



Stillwater Family YMCA

Kindergarten-3rd Grade Flag Football 2010

Rules & Regulations

Equipment

- **BALL** A pee-wee sized football will be used. Teams may provide their own football inflated to their own liking. **Practice and Game balls are all provided by YMCA.**
- **UNIFORMS** All members of the same team must wear the same color jersey. **(Fee covers shirt.)**
 - The lower uniforms may be shorts, warm-ups, pants, or any type of athletic wear, and does not have to match other players.
 - Jersey's must be tucked in. No article of clothing may cover any portion of the player's flag. No non-yielding headgear may be worn. **NO jewelry may be worn.**
 - Any articles deemed dangerous or unyielding by officials need to be removed prior to participation. These articles may include but are not limited to casts, hard or unyielding braces, baseball caps, etc.
- **SHOES** Any flat-soled shoe or completely molded cleat is acceptable. Baseball spikes, track spikes, or any shoes that have steel or metal tips are prohibited. All players must wear shoes. No boots or sandals are allowed.
- **FLAGS** A minimum of two (2) flags will be worn at the waist – one on each side of every player. If the flags are attached to a belt, the belt will be worn snug around players' waist to eliminate turning partially around the waist during an attempted de-flagging. Flag attachments must be via a Velcro flag belt. **Practice and Game flags are all provided by YMCA.**

Length of Games and Time Outs

- **COIN TOSS** If your team wins the coin toss, your team will receive. No choices of deferments are allowed.
- **LENGTH** Games shall be played in four periods as followed: 1st and 3rd periods, 8 minutes each, 2nd and 4th periods, 6 minutes each, plus 5 play period.
- **FIVE PLAY RULE** Once the clock reaches 6 minutes in the 2nd and 4th quarters, the referee will allow the current play to finish. The referee will then inform both teams that they are now in the five –play period. Play continues at the down, distance and possession of the team when the five play period is announced. The official should inform both teams of the down, distance, and play number after each of the plays this period.
- **HALF TIME** 5 minutes at half time is allowed for a break.
- **TIME OUTS** Each team shall have 2 time outs per half. Timeouts do not carry over to second half. Each time out shall be 1 minute in length. Officials may call additional time outs at their discretion. (I.e. injury)
- **HUDDLE TIME** **(NEW!)** A 30 second play clock will now be in effect. Penalty incurs if huddle last longer than 30 seconds. (See penalty rules below.) Huddle time starts when ball is spotted.
- **CHANGING ENDS** Teams will exchange ends of the field **ONLY** at the end of the half.

Players and Substitutions

- **PLAYERS** 8 players, everyone is eligible.
- **SUBSTITUTIONS** No more than 8 players on the field upon breaking the offensive huddle. This rule is intended to eliminate the “sleeper” or the “hide-out player”.
- **EQUALITY RULE** If the team has less than 8 players, the opposing team must play with the same number.

- **PARTICIPATION RULE** Every player must be a starter on either offense or defense. Every player must play ½ of the game. Any violation of participation rules will result in automatic coaching suspension.
- **POSITION PLAY** Every player must play each position sometime during the season. However, if a player does not want or desire to play a position they are not required to play it.
- **OFFENSIVE BACKFIELD** No player may play more than ½ the game in the offensive backfield, nor shall a player pass, carry or receive the ball for forward progression for more than ½ of a game on offense. (This means that no one player can be a part of every pass, carry or reception over and over. So if one kid does QB, RB, TE, WR with draws, sweeps, options, passes, or receptions they should not get the ball more than ½ the game.) **ONLY ONE WARNING WILL BE GIVEN TO COACH FROM DIRECTOR.**

