Indoor Flag Football League Rules

Welcome and thank you for your interest in flag football at the Plex. The purpose of these rules is to ensure order and safety for all involved in a flag football event at the Plex. These rules are in place to set the expectations for and monitor the type of play that takes place at the Plex. The rules are not subject to player interpretation and must be enforced by the officials.

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OVERVIEW

Standard dimensions of the field are 60 yards long by 25 yards wide with 7 yard endzones. Approved field sizes may fluctuate from 53-64 yards long when necessary, or 23-30 yards wide. Endzones should not be shorter than 5 yards.

RULE 1: GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 1. THE GAME BASICS

Article 1.
Minimum 4 players to start a game. May only have up to 5 players on the field at any one time.

Article 2.
A coin toss determines 1st possession. The team can elect to have offense, defense, defer or direction. Choice in the 2nd half will be awarded to the team that did not have the choice 1st half.

Article 3.
The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has three plays to cross mid-field. Once a team crosses mid-field they have three plays to score. If the offensive team fails to cross mid-field, the ball changes possession. If the offense does not score, the ball changes possession. All drives start from the 5-yard line with the exception of an interception.

Article 4.
No blocking is allowed. No intentional contact is allowed.

SECTION 2. ADMINISTRATIVE BASICS

Article 1.
The Plex reserves the right to move teams and/or players between divisions at any time in the best interest in the league. Registering for a league does not guarantee placement in that division. All divisions and leagues will be evenly divided to allow the most fun for all teams involved. If your team wins or finishes in the top three in a division, you shall automatically be considered a candidate to move to the next highest division for the next session.. All team placements will be decided by the Director of Football and all teams are subject to review. This clause is at the discretion of the Plex management.

Article 2.
All teams must have a $200 deposit paid by the deadline or they will not be allowed to participate in the session.

Article 3.
Full team payment, as well as player cards and waiver forms, are due before the second game or your team will be issued a forfeit. Teams with outstanding balances after the second game will be issued a $50 late fee and a credit card must be on file with management. Teams with balances after the first game will not beallowed to participate until the fees are paid in full.

Article 4.
All players shall have a valid player card and signed waiver form on file with the Plex for each session before you can participate. Without a valid player card and waiver form on file, you are considered an illegal player and your team will be issued a forfeit for each game in which you participate.

Article 5.
Only qualified coaches and players are allowed in the bench area.

Article 6.
Teams are allowed one non-rostered player to serve as a coach. Coaches will adhere to the same rules as players and are subject to the same penalties as the team.

Article 7.
Any spectators found behind the goal or on the bench will be asked to sit in the spectator area. Failure to comply shall result in that person being asked to leave the facility and penaties may be enforced upon teams on the field.

Article 8.
Players may not wear cleats on the turf. Only flats and turf shoes will be allowed. Any player found to be wearing cleats will be asked to leave the field and may not return until they have proper footwear. Proper footware shall be confirmed by the referees.

SECTION 3. REQUIRED PERSONAL CONDUCT

Article 1.
Players, coaches and spectators must keep their comments profanity free. Disrespectful language, racist, sexist, homophobic remarks, obscene gestures/ behavior, and bullying are prohibited.

Article 2.
Foul play will not be tolerated. Any staff member that hears or sees anything that leads them to believe an infraction of the required personal conduct outline has been committed the person responsible may dismissed for the rest of the tournament.

Article 3.
Fighting will lead to an immediate ejection for the remainder of the day, as well as disqualification from the next scheduled contest. It may also include longer suspension or even a lifetime exclusion.

Article 4.
Alcohol, other intoxicants, weapons, drones and pets are prohibited on our fields.

SECTION 4. REQUIRED TEAM CONDUCT

Article 1.
For the safety of our officials and their ability to administer the game all team personnel must remain inside the designated team bench area.

Article 2.
Coaches may signal or call-in plays during the play clock but must be on the bench before the snap. Coaches on the field during game play will be assessed a timeout. In the event a team is out of timeouts, an unsportsmanlike will be assessed.

Article 3.
After all touchdowns and successful PAT attempts, the ball carrier shall report to an official who will ensure the flag was not tampered with by pulling the flag from the ball carrier.

Article 4.
Teams are required to gather on the appropriate bench (home or away) and shall not go in the neutral space between benches or the opposing team's bench during a game.

Article 5.
If teams are unsure which bench to use, check with a referee.

Article 6.
Officials may require that boom-boxes or other noise producing devices be turned off or eliminated as they interfere with the game official's ability to communicate and administer the game.

Article 7.
Teams are required to clean up their garbage after contests.

SECTION 5. ROSTER RULES

Article 1.
Rosters must be completed through the registration system or in person on paper before your first game on an official roster sheet. Team captains must invite players by entering their email address or sending them the invite link. Players must accept the invite, register themselves and accept the waiver in order to be eligible to participate.

Article 2.
If the team captain is also playing, they must register themselves as a player on the roster and accept the waiver. If the team captain is not playing, their spot on the roster does not count toward the roster maximum.

Article 3.
Failure to complete your roster will result in a forfeit if protested and removal from the session without refund.

Article 4.
Players are not eligible to be on a roster for more than one team in each league.

Article 5.
Transgender players may play on the team that matches the gender on their state or federal issued identification document.

