



Flag Football Rules Fall-2010



Basic Policies

Rescheduling: There will be no regular season rescheduling. The only rescheduling that will take place will be during the playoffs. Check the IM handbook for procedures.

Cancellation: Any team knowing in advance that they will be unable to play in a scheduled match may request to cancel and take a loss. All cancellation requests must be completed prior to 2:00pm the day of the game, or Friday for Sunday games. The Intramural Sports Office **must** be contacted when cancelling a game.

Forfeit: GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME! A team must report to the game site and be “ready to play” with the minimum number of players to avoid a forfeit. “Ready to play” means checked in with the proper game equipment and on the field/court ready to begin play at the scheduled game time. It is advised that teams show up 15 minutes prior to their scheduled start time. The Intramural Sports Staff will be responsible for calling a forfeit

Protests: Rule interpretation and player eligibility protests must be declared immediately after the play in question. Team captains must announce this to the official/supervisor and the Protest Form must be filed to the Intramural Sports Department no later than 12:00pm the following business day. Rulings involving official’s judgment may NOT be protested.

Sportsmanship: Teams/Participants must receive an average 2.75 sportsmanship rating during league play to be eligible for playoffs. Ratings will be given by officials for officiated sports and supervisors for self-officiated sports, 4 being the highest possible rating and 0 being the lowest.

Conduct: All participants are expected to play according to the rules of the Department, Intramural Sports, and University Regulations. The staff of the Department of Recreation reserves the right to penalize individual participants and/or teams for fighting or other unsportsmanlike conduct. Any individual or team that has or is consuming alcohol is subject to an automatic forfeiture. Since the use of alcohol is unsportsmanlike conduct, the Intramural Supervisors and Officials have the right to eject the player(s) or team and may forfeit the contest to the opponent. In addition, cases involving physical abuse of or between participants and/or spectators may be referred to the Division of Student Affairs for possible action.

Inclement Weather: During league play and/or playoff games, a game “under play” may be called due to inclement weather or mechanical failure of the lights. Situations that would warrant calling games due to inclement weather would be lightning and thunder, tornado warnings and conditions that would be deemed injurious to participants continued play.

The Intramural Supervisor will have the responsibility for calling games due to inclement weather or light failure. Games that are called prior to starting by the supervisor will be re-scheduled (if time permits) by the Intramural Staff. These games will be re-scheduled by the Intramural Staff the next regular office day and notices of the re-scheduled games will be posted. Participants should call the Weather Hotline (940-8888) for updated game information.

Official Game: In the event of inclement weather during the regular season, if a game has reached halftime, it is over and the score is official. If the game has not yet reached halftime or four completed innings, it is considered a cancelled game and will not be counted toward playoff qualification. Cancelled games will only be made up if space and time permits.

Scorecard: Prior to each game, all players must sign in on the official scorecard. The game officials will then verify each player’s identity by checking the players ID. All participants must display their valid Butler University ID in order to participate. **NO ID, NO PLAY! (NO EXCEPTIONS)** An individual whose name appears on the official scorecard will be considered as having played in the contest. Late arriving players must have their name added to the scorecard upon arrival by an official before they may participate.

Eligibility: A participant may play for only one team. They may play on two teams if one of the teams is a Co-Rec team. For more eligibility policies please see the link below to the Intramural Sports Handbook.

More Policy Information: For additional information please review the Intramural Sports Handbook online at: www.butler.edu/intramurals

Equipment

Shoes: Each player must wear athletic shoes. They must be made of soft, pliable upper material (molded plastic, canvas, leather, or synthetic) which covers the foot attached to a composition bottom. Shoes with rubber cleats are acceptable; however, NO METAL may be exposed on cleats.

Jerseys: For all flag football games, it is required that teams wear uniformly colored shirts in order to help distinguish one team from another. During the game, shirts must be tucked in at all times and/or the entire flag belt must be visible by players and officials. See the Intramural Handbook for any further clarification.

Balls: Men will use a regulation football. Women and Co-Rec may use a regulation, intermediate, or youth ball. Each team may provide a ball or the teams may agree upon one ball to play the game with. Balls may be checked out from the intramural sports staff at the field.

Game Regulations

Players: Male/Female team = Seven (7) players

- Minimum = Five (5) players

Co-Rec team = Eight (8) players

- Minimum = Six (6) players

Game Length: A game shall consist of two 20-minute halves, with a 5-minute half-time intermission. Regular playing time will be kept on an automatic timing device. The clock will be kept running throughout the first half and the first 18 minutes of the second half and will not stop for dead balls. There will be a "two-minute warning" in the second half of play.

