 2.) Dead ball - Illegal Substitution – 5 yards.**

## **Rule4 - Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Player Downed**

<b>Section 1 - Putting the ball in play</b>
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- Article 1)** The ball shall be spotted at a teams own 5 yard line to start each half and after a try after touchdown
- Article 2)** On 4<sup>th</sup> down a team must notify the referee if they want to give the ball back to their opponents (declaring a punt). When a team declares a punt, the ball is automatically moved to their opponent's 5-yard line and their opponent will take possession of the ball at that spot.

<b>Section 2 - Dead Ball and End of the Down</b>
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- Article 1)** The ball becomes dead and the down is ended when:
- a) A runner goes out of bounds
  - b) A team fumbles the ball (ball is returned to the spot where the player who fumbled lost possession).
  - c) Any forward pass is incomplete or is simultaneously caught by opposing players. Simultaneous catches are awarded to the offensive team.
  - d) When a touchdown occurs.
  - e) When an official inadvertently sounds his/her whistle.
  - f) When a player is deflagged.
  - g) When a player in possession of the ball touches the ground with anything other than hand or foot.
- Article 2)** During a down with an inadvertent whistle, the team who was last in possession may take the ball at the spot where the ball was last in player possession at the time of the whistle or they may elect to replay the down from the previous spot.

<b>Section 3 - Player downed</b>
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- Article 1)** When the player is deflagged, the ball is spotted at the point where his forward foot was when he was deflagged.
- Article 2)** When a player goes out of bounds, the ball is spotted at the spot where his front foot was when he broke the plane of the sideline.
- Article 3)** After a player is downed, the officials shall move the ball back to the middle of the field for the next snap.
- Article 4)** If the flag belt comes off a player before he/she has possession of the ball, and the player subsequently gains possession, the player is downed at the spot where he/she secures possession.
- Article 5)** If a player's flag belt becomes covered by a shirt that becomes untucked during a play shall be declared down when touched at a spot where the flag belt is located.

## **Rule5 - Series of Downs, Number of Down and Team Possession After Penalty**

<b>Section 1 - Series of Downs</b>
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- Article 1)** The team who puts the ball in play is awarded a series of four downs to advance the ball across the first-down line.
- Article 2)** A new series of downs is awarded as follows:  
a) After a first, second, or third down, a 1<sup>st</sup> down shall be awarded only after considering where the ball is located including after any penalty (including dead-ball and unsportsmanlike conduct penalties) is administered.  
b) After a fourth down, a new series shall be awarded only after considering where the ball is located including after the administration of any live-ball foul. Unsportsmanlike and dead-ball fouls are not considered in determining if the line-to-gain was reached.
- Article 3)** Once a team is awarded a new series by crossing the line-to-gain, they cannot again be awarded a new series by crossing over the line-to-gain again, even if a penalty takes them behind the line or part of a penalty includes an automatic first down and they are still behind the line-to-gain.

<b>Section 2 - Down and Possession After Penalty</b>
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- Article 1)** When a penalty is declined, the number of the down is the same as if the penalty had not occurred.
- Article 2)** If a double-foul is called, the down is the same as the down in which the ball was last snapped.
- Article 3)** When a foul occurs before a change of team possession, the ball always belongs to the offense after enforcement. The number of the next down is the same as that of the down during which the foul occurred unless penalty acceptance includes loss of down or automatic first down or the ball is beyond the line-to-gain after enforcement.
- Article 4)** When a dead-ball foul occurs or a foul is simultaneously with the snap, the number of the next down after enforcement is the same as the number established before the foul occurred unless enforcement of a foul by the defense results in an automatic first down.
- Article 5)** Loss of down is not enforced if a penalty occurs after an interception.

## Rule6 - Snapping, Handing, and Passing the ball

### Section 1 - Before the Snap – Both Teams

- Article 1) After the ready-for-play no player may be in or beyond his side of the neutral zone.
- Article 2) After the ready-for play, all players on the field who will participate must establish themselves in the formation without attempting to use the substitution process to deceive their opponents.

