

# Rules and Regulations

Version 13 [Winter 2018]



## 2 EQUIPMENT

**2.1** All team members must wear jerseys of the same color shade. A player who does not have a matching colored jersey will not be allowed to play. If both teams are wearing similar coloured jerseys, the away team will be required to wear pinnies, both in the regular season and in the playoffs.

**2.2** Players must have a number on their back. Taped-on numbers will not be allowed; preferably the number should be sewn, vinyl pressed, imprinted or sublimated onto the jersey itself. Numbers on the front of the jersey are recommended but not obligatory. Players without a number will not be permitted to play. No duplicate numbers are permitted.

**2.3** Long jerseys must be tucked into a player's pants/shorts at all times.

**2.4** Short jerseys may be worn. The shirt should be short enough so that it does not hinder the visibility of the flags. Bib style shirts that expose the side of the torso are not permitted.

**2.5** All players on the field must wear a flag belt that meets the standard requirements: a white belt which is visible at all times, a rigid plastic spring-loaded clip, and three vinyl flags that measure at least 36 cm from the top of the belt, and 6 cm wide. A player found to have deliberately tampered with his flags shall be penalized for objectionable conduct. The opposing team may request that the officials verify a player's flags for tampering, however requesting to do so unjustly shall also result in an objectionable conduct penalty.

**2.6** Any undershirt must be tucked in. The flags must not be tucked in to the flag belt or turned so that they are no longer placed over the hips and tail bone. It shall be the officials' responsibility to be preventative, however if an advantage is gained, it shall be penalized as flag guarding.

**2.7** No hard headgear is permitted on the field, such as baseball caps, helmets and so on. Soft headgear such as do-rags, bandanas, kippahs and turbans are permissible.

**2.8** The league does not permit any pants or shorts with pockets. This is due to the high risk of injuring fingers while attempting to deflag an opponent. Any player with pockets will be asked to leave the field of play for five plays to allow him to change clothing. It is not permitted to play wearing clothing with pockets that are taped or zippered closed, or clothing with pockets turned inside out including pockets on the back of shorts or pants. Players are strongly suggested to wear shorts or pants; playing in underwear such as boxers or bikini cut garments is not permitted even if a player's shorts are damaged during the course of a game. Compression garments such as tights, body suits, leggings and yoga pants are permissible. Penalty: 10-yard dead ball foul applied at point of next scrimmage and **5 plays off**.

**2.9** No jewelry of any kind is permitted on the field. Metal earrings and rings, including wedding bands, should be removed or covered with tape. Watches, chains, *wearable technology* and metal bracelets must be removed. All other materials such as rubber Livestrong type wrist bands or those made of textiles, such as those often associated with beach vacations, are not considered jewelry. Any player with jewelry will be asked to leave the field of play for five plays. Penalty: 10-yard dead ball foul applied at point of next scrimmage and **5 plays off**.

**2.10** Players are permitted to have a towel, pair of gloves, or play sheet hanging from their waist, but they will be treated as flags. Therefore, if any item hanging from the waist is pulled off, the play will be whistled dead.

**2.11** All running shoes and cleats are legal except metal, spiked cleats of any kind.

**2.12** Players may participate in the game wearing a cast, so long as it is covered with padding to the satisfaction of the referee.

**2.13** A player with an open wound must leave the field until such time as the wound is covered to the satisfaction of the referee.

**2.14** In the senior men's league, teams must use an adult sized composite or leather ball, such as those used in the NFL, CIS, and CFL. Examples of unacceptable balls are junior and youth sized Wilson TDY and TDJ, Nike sizes 5-8 and Spalding J5J and J5Y. In the coed division, junior sized footballs are acceptable. It is illegal to tamper with the ball, for example by applying an adhesive substance; doing so is considered objectionable conduct.

### **3 GAME ADMINISTRATION**

**3.1** Captains are required to meet with the referees **five** (5) minutes prior to the start of the game. A maximum of two captains per team may be present.

**3.2** The coin toss will take place with the visiting team's captain making the choice of heads or tails. The winning team can choose from the following options: a) To start on offense or defense b) The goal the team will defend. The team not having the first choice of options shall exercise the remaining option. The team that starts on offense in first half will automatically start on defense in the second half. It is not permitted to change sides at halftime; the choice of goal is made once at the start of the game. In the playoffs there is no coin toss, the home team will have the first choice in the captains meeting, both at the beginning of the game and in overtime.

**3.3** Barring a penalty, a team will always begin the half with the ball at their own 10-yard line.

**3.4** Teams will have the option of starting with five players. Otherwise, if a team does not have the minimum requirement of five players at game time, six points will immediately be awarded to the opposing team. The game clock then starts and every 5 minutes the opposing team is awarded 6 points. If the team that is missing players does not participate by halftime, the game ends with a 30-0 final score.

**3.5** If two teams, scheduled to play each other in the same week, have fewer than 5 players in attendance to play that game, both teams will be awarded a loss. In this case, as per rule 3.4 above, each team will be awarded 6 points at the start time of the game, and every 5 minutes each team is awarded 6 points. The game would end with a 30-30 score at halftime, and in the standings both teams are awarded a loss.

**3.6** Playing time for each game is 44 minutes plus an extra ten plays. Each half is 22 minutes long with five untimed plays to end the half. Once the clock hits zero, even if there is a stoppage in play, for example for a timeout or a foul, there are 5 plays remaining in the half. Game starts at scheduled time OR when both teams are ready for play after coin toss.

**3.7** There will be a running clock for the entire 22 minutes of each half.

**3.8** There will be a three-minute break between the first and second half.

**3.9** Teams will each have a total of 2 timeouts per game, which can be used at any time, regardless of which half. It is perfectly acceptable for a team to call consecutive timeouts without running a play. A team timeout must be

called if an injured player does not want to leave the field for one play. This rule would not apply in the last five plays. The clock will start on the snap after all team timeouts.

**3.10** In addition to its regular timeouts, teams will be awarded one technical timeout per game for rule clarifications only. Following a technical timeout, the clock starts on the referee's whistle.

**3.11** Referees will give a one-minute warning at an appropriate break in the play when there is one minute or less remaining until the final five plays.