Article 6.
Players must have a valid I.D. or copy of their I.D. with them at all times. In the event of a Roster Protest this is the only form accepted as proof of identity. If, in the event of a roster protest, the player in question cannot provide valid ID, the protested player will be disqualified.

Article 7.
The maximum number of players that can be on a team's roster is 12.

Article 8.
Rosters will be frozen prior to the start of the second game. Players cannot be added after this game without the consent of the league director.

Article 9.
A player must play a minimum of three (3) regular season games to be considered eligible for the playoffs.

RULE 2: UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

SECTION 1. SAFETY

Article 1.
Players may not wear hard, unyielding, or stiff material items that in the view of the officiating crew may present a hazard to other players.

Article 2.
It is recommended that all players wear a protective mouthpiece while on the field-of-play.

Article 3.
It is recommended that players wear pants or shorts that do not have pockets, belt loops, zippers, or exposed draw strings. Pockets being ripped will count as a flag pull and not as a hold. Pants or shorts with pockets that have been professionally sewn-shut are allowed at the game official's discretion. Pants or shorts cannot be taped.

SECTION 2. FLAG BELTS

Article 1.
Teams must supply their own flags.

Article 2.
Bring extra flags and belts, the plex will attempt to have flag belots for sale, but may not have flags available depending on demand and have no means in which to replace or repair damaged flags. Your participation is subject to having the correct and working flags.

Article 3.
Having the correct and legal flags is solely the responsibility of the participant. If you are not certain if your flags are legal or allowed, it is your duty to confirm with the officials or director prior to game start in order to avoid consequences of illegal equipment.

Article 4.
Altered or tampered flags could result in an ejection or forfeit. No shortening, cutting, using a cloth material or other substrate different from the traditional

vinyl material (at the discretion of the officials and director), etc.

Article 5.
Youth size flags may not be worn in adult leagues. Adult flags must be no less than 14" long as measured from the bottom of the popper or flag belt when there is no popper present and no less than 1 ¾" wide. (Failure to Wear Proper Equipment – 5-yards, loss of down). Player is disqualified until equipment meets standards.

Article 6.
Flags must be a contrasting color to a player's pants/shorts. Contrasting is at the official's discretion.

Article 7.
Flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding. Flags must be evenly distributed on the belt. Suction cups shall be face down and away from the body. Belts shall be snug around the waist to avoid rotating.

Article 8.
If a player chooses to wear a hand towel, or any other object, on their waist it will be treated as part of the flag belt.

Article 9.
If a ball carrier starts the play wearing a fully incomplete flag set (zero flags attached to the flag belt) or no flag belt at all they'll be down where they took possession of the ball and will be ruled down instantly when the ball is caught. For example: They may catch a pass with no flags or no flag belt at all but cannot advance it.

Article 10.
Any player may advance the ball with at least one flag attached their flag belt. They'll be able to participate in the play and will be downed by one-hand touch or any contact from the opposing team. For example: They may catch a pass with one flag attached their flag belt and be able to advance the ball but will only need to be touched by the opposing team.

Artilcle 11.
If a player is legally or illegally deflagged during a play and then comes into posession of the football later during the same play, they must be downed by one-hand touch.

Article 12.
All players on the field are eligible receivers at the snap regardless of possible uniform violations.

Article 13.
A missing flag violation will not delay the game or stop a live play.

Article 14.
A pocket in the shorts will be an extra flag. Any extra cloth or clothing under the belt will count as an extra flag. Tuck your shirt into your shorts to avoid this.

SECTION 3. MISCELLANEOUS UNIFORM AND GEAR ISSUES

Article 1.
Some type of team jersey is required; the minimal standard is similar-colored shirts. Teams should carry two colored shirts, a dark color and a light color to prevent a situation where two teams are similar in color. They do not have to be official uniforms, the light colored one can be a white T-shirt. If both teams are wearing the same color, the away team will have to wear pennies if they do not have an alternate colored shirt.

Article 2.
Players must ensure their jerseys are long enough to remain tucked in during the entire play or short enough so there is a minimum of 4" from the bottom of the jersey to the player's waistline. (Jerseys should never cover the flag belt).

Article 3.
When a shirt is untucked at the snap a hold will not be called on the defender that is making a fair and legal attempt at the ball carrier's flag. It is the player's responsibility to check their equipment before each snap. If the shirt is ripped during the flag pull attempt, the untucked shirt will count as a flag pull.

- Adult men's teams must use a regulation size ball.

Article 4. • Adult women's teams may use a regulation, intermediate or junior size ball.
Footballs must be pebble grained leather or rubber covered and meet the recommendations of size and shape for a regulation football.
Article 5.

Players must wear close-toed shoes. No cleats are allowed when playing indoors; flats and turf shoes (indoor soccer) only. Cleats with exposed metal are never allowed.

Article 6.
Players may wear eye protection to include prescription glasses or flexible sunglasses.

Article 7.
Players may wear a face shield molded to the face with no protrusions to protect against facial injury.

Article 8.
Jewelry that in the judgement of a game official might endanger other players must be removed before play.

Article 9.
Player's finger nails must be trimmed or taped over to protect opponents. Alternatively,players may wear gloves to protect their opponents.