Playing Specifications

- **OFFENSIVE MOTION** Only one (1) player is allowed in motion at the snap of the ball and his movement must be parallel to or away from the line of scrimmage and must be continuous.
- **NEUTRAL ZONE** A neutral zone of 1 yard is created by the referee with two flat cones. The zone is created to eliminate contact at the line of scrimmage, and to allow opportunities to see holes in the other team and the opportunity to de-flag the ball carrier. Once the ball is snapped, either team may enter the neutral zone without penalty, but may not make contact with other players. Offensive line may meet the defensive line in neutral zone to screen block. Defensive line may meet offensive line in neutral zone to pull flags of ball carrier that may be coming up the middle or close around the sides.
- **NEUTRAL ZONE INFRACTION** Going into the neutral zone before the ball is snapped for offense or defense is a dead ball foul. The play shall be immediately whistled dead before the play begins, and 5 yards will be automatically marked off against the penalized team. If a player lines up in the neutral zone, the official will attempt to place the player back on sides. If the player does not get back before the ball is snapped, they will be considered as having encroached at the moment of the snap. If an official has not warned a team for lining up offside, the official should not call the encroachment on them at the snap of the ball. They should be warned of lining up offside and given a chance to move back or else not penalized for lining up offside. (This rule is designed to speed up the game by helping players line up on sides, thereby eliminating what is, most of the time, non-intentional penalties.)
- **FALSE STARTS** A false start occurs when an offensive player crosses into the neutral zone before the ball is snapped and shall constitute as a dead ball foul, for a 5 yard penalty.
- **ONE RUSHER ONLY** **Only 1 Rusher** is allowed to rush passed the line of scrimmage into the QB box. A penalty will be called if there are two or more. The penalty is 5 yards against the defense and a replay of down or the offense may decline and allow the play to stand.
- **1st DOWNS** Four downs shall be allowed in which to advance the football into the next line. The location of the football is where the play is called. When the ball breaks the plane of the next line-to-gain, a 1st down shall be awarded.
- **TOUCHDOWN** The ball crossing the line not the flags determines a touch down.
- **STANCE** Any stance is permitted.
- **LINE SET** 5 offensive players must be set on the line of scrimmage at any part of the line from side to side.
- **BLOCKING** Only **Screen Blocking** is permitted. “Screen Blocking” shall be defined as obstructing a rusher’s path to the quarterback or ball carrier, as long as it is done behind the line of scrimmage. There can be no independent movement of the arms or legs. The screener’s hand and arms must be by the sides of the screener in a non-threatening manner. A Penalty will automatically be called if a screener’s hands leave his side while in the process of screening within 2 yards of the rusher; even sticking out the knee is illegal.
 - Although this method of screening cuts down on excessive contact by the screener, it nevertheless places the screener in a very vulnerable position, therefore: **THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY OF AVOIDING CONTACT RESTS WITH THE RUSHER.** **THE RUSHER MAY NOT RUN OVER THE SCREENER.** The rusher may not pull the screener towards him or push the screener away from him. A penalty will automatically be called if the rusher touches the screener’s head as long as the screener is screening upright. A screener may not leave his

feet to screen. WE ASK THAT BOTH THE SCREENER AND THE RUSHER STRIVE FOR NO CONTACT IN THIS AREA.

