

KSU Intramurals

Flag Football Rules

(updated 9/3/09)

Play will be governed by the NIRSA 2009 & 2010 Rulebook with the following exceptions and/or highlights.

A. Team Formation

1. Games will be played 7 on 7.
2. Up to 15 players can be on a team roster.
3. Teams will have a 5 minute grace period to field at least 5 players. Players arriving late can join at the next stoppage of play once they have checked in.
 - a. If a team does not have 5 players ready to play within the grace period, the game will be forfeited. If neither team has 5 players present, the game will be a double-forfeit.
 - b. The grace period will begin at the scheduled start time of the team's game.

ALL PLAYERS MUST CHECK IN BEFORE EACH GAME BY SHOWING KSU ID CARD TO SCOREKEEPER. NO ID – NO PLAY

B. Game Length and Timing

1. Coin Toss
 - a. Visiting team will call toss in air
 - b. Team winning toss will be able to make the first choice then, or defer their choices until the 2nd half
 - c. Team with choices can pick to begin on offense or defense or chose which side to defend.
 - d. Team losing toss will have the other decision.
 - e. In 2nd half choices are repeated, with the other team getting first pick
2. Playing Periods
 - a. Game will consist of two twenty minute halves, with a 5 minute halftime.
 - b. Clock will stop only for time-outs, injuries and unusual delays during first 38 minutes of play
 1. If clock is stopped for an injury, injured player must leave play for at least one play
 - c. In last 2 minutes, play will stop on the following occurrences:
 1. Incomplete Pass – restart on snap
 2. Out of Bounds – restart on snap
 3. Safety- restart on snap
 4. Time Out – restart on snap
 5. Touchdown – restart on snap (after the PAT)
 6. First Down – restart on the ready
 7. Penalty – restart on the ready
 8. Touchback – restart on snap
 9. Change of possession – restart on snap
 10. Team attempting to conserve time illegally – restart on ready
 11. Team attempting to consume time illegally – restart on snap
 12. Injury Time out – restart on snap
 13. Inadvertent whistle – restart on the ready

3. Time-outs
 - a. Each team will have 2 time-outs per game.
4. Tie Game at end of regulation
 - a. During the regular season, the game will end in a tie
 - b. During the playoffs the following method will be used
 1. Coin toss will be administered with Home Team having the call.
 2. Team winning toss will have choice of offense, defense or side of field.
 - a. Both teams will play toward same end zone.
 3. Each team will have 4 downs to score from the 10 yard line.
 - a. PAT will be attempted according to standard rules.
 4. After each team has had one possession, team in the lead will be declared the winner
 - a. If score is still tied, process will be repeated, with team that lost coin toss choosing offense or defense first.
5. Mercy Rule
 - a. If a team is ahead by 19 points or more in the final 2 minutes of the game, the mercy rule will be declared and the game will be over.
 1. For the purpose of calculating point differential, a team winning by more than 19 points will only be credited for 19 in the standings.
6. Players Equipment
 - a. All players must wear closed-toed athletic shoes
 1. Rubber or plastic molded cleats will be allowed. No metal cleats are allowed
 2. Screw in cleats are allowed as long as there is no exposed metal
 - b. Players must wear athletic pants or shorts without pockets, exposed drawstrings or belt loops.
 1. A player may not turn their clothes inside out or tape pockets closed.
 - c. All jewelry must be removed
 - d. All teams must provide and wear the same color shirts or jerseys with numbers on the back – after the preseason tournament, jerseys will not be provided by the department
 - e. All shirts must be tucked in or cut off with a minimum of 4 inches clearance above the flag belt
 - f. Flag belts will be provided by the Intramural Department.
 - g. Knit caps, stocking caps, or a headband no wider than 2” are the only headwear allowed to be worn
 - h. Braces made of hard, unyielding material are not allowed to be worn unless covered with at least 2 inches of slow recovery rubber or other similar material.
7. Team Area and Substitutions
 - a. Both teams will have team areas on the same side of the field, team boxes will be set up between the 10 and 30 yard line on each side of midfield. Failure to remain within the team box will result in a 5 yard penalty.
 - b. All substitutions must take place prior to the ball becoming live.
 1. All substitutes must enter the field from between the 20-yard lines.
 2. All players substituted for must leave the field between the 20-yard lines.
 - c. A player cannot sub in and then out again without a play occurring, a penalty being called, a timeout being called or the period ending
 - d. PENALTY for the above infractions – Illegal Substitution – 5 yards