Article 10.
Players may wear knit or stocking-style caps. Hard-billed caps must be removed or turned around backward. Players may wear a headband made of non-abrasive material. Rubber or elastic bands may be used in hair. Soft-shelled helmets designed for flag football players (e.g., the EliteTek brand), may be worn.

Article 11.
Players may tape forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear soft gloves, elbow pads, shin guards, and knee pads. Unyielding items such as braces, casts, or anything with exposed metal are not allowed.

Article 12.
Officials will endeavor to identify missing, incomplete or improperly worn flag belts prior to the snap and announce for example "number X, down on possession". The player with the missing flag violation must fix the issue during the next dead ball situation or leave the field until they have done so.

RULE 3: CLOCK MECHANICS

SECTION I. GAME CLOCK FORMAT

Article 1.
Game clock is 40 minutes long. Two 20 minute halves and 2-minute halftime.

Article 2.
Each team has two 30 second timeouts per half. If a time out is called after a TD the clock will not run until the change of possession and the offense snaps their ball.

Article 3.
The play clock is 25 seconds from the end of the previous play.

Article 4.

If a team does not consist of the minimum amount of players to begin the contest, the 20 minute first half will begin. A team will have 5 minutes to achieve the minimum player count before the contest is forefeit. If the team gains enough players to play, the clock will resume with the remainder of the time and the game will proceed as normal.

Article 5.
The clock will stop at the one minute mark (or immediately following the offense's play if the 1:00 mark occurs mid-play) if the game is within 8 points in the second half

Article 6.
When in the final minute of the second half, if the game is within 8 points the game will enter 'pro clock' rules.
When officials go to the 'pro clock' mechanic the clock will stop / start as listed below:

Clock stops for:	Clock resumes when:
Change of Possession	On the Snap (unless PAT)
First Down	On the Snap
Inadvertent Whisle	On Ready Whistle
Incomplete Pass	On the Snap
Intentional Grouding	On Ready Whistle
Runner Out of Bounds	On the Snap
Penalty Administration (other than delay of game)	Depends on previous play
Delay of Game	On the Snap
Referee Timeout	Referee Discretion
Score	On the Snap (except PAT)
Team Timeout	On the Snap
Injury (see referee timeout)	(see referee timeout)

PATs are always untimed downs when in 'pro clock', but a game can exit pro clock if a score puts a team beyond an 8 point differential.

SECTION 2. TIME OUTS AND CLOCK PROTOCOL

Article 1.
Officials may stop the clock as needed.

Article 2.
Team timeouts are 30 seconds. After 30 seconds the official will audibly place the offense on a 25-second play clock. Timeouts do not roll over from the first half.

Article 3.
Halftime is two minutes.

Article 4.
Team captains are encouraged to yell "clock?" or "clock check?" in lieu of "time?" to avoid confusion when requesting a team timeout.

Article 5.
Event directors may enter the field of play during any dead ball situation to address matters they believe should not wait till half-time or the end of the game by calling a 'Director's time-out'.

SECTION 3. FIRST HALF CLOCK

Article 1.
The clock will run continuously during the first half unless a team timeout is used or play is stopped by an official (e.g. deal with an injury, challenge, referee conference, game management purposes, etc.)

Article 2.
The clock will run during point-after-touchdown attempts (PATs) in the first half unless either team opts to use a team timeout.

SECTION 4. SECOND HALF CLOCK

Article 1.
In the second half the clock will run continuously for the first 19 minutes unless a team timeout or an official's time out is used.

Article 2.
The one-minute warning will stop the clock in the second half if the score difference is 8 points or less.

Article 3.
The head official will give a verbal one-minute warning as close as possible to the actual marks but will not interrupt a live play.

Article 4.
If a one minute warning is given officials will use a 'pro clock' mechanic for the remainder of the contest.

RULE 4: COIN TOSS

SECTION 1. COIN TOSS

Article 1.
Team captains shall bring their game ball(s) to the coin toss for inspection.

Article 2.
Game officials will confirm with team captains during the coin toss that the teams are in correct and legal uniforms (pockets, flags, contrasting colors, unyielding materials, etc.).

Article 3.
Referee will issue the first warning about unsportsmanlike conduct, excessive rough play, and language.

Article 4.
First possession is decided using a coin toss. The head official will ask the 'calling captain' their choice of "heads" or "tails". The head official will then confirm the call. The captain winning the toss shall choose one of the following options:

- Begin on offense
- Begin on defense

Article 5.
At the start of the second half, the team that started the first half on Defense will now start on Offense.

RULE 5: CHALLENGE PROCEDURE

SECTION 1. RULE CHALLENGES

Article 1.
Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Generally, officials are happy to answer quick response and general questions during the game if they do not impede the game. The priority is to spot the ball then address questions without impeding the play clock.

Article 2.
If a captain or head coach believes an official has made a procedural error they may call for a timeout. If the head official agrees that there has been a procedural error (e.g., wrong down, incorrect penalty yardage, etc.) the procedural error will be addressed and the timeout will not be charged. The challenge must be made to an official before the next snap.

Article 3.
In the event the captain or head coach loses a procedural challenge and the captain's team did not possess a legal team timeout a fifteen-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will be assessed.

Article 4.
Only procedural issues may be addressed, not an official's judgment call or no-call.

Article 5.
If the protesting team is unsatisfied with the ruling of the challenge on the field and would like to elevate the challenge to a league director / head of officials, they may do so.