- The rusher may not run into the screener, the rusher may not push or pull the screener to move the screener out of the way. Screeners may not dive into the rusher. The screeners may leave their feet, but no contact may be made with the rusher.
- ROUGHING THE PASSER Will be called when the rusher, while attempting to de-flag the quarterback or block the pass, lets his momentum carry him into the passer. A rusher is not allowed to touch the quarterback while passing or attempting to pass. If the rusher touches the quarterback's head in his attempt to block the pass, a penalty will be called. Defensive players may not have any contact with the passer while passing, other than flag pulling.
- PASSING Only one forward pass will be allowed per play and must be initiated behind the line of scrimmage. If the ball is released beyond the line of scrimmage, the penalty for a forward lateral applies. (Passing and Running plays are **not** limited per game.)
NOTE: A passer may never be his own receiver unless deflected by the opposing team. If the ball is clear of the quarterback's hand when the flag is pulled, the pass is allowable.
- LATERALS Any number is allowed. No forward lateral is allowed beyond the line of scrimmage. A lateral pass will be any pass thrown overhand or underhand perpendicular to or away from the direction of advancement of the team in possession.
- RECEIVING All players of both teams are eligible pass receivers. Each player is eligible, even if he steps out of bounds or out of the end zone, as long as he catches the ball with at least one foot in bounds. If a receiver comes down with one foot in bounds and one foot out of bounds simultaneously, the pass shall be **incomplete**. All border lines are considered out of bounds. Two or more offensive receivers may touch a pass in succession, resulting in a completion.
- PASS INTERFERANCE DEFENSIVE pass interference will be called when any contact is made with the receiver, whether it was incidental or not.
- DEFLAGGING A ball carrier is downed and the ball is dead when either flag is detached from a player's belt or when the ball or either knee touches the ground.
- (TWO BELOW) INTENTIONAL DEFLAGGING PRIOR TO POSSESSING BALL OR LOSS OF FLAG If a flag is intentionally pulled from an offensive player or a player loses flags who is not in possession of the ball, the TWO BELOW METHOD must be used by defensive player. If a defensive player intentional de-flags an offensive player, a 5 yard penalty shall be given to offensive team at end of play.
- TACKLING IS PROHIBITED. Tackling is grasping or encircling the body of the ball carrier with a hand or arm, or making contact that impedes the ball carrier's progress. Grabbing the ball carriers clothing shall also be considered a tackle if that impedes the ball carrier's process. If the defensive player reaches across the body of a ball carrier to his flag and contact is made, the responsibility of the contact lies with the defensive player. If the act prevents what could be a score, a penalty will be called.
- FLAG PROTECTING The ball carrier shall not protect his flags by blocking with his hands, arms, clothing, legs, football, or head. The ball carrier is to avoid all contact by turning, bobbing, etc. If the ball carrier is protecting his flags, both teams shall be warned that this is not allowed. If flag protecting occurs again, by either team, a penalty will be called.
- FUMBLE When the ball touches the ground after a snap, it is a fumble and will be played from the spot of the first bounce. If the ball every touches the ground after the snap it is a dead ball.
- CENTER A center may side snap or under his/her legs. The center is not eligible for a hand off back through the legs. Center must come out of snapping stance to receive ball from pass, shovel pass or hand off.
- THE PUNT If a punt is to be made the offense must announce the punt. The punter may take the snap from the center by any method, or may just drop kick from behind the line of scrimmage. Offense may not move until ball has been kicked. However, a snap is not required by the center to the punter in order to put the ball in play. The ball will not be dead if it touches the ground before the punt is made, even if muffed by the punter. After a punt has been declared, it must actually be made and neither team may cross the line of scrimmage until the punt is made. Then screen blocking is only allowed by non-ball carries of the team that is returning the ball.

- The Punt Returning team must catch the ball for it to be playable. If the ball hits the ground it will be ruled dead and be played at first bounce.
- 5 PLAY PERIOD Goes into effect after 6 minutes have expired in the 2nd and 4th quarters. From this point on, the clock will no longer be kept. Instead, there will be 5 total plays left in that half. Penalties towards offense will give the team the yardage, replay of down, and no loss of one of the 5 plays in the rule.
- INTERCEPTION IN THE END ZONE Interceptions whose momentum takes players into the end zone, may be run out, but if the interceptor is de-flagged in the end zone, shall be ruled as a touch back. A touch back is spotted at the first line to gain.
- CONVERSIONS **NO CONVERSIONS** will be played after a touch down, no Field Goals either.
- SAFETY It is a safety if the ball carrier is de-flagged in their end zone. The team that was de-flagged in end zone will gain the ball back at the first line to gain. No FREE Kick to other team. Team that was downed in the end zone will now have the ball on the 1st line to gain.
- BALL STEALING No player may attempt to steal the ball or cause a fumble through any attempt to steal the ball from the ball carrier.
- ON FIELD COACHING DURING PLAY **NEW ONLY 2** Coaches may be on the field during play. However, if a coach of one of the teams interferes with the other team's attempt on the ball carrier, a penalty will be called.

If a violation does not fit within the rules discussed above, the officials have the right to review the situation and make a ruling that they deem reflects fairness to both teams. This call is not debatable by either team.