

# 7v7 Flag Football

The NIRSA rules will govern play with the following exceptions and highlights.

## ELIGIBILITY

All participants must have an active WRC membership, Intramural Sports Play Pass, and show their UNI or government ID Card prior to each contest. Eligibility status is the responsibility of each individual participant and the Team Captain.

## TEAMS

- 1.1 The game shall be played by 2 teams of 7 players. A minimum of 5 players is necessary to begin play.
- 1.2 Players may play the same sport on multiple teams, as long as they are in different divisions (ex. Competitive and recreational)
- 1.3 Players are not officially on a team until they have checked in and signed a waiver. Once a player has played for a team, he or she shall be on this team for the remainder of the season.
- 1.4 Teams may add players through the final game of the regular season or until their team limit has been reached whichever comes first. Once the roster limit is reached the roster is frozen.
- 1.5 Game time is forfeit time. A 5-minute grace period from the scheduled start time will be allowed before a forfeit is declared if the team short of the minimum player requirement has at least one player present at the scheduled game time.
- 1.6 Rule interpretations (not judgment calls) are the only areas of discussion between a Team Captain and Officials.

## THE GAME

- 2.1 The game shall consist of two 20-minute halves with a running clock. In the last two minutes of the second half, the clock will stop only if there is an 18 or fewer point difference between the scores for single-gender leagues and a 24 or fewer point difference in CoRec.
  - Under two minutes in the second half, the clock will stop for out-of-bounds, incomplete passes, scores including PATs, timeouts, 1st downs until the ball is set, and penalties until the ball is set.
- 2.2 A coin flip or Rock, Paper, Scissors will be used to determine who picks the options of offense, defer, or direction. The loser of the toss shall make a choice of the remaining options.
- 2.3 Each half and series after a score starts with possession of the ball on a team's own 14-yard line.
- 2.4 Halftime will be two minutes in duration.
- 2.5 Each team will be granted three 1-minute timeouts for the game. Timeouts do not carry into overtime, though you will be given one timeout per overtime period.
- 2.6 Mercy Rule - If a team's lead is 40 or more points at any time in the second half or 19 or more points for single-gender games (25 or more points for CoRec games) ahead with 2 or fewer minutes remaining in the game, the game will be over.
  - In CoRec if a team's lead is 40 or more points at any time in the second half or 25 or more points ahead with 2 or fewer minutes remaining in the game, the game will be over.
- 2.7 Under the last minute of the second half, on any penalty, the referee shall ask the non-offending team if they wish to start the clock on the snap or the ready-for-play single (referee's whistle).
- 2.8 **Onside Conversions:** In the second half, any team who trails or is leading by 18 points or less may attempt an "onside conversion" from the opponent's 20-yard line (essentially a three-point attempt). If successful, that team can retain possession of the football and start their next possession on their own **30-yard line**. If the attempt fails, the defensive team will receive the ball on the opponents 30-yard line. A team leading by 19 points or more **MAY NOT** go for an onside conversion. The **3-second rush count will be voided** on this attempt and the defense may rush immediately.
  - **ALL Onside conversions will be untimed downs.**
- 2.9 The Quarterback (QB) shall not carry the ball past the line of scrimmage. (Penalty: Loss of down + 5 Yards from the previous spot)  
Exception: The quarterback may run if/when they are rushed by the defense (the defense crosses either of the cones in the neutral zone).
- 2.10 A **3-second count after the snap** will be administered by the game's head official, after the 3-second is up, the defense is allowed to rush the quarterback. **\*\*This count will not be effective on Any pass or handoff behind the line of scrimmage**

## **EQUIPMENT**

- 3.1 Intramural Jerseys will be provided if teams have shirts of the same color before each game. A shirt must be worn under the jersey that is provided. All shirts must be tucked in.
- 3.2 Flag belts must be worn on the outermost layer and must be on at the beginning of each play.
- 3.3 Athletic shoes or cleats must be worn by all players. No metal cleats will be allowed.
- 3.4 No jewelry of any kind is permitted while participating in any intramural activity. Taping of jewelry to the body is not permitted. If jewelry is discovered by an official during the game, the player must leave the field and cannot re-enter until it is taken off.
- 3.5 Exception: If a player must wear a medical bracelet or necklace, it may be taped.
- 3.6 Braces - There shall be no hard or unyielding braces on the arm or leg.
- 3.7 Knee braces with hinges of any sort must be unaltered from the original manufacturer's product. Additional padding may be added to make the brace safe for play.
- 3.8 There is no penalty for improper equipment. The play will be blown dead and said player will need to sit out for 1 down and fix their equipment issue before their return.