**PENALTY SUMMARY: (Arts 1) Dead Ball - Encroachment - 5 yards.  
(Art 2) Dead Ball – Illegal Substitution – 5 yards**

### Section 2 - Offense – Before the Snap.

- Article 1) A team is required to have a Center who:  
a) must snap the ball to a QB.  
b) is an eligible receiver.  
c) may snap from off to one side or between his legs. The center is allowed to have a single foot over the neutral zone when snapping from off to one side.  
d) may lift the ball to grip it but must place the ball on or near the ground to snap it.
- Article 2) No offensive player shall false start.
- Article 3) All players are eligible to receive passes.
- Article 4) After a huddle or shift, all offensive players must momentarily come to a stop before the ball is snapped. (A shift is having two or more players moving).
- Article 5) Only one A player may be in motion at the snap and then only if such motion is not toward their opponents goal line.

**PENALTY SUMMARY: (Arts 1a,c,d) Dead Ball - Illegal Procedure - 5 yards  
(Art 2) Dead Ball – False Start – 5 yards  
(Art 4) Illegal Shift – 5 yards  
(Art 5) Illegal Motion – 5 yards.**

### Section 3 - Handing and Pitching the Ball

- Article 1) Any player may hand the ball backward or forward provided both players involved in the handing are in or behind the neutral and there has not been a change of possession.
- Article 2) One backward pass or pitch is allowed during a down and the player must make the backward pass or pitch from behind the neutral zone. No pitches or backward passes may follow a forward pass.

**PENALTY SUMMARY: (Art 1, 2) – Illegal Handing/Pitch/Forward Pass- 5 yards and loss of down,**

### Section 4 - Fumbles

- Article 1) If a Team fumbles the ball, the ball is spotted at the location where a player last had possession.
- Article 2) No player shall try to strip the ball from an opponent who has possession.

**PENALTY SUMMARY: (Art 2) – Illegal Batting - 10 yards and loss of down.**

<b>Section 5 - Forward-Pass Clarification</b>
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- Article 1)** It is a legal forward pass, if during a down and before team possession has changed, a player on offense throws the ball with both feet of the passer in or behind the neutral zone when the ball is released. Only one forward pass may be thrown during a down.
- Article 2)** An illegal forward pass is a foul and includes loss of down. Illegal forward passes include:
- A pass after team possession has changed.
  - A pass from beyond the neutral zone.
  - A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible receiver, unless a team is attempting to stop the clock and the pass is immediately grounded.
  - A subsequent forward pass after the first legal forward pass.
- Article 3)** If the penalty for an illegal forward pass is accepted, it shall be enforced from the spot of the illegal forward pass. If the offended team declines the penalty, it has the option of having the down counted at the spot of the illegal incomplete forward pass or of having the results of the play.
- Article 4)** If a forward pass, legal or illegal, is completed, the ball may be advanced by the player in possession. If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by two opponents, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team.
- Article 5)** It is forward-pass interference if:
- Any player of the offense or defense interferes with an opponent's opportunity to move toward, catch, or bat a pass.
  - Pulls the flag belt of an opponent before the opponent has touched the pass.
- Article 6)** Pass interference restrictions begin for the team starting on offense starting with the snap.
- Article 7)** Pass interference restrictions begin for the team starting on defense starting with when the pass is released.
- Article 8)** Defenders may not hold or block and opponent from running his/her pass route.
- Article 9)** It is not forward-pass interference if:
- Unavoidable (unintentional contact) contact occurs when two or more opponents are making a simultaneous bona fide attempt to catch, bat a pass, or unintentionally blocking the rusher.

**PENALTY SUMMARY: (Art 1, 2) – Illegal Forward Pass – 5 yards and loss of down.**  
**(Art 5) Offensive Pass Interference – 10 yards and loss of down. Defensive Pass Interference – 10 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.**  
**(Art 8) Holding / Illegal Contact – 10 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.**  
**(Art 9) Unintentional Contact (5 yards, repeat down)**

## Rule7 - Scoring Plays and Touchback

### Section 1 - Point Values

- Article 1) The team who scores the most points wins the game.
- Article 2) Points are scored as follows:
- a) Touchdown – 6 points
  - b) Safety – 2 points
  - c) Successful Try After Touchdown:
    - (1) From 5 yard-line – 1 point
    - (2) From 12-yard line – 2 points.
  - d) Forfeited Game: 7 – 0. Unless offended team is ahead in which case the score at the time of the forfeit stands.

