



## **Youth Flag Football League Rules**

### **Registration/Organizational**

The teams coach/contact must register the team online or in person.

Game times cannot be changed once the full season schedule is released. Schedule requests must be submitted 2 weeks prior to the start of the season.

Teams must wear matching colored shirts/jerseys.

The team must pay the \$20 referee fee in cash prior to the game. Failure to pay your ref fee may result in the game clock being started on schedule, with the game not being started until payment is made.

Teams that forfeit a game are responsible for paying the \$40 forfeit fee (both team's referee fee).

All players must be on the team's roster and be paid in full to play their first regular season game.

Teams cannot borrow players from other teams. Doing so may result in a forfeited loss.

### **General Gameplay**

League is played **7v7**. Less than **5** players will result in a forfeit.

Offenses should consist of 1 QB, 1 RB (may motion out to a WR split), 3 WR, WR/TE, 1 OL.

There are two twenty-minute halves with a 3-minute halftime.

The clock is running time. The buzzer ends the game unless the following occurs: a defensive foul or an extra point attempt that will break a tie.

There are no timeouts.

There is a 30-second play clock. The ref will give a 10-second and 5-second warning. The defense cannot count down the time. Failure to get the play off will result in a delay of game penalty and a loss of down.

The midfield line is the only first-down.

Each team will start with possession on their own end of the field. There are no kickoffs or punts.

If choosing to "punt", possession goes directly to opposing team on their own end of the field.

There are no fumbles. Once the ball hits the ground, it is dead.

A player is down if he: has a flag removed by a defender, has 1 flag and is touched, touches the ball without flags on, has a knee on the ground, or touches the ground with the ball.

Flag-guarding is not permitted. This includes the player holding the flags with his hands or swatting away defenders' hands, etc.

The offense must have 3 players on the line of scrimmage. These players include one lineman and one eligible receiver on each side of the ball. The defense must have 1 player lined up across from the offensive lineman. Defensive Linemen must line up head up on the offensive player in a 2-point stance (aka RB stance). Bull rushing will not be allowed!

If a team only has 5 players at the start of game time, the game will be played as scheduled **6v5**. The 5-man team will lose a skill position on offense and a skill position on defense. Example, a wide receiver and defensive back.

After scoring a touchdown, teams will opt to go for a one or two-point conversion based on distance from the end zone. The difference is approximately four yards. A defensive penalty will reward the extra points and an offensive penalty will negate the points. Extra points cannot be advanced by the defense.

All QB's must start with the ball in their hand's pre-snap. There will be no snapping.

The Quarterback cannot run the ball for any reason, even if rushed.

Quarterbacks cannot be touched above their waist for any reason.

There will be no intentional grounding. As long as the QB throws the ball forward, it is deemed a legal forward pass.

The ball carrier may not lower his/her shoulder or stiff-arm a defender.

Receivers must have one foot in-bounds to complete a catch.

Dual catches belong to the offensive player.

There is no force out rule. Players cannot push another player out of bounds. Doing so will result in a personal foul and potentially an automatic touchdown.

Ball is spotted by where the players hips/flags are when their flag is taken, not where the ball is.

Players cannot dive to attain a first-down or touchdown. The ball will be spotted where the player left their feet.

Players must make all attempts to avoid contact at the referees' discretion.

It is the offensive team's responsibility to return the ball to the referee.

Trick plays are allowed!

Once the defense jumps offside, the play is dead. They cannot get back on side.

There will be no blitzing unless a running back is in the backfield. If the running back goes in motion, the defense may still blitz. You may only send one blitzer for each accounted player in the backfield, that includes accounted offensive linemen. Ex. One RB and 2 OL (TE), defense may rush 3 players.

Defenders cannot swat at the ball or strip the ball from a runner. They must strictly go for the flags.

All other rules not mentioned will be at the Director/Referee's discretion.

### **Blocking**

Live blocking on the line and backfield only. This will consist of the lineman who is ineligible and a tight end, if team chooses to use one. If a team uses a running back, he may open hand block as well.

Blocks must be to the opponent's chest only.

No hitting above the shoulders or below the knees.

No chop blocks.

No blocking in the back.

No player can leave his feet to make a block.

There is no down field blocking. Players cannot use hands or arms to block. Once past the line of scrimmage, the ball carrier must make his/her own attempt to avoid being deflagged. Moving picks are allowed without contact being initiated by the offense.

### **Overtime**

Regular season games will end in a tie. Playoff games will go to overtime with the following format:

A coin flip will determine who has possession of the ball first.

Overtime will begin at midfield, with the offense having 4 downs to advance the ball as far as they can or score. The other team will then get the ball at midfield. If the first team scored, the second team must match the points to continue. If the first team did not score, the second team will only need to advance the ball further down the field to win. This will continue until there is a winner.

### **Penalties/Personal Fouls**

#### **Offense:**

- Delay of Game - 5-yard loss, repeat down (2<sup>nd</sup> time will be a loss of down)
- False Start – 5-yard loss, repeat down
- Holding – Loss of down
- Offensive Pass Interference – Loss of down
- Flag Guarding – Ball will be spotted at spot of foul
- Hurdling/Diving – Ball will be spotted at spot of foul
- Illegal Block Downfield – Loss of down, play will be negated by the penalty

**Defense:**

- Encroachment – 5-yard gain, repeat down
- Defensive Pass Interference – Automatic first down, 10-yard gain
- Roughing the Passer - Automatic first down, 10-yard gain
- Illegal Use of Hands - Automatic first down, 5-yard gain (i.e. Hands to the face)
- Illegal Force - Automatic first down, 5-yard gain (i.e. Swatting, punching, pulling ball from carriers' hands)
- Illegal Belt Pull – Additional 5-yard gain added to spot of foul (i.e. Pulling another player's belt back, restricting the players forward progress)
- Unnecessary Roughness – Automatic first down, 10-yard gain (i.e. Tackling another player) \*\*Warning will be given and player must leave field for 2 minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> penalty will result in ejection from the game\*\*

\*Any altered flags will result in ejection from the game. It is the players' and coaches' responsibility to inspect their own flags.

\*Players must have their jerseys tucked in. Holding penalties may not be called if a shirt is untucked. If jerseys are untucked, a warning will be given. Second warning will result in a delay of game penalty.

\*There is no profanity permitted. This is a youth league and family-based establishment. This applies to coaches, players, and spectators.

**Coaches/Parents**

\*Please do not enter the field of play to argue calls. Please respect all players, coaches, and referees and encourage fair play and sportsmanship. The goal is to have fun. Remain a role model for the kids you are assisting!

\*There will only be a maximum of 3 coaches allowed per team. Each team must designate two field coaches and one bench coach. Field coaches are required to call plays, organize huddles, help players get set pre-snap, etc. Bench coaches are responsible for substitutions, assisting in player injuries, and sideline control.

\*If you are a team that is unable to field the maximum number of coaches, then you must have at least 1 coach on the field at all times and a parent monitoring the sideline.

**Zero-Tolerance Policy**

\*Any verbal or physical abuse towards a referee or any other GoodSports USA staff will not be tolerated. Doing so will result in ejection from the facility and possible suspension. This goes for all players, coaches, and spectators before, during, or after a game.