**3.12** Once the fifth untimed play is completed the referee will signal the end of the half/game.

**3.13** A punt is considered a play in the final five untimed plays.

**3.14** There is a mercy rule.

- a) If a team reaches a lead of 18 points or more, at any time once the clock has expired, the five untimed plays (or any fewer number of remaining plays, and any convert attempts) at the end of running time in the second half will not be played.
- b) If the winning team is in possession of the ball from their own 10-yard line and out, and has a sufficient number of downs to end the game, the winning team may decide to end the game. The losing team may also ask to end the game at this time.
- c) If a 35-point differential is reached in the 2nd half, the referee will ask the losing team's captain if they wish to continue. The losing team may choose to end the game at any time after this point.
- d) Under the referee's discretion the game will continue until its conclusion. I.E. the referee can end the game if it is deemed necessary to do so.

**3.15** Players will be required to retrieve the ball after each play and will bring it back to their huddle. The referees will assist the players with the ball relay whenever possible. **Note (a):** The referee can whistle the play in or call a delay of game penalty if the team in possession of the ball does not get the ball back to the huddle in a reasonable amount of time.

**3.16 Substitutions.** Players may substitute up until the snap of the ball and the maximum number of players permitted on the field at the time of the snap is 6; non-compliance with this rule will result in an illegal substitution penalty.

**3.17 Late arrivals.** A player who is already included on a team's roster, and has already played at least one game with the team, is permitted to participate in the game even if he was not present before the start of the second half. A player who is not on the current roster and played at least one game must be included on the roster submitted to the scorekeeper at the start of the game and may not join in at any point after the first play. Each team's roster must be submitted to the scorekeeper before game time. Failure to respect this procedure will result in a 5-yard delay of game penalty.

**3.18 Cap system.** a) Each division has its own maximum capacity for combined player ratings. If a team fields a roster that surpasses the limit in any game, it will automatically forfeit the game, and will be handed a 30-0 defeat. b) Certain divisions have a QB cap, which restricts select players from attempting a forward pass (including convert attempts) in a division where their QB rating exceeds the maximum allocation. In a situation where a player does not have a second offensive rating, the issue should be presented to FPF Administration, where it will be decided whether or not the offending player would have a QB rating that exceeds the limit. Offending teams will be handed

a 30-0 defeat. c) If a player has two offensive ratings, and he proceeds to attempt a forward pass and receive a pass (not from himself) in the same game, the higher of his two offensive ratings will be used for that particular game. Using that higher rating, should his team exceed the cap for their respective division, a 30-0 forfeit will also be declared.

**3.19 Player benches:** *on fields at the extremity of a facility, the team benches are located on the sideline, past midfield on the side decided at the coin toss; alternatively, teams can use the end zones. At no time can a player be on the tarp / curtain / net divider side. On a middle field, nobody can be on the sidelines at all, the bench area must be in the end zone.*

#### 4 RUSHER/PASSER

**4.1** *The first player to cross the line of scrimmage to rush the quarterback must be lined up seven yards in front of the LOS in the "rush zone" (the seven-yard rusher line will be marked prior to each play,) in order to have straight line immunity. The rusher is not permitted to line up directly in front of the snap, he must line up at least one yard to left or right from the rush bag in the middle of the field, to maintain immunity. (See 4.2)*

**4.2** Any rusher loses protection if he is outside the "rush zone" beginning one yard from either side of the rusher bag and extending one yard out, straight up to the QB (two yards total from either side of the rusher bag). The rusher also loses protection if he is lined up on the bag or if he switches sides once ball has been handled by the snap.

**4.3** The rusher has straight-line immunity; the snap must get out of the way and cannot impede the straight-line path even if remains stationary. He can run straight or to either side but he must avoid the rusher. All other offensive players must avoid the rusher.

**4.4** The rusher has the right to run at the QB and take the straightest path, even on a roll out. If the rusher deviates from his straight-line path for no reason, he loses immunity.

**4.5** Only one rusher gets protection in the "rush zone." The rusher getting protection must declare to the offensive team, if asked, by any player on the offense. He can declare by raising his hand. **Note:** If two players declare or two players rush, only the rusher in the "rush zone" gets immunity. If both rushers are in the "rush zone" only the one on the defensive left side gets immunity.

**4.6** Contacting the passer - No rusher may interfere with the QB's throwing motion. Any contact with the quarterback's arm (from the shoulder down) or the ball (while in hand) during the throwing motion will result in a defensive penalty. *Any form of bodily contact will be penalized under contacting the passer and treated as a major foul and can thus be added on to a score or carried over onto the following convert or next possession. Excessive physical contact with the QB when there is intent and/or severity can also be penalized as UR.*

**4.7** A player who is fewer than seven yards from the LOS when the ball is snapped may not rush the quarterback before someone from seven yards away crosses, or the ball is handed off or lateralled, *if a lateral or handoff is feinted*, or a forward pass is caught behind the LOS. *Lining up a player in the backfield does not permit a rush from less than 7 yards before the rusher crosses, a feint must be made to allow this.*

**4.8** *To be considered onside, all parts of the rushers body in contact with the ground must be behind the rush bag. A rusher can be past the rush bag, return to the seven-yard rush line, and then cross the LOS, so long as all parts of his body in contact with the ground return behind the rush bag. The rusher is only penalised for offside if he actually crosses the LOS having not respected this rule.*

## **5 OVERTIME/TIE GAME**

**5.1** There is no overtime in any regular season game.

**5.2** In the playoffs, if the score is tied at the end of regulation, the teams will proceed to overtime.

**5.3** At the start of the overtime period, the referee will meet with the two captains to determine who starts with the ball, and at which end the entire overtime will be conducted. The home team will have the first choice in the captains meeting.

**5.4** The first team will have the choice to go for 1 point (from the 5-yard line), or 2 points (from the 10-yard line). The two teams will each have three conversion attempts, going back and forth between the two. The team with the most combined points after their three attempts wins the game. If it is still tied after three turns each, they will go into sudden death where the teams will exchange single possessions until one team outscores the other.