Article 6.
If the protest is ultimately lost, the protesting team will lose all remaining timeouts of that half. If the protesting team does not have any timeouts left in the half they will lose all of the timeouts in the following half.

Article 7.
If the team doesn't possess any timeouts at all they will be assessed an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

SECTION 2. ROSTER CHALLENGES

Article 1.
To protest a roster, a team captain must specifically request a protest from the officials and select one individual player to challenge. This must occur while the game is in play.

Article 2.
Challenges will be examined and fully enforced first before another or cross-protest can be issued.

Article 3.
During play if a player is found playing on a team illegally, the team will immediately forfeit the game. They are not allowed to protest back at that time because the game is no longer in play.

Article 4.
If the protest is lost, the protesting team will lose all remaining timeouts of that half. If the protesting team does not have any timeouts left in the half they will lose all of the timeouts in the following half. In the event the captain or head coach loses a procedural challenge and the captain's team did not possess a legal team timeout a fifteen-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will be assessed.

RULE 6: OFFENSE

SECTION 1. GENERAL OFFENSE

Article 1.
Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless they are the only player in motion.

Article 2.
A player in motion towards the line of scrimmage must set for one second before the snap. A player motioning parallel or away from the line of scrimmage at the snap does not have to set.

Article 3.
All players shall substitute from their bench only. This allows the defense to be aware of their presence and avoids deceptive plays by the offense.

Article 4.
The ball must be snapped between the center's legs.

Article 5.

It is a false start if any player on offense enters the neutral zone before the snap.

Article 6.
The offense may not act or move in a manner that, in the judgement of the covering official, is clearly intended to cause the defense to encroach. Verbalizing play-calls or snap counts alone are not acts or moves that should be considered unless they are in conjunction with other acts or moves. The speed, abruptness, down and distance and if any player pretends to have the ball or otherwise simulate action at the snap will be considerations.

Article 7.
Direct snaps are legal to any player not on the line-of-scrimmage.

Article 8.
The ball will be declared dead if any portion of the ball carrier's body other than their hands and feet (knee, elbow, buttocks, ball-in-hand, etc.) touches the ground.

Article 9.
The offense is responsible for retrieving the ball and returning it an official or to the line of scrimmage at the end of each play.

SECTION 2. FUMBLES AND MUFFS

Article 1.
A fumble is when the ball, either intentionally or unintentionally, leaves the runner's hands after securing a catch or handoff.

Article 2.
Fumbles are a "dead ball" when they hit the ground. If a lateral, muffed or fumbled ball is intercepted before becoming dead it remains a "live ball".

Article 3.
Forward fumbles that hit the ground will be marked where the ball carrier's feet were when he/she lost control and not the spot where the ball hit the ground.

Article 4.
Forward fumbles may not be advanced by any member of the offense if caught before it hits the ground.

Article 5.
Muffed snaps will be marked where the ball hit the ground.

SECTION 3. RUNNING / JUMPING / DIVING

Article 1.
The quarterback may not run unless the ball has been thrown back, handed or pitched to him or her in the backfield. The quarterback my also run if the defense has crossed the line of scrimmage unless inside of a no-run zone.

Article 2.
Teams may handoff (unlimited), pitch, or throw back in the backfield. Unlimited laterals or throwbacks behind the LOS are allowed for the player to remain eligible to pass.

Article 3.
Pitching (backwards/laterally) is allowed downfield (unlimited). Handoffs are allowed forward or backwards when behind the line of scrimage, and only backwards beyond the line of scrimage. A handoff does not count as a lateral/throwback.

Article 4.
A forward pass DOES NOT have to cross the LOS to be a legal play.

Article 5.
No "give and go" to the quarterback by having the quarterback bounce the ball off a receiver's back allowing the quarterback to run.

Article 6.
No run zones are located 5 yards before mid-field and 5-yards before the end zone. You may not run the ball in the no run zone (5-yards before the first down and end zone), only forward passes are allowed.

Article 7.
Ball is spotted where the ball is at the time of the flag pull. The ball must break the plane of the midfield or goal line to be considered a first down or touchdown and must fully exit the endzone to avoid a safety.

Article 8.
Players may NOT block down field in any form.

Article 9.
Ball carriers are allowed to leave their feet, jump, and spin as evasive maneuvers in order to advance the ball as long as they do not put another player's safety at risk. Not every insignificant jump or small hop constitutes a safety issue and player safety risk is at the discretion of each official. Jump cuts or leaping between two defenders is allowed if they do not initiate noteworthy contact with the defender or put another player's safety at risk.

Article 10.
Ball carriers may not hurdle over another player. Ball carriers may not dive, lunge, or fall forward in a perceived intentional manner in order to advance the ball or achieve a line-to-gain. This is a judgment call by the game officials.

Article 11.
Ball carriers may extend the ball out in front of them to gain additional yardage.

Article 12.
Ball carriers must make every effort to avoid a defender who has established a stationary position (similar to charging in basketball).

Article 13.
Runners may leave their feet to avoid collision or falling on another player.

Article 14.
Passers may jump vertically to throw the ball over a defender.

Article 15.
The offense may use multiple backward hand-offs or laterals.

