Flag Football Rules – Utah Intramural Sports – 2012-2013

These rules are general guidelines. More specific rules may be obtained from the Intramural Sports office or at the captain’s meeting.

PLAYERS

- Teams will consist of seven players (3 women and 4 men for co-rec).
- The minimum number of players to begin a contest is five (3 women and 2 men for co-rec).
- The maximum number of players on any given day is 14.
- A team must have 5 players to begin at contest.

EQUIPMENT

- Intramural Sports will supply flags, a game ball, jerseys and officials.
- All players must wear shoes without metal cleats or spikes.
- T-shirts must be worn under the game jersey or your team may provide its own t-shirts (color choice must be approved by Intramural Sports. Shirts must have numbers).

THE GAME

- Each game will begin at the indicated time on the schedule.
- Forfeit time is game time. All teams are encouraged to arrive 10 minutes early.
- Once a team has the minimum number of players necessary to start, they must begin play.
- First possession will be decided by a coin toss and that team will take possession on the 15 yard line.
- The game will consist of two 20 minute halves (running clock except the last 2 minutes of the second half).

PURPOSEFUL CONTACT OF ANY KIND WILL BE A PERSONAL FOUL AND MAY RESULT IN EJECTION FROM THE GAME.

THE FIELD

- The playing field will be approximately 45 x 80 yards with 10 yard end zones.
- The playing field will be divided into four equal 20 yard zones with the 20, 40 (midfield), 20 yard lines serving as the first down lines.
- A team will have 4 downs to cross into the new zone.

RAIN-OUTS

- Rain-outs of league play will not be rescheduled.
- A decision to cancel games due to weather will not be made until 2:00 PM on game day.
- The team captain will be notified by email.
- You may call the office after 2pm to verify the status the games.

OTHER
Alcoholic beverages are not permitted. Violation of this rule will result in forfeiture of the game.
1. **GAME, FIELD, PLAYERS, EQUIPMENT**

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

1.2 Pants or shorts with BELT LOOPS or POCKETS are prohibited. No jeans, jean shorts, cargo pants, or cargo shorts will be allowed.

1.3 Towels may not hang form a player’s waist or otherwise interfere with the possible removal of a flag. Towels however may be used and kept on the ground on the ball before the snap.

1.4 All jewelry must be removed including watches, earrings, bracelets, etc. Players may wear soft, pliable basketball or wrestling knee pads on legs, knees and/or ankle.

1.5 The game shall be played between two teams of 7 players each on a rectangular field. Each team must have 5 players on the field in order to begin the game.

1.6 The field is divided into 4 zones of 20 yards each and 2 end zones of 10 yards each.

1.7 Each team shall designate a captain to act as team spokesperson and make decisions. Only the captain may talk to officials. Team representatives including players, spectators, team managers, coaches, and group members subject to the rules.

1.8 The use of dangerous equipment is prohibited. Shoes must be worn.

1.9 Kicking is not allowed. No kicking tees will be provided.

1.10 Men will use the regular size football while women will use the intermediate size football (Co-Rec may use either size balls). Game balls will be provided but teams may choose to use their own footballs. Referees will not handle the football; the offense is responsible for the ball at all times.

2. **PERIODS, TIME FACTORS, SUBSTITUTIONS**

2.1 The winner of the pre-game toss shall have the first choice of options:

   A. offense/defense

   B. which goal to defend

   C. defers their choice of A or B until the second half.

2.2 Playing time and intermissions. A game shall consist of 2 halves with a 5-minute intermission. Each half shall consist of 20 minutes. The clock will run
continuously during the first half. During the last 2 minutes of the second half, the clock will stop such as in college football:

- Penalties
- Scoring pays
- Incomplete passes/out of bounds
- Injured players
- First downs (until the ball is set in play by referee's ready to play whistle).

2.3 Mercy Rule: If a team is ahead by 19 points (Co-Rec is 23 points) at the two-minute warning in the second half, the game is over. If a team is ahead by 32 points anywhere in the second half, the game is over.

2.5 Each team is allowed two (2) timeouts per half (1-minute time-outs); time-outs not used in the first half are not carried over into the second half. The clock will stop during time-outs.

2.6 Free substitution is allowed after any whistle provided the substitution does not delay the game. However, no offensive substitute may enter unless he joins the huddle and is part of the huddle at the time when it breaks. **PLAYERS SHOULD CHECK-IN WITH THE SCORE TABLE PRIOR TO SUBSTITUTIONS.**

2.6a A team cannot have 8 players at any time during a huddle. Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot

2.6b When breaking a huddle, no player may be within 7 yards of the sideline. Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot

2.7 The offensive team has 40 seconds to put the ball in play after the previous play has ended. Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot

2.7b After a time stoppage, or penalty; the referee will signal the ball “ready for play.” When the ball is “ready for play,” the ball can be snapped. If the ball is snapped prior to this whistle it will be ruled an illegal snap and the team assessed a 5 yard penalty.