**5.5** An interception in overtime CANNOT be returned for a score.

**5.6** There are no timeouts allowed in overtime.

**5.7** A minor foul in overtime cannot be carried over to the next convert attempt. The non-offending team must accept the result of the play or the foul. A major foul (UR, OC, UC, contacting passer) in overtime may be applied on the next convert attempt or on a repeat of the convert, at the discretion of the non-offending team.

## **6 FORMATION/MOTION**

**6.1** Once a game has started, either team is permitted to play with fewer than five players on the field due to an injury, a penalty that results in a player sent off for five plays or emergency. If a team has fewer than five eligible players due to player disqualification (be it from rough play or accumulation of 2 OC/URs), the offending team will forfeit the game.

**6.2** The offensive team must have at least three players lined up on the LOS when the ball is snapped. They will be considered on the LOS if they either put their hand up or are within one (1) yard of the LOS. All receivers must be at least two yards away from the snapper on the LOS. Should Team A have fewer than 6 players on any given play, they must still respect the aforementioned.

**6.3** The quarterback must be a minimum of five (5) yards behind the snapper when receiving the snap.

**6.4** The player accepting the snap may not receive the ball while making forward progress towards the line of scrimmage in order to gain an advantage.

**6.5** One receiver can be in motion laterally or backwards before the ball is snapped. All other players must be motionless for one full second before the snap.

**6.6** The player defending the center must be three (3) yards in front of him or one (1) yard to either side. Rule 11.2 applies to the defender covering the center, such that he must still respect the 1-yard neutral zone even if he is playing shade, 1 yard to the side of the center.

**6.7** A huddle before each play is not compulsory.

**6.8** The center must align the line of scrimmage bean bag and the ball prior to the snap, between his feet. Failure to do so will result in a 5-yard illegal procedure penalty, or option to team B to take the result of the play. Specifically, the center cannot line up with both feet outside the bean bag, nor can he line up behind the line of scrimmage to create an advantage.

**6.9** Team B may not mimic Team A's pre-snap cadence, for example by shouting out « HUT ». Doing so results in a 5-yard illegal procedure penalty against the defense.

## **7 DELAY OF GAME (Time count)**

**7.1** The ball is whistled in before each play. Once the play is whistled in, the offensive team has 20 seconds to snap the ball. Failure to snap the ball will result in a time count penalty. The referee will track the play clock. If Team A takes two consecutive pre-snap fouls, it will be required to put the ball in play or will forfeit possession at the point of last scrimmage. This means that there is an automatic turnover in the event of 3 consecutive pre-snap fouls by Team A. *The clock will stop after a time count violation and restart at the snap.*

**7.2** All players on the field must be wearing their flag belts when the ball is snapped. If a player is not wearing a flag belt during the snap he will be penalized.

**7.3** Any deliberate action that delays the game will be penalized as Objectionable Conduct (OC).

## **8 DEAD BALL/ SPOTTING/ LEGAL PASSES**

**8.1** A ball is declared dead when it is carried out of bounds, after a touchdown, safety, successful or failed PAT, when a forward pass hits the ground, referee or any other object on the sideline (e.g. a soccer goal post). If the ball hits a wire above the field, the play is dead and the down will be repeated. If the ball hits the ceiling or any other permanent fixture (dome or building), the play is whistled dead, and it will be ruled an incomplete pass. If there is a mid-air collision between two players attempting to catch a pass, the pass is caught, and both players fall to the ground, the ball is dead.

**8.2** There are no fumbles and once the ball carrier loses possession of the ball, the play is over at the point where the ball was last possessed before being fumbled. A ball is whistled dead when a backward pass ~~or~~ hits the ground. Laterals and handoffs are NOT permitted past the LOS. If a lateral or handoff past the LOS is attempted, the ball will be dead at the point of the pass.

**8.3** A pass is complete when the player has possession of the ball throughout the act of having two feet in bounds, or any other part of his body besides his hands on the ground in bounds. The pylons at the corners of the end zones and the cones along the sidelines are considered out of bounds and a player cannot step on them to establish an inbounds position.

**8.4** A player in possession of the ball who is on the ground (knee down, rear end down, back down) who is touched by an opponent will be ruled down. However, if the player is not touched, he is permitted to regain his footing and continue his progress. A player cannot intentionally roll forward and gain yardage, even if no defender is nearby. A referee can blow potentially dangerous plays dead anytime e.g. dual possession of a ball, a player on the ground in a crowd.

**8.5** After an interception, the intercepting player will not be ruled down until an opponent deflags him, touches him if he is on the ground, clearly gives up on the play, or if a referee deems it necessary to blow the play dead for player safety reasons.

**8.6** The ball will be spotted where the player's flag was when he was deflagged. A player is considered deflagged when the flag becomes detached, not when it hits the ground.

**8.7** If a player not in possession of the ball loses his flag during a play he remains eligible to catch a pass. If he catches a pass, that player must be touched by a defender with one hand to be called down. If a receiver is deflagged and bobbles the catch at the same time; the ball will be dead at point of the deflag so long as completion is eventually made

**8.8** In the case of a bad snap *that skips off ground in front of the QB and is immediately recovered, the ball is live. In the case of any other bad snap, the ball is spotted where it initially hits the ground.*

**8.9** A dribbled snap (a snap that travels fewer than 5 yards) judged to be an illegal tactic, can result in a 5-yard procedure penalty, DR. The defense can also elect to decline the penalty and take the loss, downs continue. This usually occurs in the last five plays.

**8.10** If a player is unintentionally bumped out of bounds by a defender before landing in bounds with the ball, the referee may judge that the player would have landed in bounds and award a catch.

**8.11** All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass. A player going out of bounds, coming back into the field of play and catching a pass is not a penalty but it will be an incomplete pass, downs continue. If a player goes out of bounds, returns to the field of play, and tips the ball, the opposing team may complete a catch/interception, however the player and his teammates are no longer able to do so. If a player is forced out by a defender he may return and catch a pass legally. Should the rusher need to line up in an out of bounds position near the dead ball line, he is permitted to do so and may continue to participate in the play.