Overtime: If the score is tied at the end of regulation play during the regular league season, the game will be declared a tie. Overtime procedures will be used in the playoffs ONLY. A new coin toss will determine offense, defense or direction. (all overtime periods are played toward the same goal line) Each team will get 4 downs starting from the 10yd line, if tied after the round another will be played until there is a winner. Penalty's will be administered the same throughout. Interceptions for touchdowns count; however if it is not scored then the intercepting team is given the ball at the 10yd line with a new set of downs.

Officials: The Intramural Staff will assign officials for each scheduled game. All games conducted by the Department of Recreational Sports must be played under the supervision of the Intramural Supervisor employed by the Department. No game may be played without its being scheduled through the Intramural Office. An Intramural Official will keep the scorecard.

Playing Area: All games will be played at the Intramural Sports Fields unless specified. A diagram of the playing field is located at the end of this document for your reference.

Mercy Rule: The NIRSA "Mercy Rule" will be in effect. If a team is 19 or more points ahead in men's or women's, 25 for Co-Rec, when the referee announces the 2 minute warning for the second half or any time after, the game shall be over. If the game is not ended by the mercy rule, the clock will stop on all dead ball situations the final two minutes.

Sport Specific Rules

Illegal equipment: *Any equipment that in the official's judgment could be injurious is illegal to wear.*

- Pants, shorts and shirts must not have exposed drawstrings and/or belt loops.
- All jewelry must be removed before playing. (This includes earrings, necklaces, sunglasses, watches, and rings)
- Stocking hats may be worn but any hat with a hard bill will not be allowed.

- Helmets, casts, shoulder pads, and boots are all examples of illegal equipment.

Flags: The intramural sports staff will furnish flag belts for all contests. All flag belts worn by a team should be the same color. Competing teams should wear different colored flags.

Scoring: Touchdown - 6 points
Safety - 2 points or 1 point on a Try
PAT (run or pass) –
1. 3 points from the 20
2. 2 points from the 10
3. 1 point from the 3

Start of Game: The game shall start with a coin toss, or odds game. The referee shall toss a coin in the presence of the opposing team captains. One (1) captain of the visiting team will be designated to call the fall of the coin. The captain winning the toss shall choose one of the following:

- (1) Take option in the first half
- (2) Take option in the second half.

The options available to teams each half are:

A. To choose whether his/her team will start on (a) offense or (b) defense.

B. To choose the goal his/her team will defend.

C. The opposite team shall than choose between the remaining options.

*The team not having the first choice of options for a half shall exercise the remaining options.

Starting Play: To start each half, following a touchdown, or touchback, the ball will be placed on the 14-yard line of the team in possession. There will be no kickoffs.

Time Outs: Each team will be allowed two time-outs per game. The referee may declare a time-out for any injury or rule interpretation between officials. Each team is granted one timeout per overtime period in playoffs.

NO CONTACT at any time!

Lines to gain: The field is divided into four 20-yard zones. A team shall have four (4) consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone. This may be affected by penalty.

Scrimmage Line: The scrimmage line for the offensive team is the yard line and its vertical plane which passes through the forward point of the ball which is placed at the orange ball spotter. The scrimmage line for the defensive team is the vertical plane which passes one yard from the point of the ball nearest its own goal line.

Ball Responsibility: The offensive team is responsible for retrieving the ball after the down.

Flag Belts: Every eligible participant on the field of play must have a legally secured flag belt at the time of the snap.

Minimum Line Players: The offensive team must have at least 4 players (**Co-Rec requires 5**) on their scrimmage line at the snap. All remaining players must be on or behind the scrimmage line.

Motion: One offensive player may be in motion at the time of the snap, but not in motion toward the opponent's goal.

Shift: The action of one or more offensive players who after taking a set position, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap.

Snapping the Ball: Each time the ball is snapped, it must be a quick and continuous motion of the hand(s). The ball must leave the hand(s) in this motion.

Long Snap: The player who receives the snap must be at least two (2) yards behind the offensive scrimmage line. **No Direct Snaps!**

Ball in Play: On each play after the referee sounds the ready for play whistle, the team on offense has 25 seconds to put the ball in play.

Diving: A player, who is attempting to remove the flag belt, may leave his/her feet. Any contact will be considered the fault of the person diving. Diving by the offensive player is illegal.

Handing and Passing the Ball

Handing the Ball: Any player may hand the ball backwards or forwards at any time at any location on the field.

Backward Pass: A runner may pass the ball backward given that its initial direction is parallel with or towards the defenders end line.