## **PRE-SNAP/OFFENSE**

- 4.1 A team has a series of 4 downs, to advance the ball across the zone-line-to-gain
- 4.2 Once "Ready to Play" is whistled by the referee, the offense has 25 seconds to snap the ball. (Penalty: Delay of Game, 5 yards)
- 4.3 The Neutral Zone is the area between the two scrimmage lines; the point closest to the ball for offense, one yard behind the ball for defense.
- 4.4 The offense is only required to have the center (snapper) on the line at the time of the snap.
- 4.5 The center (snapper) may snap the ball either between their legs or from the side; however, the ball must be touching the ground. The player who receives the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the center (Penalty: Illegal Snap, 5 yards). 4.6 Only one offensive player may be in motion parallel, not towards, the line of scrimmage at the snap (Penalty: Illegal Motion, 5 yards).
- 4.7 The team in possession of the ball is responsible for retrieving the ball.
- 4.8 Value of scores:
  - Touchdown in single-gender leagues: 6 pts.
  - Touchdown in CoRec that does/does not involve a female: 9 pts./6 pts.
  - PAT from 20 yds.: 3 pts.
  - PAT from 10 yds.: 2 pts.
  - PAT from 3 yds.: 1 pt.
  - Safety: 2 pts.

## **KICKING/PUNTING**

- 5.1 Punts: Before making the ball ready for play on fourth down, the Referee will ask the offensive team captain if they want to punt. The offensive team captain may request to punt on any down. After such an announcement, the ball must be punted unless a timeout is called, a foul occurs, or it is the end of a period any time before or during the down after the announcement is made.
- 5.2 There are no quick kicks. (Penalty: Illegal Kick, 10 yards)
- 5.3 Neither team may advance beyond their respective scrimmage line until the ball is punted. (Penalty: Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot)
- 5.4 Kick Catch Interference: While any punt is in flight beyond the kicking team's scrimmage line, the kicking team shall not touch the ball or any receiving team player, nor obstruct the receiver's path to the ball, unless the punt has been touched by a receiving team member or the ground. (Penalty: Kick Catch Interference, 10 yards)
- 5.5 The ball becomes dead as soon as it bounces back toward the kicking team's line of scrimmage, comes to a complete stop, or the returner is de-flagged.
- 5.6 Defensive players may not try and wave or jump to block the punt.

## **DEAD BALL**

- 6.1 The ball is dead in the following situations:
  - The ball carrier's person touches and/or falls to the ground (excluding the hand or foot).
  - Ball goes out of bounds.
  - A touchdown, touchback, safety, or successful try-for-point.

- A forward pass strikes the ground or is simultaneously caught.
- The ball is fumbled and touches the ground (the play is dead where the ball hits the ground).
- The passer is de-flagged before the ball leaving their hand.
- A fumbled/mishandled snap hits the ground (loss of down, play is dead where the ball hits the ground).
- The ball strikes the ground following the first touching by the kicking team.
- A runner has their flag belt removed legally by an opponent (a flag belt is removed when the clip is detached from the belt).
- A runner is legally tagged (tagged with 1 hand between the shoulders and knees including the hands and arms) if the runner's flag belt has already fallen off.
- The Quarterback advances the ball past the line of scrimmage
- Official sound their whistle inadvertently during a down or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, when:
  - The ball is in player possession (the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where declared dead or replay the down).
  - The ball is loose from a fumble, backward pass, illegal kick, or illegal forward pass (the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down).
  - During a legal forward pass or a punt (the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down is replayed).

## PLAYER CONDUCT

### 7.1 No player shall:

- Use abusive or insulting language.
  - Play unfairly.
  - Use words similar to the offensive audible and quarterback cadence before the snap in an attempt to interfere with the offense's signals or movements.
  - Intentionally kick an opposing player or the ball.
  - Intentionally swing their arm, hand, or fist at an opposing player.
  - Leave the field between downs to gain an advantage.
  - Spike the ball, throw it high in the air, or fail to return it to the nearest official (or to the huddle) during a dead ball.
- \*Penalty:** Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards, ejected if flagrant

### 7.2 Personal Fouls

- Stealing, or attempting to steal, the ball.
- Tripping, hurdling, or diving (only if the player has the ball and dives/slides).
- Contacting an opponent who is on the ground.
- Throwing a runner to the ground.
- Making any unnecessary contact with an opposing player.
- Clipping.
- Deliberately running or driving into an opponent.
- Tackling the ball carrier.

**\*Penalty:** 5 yards, ejected if flagrant

7.3 Roughing the Passer – The defense must make a definite effort to avoid creating contact with the passer after the ball is thrown. Any contact with the throwing arm or body is roughing the passer (Penalty: Roughing the Passer, 10 yards and 1st down).

7.4 Screen Blocking - Offensive "blocking" shall take place without contact. Hands and arms must be at the side or behind the back. Any initiated contact or forward contact is illegal (Penalty: Illegal Offensive Screen Blocking, 10 yards). 7.5 Use of Hands and Arms - The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to drive past opponents (Penalty: Stiff Arm, 10 yards).