**8.12** A forward pass must be thrown from behind the LOS. If the passer crosses the LOS he is no longer eligible to throw a pass and will be penalized for an illegal forward pass. The non-offending team can now take the result of the play, or go back to PLS AND LD DC and **on** 4<sup>th</sup> Down, loss of ball at the PLS. The passer is not entitled to the gain past the LOS to the point where the pass was thrown from. Furthermore, this play is not considered a run. **Note:** The passer is considered over the line when his core, including the flag, is on or over the line. An illegal forward pass on a convert attempt results in a failed convert.

**8.13** Once a ball carrier passes the LOS, he cannot return behind the line and attempt a forward pass. Rule as illegal forward pass, loss of down at PLS or option and **on** 4<sup>th</sup> Down, loss of ball at the PLS.

**8.14** A pass thrown out of bounds or towards the ground with no receivers in the area to avoid a loss shall be considered grounding at the discretion of the head referee. **Note:** Grounding by the QB positioned in the end zone is a safety touch.

**8.15** When a team is in the red zone, it will not be permitted to attempt an underhanded forward pass. The passer's hand cannot be cradling (underneath) the ball. Rule as illegal forward pass, loss of down at PLS or option and **on** 4<sup>th</sup> Down, loss of ball at the PLS.



**8.16** A simultaneous catch between an offensive player and a defensive player will be awarded to the offensive player.

**8.17** Illegal deflag - removing a player's flag early shall be penalized unless it is done in a bona fide attempt to properly time a deflag with a catch. Deflagging a Team A player late, in the offensive backfield, who is not the ball carrier, shall also be penalized. L10 PLS, AFD or Option.

**8.18** The ball is dead when an official blows his whistle, when the ball carrier is deflagged, or when a score is made. If there is an inadvertent whistle that affects the outcome of the play the affected team will choose whether to accept the result of the play at the time of the whistle or to repeat the down at the PLS. If the referee cannot determine which team was affected adversely, the play will be repeated.

## **9 SERIES**

**9.1** Each team has four tries to obtain a first down at ten yards. In order to obtain a new series of downs, the offensive team must advance the ball at least ten yards through the result of a pass or run play or through a defensive penalty.

**9.2** There is no kicking in FlagPlus Football. If a team wishes to concede its possession to the other team on fourth down they can ask to "punt". If the punting team is in their own half of the field, a punt will result in the opposing team gaining possession on its own 10-yard line (barring a penalty). If the punting team had successfully crossed mid-field, a punt will result in the opposing team gaining possession on its own 1-yard line.

**9.3** Team A must declare their intention to punt before the ball is whistled ready for play by the referee. Once the play is blown in, Team A must take a time out or a delay of game penalty should they wish to punt.

**9.4** If the offensive team decides to run a play on fourth down and they do not gain the necessary yards, it will result in a turnover on downs at the PLS or the PBD.

## **10 RUNNING**

**10.1** No running zones (red zones) are located 7 yards from each defensive end zone. These red zones are enforced to avoid short yardage, power-running situations. Once the ball has reached the 7-yard line, the rest of the drive is considered to take place in the red zone, regardless of subsequent losses of yardage or penalties.

**10.2** The quarterback is allowed to run with the ball outside the red zone. The ball carrier must advance the ball past the LOS for it to be considered a run; when the ball carrier runs up towards the LOS and it results in a zero-yard play, it is not considered a run. Should the ball carrier cross the line of scrimmage and subsequently return behind it and be tackled for a loss, it is considered a running play.

**10.3** Unlimited handoffs in any direction and unlimited laterals are allowed behind the LOS. After a handoff or a lateral, a forward pass is allowed from behind the LOS. However, once the ball carrier has crossed the LOS, or a forward pass is thrown, laterals and handoffs are no longer permitted. Penalty: ball is dead at the point of origin of the illegal lateral or handoff pass and DC. NB: the defensive team can intercept a lateral pass behind the LOS. Once past the LOS laterals are illegal and cannot be intercepted.

**10.4** A player is not permitted to toss the ball up to himself to avoid being deflagged while in possession of the ball.

**10.5** No diving is permitted with the intention of gaining yards. The ball will be spotted where the officials judge an advantage was being gained. In addition, a blatant dive in a crowd with or without contact will be assessed a UR penalty. **Note:** A player is allowed to dive in attempting to catch or intercept a ball as well as attempting to deflag an opponent.

**10.6** Charging: A player in possession of the ball is not permitted to lead with his head in order to gain yardage. Any defensive player who has established his position before deflagging his opponent must be avoided by the ball carrier. If the runner knowingly runs into the defensive player, who has already established his position, the former will be penalized. The same can be said for a defensive player who uses his body to obstruct the path of the ball carrier rather than going for the flag. In both cases, the penalty is unnecessary contact or UR at the discretion of the officials.

**10.7** Leaping (jumping) in order to gain extra yardage is illegal. However, a player may leave the ground while spinning or juking.

**10.8** A forward pass caught behind the LOS by any player will be considered a run, so long as the ball carrier subsequently passes the line of scrimmage. **Exception:** A pass tipped by the defense that is caught by an offensive player behind the LOS, even in the red zone. Hence, even if such a play happens after a run, it is legal. A passer who receives the tipped pass can run with the ball and will be credited with both the pass completion and reception.

**10.9** A team cannot attempt two forward passes in a row on the same play, even if the first pass is tipped back to an offensive player behind the LOS.

**10.10** Any player who exposes his elbows while running with the ball will be penalized. Should this action block the flags, penalize as flag guarding. Should contact occur, penalize as unnecessary contact, or unnecessary roughness, at the discretion of the officials.

**10.11** A team may not run the ball on two consecutive plays. If a run is followed by a play that is negated by an accepted penalty (applied from the PLS DR, not DC), a run is still not allowed on the following play. If a run followed by an intentional grounding foul, a run is allowed on the next play. A team may not run on the play following an illegal run penalty (i.e. cannot run 3 plays in a row in an attempt to circumvent this rule).

**10.12** It is perfectly acceptable to attempt a 2-point convert attempt by running the ball on the play immediately following a touchdown scored on a running play.

**10.13** The penalty for an illegal run is loss of down, and on 4<sup>th</sup> Down, loss of ball at the PLS. This applies to running on two consecutive plays and an illegal run in the red zone. On a convert attempt from the red zone, the penalty for an illegal run is a failed convert.