Backward Pass Out-of-Bounds: A backward pass or fumble which goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines belongs to the team last in possession at the out-of-bounds spot. If out-of-bounds behind the goal line, it is a touchback or a safety. If intentionally thrown out-of-bounds to conserve time it is a penalty.

Fumble: Unintentional loss of possession. The loose ball remains live until it hits the ground and therefore becomes dead. While the ball is live, it may be recovered and advanced by any legal player.

Dead Ball: A backward pass or fumble which touches the ground between the goal lines is dead at the spot where it touches the ground and belongs to the team last in possession unless it is lost on downs.

Eligible Receivers: All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass. An offensive player forfeits his/her eligibility once he/she goes out-of-bounds.

Legal Forward Pass: During a scrimmage down one (1) forward pass may be thrown providing the passer's feet are behind the offensive scrimmage line when the ball leaves the passer's hand, and the initial direction of the ball is towards the offenses end line.

Illegal Forward Pass: A forward pass is illegal if:

1. The passer's foot is beyond the scrimmage line when the ball leaves his/her hand.
2. Thrown after team possession has changed during a down.
3. Intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage. (EXCEPTION=A Spike to stop clock)
4. A passer catches his/her untouched forward or backward pass.
5. There is more than one forward pass per down.

Legal Catch or Interception: A pass is considered a catch as long as the first part of the person to make contact with the ground, after the catch, is inbounds. One foot must touch inbound to be considered a catch.

Simultaneous Catch by Opposing Players: If a pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the team that snapped the ball at the spot of the catch.

Incomplete Pass: When a forward pass touches the ground or anything out-of-bounds, it becomes dead.

Blocking

Blocking: All players will be limited to screen blocking. Screen blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without contacting him with any part of the screen blocker's body.

Offensive Screen Blocking: The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back. Any use of the arms, elbows, or legs to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her hand or arm to break a fall or to retain his/her balance.

Screen Blocking Fundamentals: A player who screens shall not:

1. Take position closer than a normal step from the opponent when he/she is behind a stationary opponent.
2. Make contact with the opponent when he/she assumes a position at the side or in front a stationary opponent.
3. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his/her opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or direction. The speed of the player to be screened determines where the screener may take his/her position. This position will vary and must be at least one (1) normal step or stride from the opponent.
4. After assuming his/her legal screening position move, to maintain the position the player must move in the same direction and path of his/her opponent. If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, he/she has committed a personal foul.

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.

Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense: Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used to contact the opponent. A player may use his/her arms or hands to break a fall or retain his/her balance.

Flag Belt Removal

Basics: Every player must have a securely fastened flag belt at the snap. When the flag belt is clearly taken from the runner the down shall end and the ball is declared dead at the spot of the ball when the belt is removed. A player who removes the flag belt from the runner should immediately hold the flag belt above his/her head to assist the official.

Inadvertent Removal: If a flag belt inadvertently falls to the ground, a one hand tag between the shoulders and knees constitutes down.

Defensive Contact: In an attempt to remove the flag belt from a runner, defensive players may inadvertently contact the body and shoulders of an opponent with their hands, but not their face or any part of their neck or head. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the runner down in an attempt to remove the flag belt.

Runner

Flag Guarding: Runners shall not guard the flag belt by using any part of their body or the ball to deny the opponent an opportunity to remove the flag belt. Examples include but are not limited to:

1. Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt.
2. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt.
3. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner that places the arm over the flag belt.

Stiff-Arm: The runner shall be prohibited from contacting an opponent with extended arm or hand.

Obstructing the Runner: The defensive player shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag belt.

Charging: A runner shall not charge into an opponent in his/her path. The runner must avoid contact by changing direction.

Knee Touching Ground: The ball becomes dead if any part of the ball carrier, other than the hands or feet, touches the ground.

Kicking

Protected Scrimmage Kick: The only kick permitted shall be a punt. For each scrimmage kick, offensive team must announce that they are going to punt. The offensive team must have four players on the line of scrimmage until the ball is

kicked. No one shall rush the kicker and no player from either team shall cross the scrimmage line until the ball is kicked.

Kick: Any player becomes a kicker when the ball hits his/her knee, lower leg, or foot makes contact with the ball before it strikes the ground.

Punting After the Snap: After receiving the snap, the kicker must punt the ball immediately and in a continuous motion.

Ball hitting the Ground: When receiving a kick a team may choose to let the ball hit the ground before they pick it up and run; however if the receiving team touches the ball and the ball then touches the ground, the play becomes dead and the ball is spotted where it hit the ground.