2.8 A maximum of 14 players is allowed on the roster on any given day.

2.9 Tie Games: Ties will be broken by the "Texas Tie Breaker"

A. Play will begin on the 10-yard line and teams will have 4 plays each.

B. A coin toss will precede "Tie Breaker". The team winning the toss has 3 options: Offense, Defense, or Direction. The opposing team then has the remaining choice.

C. The object is to score a touchdown and subsequent extra point (1, 2 or 3 points). After team A scores, team B then has 4 plays within which to score. If no team has scored after their respective plays the process is repeated.
D. When a pass is intercepted the defense becomes the offense and begins their series of 4 plays. If the interception is returned for a touchdown, the game is over.

E. Penalties are assessed similar to the regular game. A team shall be given a new series of 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 an overtime shall be enforced at the succeeding spot. Dead ball penalties following a successful attempt will be penalized from the succeeding spot, the team B 10-yard line, if accepted.

F. In the event that both teams are still tied after they both had a chance to score, the choice alternates for offense, defense, and direction to the team that lost the coin toss at the start of the tie-breaker.

3. DEFINITION OF PLAYING TERMS

3.1 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. A player who removes the flag belt from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag belt above his head to assist the official in locating the spot where the capture occurred. A player may dive to remove a flag belt as long as no contact is made with the opposing team.

3.2 The position of the ball when a player is de-flagged determines the spot of the next line of scrimmage.

3.3 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.

3.4 When a runner loses his/her flag belt, either accidentally or inadvertently, play continues. The de-flagging reverts to a one-hand tag of the runner on the shoulders or below.

3.5 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 one yard from the point of the ball nearest its own goal line. A colored puck will signify each.

4. Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out-Of-Bounds

4.1 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.

4.2 The sideline and end lines are considered out of bounds. (Only one foot needs to touch in bounds in order for a pass to be complete).
4.3 Once an offensive or defensive player steps out of bounds, that player is no longer eligible to touch the ball. Penalty: 5 yards and replay the down.

5. **SERIES OF DOWNS, NUMBER OF DOWNS**

5.1 In a series of 4 downs, the ball must be advanced forward into the next zone in order for a new series of downs to be awarded. Yardage lines are considered part of the forward zone.

6. **KICKING THE BALL**

6.1 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, and neither team may move until after the ball has been punted. Defensive and offensive teams must have 4 players on the line of scrimmage until the punt is made. After receiving the ball the punter must put the ball in play within 5 seconds. Quick kicks are illegal. Penalty: Delay of game.

6.2 The defensive team may not build a pyramid or support each other in any manner in order to block or attempt to block a kick. Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot.

6.3 Free Kicks are awarded to a team after a safety. The team who scored a safety will receive the kick (a punt or a kickoff) from the 20 yard line. The receiving team will line up 10 yards from the ball. The kicking team may line up no further than 5 yards from the LOS and may have a running start but may not cross the LOS before the ball is kicked. The receiving team may retreat after the ball has been whistled “ready for play.”

7. **SNAPPING, HANDLING, AND PASSING THE BALL**

7.1 The ball may be snapped between the legs or to the side of the snapper. The ball must be on the ground for the snap.

7.2 The player who receives the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the offensive scrimmage line. Direct snaps are always illegal (under center).

7.3 It is defensive pass interference if an eligible receiver is de-flagged prior to touching the ball on a forward pass attempt.

7.4 During the interval between downs, when 2 or more consecutive encroachments are committed by the same team, the penalty will be 10 yards for the second encroachment foul.

7.5 The offensive team must have a minimum of four players on the line of scrimmage.

7.6 All players are eligible for a forward pass. The passer may pass from anywhere behind the LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.
7.7 The passer shall not intentionally ground the ball in order to avoid a sack, when inside the tackle box.  
Penalty: 5 yards and loss of down

7.8 Any player who leaves the playing field after the snap and returns to the field of play will be deemed ineligible.

7.8b Any ineligible player cannot be the first to touch an airborne pass.  
Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot; repeat down.

8. **SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACKS**

8.1 A team is given the choice of going for 1, 2 or 3 points after scoring a touchdown. Once the captain makes the choice, it may only be changed if a time out is called. Ways of scoring a successful point-after-attempt:

   A) By running or passing from 3 yards = 1 point.