## **11 METHOD OF SCRIMMAGE**

**11.1** Following the whistle to start the play and prior to the snap, no player on either team may encroach on the LOS, touch the ball or make contact with opponents. A player on either team who crosses the LOS (past the ball) before the snap will be assessed an offside penalty and the play will be whistled dead. A flinch (a slight movement forward) will be allowed if the player gets back before the ball is snapped.

**11.2** The defense must allow a 1-yard neutral zone. The penalty is offside and the play will not be whistled dead.

**11.3** The ball can be scrimmaged inside the 1-yard line and the 1-yard neutral zone must still be enforced.

**11.4** The snapper must set the ball before snapping it to the quarterback. Once the ball is set the snapper cannot move the ball until the he snaps it. Any movement of the ball, simulating the beginning of a play after the ball is set in the snapper's hand will result in an illegal procedure penalty for the offense.

**11.5** The snapper must pass the ball backwards between his legs, from its position on the ground, with a continuous motion.

## **12 INTERFERENCE/CONTACT**

**12.1** Pass interference (PI) is any contact or screening that prevents a receiver or defender from catching a pass.

**12.2** Pass interference is a judgment call and a referee reserves the right to view any contact as incidental.

**12.3** Illegal contact occurs in an obvious passing situation when the receiver is interfered with before the pass is thrown, and it may be called against the defense only. Penalty: 5 yards from previous line of scrimmage (PLS) and automatic first down. The offense cannot be called for illegal contact, however it can be called for unnecessary contact, unnecessary roughness, pass interference, etc.

**12.4** A defensive PI infraction will be a spot foul, AFD. If it occurs in goal, the ball will be placed at the 1-yard line, and if it occurs behind the LOS, it will be a first down at the PLS. Note (a): An unnecessary roughness (UR) penalty can be added on to a PI call if the PI is a flagrant action. Note (b): A PI can be waived off if the pass is deemed to be uncatchable.

**12.5 Tripping** will be penalized as a 5-yard minor penalty, therefore L5 PLS DR or L5 PBH DC. Depending on the severity, tripping may be penalized as unnecessary roughness.

**12.6 Offensive pass interference** will provide the defense with several options. They may accept the result of the play, should they so desire. They may also accept a 10-yard penalty from the PLS with DR, or apply a loss of down from the PLS. Should the choice be the loss of down option on 4D, it will result in loss of possession at the PLS.

## **13 SCORING**

**13.1** A touchdown is scored when the offense is in possession of the ball in the opposition end-zone, with both the flags and the ball having crossed the plane of the goal line. If one of the 2 are not in goal, the ball will be spotted at the point where either the ball or the flag is not in goal.

**13.2** A touchdown will count for 6 points and will be followed by a Point after Touchdown (PAT) – also called a convert attempt.

**13.3** After a player scores a touchdown the referee will immediately signal a touchdown. The player is then expected to remain stationary and let the ref pull his flag belt to check for an illegal flag.

**13.4** If the flag is illegal (knotted or broken), the player will receive an illegal flag penalty and the TD will not count, DR.

**13.5** If the player does not co-operate with the referee in the flag check, the player will receive an OC penalty and the TD will not count, DR.

**13.6** Should Team B intercept a pass on a scrimmage play, and subsequently be called for an illegal flag belt, the penalty will result in a L5 from the point the ball was intercepted and Team B will maintain possession.

### **Convert aka PAT (Point after Touchdown)**

**13.7** After a touchdown, the scoring team has the choice to either go for a one-point convert from the 5-yard line or a two-point convert from the 10-yard line. The scoring team may decline to attempt a convert. Once team A has expressed their option for a convert and the bags are set, they will be required to take a timeout if they wish to change their convert choice. The non-scoring team can concede the convert, and if they choose to do so, a 2-point convert will be awarded.

**13.8** The red zones apply during all convert attempts from the 5-yard line. **Note:** an illegal run on a convert attempt from the red zone results in a failed convert.

**13.9** The defensive team can return an interception on a convert. The ball is considered live until the interceptor is deflagged or out of bounds. If the ball is returned back into the end zone, the returning team will be awarded the amount of points the opponent was attempting to convert (1 or 2 points).

**13.10** If the last defender back holds an interceptor or otherwise illegally prevents a successful score, the play will be whistled dead immediately and the applicable points are awarded. If a defender other than the last defender holds an interceptor or otherwise illegally prevents a successful score, the defensive team will **be awarded a convert attempt** of their own for the same number of points as the attempt by their opponent.

### **SAFETY TOUCH**

**13.11** If a ball carrier is deflagged in his end zone, crosses his own dead ball line (back of the end zone) or sidelines in the end zone, a safety touch (two points) is awarded to the defensive team. *The ball carrier is deemed to be in the end-zone until both the flags and the ball have crossed the plane of the goal line into the field of play. If one of the 2 are in goal, the ball carrier is deemed to be in goal for purposes of this rule.*

**13.12** If a fumble, missed snap or lateral pass lands in the offensive team's end zone on the first bounce, the ball is dead and a safety (2 points) is awarded to the defensive team. *This is subject to the provisions of rule 8.8 regarding a snap that skips immediately into the QB's possession.*

**13.13** If a safety is awarded, the defensive team also gains possession of the ball at its own 10-yard line.

**13.14** A defensive player who intercepts a pass in the field of play, runs backwards into his end zone and is deflagged will have a safety called against his team unless his momentum takes him into the end zone – in the latter instance, it would be a touchback and scrimmaged at the 10-yard line.

### **LAST MAN BACK ON SCRIMMAGE PLAYS**

**13.15** On any play, if the ball carrier is illegally interfered with in any way by the last defender between himself and the goal line, and in the opinion of the official, it is **CLEAR** that a score would have been made had the interference not occurred, the score will be awarded. In the case of a dual foul, a score cannot be awarded, and the fouls would be balanced at the appropriate point.