SECTION 4. FLAG GUARDING INCLUDING STIFF-ARMING

Article 1.
The ball carrier's flags must be accessible to the defense throughout the play. Flags may not be tucked in pants, tucked under jerseys, worn improperly, looped around the waist belt, or knotted.

Article 2.
Flag guarding is the act of a ball carrier denying a defender the opportunity to capture their flag in any physical way. The ball carrier shall not flag guard by flailing of arms, using their hands, arms, elbows or extremely dipped shoulders to deny the opportunity of an opponent to remove a flag.

Article 3.
The ball carrier may not swat a defender's hands away nor pin the flag against their body using the ball or hands. An official may call flag guarding if they feel that a ball carrier's natural running motion gave the ball carrier a decisive advantage over the defender and the running motion caused part of the ball carrier's body to block a de-flagging attempt.

Article 4.
What constitutes flag guarding is up to the official's judgment. We recommend you carry the ball with your hands held high on the body to avoid flag guarding. This is one of the most difficult transitions for traditional football players. Flag guarding shall not be called if there is no defensive player within reasonable distance to capture the flag.

Article 5.
The ball carrier may bend at the knees to dip low, side cut, skip, or take short hops. Extreme low dips (sometimes called a "duck-walk") are legal and do not constitute flag guarding in themselves, as long as the flag carrier's flags are still exposed and the defensive player isn't physically impeded (i.e. the ball carrier isn't using his arms, hands, shoulder, ball, etc. to impede the defender. Normally flag guarding can be avoiding while "duck-walking" when the ball carrier keeps his hands and elbows high on the body (ex: at shoulder-level). Examples of flag guarding:

- stiff arming
- pinning the flag
- swatting

- using the ball as a stiff arm

Article 6.
A flag guarding penalty will still be called if a ball carrier simultaneously flag guards as the defender pulls the flag.

Article 7.
Tampering with the flag or belt in any way to gain advantage is illegal.

SECTION 5. PASS PLAYS

Article 1.
Only one forward pass per play. Once the ball has passed the line-of-scrimmage it cannot be returned to behind the line-of-scrimmage and thrown forward legally.

Article 2.
If any portion of the passer's body is behind the line-of-scrimmage it is a legal pass.

Article 3.
All players are eligible to receive a pass unless they have stepped out-of-bounds of their own accord.

Article 4.
Any offensive player who receives either a forward or backward handoff behind scrimmage can pass the ball from behind the line-of-scrimmage.

Article 5.
Backward passes are allowed.

Article 6.
If the passer's flag has been pulled while the passer still has the ball in their hand, it is a sack. There is no allowance given for the passer's arm being in motion at the time of the sack. Ball in hand at all equals a sack.

Article 7.
The quarterback has 5 seconds to pass the ball if there is no rush. If the ball is not thrown, then the play is dead. After the ball is ruled dead it is placed where the quarterback is located resulting in loss of yardage after the ball is not released into the field of play within the 5 seconds if there is no rush.

Article 8.
Once the ball is handed off or pitched backwards the 5 second count stops. If the defensive team rushes, then there is no 5 second count once the defense crosses the line of scrimmage.

Article 9.
There is no arm in motion, if the ball is in hand when the quarterback's flag is pulled then it will be ruled a sack. Same for the 5 second rule.

Article 10.
Interceptions may be returned.

Article 11.
The rusher may not have any contact with the QB (no hitting the QB arm or knocking the ball out of the QB hand). See Rule 7, Section 4 for more details.

SECTION 6. INTENTIONAL GROUNDING

Article 1.
A passer may not throw the ball into the ground to avoid a loss of yardage or conserve time.

Article 2.
An exception to Rule 6, Section 6, Article 1 is it is legal to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball to the ground immediately (spiking) after receiving either a direct hand-to-hand snap or from the "shot-gun" formation for styles that do not allow hand-to-hand snaps. The spike must be fluid and immediate after the snap or it is intentional grounding.

Article 3.
A pass may not be intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an offensive receiver.

Article 4.
Passers may not throw the ball out-of-bounds to stop the clock as in NFL or NCAA games.

Article 5.
Intentional grounding can occur anywhere behind the line of scrimmage.

SECTION 7. CATCHES

Article 1.
All players are eligible to receive a pass, including the quarterback, if the ball has been pitched or handed off in the backfield.

Article 2.
Players must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.

Article 3.
A pass is completed when an offensive player simultaneously places at least one foot inbounds and momentarily secures possession of the ball.

Article 4.
Simultaneous catches between a defensive and offensive player go to the offense.

Article 5.
In the event of a bobbled catch, i.e., the ball is batted about by the receiver in an attempt to catch it, and the intended receiver is de-flagged before taking full possession there is no penalty for early flag pull, and the receiver is not down until the catch is secured and either the other flag is pulled or one hand touch between the knees and shoulder.

Article 6.
Whether or not a ball is tipped or touched in the air has no bearing on the play as it applies to fouls anywhere on the field (roughing, personal fouls, illegal contact, pass interference, etc.).

Article 7.
If a receiver steps out-of-bounds of their own accord and is the first to touch a pass, it is illegal touching. The play will be blown dead immediately.

Article 8.
If the ball comes out of the receiver's grasp due to contact with the ground or while going to the ground before having the ball secured the pass is incomplete.