7.6 Ball Carrier – The ball carrier may not intentionally or unintentionally use hands or arms to guard flags (Penalty: Flag Guarding, 10 yards). They may not stiff-arm (Penalty: Flag Guarding, 10 yards). They may not charge into another player (Penalty: Illegal Contact 10 yards).

7.7 Illegal Advancement - Quarterback is not allowed to advance the ball past the line of scrimmage (Penalty: Loss of Down)

7.8 Defender – A defender may not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward movement of a ball carrier in the act of removing the flags (Penalty: Holding the Runner, 10 yards).

7.9 Flag Belt Removal – A flag belt being detached inadvertently does not stop play (one hand tag between shoulders and knees). Pulling the flag belt of a player without the ball is illegal (Penalty: 5 yards and is a live-ball violation). 7.9 Diving to gain yardage or to de-flag a runner is allowed as long as there is no contact initiated.

## **OVERTIME**

- 8.1 Time outs do not carry into overtime, though you will be given one timeout per overtime period.
- 8.2 All overtime periods are played toward the same goal line.
- 8.3 Unless moved by a penalty, each team will start 1st and goal from the 10-yard line with 4 downs to score.
- 8.4 Points after touchdowns will be decided on by the offense (just like regulation play, 1, 2- or 3-point attempts).
- 8.5 If the defense intercepts a pass and returns it for a touchdown, the game is over. If the defense does not return the interception for a touchdown, the series is over and the ball will be placed on the 10-yard line. The original defense will begin their series of four downs.
- 8.6 The same rules apply for a second overtime, except on a score both teams must attempt their point after a try from the 10-yard line (2 pts.) **OR** the team may choose to go to the 20-yard line (3 pts.).
- 8.7 Teams will alternate first possession for every additional overtime.

## **COREC MODIFICATIONS**

- 9.1 CoRec games will be played with 7 players per team (4 self-identified males, 3 self-identified females, or vice versa). Teams shall play with the same number of males and females on the field at the same time. If a team is playing with an odd number, the gender difference cannot be greater than one. A minimum of five players is required to start the game and avoid a forfeit.
- 9.2 A male on offense may not advance the ball through the line of scrimmage (5-yard penalty, loss of down). Once the ball is past the line of scrimmage, there is a change of possession, and/or after a legal forward pass, there is no restriction on the gender of the runner.
- 9.3 Open plays - everyone is an eligible receiver.
- 9.4 Closed Plays - Once there is a male-to-male completion for a gain, the play becomes closed. A female must be involved during a closed play.
- 9.5 There may not be two (2) consecutive male-to-male legal forward pass completions. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards. (Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot, and loss of down).
- 9.6 Females may run the ball, though it will not make the next play "Open".
- 9.7 Value of scores;
  - Touchdown in CoRec that does/does not involve a female: 9 pts./6 pts.
  - PAT from 20 yds.: 3 pts.
  - PAT from 10 yds.: 2 pts.
  - PAT from 3 yds.: 1 pt.
  - Safety: 2 pts.
  - Return of PAT: 2 pts.

## **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

- 10.1 Unsportsmanlike Conduct or fighting will not be tolerated.
- 10.2 A team representative is a participant, player, non-player, captain, coach, manager, spectator, or anyone representing a team.
- 10.3 Unsportsmanlike Conduct includes:
  - Behavior, language, and actions that are a violation of the UNI Student Code of Conduct.
  - Behavior, language, action, and contact toward a team representative, ref/official, or Intramural Staff member
- 10.4 Unsportsmanlike Conduct that is but not limited to:
  - Arguing a call.
  - Behavior, language, or action that is abusive, demeaning, insulting, disruptive, or threatening.
  - Contact that is excessive or unnecessary and contact that is persistent, severe, extreme, vulgar, violent, or flagrant.
- 10.5 A team representative will be disqualified from the game, ejected from participation, shall leave the facility, and may be subjected to expulsion from further Campus Recreation events or programs.
- 10.6 Teams must get a 3.0 sportsmanship rating in knockout rounds or maintain a 3.0 sportsmanship rating average to advance to playoffs. In playoffs, if a team receives a 2,1, 0 sportsmanship rating that team's progression in the playoff bracket will be under review.
- 10.7 Two (2) unsportsmanlike conduct penalties and/or technical fouls against a player constitute an automatic ejection.
- 10.8 Four (4) conduct unsportsmanlike penalties and/or technical fouls against a team or of any kind will forfeit the contest.

10.9 Six (6) conduct unsportsmanlike penalties and/or technical fouls against a team during the season will forfeit the team's remaining schedule

10.10 Game (s) may be forfeited at the discretion of the ref/official, Supervisor, or Intramural Staff member

Questions or concerns regarding the rules and regulations should be directed to [imsports@uni.edu](mailto:imsports@uni.edu)

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