#### **14 FLAG GUARDING/PICKS**

**14.1** Ball carriers are not permitted to guard their flag in any way. Using hands, elbows or the ball as shields for their flags is illegal. If the ball carrier stiff-arms, swats the opponent's hand or performs any action that prevents a defender from deflagging him, he will be penalized for flag guarding. Should the ball carrier place the ball near his flags and have it knocked out of his hand by the defender, flag guarding is applied.

**14.2** Setting pick plays (blocking a defender while running a pass pattern) is illegal, and will result in an offensive pass interference penalty.

**14.3** Once a player catches a pass or begins running with the ball his teammates are expected to freeze and remain motionless, or move out of the way of the play (without interfering with any opponents) until the play is over. If a player runs alongside a teammate down the field he will be flagged for illegal blocking. If a potential running play is developing, an offensive player is allowed to run his route until the runner crosses the LOS, doing so is not considered blocking.

#### **15 MAJOR FOULS**

**15.1** A suspension may occur if a player is ejected from a game for committing a personal foul with intentions to injure another player, as well as any player who verbally abuses an opponent, referee or league official.

**15.2** A referee has the authority to remove a player from the game, and if the player continues to harass the referee he will be forced to leave the playing area. If the player refuses to do so, the referee has the authority to call the game and award a forfeited win to the opposing team.

**15.3** No fine will be given for any suspension.

**15.4** The league reserves the right to suspend a player for any violation.

**15.5** A player will automatically be suspended one week once he has received a total of 3 either UR or OC penalties during the regular season, and three during the playoffs. This will be followed by an additional week for any two to follow. These penalties will be tracked for the duration of the season.

**15.6 Objectionable Conduct (OC):** The use of profane, obscene, insulting language or gestures to an opponent, official, or spectator by any player or occupant of the team bench is prohibited. Unsportsmanlike conduct, including spiking a ball or throwing it an opponent or official, directing the ball off the field in an objectionable manner, deliberately delaying the game or contacting an official, are also prohibited. There will be **zero tolerance** for objectionable conduct. OC results in an automatic first down when called against the defense. Fouls assessed for pockets or jewelry are not considered objectionable conduct.

**15.7 Unnecessary Roughness (UR):** Any deliberate and intentional physical action against an opponent, official, or spectator by any player or occupant of the team bench is prohibited. These include but are not limited to: diving in a crowd (with or without contact), punching, head-butting, shoving, kicking and elbowing. There will be **zero tolerance** for unnecessary roughness. UR results in an automatic first down when called against the defense.

**15.8 Unnecessary contact.** This would be called when a UR is not warranted but there was contact. If the contact is incidental and not excessive in nature, the referee will call Unnecessary Contact. Stripping the ball once possession has been secured shall be penalized under this rule. The offending player does not have to leave the field for five plays. FlagPlus Football is a non-contact league, and as much as possible, contact is to be avoided.

**15.9 Suspensions:** As of Winter 2011, suspensions will be given in weeks and not games. Consequently, any player who plays on multiple teams will have to sit out games with all teams for the duration of the suspension. **Note:** The FPF Discipline Committee will handle all suspensions.

**15.10 Five plays off:** A player will be sent off for five plays if he is assessed a penalty for wearing pockets or jewelry, an Objectionable Conduct (OC) or Unnecessary Roughness (UR) penalty; conversions and punts count as a play off. If the half ends with a player having not served the five plays off in their entirety, they will carry over to the second half (or overtime in the playoffs). If the non-offending team accepts a penalty instead of the result of the play, in a DR situation, this does not consume a play for purposes of 5 plays off. If Team A declines the opportunity to attempt a convert, or Team B decides do concede the convert, this does not consume a play for purposes of 5 plays off.

**15.11 Automatic disqualification:** Any combination of two URs or OCs will result in a game ejection (e.g. one UR and one OC). Fouls assessed for pockets or jewelry are not considered objectionable conduct.

**15.12** At the end of the season, teams that fail to comply with league rules will be issued a letter putting them on probation.

**15.13 Interference by unauthorized persons.** If anyone other than the players legally on the field interferes with the play, there will be an automatic disqualification of the guilty player. Furthermore, if, in the opinion of the official, it is clear that a score would have been made had the interference not occurred, the score will be awarded. If it is not clear that a score would have been made, the non-offending team will be awarded a 15-yard penalty from the point of the interference. Should the foul occur on the last play of either half, and the application result in a 15-yard penalty, one more play will take place.

**15.14 Unnecessary roughness and unnecessary contact on receivers:** When contact in the target zone of the pass by Team B results in an incomplete pass, the non-offending team will have the option of a spot foul. Specifically, for unnecessary contact, this would result in an option of an automatic first down at the point of the foul. Similarly, for unnecessary roughness, the non-offending team will have the option of taking possession at the PF, and the offending player will serve 5 plays off. This would apply, for example, in cases where the defender separates the receiver from the ball with contact or unnecessary roughness. If the foul occurs in goal, spot foul will be the 1-yard line (or the 7 ½ for red zone purposes). In all cases, award AFD.

## 16 APPLICATION OF PENALTIES

Glossary:

- AFD = Automatic First Down
- DR = Down Repeated
- DC = Downs continue (next down)
- LOD = Loss of downs
- LOB = Loss of Ball
- PLS = Point of Last Scrimmage
- PF = Point of Foul
- PBH = Point ball held at time of foul
- PBD = Point Ball Dead (end of the play)
- Or Option = Let the play stand as it concluded

Example: **Offside:** L5 DR from PLS means loss of 5 yards from the Line of Scrimmage, and the down is repeated.