   B) By running or passing from 10 yards = 2 points.

   C) By running or passing from 20 yards = 3 points.

8.2 Touchdown Verification: The player scoring the touchdown must raise his/her arms so the nearest official can de-flag the player. If the player is not de-flagged with one good pull, 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 a loss of down.

8.3 Play after safety. After a safety is scored, the team that is awarded 2 points will receive a free kick.

9. **PLAYERS’ CONDUCT**

9.1 It is illegal to steal or attempt to steal (strip) the ball from a player in possession. The object of the game is to de-flag a ball carrier, not to steal the ball. Penalty: 10 yards from the end of the run.

9.2 Roughing the passer. Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear that the ball has been thrown and may not make contact with the throwing arm. Penalty: 10 yards and automatic first down, tack on the end of the play (if positive yards have been gained), if not, 10 yards from the original spot and automatic first down. If this penalty occurred during a scoring play, the penalty will be enforced on the next possession by moving the ball back half the distance to the goal. This penalty also negates any turnover that occurs on the play.

9.3 Guarding the flag belt. Ball carriers shall not guard their flags by blocking, with arms, hands or ball, the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Penalty: 10 yards.
9.4 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. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.5 The flag belt removal. Intentionally pulling or removing a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball by a defensive player is illegal. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.6 Offensive screen blocking. The offensive screen block shall take place with minimal contact. Excessive blocking calls will be up to the judgment of the official. A blocker may use his/her feet in order to gain position before, during and after screen blocking. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.7 Screen blocking fundamentals – a player who screens shall not:

A. when he/she is behind a stationary opponent, take a position closer than a normal step from him or her;

B. when he/she assumes a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent, make contact with him/her;

C. take a position so close to a moving opponent that his opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take his/her stationary position. This position will vary and may be one to two normal steps or strides from the opponent.

D. After assuming his/her legal screening position, move to maintain it, unless he/she moves in the same direction and path of his/her opponent. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.8 Blocking and interlocked interference. Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for him/her by screen blocking, but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner. Penalty: 10 yards.

9.9 Use of hands or arms by the defense. Defensive players must go around the offensive player’s screen block. Minimal contact is allowed. 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. Penalty: 10 yards.

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

9.11 Players can dive to remove flags.

9.12 No downfield blocking
Flag Football - Penalty Recap

5 Yards Penalties
1. Delay of Game (Dead Ball Foul, RD)
2. Encroachment (Dead Ball Foul, RD)
3. Offside (DB, RD)
4. False Start (Dead Ball Foul)
5. Illegal Motion (RD)
6. Illegal Procedure (RD)
7. Illegal Shift (RD)
8. Illegal Snap (Dead Ball Foul)
9. Illegal Formation (RD)
10. Illegal Touching (RD)
11. Receiving snap within 2 yards of scrimmage line (RD)
12. Illegally handing the ball forward (LOD)
13. Illegal Forward Pass (LOD)
14. Intentional Grounding (LOD)
15. Illegal substitution
16. Aiding runner by teammates
17. Kickoff out of bounds

10 Yards Penalties
1. Personal foul
2. Illegally secured flag belt on touchdown (LOD and player disqualification)
3. Defensive pass interference at spot if inside 10 yards (AFD)
4. Flag guarding, illegal flag belt removal
5. Stiff arm (from spot)
6. Unsportsmanlike conduct (enforce as dead ball foul)
7. Intentional grounding (LOD)
8. Illegal touching (RD)
9. False start (Dead Ball Foul)
10. Encroachment (Dead Ball Foul, RD)
11. Illegal shift (RD)
12. Offside (DB, RD)

15 Yard Penalties
1. Roughing the passer (AFD)
2. Personal foul
3. Personal foul
4. Personal foul
5. Personal foul

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Loose Ball Play: Foul during loose ball play basic enforcement spot is previous spot either of the snap or free kick
Running Play: Foul occurs during running play basic enforcement spot is spot where the related run ends

Basic spot= Previous spot
*For a foul which occurs simultaneously with the snap
*For a foul which occurs during a loose ball play
Basic spot= spot at end of run
*Is the spot where the related run ends
Basic spot= succeeding spot
*Where the ball would be next snapped or kicked

All-but-one Principle
A foul on the offense behind the basic spot
Is enforced from the spot of the foul

“Normal” Basic spot would have been at the end of the run.

For an unsportsmanlike foul, for a dead ball foul, for a non-player foul or when the final result of the play is a touchback and the “normal” basic spot would have been at the end of the run.

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