C. Flags

1. All players must wear a flag belt supplied by Intramural & Recreation Services.
2. The flag belt should be worn around the waist so that a flag hangs off of each side and one from behind.
3. Flag belt must be legally worn at the start of each play. PENALTY – Required equipment worn illegally – 5 yards
4. A player may not tie or otherwise manipulate his/her flag belt so that it will be difficult to remove. PENALTY – Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 10 yards + loss of down + player disqualification.
5. If a flag comes off inadvertently during a play, no penalty is assessed; to be downed, player can simply be tagged on the body between the shoulders and knees.

D. Basic Gameplay

1. The field will be 80 yards long-separated into 20 yard sections and 40 yards wide; end zones will be 10 yards deep.
2. Teams will start possession on their 14 yard line and have 4 downs to progress the ball to the next zone line to gain on the field.
3. Upon crossing the next zone line to gain, a team will be awarded a new set of 4 downs.
4. A team successfully progressing to the end zone will receive 6 points and a point after touchdown attempt
 - a. After scoring a touchdown, the scoring team will be given the option of attempting a score from the 3, 10 or 20 yard line. If successful, the team will receive 1, 2 or 3 points respectively.
 - b. A team will have one attempt to convert their PAT attempt.
 - c. If the defensive team can intercept the PAT attempt and run the ball back to the opposite end zone, they will receive 3 points.
 - d. If the defense commits a penalty during a play in which a TD is scored, the offense can chose to have the penalty assessed on the PAT attempt or on the first play after the PAT attempt.
5. On fourth down a team will have the option of attempting to make a first down, touchdown, or punting. There are no field goals in flag football.
 - a. If a team does not earn a first down or score a touchdown after 4 downs, the ball will be turned over to the defense from the spot where they were stopped.

E. Start of Drive

1. Offensive team will have choice of ball placement between the hash marks when starting a drive at the start of a half, for a PAT attempt, after a touchback, safety, or touchdown, or at the start of an overtime series.
 - a. Placement must be made before ready to play whistle is sounded.
 - b. If a team disregards referee's question for placement, or does not make a decision; ball will be placed at center of field.

F. Offense

1. Line of scrimmage/starting a play
 - a. The offense will have a 25 second play clock from the referee's ready signal. PENALTY – Delay of Game – 5 yard penalty
 - b. Offensive team must have 4 players on line of scrimmage and within 15 yards of the ball when snapped. PENALTY – Illegal Procedure – 5 yard penalty
 - c. Players on the line shall remain motionless until the ball is snapped.

- d. After assuming the position for snap and adjusting the ball, the center may not move or change the position of the ball in any manner simulating the beginning of the play. The ball must be snapped from the ground, and can be done so between the legs or from a side position. PENALTY - Illegal Procedure – 5 yards
 - e. Only one offensive player may be in motion before the snap; this motion must be lateral or away from the line of scrimmage. If more than one player is in motion, it will be considered a shift, all players must then set for one second before the ball can be snapped. PENALTY – Illegal Shift – 5 yards
2. Moving the ball
- a. Ball can be progressed by ground or air; ball can be handed off or pitched for rushing plays. A dropped handoff or pitch is dead as soon as it hits the ground. A fumbled or pitched ball can be recovered by the defense before it hits the ground.
 - 1. Ball can be passed backwards at any time during a play.
 - 2. A backwards pass or fumble into a team's own end zone will result in a safety.
 - 3. A fumble into the opponent's end zone will result in a touchback for the opponent.
 - b. Passing
 - 1. All offensive players are eligible receivers.
 - 2. Pass must be made from behind the line of scrimmage.
 - 3. Only one forward pass per play.
 - 4. The passer cannot catch his/her own untouched pass.
 - 5. Ball cannot be thrown out of bounds to save a loss of yardage
 - a. PENALTY for violating any of the above rules – 5 yards from the spot of the foul plus loss of down.
 - 6. One foot must land in bounds for a complete pass
 - 7. A catch by a kneeling or prone player inbounds is a legal catch; ball is dead at the spot caught.
 - 8. A ball caught by the offense and defense simultaneously is blown dead immediately and remains in possession of the offense.
 - c. Running the ball
 - 1. Runners shall not guard their flag belt by using their hands, arms or the ball to prevent an opponent from removing the flag belt. The following actions are considered Flag Guarding, a 10 yard penalty:
 - a. Placing or swing the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging.
 - b. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging
 - c. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging.
 - 2. An offensive player may not initiate contact while performing a spin move while carrying the ball PENALTY – 5 yards
 - 3. An offensive player may not stiff arm to ward off an opponent. PENALTY – Personal Foul – 10 yards.