### Section 2 - Touchdown

- Article 1) It is a touchdown when a runner advances from the field of play so his/her feet break the vertical plane of the opponents goal line.
- Article 2) It is a touchdown when a pass is caught by a player when his/her feet is on or beyond his/her opponents goal line.

### Section 3 - Try

- Article 1) After a touchdown the team who scored shall attempt a try. They may opt to attempt to score from the 5-yard line and they will receive one point for a successful try, or they can opt to try from the 12-yard line and they will receive two points for a successful try.
- Article 2) The try begins when the ball is ready for play. It ends when:
- a) The defense secures possession of the ball.
  - b) The try is successful.
  - c) The ball becomes dead outside of the end zone
- Article 3) If during a try a loss of down foul occurs, the offense will score NO points and the try is not replayed.
- Article 4) If during a successful try, the defense fouls, the offense is given the option of enforcing the foul at the succeeding spot or replaying the down following enforcement.

### Section 4 - Action of the Quarterback after the snap

- Article 1) Even if he/she is rushed, the quarterback may not advance the ball across the line of scrimmage unless he/she receives the ball back after handing or passing it to a teammate.
- Article 2) If not rushed by a defensive player, the quarterback shall have 7 seconds to release his/her pass. If the pass is not released within 7 seconds, the play shall be whistled dead, the ball will be placed at the previous spot, and the down shall then be the next down in the series. If this occurs on 4<sup>th</sup> down, the defense would then take over possession of the ball.

**PENALTY SUMMARY: (Art 1) Illegal Running - 5 yards.**

### Section 5 - Action of the Defense at the snap

- Article 1)** Any player who rushes the passer, must begin his/her rush from behind the 7-yard rush marker.
- Article 2)** Any number of players may rush the quarterback.
- Article 3)** A team is not obligated to rush the quarterback.
- Article 4)** Defensive players inside the 7-yard rush marker shall not cross the line of scrimmage until the ball has been handed or passed. Once the ball is handed or passed, any defensive player may cross the line of scrimmage to rush or defend a receiver.
- Article 5)** If the offense fakes a hand-off, the defensive player must return to his or her own side of the neutral zone before crossing the line again even if there is a subsequent handoff or pass before he/she returns.

**PENALTY SUMMARY: (Art 1, 2, 5) Illegal Rush - 5 yards**

## Rule8 - Action After the Snap and Player Conduct

### Section 1 - Intentional/Avoidable Contact by Opponents

- Article 1) Intentional or avoidable hard contact by any players is strictly forbidden. Officials are authorized to eject any player who is guilty of intentionally rough contact. Officials MUST EJECT if a player is guilty of flagrant rough contact.
- Article 2) Players must not: (not an all-inclusive list):
- a) Use hands, arms, or bodies to push an opponent.
  - b) Hold an opponent.
  - c) Trip an opponent.

**PENALTY SUMMARY:**

(Art 1) Personal Foul – 15 yards – If by Offense -automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down. If by defense - loss of down. If flagrant, player is ejected.  
(Art 2 a,b) Offensive Illegal Use of Hands - 10 yards and loss of down.  
Defensive Illegal Use of Hands – 10 yards and automatic first down.  
(Art 2c) Tripping – 15 yards. Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down if by defense or loss down if by offense.

### Section 2 - Legal and Illegal Actions By Any Offensive Player

- Article 1) No player on a team in possession of the ball is allowed to block or obstruct an opponent nor is a player in possession of the ball allowed to use stationary or moving teammates to screen opponents from attempting to deflag the runner.
- Article 2) A team may hand the ball as many times as they want before the ball crosses the neutral zone.
- Article 3) No team shall execute a running play when the line of scrimmage for the play is within the no-rushing zone. The team must throw a pass.
- Article 4) The offense may not execute a running play unless they first hand or pitch the ball.

**PENALTY SUMMARY:**

(Art 1) Illegal Blocking – 10 yards and loss of down.  
(Art 3) Pass Interference – 10 yards and loss of down.  
(Art 4, 5) Illegal Running – 5 yards.

### Section 3 - Actions By a Player in Possession of the ball.

- Article 1) A player in possession of the ball shall not
- a) flag guard
  - b) charge into a set opponent
  - c) dive in an attempt to gain additional yardage.
  - d) Hide the ball under a shirt or other garment.