Behind the Goal Line: The receiving team may receive the protected scrimmage kick behind the goal line and either down the ball for a touchback or run the ball out of the end zone. If the ball goes out of the end zone, it is ruled as a touchback.

Fair Catch: There are NO fair catches. Any reception off a kick is live unless it is dropped by the receiver.

Penalty Enforcement

Captain's Choice: When a foul occurs, the Referee shall notify both captains. The Referee shall inform the captain of the offended team regarding their options on the penalty. Once a penalty has been accepted or declined, that choice may not be changed.

Establishing the Zone Line-to-gain: The zone line-to-gain shall be established after all penalties are administered and prior to the ready for play signal.

Half the Distance: A measurement cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending teams goal line. If the penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway between the enforcement spot and the goal line.

Loss of down Fouls: Fouls by the offense that result in a loss of down include;

1. Illegal backward pass
2. Illegal forward pass
3. Offensive pass interference
4. Insecure flag belt

Automatic First down Fouls: Fouls by the defense that result in an automatic first down include:

1. Defensive pass interference
2. Roughing the passer
3. Insecure flag belt

Illegally secured flag belt is grounds for immediate ejection.

Co-Rec Modifications

The number of players will be 8 (4 males and 4 females). If a team has 7 players they may have a combination of 3 males and 4

females or *visa versa*. A team may play with as few as 6 (3 males and 3 females; or 4 males and 2 females and *visa versa*).

At the snap, the offensive team must have at least five (5) players on the line of scrimmage.

A male runner may not advance the ball past the scrimmage line. A runner is considered to be a runner upon possession of the ball. There are no restrictions once the ball is beyond the scrimmage line, during a run by a female or after a change of possession.

- Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot.

There are two types of plays in Co-Rec Flag Football:

- a. **Closed Play**- means that a male player may NOT throw a legal forward completed pass to any other male player.
- b. **Open Play** - means any player may complete a legal forward pass to any other player. During the offensive team's possession there may not be two (2) consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. This rule applies to the PAT.

- c. A play becomes closed after a legal and successful male thrower completes a pass to a male receiver. To open a play, the closed play must meet all of the following criteria:
 1. Female involvement (Passer or Receiver)
 2. Legal Forward Pass
 3. Resulting in net positive yards
- d. There are no other restrictions concerning a male passer completing legal forward passes to a female receiver, or female to female, or female to male.
- e. **Penalty:** Illegal Forward Pass, 5 yards from the spot where the second consecutive male to male completed legal forward pass is released, and a loss of down.

Scoring:

- A. **6 points.** → Male to Male scoring
- B. **9 points.** → Any play with a female involved (after a change of possession, if and only if possession is exchanged between the two teams)

All point after touchdown tries are worth the same as general flag football rules.

Penalty, Yardage, Marked from where?
CODE: (PS = Previous Spot) (Spot = Spot of Foul)

5 YARD PENALTIES

Dead Ball Fouls - Loss of 5 Yards

1. Delay of Game (PS)
2. Encroachment (PS)
(2nd consecutive encroachment - loss of 10 yards)
3. False Start (PS)
4. Illegal Snap (PS)
5. Illegal Formation (PS)
6. Illegal Substitution (PS)

Live Ball Fouls - Loss of 5 Yards

1. Aiding Runner by Teammate
2. Failure to Wear Required Equipment (PS)
3. Illegal Forward Pass (+ Loss of Down, if by Team A) (Spot)
4. Illegal Backward Pass (+ Loss of Down) (Spot)
5. Illegal Motion (PS)
6. Illegal Procedure (PS)
7. Illegal Shift (PS)
8. Illegal Male Advancement (PS-CoRec)
9. Intentional Grounding (+ Loss of Down) (Spot)
10. Kickoff Out of Bounds Last Touched by K (PS)
11. Less Than Required Number of Players on the Scrimmage Line at the Snap (PS)

10 YARD PENALTIES

Live Ball Fouls - Loss of 10 Yards

1. Eligibility Lost by Going Out of Bounds and Participating in the Play by Offensive players
2. Fair Catch Interference (PS or Spot)
3. Flag Guarding, Illegal Flag Belt Removal, Stiff Arm
4. Illegal Bat, Illegal Kick, Illegal Participation
5. Illegal Contact
6. Illegal Secured Flag Belt on Touchdown (+ Loss of Down and Score; Player Disqualification) (PS)
7. Pass Interference - Defense (+ Automatic First Down) (PS)
8. Pass Interference - Offense (+ Loss of Down) (PS)
9. Personal Foul
10. Roughing the Passer (+ Automatic First Down) (PS)
11. Unsportsmanlike Conduct (Succeeding Spot)