4. A Runner shall not charge into or contact an opponent in his/her path or attempt to run between two opponents unless there is a reasonable chance to make it past without contact. PENALTY – Personal Foul – 10 yards.

d. Punting

1. A punt must be announced prior to the ready signal.
2. The kicking team must have 4 players on the line
3. The punter must be lined up at least 2 yards behind the line of scrimmage
4. Ball may be played off of the ground provided it has not been touched first. If it is touched and falls to the ground, it is dead on the spot.
5. Quick kicks and fake punts are illegal. PENALTY – Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 10 yards.
6. Player movement prior to snap
 - a. Players from either team can move after snap, but not cross line of scrimmage prior to kick crossing the line of scrimmage PENALTY – Illegal Procedure 5 -yards
 - b. Illegal Procedure penalty is no longer a dead ball foul
 - c. Defensive players may attempt to block a kick, but must stay behind line of scrimmage.
 - d. If ball is blocked legally by defense and caught in the air by offense on their side of line of scrimmage, they can advance it.

e. Screen Blocking

1. Contact blocking as seen in regulation tackle football is prohibited. A non contact screen block shall take place. A screen blocker should have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back.
2. ANY USE OF THE HANDS, ARMS, ELBOWS, LEGS OR BODY TO INITIATE CONTACT DURING A SCREEN BLOCK IS ILLEGAL. PENALTY – Personal Foul – 10 yards.
3. A player must be on his/her feet before and after screen blocking
 - a. PENALTY for violation of the above rules – Personal Foul – 10 yards.

G. Defense

1. Before the Snap

- a. The referee will lay down 2 disks on the field, one to mark the line of scrimmage and another 1 yard beyond the line of scrimmage. The area between the disks is the neutral zone. No defensive player should be within the neutral zone prior to the ball being snapped. PENALTY –Encroachment–5 yards

2. Flag Removal

- a. The play will end when the flag belt is pulled from the person in possession of the ball.
- b. The play will be marked where the ball was when the flags were pulled.
- c. A defensive player should stop as soon as he/she has removed an opponent's belt and hold it in the air to assist the official in locating the correct spot.
- d. A defensive player may not hold, push or knock the ball carrier down in an attempt to remove the flag
- e. incidental contact is permitted in the attempt to remove a flag

- f. A ball carrier is considered down when the clip on the belt has become detached.
 - g. If a flag belt inadvertently falls off of a player during a play, he/she should continue on. This player must be downed with a hand tag between the shoulders and knees.
 - h. A player can leave his/her feet to remove a flag as long as it does not impede the progress of another player and is not done in a dangerous manner to any participant.
 - i. A player may not remove the flag belt of an opponent when he/she is not in possession of the ball. PENALTY – Illegal Flag Removal – 10 yards.
- H. Additional Clarification
1. Any contact with passer aside from the attempt to remove flags is roughing the passer. PENALTY – 10 yards + automatic first down
 2. Pushing a receiver/defender is not allowed. PENALTY – Illegal Contact **or** Pass Interference (dependant on time of foul) – 10 yards.
 3. Any dead ball penalty on the defense during a successful PAT attempt will be assessed on the next play from scrimmage at the 15 yard line
 4. On an inadvertent whistle by an official, the play will be dead at the point when the whistle was blown. The offensive team will have the option of accepting the result of the play or replaying the down.