**PENALTY SUMMARY:**

(Art 1) Flag Guarding – 10 yards and loss of down  
(Art 2) Charging – 10 yards and loss of down  
(Art 3) Diving – 10 yards and loss of down  
(Art 4) Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yards from previous spot and loss of down.

### Section 4 - Actions By the Defense

- Article 1) Defensive players shall not
- a) tackle an opponent.
  - b) dive to deflag an opponent.
  - c) pull the flag belt of an opponent before the opponent touches the ball.
  - d) Push a player in possession of the ball out of bounds.
  - e) Strike the passer's arm from behind for any reason. However, if the opponent is struck by the passer's passing motion, this is not a foul.

**PENALTY SUMMARY:**

(Art 1) Tackling – 15 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down or possible awarding of a score.

(Art 2) Diving – 10 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.

(Art 3) Early Flag Pulling – 10 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down. If intentional, issue warning. Second intentional offense, eject the offender.

(Art 4) Pushing – 15 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.

(Art 5) Roughing the passer – 15 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.

**Section 5 - Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

- Article 1) No player shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner once the officials assume authority for the game. Example include but are not limited to:
- a) Baiting or taunting acts that engenders ill will.
  - b) Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures, even if upset at one's own play.
  - c) Any delayed, excessive, or prolonged act by which a player attempts to focus attention upon himself.
  - d) Using disconcerting words or actions prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with the offensive teams signals.
  - e) Refusing to comply with an official's request.
  - f) Leaving the field between downs to gain an advantage unless replaced or unless with the permission of an official.
  - g) Attempting to influence the decision of an official.
  - h) Disrespectfully addressing a game official.
  - i) Indicating objections to an official's decision.
  - j) Fighting or acting in a combative manner..
  - k) Taunting other players or officials will not be tolerated and is in instant penalty.

- Article 2) When the ball becomes dead in player possession, a player shall not:
- a) Intentionally kick the ball.
  - b) Spike the ball.
  - c) Throw the ball high into the air or from the field of play.
  - d) Fail to place the opponents flag belt directly on the ground or hand it back to him.
  - e) Fail to place the ball on the ground or hand it to the nearest official.

**PENALTY SUMMARY:**

(All Articles) Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yards from succeeding spot. Unsportsmanlike penalties are always enforced as dead-ball fouls from the succeeding spot even if committed during a live ball period.

<b>Section 6 - Unfair Acts</b>
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- Article 1)** A player, substitute, or person not subject to the rules shall not hinder play be any unfair act which has no specific rules coverage.
- Article 2)** Neither team shall commit any act which, in the opinion of the referee, makes a travesty of the game.
- Article 3)** Neither team shall intentionally and purposefully repeat fouls against an opponent.

<b>PENALTY SUMMARY:</b>
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<b>(All Articles) Unfair Act – the referee enforces any penalty he considers equitable, including the awarding of a score or forcing the offending team to forfeit the game.</b>
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## **Rule9 - Enforcement of Penalties**

### **Section 1 - Procedure After a Foul**

- Article 1)** When any foul occurs, the referee at the dead ball interval will notify both captains. He shall inform the offended captain regarding his rights of accepting the penalty or declining the penalty and shall inform him of down and distance for each option. In the case of a double-foul, neither team is consulted because the down is replayed.
- Article 2)** When a live-ball foul is followed by one of more dead-ball fouls by the opponents, it is NOT a double-foul, and the penalties are enforced separately and in the order of occurrence.
- Article 3)** When the same team commits a live-ball foul, followed by one or more dead-ball fouls, all fouls may be penalized.
- Article 4)** Enforcement of a penalty cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. If the distance for the penalty is greater than this, the ball shall be placed halfway from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line.
- Article 5)** The following 5-yard penalties if committed by the offense includes loss of right to replay a down:
- a) Illegal forward handing
  - b) Illegal forward pass
- Article 6)** All ten yard and fifteen yard penalties include either loss of down or automatic first down depending upon who committed the infraction.