16.1 Fouls on converts / PAT

Foul Committed by the <u>Offense</u> – Choice to the Defense	
Successful Attempt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-try the convert <b>AND:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply yards on the attempt,</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• Apply yards on the subsequent 1st down</li> </ul> </li> <li>* The offense may choose to change from a 1 pt. attempt to a 2 pt. and vice versa.</li> </ul>
Unsuccessful attempt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no repeat of the convert <b>AND</b> yards are applied on the subsequent 1st down</li> </ul>

Foul Committed by the <u>Defense</u> – Choice to the Offense	
Successful Attempt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no repeat of the convert <b>AND</b> yards are applied on the subsequent 1st down</li> </ul>
Unsuccessful attempt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-try the convert <b>AND:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply yards on the attempt,</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• Apply yards on the subsequent 1st down</li> </ul> </li> <li>* The offense may choose to change from a 1 pt. attempt to a 2 pt. and vice versa. If the first attempt is a 1-point convert, the maximum penalty application on a subsequent 2 <del>or 3</del> - point try is 5 yards.</li> </ul>

16.2 Fouls on scrimmage plays

Minor Offensive Fouls	
Offside	L5 PLS, DR
Illegal Formation/ Motion/Snap/Procedure	L5 PLS, DR or Option
Rusher Interference	L5 PLS, DR or Option
Offensive Pass Interference	L10 PLS, DR; <i>LOD PLS</i> ; or Option
Flag Guarding / Clothing covering flag	L5 PBH DC
Jumping	L5 PBH DC
Time count violation / Delay of game	L5 PLS, DR NO OPTION
Intentional Grounding	Ball spotted at origin of the pass, DC
Blocking	L5 PLS DR or L5 PBH DC
Illegal Forward Pass (pass across LOS)	LOD, DC at PLS or Option
2 runs in a row	LOD, DC at PLS NO OPTION
Illegal Red Zone Run	LOD, DC at PLS NO OPTION
<b>Note:</b> For an offensive foul that occurs AFTER a 1 <sup>st</sup> down is gained, the only application is to apply yards and have 1 <sup>st</sup> down and 10.	
Minor Defensive Fouls	
Offside / Lining up near the centre / lining up in the neutral zone	L5 PLS, DR or Option
Holding (ball carrier)	L5 PLS, DR or L5 PBH DC or PBD
Tripping	L5 PLS, DR or L5 PBH DC
Illegal Deflag	L10 PLS, AFD or Option
Illegal Contact / holding a receiver	L5 PLS AFD or Option
Pass Interference	POF AFD
Major Fouls	
Unnecessary Roughness	Offense: L10 PLS DR or L10 PBH, PF or PBD DC Defense: L10 PLS, AFD or L10 PBD, PF, or PBH, AFD
Objectionable Conduct	<i>L10 point of next scrimmage. If against defense AFD.</i>
Pockets or jewelry	L10 point of next scrimmage. If against defense AFD.
Diving (if players in the vicinity)	L10 PLS DR / L10 PBH DC / L10 PBD DC,
Contacting the passer	L10 PLS or PBD, AFD
Roughing the Passer	L10 PLS or PBD, AFD
Unnecessary Contact	Offense: L5 PLS, DR or L5 PBH, PF, or PBD DC Defense: AFD and L5 PLS, PBD or PBH; if results in incomplete pass AFD PF
Miscellaneous	
No flag belt / Illegal flag	L5 PLS, DR or Option
Illegal Substitution / Too many men	L5 PLS, DR or Option
Interference by unauthorized persons	L15 PF or TD awarded + disqualification

**16.3 Fouls on scoring plays other than PATs** - If a minor foul occurs on a scoring play, the non-offending team has the option of the penalty or the score. If a major foul occurs on a touchdown, the non-offending team may apply it on either the convert attempt or on the first play of the next drive. If they choose to apply it on the convert, they may



choose a 2-point attempt and still apply the penalty (to the 7 ½ or to the 1,) however the normal red zone restrictions will still apply regarding running plays.

#### 16.4 Fouls on the last play of a half

Minor Fouls:

- Should an accepted foul occur on the last play of a half, the half will be extended by 1 play. **NOTE: This does not apply to loss of down penalties (Intentional Grounding, 2 consecutive runs, and illegal red zone run).**
- If Team B fouls the ball carrier, the half is extended by one more play after the application of the foul from the appropriate spot. Under rule 13.15, if the application of the foul results in a score being awarded, the half will end after the convert attempt.
- If a minor foul is committed on a convert attempt on the last play of the half, the yardage cannot be carried over into the second half

Major Fouls:

- In addition to the options for minor fouls, any major foul can be carried over to the 1<sup>st</sup> play of the following half.
- If a major foul occurs on a touchdown on the last play of the 1<sup>st</sup> half, the non-offending team may apply it on either the convert attempt or on the first play of the next drive. They will also choose if this next play will take place as one last play in the first half, or on the first play of the second half.

**16.5 Fouls behind the LOS** Holding *is* a ten-yard penalty behind the LOS and applied with DC. However, if the ball carrier comes back behind the line of scrimmage, holding remains a 5-yard penalty. *For flag guarding behind the LOS, see 16.14.*

**16.6 Fouls in Own End Zone by Offense** If Team A commits a foul in their own end zone, while the ball is in the end zone, a safety touch is awarded to the defense. Example, QB flag guard in the end zone, intentional grounding from the end zone.

#### 16.7 Fouls Near the Goal Line:

- If the offense commits a foul which is applied from PLS, and PLS is at or inside the Team A 1-yard line, the penalty becomes LOD. NOTE: This does not apply on 4th down unless the foul normally results in loss of ball, e.g. 2 runs in a row.
- If the defense commits a foul that would move the ball into the red zone, the offense may accept the penalty however may elect to scrimmage the ball at the 7 ½ yard line and be permitted to run. This is applicable even for defensive pass interference spot fouls in the end zone or red zone. This does not apply if the ball was previously in the red zone on that series.
- If the defense commits a foul, and the full yardage unrestricted by the goal line would have the ball reach the goal line or the line to gain, the offense is awarded a 1st down. Example: Ball on the 4-yard line and defense is called for offside.
- If ball is scrimmaged at the Team B 1-yard line or less and there is a defensive penalty, the application is AFD.

#### 16.8 Penalties inside the last 5 plays

- If a foul is applied from PLS with DR, the down as well as the number of plays remaining will be repeated. Example, 1<sup>st</sup> and 10 with 5 plays left, the rusher is called for offside. It will become 1<sup>st</sup> and 5 with 5 plays left.
- Similarly, if a player has been sent off for 5 plays, and a foul is applied from the PLS with DR, said player is not considered to have served a play off.
- If a foul is applied from PBH or PBD, the downs will continue and the plays remaining will be reduced by that play. Example, with 5 plays remaining, ball carrier is called for flag guarding. Penalty is L5 PBH, 4 plays remaining.
- Defensive Pass Interference penalties are applied at the POF and do not use a play.
- If a dual foul (see rule 16.11) occurs in the last 5 plays, both fouls are accepted, and one foul normally carries the option of DC, the fouls will be balanced at the PLS, DR and the play will not be consumed. Example Team A blocking before yards gained and Team B unnecessary contact.