RULE 7. DEFENSE

SECTION 1. GENERAL DEFENSE

Article 1.
Stripping or attempting to strip the ball from a player's hand, including the quarterback, is illegal.

Article 2.
Defensive teams may not simulate the offensive team's signals or cadence. (Unsportsmanlike)

Article 3.
After the head official blows the ready-for-play whistle and the snapper puts their hand(s) on the ball, no player may enter the neutral zone until the ball is moved to start the snap. Entering the neutral zone before the snap is known as "offside" or encroachment which causes the play to be immediately blown dead and the offending team is penalized five yards.

Article 4.
If a defensive team intentionally commits a penalty in order to achieve a specific goal and the penalty is declined, any subsequent attempts to continue committing the penalty will result in a 15 yard unsportsmanlike penatly and automatic first down for the offense.

Example: Offense has the ball 2nd down and 3 yards to gain prior to a first down. Defense intentionally jumps offsides to try and get offense to accept a first down and long line to gain. If offense declines, and defense immediately attempts same penalty again, an additional unsportsmanlike penalty will be enforced.

Article 5.
Diving by the defense to capture a ball carrier's flag is legal.

SECTION 2. FLAG PULLING MECHANICS

Article 1.
Flag football is a finesse game versus the brute strength game of traditional tackle football.

Article 2.
Flag pulling is the legal removal of a flag from an opponent in possession of the ball. Legal flag pulls must begin with the hands leading toward the opponent's hips and flags.

Article 3.
No player shall make any contact with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary or excessive and which incites roughness. (This is a judgement call IAW NFHS rule 9-4-3g, Illegal Personal Contact)

Article 4.
No player has the right to over-aggressively 'body up', 'wrap up', 'play through', 'bull rush', charge, spear or lead with a shoulder against an opponent even to capture a flag. Players must play to capture the flag, not to commit Illegal Personal Contact.

Article 5.
Pushing out on the sidelines is not permitted unless the defense was making a fair, legal, and reasonable attempt to pull the ball carrier's flags, i.e. the defender's hands were aimed low at the ball carrier's hips and flags and not high up on the body.

Article 6.
Pushing, striking, holding, slapping or tripping while attempting to pull a flag is not permitted.

Article 7.
A defensive player may not pull the flag of a player who is not in possession of the ball.

Article 8.
Any defensive player who removes the flag from an offensive ball carrier is encouraged to show good sportsmanship and hold the flag above their head to assist the officials in locating the spot where the capture occurred.

Article 9.
Players may be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct for throwing, spiking, obscuring, or delaying the ball carrier in recovering their pulled flag.

Article 10.
If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play the de-flagging reverts to a one-hand touch of the runner between the shoulder and the knees.

Article 11.
When a ball carrier flag guards and a defensive player pulls the ball carrier's flag simultaneously, a penalty will be called for flag guarding.

Article 12.
If a defensive player physically contains, tackles, or attempts to tackle the ball carrier (e.g., bear hugs, holds, wrestles with, obstructs, pushes the ball carrier out-of-bounds, tackles, or attempts to tackle, etc.) without making a clear, legal attempt to pull the ball carrier's flag, the offensive team will be awarded at least one line-zone-to-gain or fifteen-yards (offended team's choice) from the spot of foul and an automatic first down.

This type of action can result in a score awarded if the foul occurred inside the final line-zone-to-gain or the covering official reasonably believes the foul is the only thing that prevented the ball carrier from scoring. (Teaching point: Play the flag not the ball carrier's body or ball as in traditional tackle football).

SECTION 3. RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

Article 1.
Players that rush the quarterback must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

Article 2.
The 7 yards will be measured off by a referee.

Article 3.
Players that are not 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped may not enter into the backfield until there is a change of possession.

Article 4.
The rusher is allowed a direct lane to the quarterback as long as he or she rushes from either side of the center or outside the bunch formation. The offense must avoid interfering with the rusher if he or she has established a lane. Officials will announce LANE or NO LANE for rushers/blitzers prior to the snap. This is a judgement call/decision based on the spacing between the players in the offensive formation.

Article 5.
The rush of a blitzer has to be immediately after the snap, quick and straight towards the point where the quarterback receives the snap in order to retain the right of way. If a blitzer is rushing late, slowly, aiming at another spot, changing direction during the rush or just does not rush the quarterback, the player loses the right of way but still can participate as any other defensive player.

Article 6.
If contact is made with the rusher when the rusher was given a LANE, impeding will be called against the offense. If contact is made when NO LANE was called, illegal contact against the Defense will be called for contacting a receiver in route.

SECTION 4. ROUGHING

Article 1.
Defensive players must make a concerted effort to avoid charging into the quarterback.

Article 2.
In general, defensive players may not "crash" the quarterback's throwing arm, shoulder or body even if the ball is touched first. This rule applies to holders and kickers as well.

Article 3.
It is a quarterbacks right to step into a throw, and the rushers duty to avoid contact. If contact is significant and forceful at the discretion of the officials, whether attempting to go for the flag or not, it may be deemed roughing the passer.

Article 4.
An insignificant "brush-by" may be allowed by the referee but is not guaranteed.

Article 5.
Making contact with the quarterback while blocking a pass or attempting to block a pass may result in a roughing the passer penalty.

Article 6.
Whether or not a ball is tipped in the air has no bearing on the play as it applies to fouls (roughing, personal fouls, etc.).