### **Section 2 - Double and Multiple Fouls**

- Article 1)** It is a double foul if both teams commit fouls, other than unsportsmanlike, during the same live-ball period in which:
- a) There is no change of possession due to an interception.
  - b) There is a change of possession due to an interception, and the team in possession at the end of the down fouls prior to the interception.
  - c) There is an interception and the team who intercepted accepts the penalty for its opponents foul.
  - d) In a, b, and c, the penalties offset and the down is replayed.
- Article 2)** When a live-ball foul is followed by one of more dead-ball fouls by the opponents, it is NOT a double-foul, and the penalties are enforced separately and in the order of occurrence.
- Article 3)** When two or more live-ball fouls are committed by the same team, only one penalty may be enforced. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties are always enforced.

**Section 3 - Types of Play**

- Article 1)** A loose-ball play is action during:
- a) a legal forward pass
  - b) during a backward pass made by the offense from in or behind the neutral zone and prior to any change of possession.
  - c) The run or runs behind the neutral zone the proceed such a forward or backwards pass.
- Article 2)** A running play is any action not included in article one.
- Article 3)** The end of the run is:
- a) Where the ball becomes dead in possession of a runner.
  - b) Where the runner loses possession
  - c) The spot of the catch when the momentum exception is in effect.

**Section 4 - Basic Spots**

- Article 1)** If a foul occurs during a down, the basic spot is determined by the action that occurs during the down. This the basic spot for penalty enforcement.
- Article 2)** The basic spot is the previous spot:
- a) For a foul the occurs simultaneously with the snap.
  - b) For a foul which occurs during a loose-ball play (pass play or backward pass).
- Article 3)** The basic spot is the spot where any run ends for a foul which occurs during a running play or after a player secures a pass.
- Article 4)** The basic spot is the succeeding spot for:
- a) Unsportsmanlike conduct fouls.
  - b) Dead-ball fouls.
  - c) When the final result of the play would result in a touchback.

**Section 5 - Special Enforcement Rules**

- Article 1)** The enforcement spot for any foul by the defense is the goal line when the run ends in the end zone and would result in a safety.
- Article 2)** If the enforcement spot for any foul by the offense is its own end-zone, the result of the enforcement is a safety.

**Section 6 - All-But-One Principle (Penalty Enforcement)**

- Article 1)** A penalty for a foul occurring during a play is always enforced from the basic spot with one exception. Fouls be the offense behind the basic spot are enforced from the spot of the foul. (See Section 4 above for information on the basic spot).

## Rule10 - Overtime Procedure

<b>Section 1 - Procedure</b>
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- Article 1)** If any regulation game ends in a tie, the following procedure shall be used.
- Article 2)** A coin toss shall be held. The team winning the toss may elect to:
  - a) Go on offense or defense first.
- Article 3)** The game officials shall pick the goal to be used for the overtime period.
- Article 4)** Teams will alternate making a single attempt to score a touchdown from either the 5-yard line for 1 point or the 12-yard line for 2 points.
- Article 5)** A round will consist of each team making an attempt of their choice. The team with the most points after a round will win the game.
- Article 6)** If the score is tied after the first round, the teams shall alternate who goes on offense and defense first.
- Article 7)** If the score is tied after the second round or any subsequent round, both teams will be required to attempt the 2-point conversion from the 12-yard line
- Article 8)** If the game is tied after 5 rounds or due to impending darkness, a coin-toss shall determine the winner. The winning team gets one additional point for the victory.

## **Rule11 - Game Cancellation**

**Section 1 - The following procedure shall be used for games stopped due to weather.**

- Article 1) A game that end at or after halftime shall be considered a complete game and the score shall count.**
- Article 2) A game that ends before the half due to weather shall not be considered a complete game and all play shall not count. Teams may choose to restart the game after rescheduling using current flag football league procedures.**
- Article 3) The decision of SFEA or of the officials to stop a game is final and may not be protested.**

**5 yards**

Wearing illegal equipment during a live ball - Illegal Game Equipment  
Delay of Game – Dead Ball  
Illegal Substitution – Dead Ball  
Encroachment – Dead Ball  
Illegal Procedure  
False Start – Dead Ball  
Illegal shift  
Illegal Motion  
Illegal forward pass (also loss of down)  
Illegal forward handing (also loss of down)  
Illegal Running  
Illegal Rushing of the QB  
Unintentional Contact

**10 yards (Always loss of down or automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down)**

Illegal Participation  
Illegal Batting  
Pass Interference  
Illegal Use of Hands  
Holding/Illegal Contact  
Illegal Blocking  
Flag Guarding  
Charging  
Diving for yardage  
Diving for Flag  
Pulling flag early