### 16.9 Dead ball fouls

a) When a player is assessed a dead ball foul, the only application possible is at the point of next scrimmage. Examples include objectionable conduct between plays, and penalties for wearing jewelry or playing with pockets. I.E. these fouls cannot be used to cancel the previous play.

b) **On 4<sup>th</sup> Down** - If the offense fails to gain the yardage for a first down, the ball has been turned over to the other team. If the team that was up until then on defense commits a major foul after the ball is dead, there is no automatic first down. The penalty is applied on 1<sup>st</sup> down after the turnover.

**16.10 Double fouls.** When a team has been guilty of two or more fouls on the same play, the non-offending team may take its choice of one of the penalties. If one of the fouls is a major foul, it shall be added to the penalty chosen, at the point of application chosen by the non-offending team.

### 16.11 Dual fouls

- A dual foul situation occurs when each team has committed one or more fouls on the same play.
- The team accepting the first foul will determine the point of application of the penalties if there is an option to be given.
- The yardage for both penalties will then be balanced at the appropriate point.
- If the point of application chosen also determines that the downs continue, the penalties will be balanced at the point the ball was held at the time of the first foul and downs continue.
- If one of the penalties is a non-distance foul, such as 2 consecutive runs, it will be treated as a **5-yard penalty** in balancing dual fouls.
- If the offense commits a foul on fourth down that would involve a loss of down, and the defense also commits a foul during the play that is accepted, 4<sup>th</sup> down must be repeated at the appropriate point.

### 16.12 Non-distance fouls

In situations where a foul is committed and no yardage is specified, for example defensive pass interference or intentional grounding on a convert attempt, the foul may be applied as a 5-yard penalty.

**16.13 Fouls and dual fouls after a convert has been intercepted.** Once Team B intercepts a convert attempt, refer to rule 13.10 if the last man back fouls the player returning the interception. If Team B, i.e. the team that just intercepted the convert attempt, commits a foul, (for example blocking or flag guarding) they have lost the ability to score, the play will be whistled dead, and no yardage will be applied on the subsequent possession.

If a Team A player other than the last defender back commits a foul, Team B is awarded a convert attempt, as per rule 13.10. However, if during the subsequent continuing action, Team B also commits a foul, the fouls will be balanced at the 5 or 10-yard line, depending on the convert being attempted.

**16.14** *If the ball carrier commits any foul, the officials will kill the play. Downs will continue on 123D; and on 4D if YNG, the application will result in LB; in all cases penalty yardage will apply in addition to the downs continuing and the playing being terminated. If the ball carrier commits a foul on a convert, the convert will be unsuccessful and the yardage will carry over. If this happens in overtime, the attempt is unsuccessful and only major fouls can carry over.*

If a player has any questions or comments concerning the rules and regulations they can contact us at [info@flagplusfootball.com](mailto:info@flagplusfootball.com)

1. **Uniform** — All team members must wear the jerseys provided by FPF. In an emergency situation where a jersey is lost, torn or forgotten, the player must wear a shirt of the same color, sporting the same number.
2. **Rush bag** — In the freshman division, the rush bag will be placed 10 yards from the line of scrimmage. In the sophomore and varsity divisions, the rush bag will be placed 7 yards from the LOS.
3. **Pockets** — Taping pockets closed is permitted in FPF Junior.
4. **Playing time** — In FPF Junior after the 22 minutes of running time in each half, there will be three (3) untimed plays.
5. **Mercy rule** — If an 18-point differential is reached at any point in the second half, the referee will ask the losing team's coach if his/her team wishes to continue. The losing team may choose to end the game at any time after this point and play the remaining minutes as a "scrimmage" (the final three plays will not be played). Also, once the game has reached the final three plays of the game, if the winning team is in possession of the ball from their own 10-yard line and out, and has a sufficient number of downs to end the game, the winning team may decide to end the game. The losing team may also ask to end the game at this time.
6. **Formation** — The quarterback must be in a shotgun position (at least three yards back from the snapper) when receiving a snap.
7. **Punt** — There is no option to punt in FPF Junior.
8. **Passing** — Underhand passes where the ball is cradled by the passer **are permitted everywhere** on the field, including the red zone, in FPF Junior.
9. **Series** —
  - a. The offensive team gains possession of the football at the 10-yard line and has four tries to gain a fresh set of downs by advancing the ball past midfield.
  - b. Once the offense passes midfield, they have another four tries to cross the goal-line for a touchdown.
  - c. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield on their first set of downs, or fails to score on their second set of downs, the opposing team will start its drive from their own 10-yard line.
  - d. All possession changes (start of a half, following a turnover on downs, or following a score) begin at the offensive team's own 10-yard line, barring an interception or a penalty.
  - e. If the opposing team's last drive ended with an interception, the intercepting team will take over possession where the last play ended.
  - f. In cases where a team has a first down in their own half of the field, elsewhere than on their 10-yard line, (following an interception, a defensive penalty which grants a first down, or an offensive penalty applied after yards are gained), they may gain a first down by crossing mid-field.
10. **Running** — A team in possession of the football is only permitted to run the ball **once** per any its offensive possessions.
11. **Converts** — The defensive team **cannot** return an interception on a convert.
12. **Bad snap** — If a missed snap lands in the offensive team's own endzone on the first bounce, the ball will be placed on the offensive team's one-yard line, and downs will continue. A safety will **not** be awarded as a result of a missed snap.
13. **Interceptions near own end zone** — Should a defensive player intercept a pass in the field of play, run backwards into his end zone and get deflagged, the play will result in a touchback (**not a safety**) and will be scrimmaged at the 10-yard line.
14. **Conduct of players towards coaches** — Players may be penalized for Objectionable Conduct or Unnecessary Roughness for their actions towards coaches.