Article 7.
A roughing penalty will not be enforced if a quarterback initiates contact with a defensive player while in the throwing motion; for example, during the passer's follow through the player's arm makes contact with an opponent's hand, arm, or shoulder. In this instance the impetus of the contact is the action of the quarterback and not the defender. This is a judgment call.

SECTION 5. PASS COVERAGE:

Article 1.
Contacting receivers is not allowed except for situations such as Articles 2 and 3 of this section.

Article 2.
Pass interference normally occurs above the waist; entangled feet are not considered pass interference. Incidental contact is not considered pass interference.

Article 3.
A player may "find" their opponent by reaching out and placing a hand on them as long as touching does not delay, impede, twist, or turn their opponent. This is not considered pass interference.

Article 4.
Contact away from the direction of the pass is not considered pass interference, but may be illegal contact. Examples of pass interference include:

- Shoving or pushing off to create separation.
- Playing through the back.
- Hook and turn: grabbing the torso and turning an opponent before the pass arrives.
- Not playing the ball: the defender is looking at the receiver and contact materially impedes the receiver.
- Arm bars, hooking, restricting, grabbing wrists, or turning a receiver.
- Blocking downfield before the ball has been touched, commonly seen through "pick plays".
- Cutting off the path of a receiver by being in front of them and slowing down or being beside them and "riding" them off their path to the ball.

Article 5.
A player may use their arms or hands to intentionally obstruct the receiver's view (face guarding) of the ball without turning their own head to play the ball as long as noteworthy contact is not made with the receiver.

Article 6.
Whether a pass is catchable or uncatchable has no bearing on pass interference.

Article 7.
If defensive pass interference occurs in the end zone the ball will be placed on the one yard line, automatic first down.

SECTION 6. INTERCEPTIONS

Article 1.
Interceptions may be returned. In the event of an interception, the intercepting team must secure the ball with "clean hands," i.e., they must not have committed a foul before or simultaneous to the interception.

Article 2.
If the intercepting team gained the interception with "clean hands" they will be awarded a first down where the ball becomes dead (flag pull, stepping out-of-bounds, fumbled, etc.)

Article 3.
The ball will be spotted wherever the ball was at the time of the flag pull or the ball carrier left the field-of-play.

Article 4.
Fouls by the intercepting team after an interception will be assessed from the spot of the foul. Fouls by the intercepted team after the interception will be assessed at the end of the run.

Article 5.
Interceptions in the end zone that are not returned to the field of play will result in a touchback and the ball will be spotted on the 5-yard line.

RULE 8: SCORING

SECTION 1. POINTS

Touchdown	6 points
Point After Touchdown (PAT)	1 point from the 5-yard line 2 points from the 12-yard line Returned Interceptions on all PAT's are 2 points
Safety	2 Points

SECTION 2. POINT AFTER TOUCHDOWN (PAT)

Article 1.
Following a touchdown, once the scoring team has informed an official of which point conversion choice they want to attempt the decision cannot be changed unless the scoring team uses a team timeout.

Article 2.
If a penalty occurs during an extra point attempt, the penalty will be assessed but the extra point value remains the same.

Article 3.
Decisions cannot be changed after a penalty. For example, if the offense attempts a 1-point PAT and is penalized five yards for a false start, they cannot change their mind and go for a 2-point PAT even if they use a timeout as outlined in this section (article 1).

Article 4.
Unsportsmanlike conduct and personal fouls by the defense during successful touchdown attempts will be assessed at half the distance to the goal during the PAT attempt. All other defensive penalties may be declined by the offense and the score will stand.

Article 5.
Dead ball fouls committed by the offense that do not carry a loss-of-down penalty (false start, offside, etc.) will result in penalty yardage assessed and the down replayed.

Article 6.
Fouls by the offense during a PAT attempt that carry a loss-of-down penalty (flag guarding, illegal advancement, illegal forward pass, etc.) will result in the PAT being "no good" and the attempt will not be repeated.

Article 7.
Fouls simultaneous to the snap (illegal shift, illegal motion, illegal formation, etc.), if accepted, will result in penalty yardage assessed and the down replayed.

Article 8.
Fouls by the defense during an unsuccessful PAT attempt will result in a retry after the options are administered. The offense may opt to accept or decline penalty yardage before the retry.

Article 9.
Interceptions on any PAT can be returned by the defense for two points regardless of what PAT point value attempted.

SECTION 3. SAFETIES

Article 1.
A safety is awarded to the defense when the ball becomes dead in the offense's end zone or the offense commits a foul in their end zone. The goal line is IN the End Zone which means the ball must COMPLETELY leave the endzone to avoid a safety

Examples:

Terminologies and Designations – Team A is the team that initiates the snap. Team B is the opponent that began the play on defense. Safeties occur when the ball becomes dead in the offense's (Team A's) end zone or Team A commits a foul in their end zone. The team's End Zone is the one it is defending. The goal line is IN the End Zone which means the ball must COMPLETELY leave the endzone to avoid a safety. Examples include:

- Grounded fumbles in or out of Team A's end zone (sidelines and end line).
- A player in possession of the ball has their flag pulled in the end zone (except after a change-of-possession).
- The ball carrier going out-of-bounds behind the goal line (except after a change-of-possession).
- The ball is snapped out of the end zone.