**15 yards (Always loss of down or automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down)**

Personal Foul (Eject for flagrant)  
Tripping  
Unsportsmanlike Conduct (Succeeding Spot Enforcement)  
Tackling  
Pushing  
Roughing the passer  
Unnecessary Roughness

## Rule12 - Administrative Rules

### Section 1 - Player Eligibility and Roster Size

- Article 1) For the Men's recreation, interermediate, and competitive leagues, **ONLY** State Farm employees are eligible to play.
- Article 2) For the Women's league and the co-recreational league, both State Farm employees and/or their female spouses are eligible to play.
- Article 3) Teams rosters must consist of at least six (6) full-time players and no more than ten (10) full-time players.
- Article 4) Two players designated as substitutes are allowed per team in addition to the any full-time players. Those designated as substitutes are not eligible for to receive post-season awards.
- Article 5) Teams may not add players to the roster after the season begins unless one of the following occurs:
- a) A roster drops below six full-time players. If a roster drops below six full-time players, teams may add players to the roster to increase the total number of full-time players to six.
  - b) The employee desiring to be added to the roster is a new-hire
- Article 6) Men are only allowed to compete in one Men's only division. Men may play in the co-recreational division and a men's division.
- Article 7) During Co-recreational play, a team with 4 players must place a minimum of 2 women on the field at all times. A team with less than 4 players must place at least one woman on the field at all times.

### Section 2 - Refund Policy

- Article 1) SFEA will give absolutely no refunds once the season begins.

### Section 3 - Schedule

- Article 1) Each team will have eight regular season games on the schedule.
- Article 2) After the eight games have been played, certain teams will be eligible to play in a single-elimination playoff. The number of teams in the playoffs shall be determined after enrollment in the leagues is closed.
- Article 3) Teams that are eligible for the playoffs shall be seeded according to the following:
- a) Teams with the best winning percentage
  - b) If tied, head-to-head record verses the tied teams shall determine the higher seed and/or qualification for the playoffs.
  - c) If tied, the average point difference overall for the regular season shall determine the seeding and/or qualification for the playoffs.
- Article 4) If a game is cancelled due to inclement weather, it may **ONLY** be rescheduled following these procedures
- a) Both captains must work together to agree on a make-up date.
  - b) Those captains then work with the official's coordinator to schedule officials for the make-up game and must use an available field.
  - c) If a field or officials are not available for the date selected, the captains must choose a date when a field and/or officials are available.
  - d) Once officials are confirmed, one of the captains is responsible for contacting the league president to let him/her know the date, time, and field for the make-up game.
  - e) If officials, a game date and time, or a field are not available, the game cannot be made-up and neither team will be credited with a win or loss.

**Section 4 - Score Reporting**

- Article 1)** The officials of the game shall record the score and they shall be responsible for giving the correct score to both captains (or a person representing the team if the captain is absent).
- Article 2)** The winning captain must report the score the league president by email by the next business day. The winning captain must also carbon copy the other team's captain on that email message.
- Article 3)** In the event of a forfeit, the winning captain shall report this to the league president and to the losing captain. Email is the preferred method
- Article 4)** In the event that both teams do not show up or there is a game cancellation due to inclement weather, one of the officials is responsible for reporting this to the league president by the next business day.

**Section 5 - Injuries and Communicable Disease Policy**

- Article 1)** Any open wound must be covered before a player is allowed to participate or continue participating in the game. If a team has substitutes available, a team must substitute for the injured player and the game clock will continue to run. If a substitute is not available and it is reasonable to delay the game, the clock may be stopped to allow the injured player to cover the wound.
- Article 2)** Any injuries that occur during or as a result of playing the game **MUST** be reported to SFEA by filling out an incident report. Incident reports may be available at the field OR they are available online at <http://intranet.statefarm.org/adsiar/instructions.htm>
- Article 3)** The player who is injured should submit the report, or if the player is unable to submit the report, a teammate should volunteer to submit the form for his teammate.
- Article 4)** If a player is severely injured and requires immediate emergency care, a phone call can be made from the gatehouse. If the gatehouse is not available, consider using someone's personal cell phone.