Summary of Fouls

5 Yard infractions

Required equipment worn illegally
 Delay of game
 Illegal Snap
 False start
 Encroachment
 Illegal Procedure
 Illegal Forward Pass (from spot of foul + loss of down)
 Intentional Grounding (from spot of foul + loss of down)
 Helping the runner
 Offensive player not within 15 yards of ball at snap
 Illegal Shift

10 yard infractions

Delaying the start of either half
 Consecutive encroachments on same play
 Illegal Participation
 Offensive Pass Interference (+ loss of down)
 Defensive Pass Interference (automatic first down)
 Illegally secured belt on TD (No TD + loss of down)
 Unsportsmanlike Conduct
 Spiking the ball or not returning ball to official
 Attempting to steal or strip ball from carrier
 Hurdling
 Unfair Acts
 Unnecessary Contact
 Roughing the Passer (Automatic First Down)
 Defensive use of hands
 Flag Guarding
 Illegal Batting
 Illegal Flag Belt Removal
 Personal Foul

10 Yard Penalties with Player Disqualification

Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Conduct
Flagrant Spiking, Kicking or Throwing of Ball
Intentional Contact of Officials
Flagrant Personal Foul
Tackling
Fighting
Intentional Tampering of Flag Belt (+loss of down)

I. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

1. Unsportsmanlike acts will not be tolerated for any reason within any intramural event. The following is a non-exclusive list of acts that are defined as unsportsmanlike conduct.
 - a. Refusal to comply or abide a request or decision of an official
 - b. Intentionally kicking, spiking or throwing the ball in aside from game play
 - c. Attempting to influence the decision of an official
 - d. Disrespectfully addressing an official or opponent– use of profanity towards an official or opponent will be an immediate Unsportsmanlike Conduct flag.
 - e. Intentionally coming into physical contact with an official
 - f. Fighting (Automatic player disqualification)
 - g. Excessive celebration of a touchdown or other game event.
 1. Choreographed team celebration is cause for game forfeit.
 - h. Any flagrant foul (player ejected)
2. **Unsportsmanlike penalties can be assessed before during and after the game**
 - a. Officials should not be pursued off the field to discuss game issues, such harassment will result in suspension from play
3. If a player accumulates 2 Unsportsmanlike Conduct fouls in a game, he/she will be ejected and suspended for next game.
 - a. Player is ineligible for all IM Sports until suspension is served
4. A player accumulating 3 over the course of the season will be removed from the league
 - a. Player will also serve a 1 week suspension from IM Sports
5. A team accumulating 3 Unsportsmanlike Conduct fouls in a game will forfeit the game.
 - a. Team will be removed from league after second occurrence.
6. An ejected player has 90 seconds to leave the Owls Nest Complex. Player must be out of sight and sound.
 - a. It is the team captain's responsibility to control the team and make sure the player leaves the field quietly
 - b. If the player does not leave in a timely manner, the team will be assessed with a delay of game penalty.
 - c. If after 3 minutes the player has not been controlled and removed from the field, his/her team will forfeit.
7. The team captain is also responsible for the conduct of his/her supporting spectators. A team can be penalized for the actions of their spectators. Spectator behavior will also influence a team's sportsmanship rating for the game
 - a. Spectators are to remain building side of the field on the natural turf only
 - b. Only participating checked-in team members are allowed on the sidelines.

J. Team Standings – Playoff Qualifications

1. Teams will be ranked within their division based on winning percentage
2. If two or more teams finish with the same winning percentage, the following tie-break methods will be used:
 - a. A team with a forfeit will automatically be dropped to the lowest placement.
 - b. Head to head result (two-way tie only)
 - c. Point differential
 - d. Points for
 1. In a 3 or 4 way tie, if two teams have the same point differential or amount of points for, the head to head result of those teams will determine placement.
 - e. Additionally: to encourage good sportsmanship, a team winning a game by more than 19 points, will only be credited with 19 points from that game for tiebreaker determination in points c. or d.