Team B Exceptions:
• A flag pull immediately after an interception by Team B in the end zone is a touchback, not a safety. A Team B player going out-of-bounds behind the goal line immediately after an interception in the end zone is a touchback, not a Safety.
• If the ball is intercepted by Team B in the end zone and Team B fouls in the end zone prior to the ball being brought back into the field-of-play (example:

flag guarding) the result of the play is a touchback and the foul will be administered from the touchback spot. This will not a safety.
• If the ball is intercepted Team B between the 5-yard line and the goal line and the player's momentum takes them into the end zone where the ball becomes dead in Team B's possession or Team B fouls in the end zone (example: flag guarding) the ball belongs to Team B and the penalty will be assessed from the spot where it was intercepted. It is a touchback. It is not a safety.

SECTION 4. MERCY RULE

Article 1.
If a team is up by 28 points or more during play within the last 5 minutes of gameplay, the game may be called by the referees. This may only be used if games are behind schedule in an attempt to recover lost time from previous contests.

RULE 9: OVERTIME

SECTION 1. GENERAL PROCEDURES

Article 1
Overtime does not exist in regular season or non-elimination games. If the 40 minute clock ends with the score's even, the game will end as a tie.

Article 2.
Only one coin toss is allowed during overtime regardless of the number of overtime periods played.

Article 3.
If additional overtimes are played, the captains will alternate choices (for example: the winner of the overtime coin toss chooses defense. If there is another overtime period the loser of the overtime coin toss now gets to choose).

Article 4.
For winning the coin toss, a team may choose offense or defense.

Article 5.
Each team is allowed one timeout per each overtime period.

Article 6.
If the defensive teams intercepts a pass and returns it for a touchdown, the game is over. If the intercepting team does not score and has not been on offense, the ball will be placed at the appropriate yard line. If the intercepting team does not score and was already on offense and their offense scored, the game is over.

Article 7.
Overtime rules are as follows

OT #	Who chooses Offense or Defense	Starting Yard Line	Downs to Score	PAT Options
1	Coin toss winner	midfield	3	1 or 2
2	Coin toss loser	12	3	1 or 2
3	coin toss winner	5	3	1 or 2
4+	coin toss loser	5	1	2

RULE 10: PLAYOFFS

SECTION 1. GENERAL

Article 1.
All previously outlined rules are the same except the rules that are specifically mentioned in this rule.

Article 2.
All teams participate in the playoffs

SECTION 2. SEEDING

Article 1.
In the event that two or more teams have the same regular season record, the tie breakers to determine seeding are as follows:

- Head-To-Head regular season games
- Least Points Allowed
- Most Points Scored
- Coin Flip

SECTION 3. CLOCK

Article 1.
The game is a 20 minute game with two 10 minute halves and a 1 minute half time.

Article 2.
First possession is decided by the higher seeded team. The captain of the higher seeded team shall choose one of the following options:

- Begin on offense
- Begin on defense

Article 3.
At the start of the second half, the team that started the first half on Defense will now start on Offense.

Article 4.
Each team will have 1 time out per half. If the time out from the first half was not used, that time out will carry to the second half

Article 5.
Play clock is 15 seconds

Article 6.
The clock will stop for a 1 minute warning in the second half of play if the game is within 8 points.

Article 7.
There is NO 'pro clock' mechanic in the tournament.

SECTION 4. CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Article 1.
All playoff rule overrides are reverted. The regular game rules will apply.

RULE II: OFFICIATING

SECTION 1. GENERAL OFFICIATING

Article 1.
Officials do not have to call everything they see but they must completely see everything they call.

Article 2.
Game officials may not use any recording or replay in making any decision relating to the game.

Article 3.
Officials must not tolerate taunting, baiting, and unsportsmanlike acts.

Article 4.
Game official must err on the side of safety while officiating.

SECTION 2. ENDING THE GAME / FORFEITS

Article 1.
The game may not end with a penalty unless it is declined.

Article 2.
Penalties by the offense that include a loss of down with time expired in either half (i.e., there is no time on the clock) will not extend the half or game.

Article 3.
Offsetting penalties will not extend the half or game.

Article 4.
Forfeits that occur prior to game will be recorded as 28-0 for 4v4 and 5v5 games and 17-0 for 7/8/9 player formats. Forfeits that occur during the game will be recorded at these scores or the actual score of the game at the time of the forfeit, whichever is the larger differential.

Article 5.
A forfeit will not be official until expressely issued by a director only and deemed final.

Article 6.
Team's and players participating in multiple styles that are not guaranteed to be scheduled separately, or in the same schedule block, are required to have enough players to participate to avoid a forfeit and no rescheduling or holding the game up will be administered.

Article 7.
It is each team's responsibility to have enough players present at the coinflip in order to avoid a forfeit, even in the event of other divisions or fields running behind. The only time a game will be held up officially is when those styles have specifically been guaranteed not to overlap as detailed on the event page. If you are not certain if your teams games will overlap, make sure to double check prior to schedules being released.

Article 8.
No period or half can end if there is an obvious timing error or any other irregularity has occurred and verified.

Article 9.
Four unsportsmanlike and / or personal fouls by one team will result in a forfeiture.

SECTION 3. PREVENTATIVE OFFICIATING

Article 1.
Officials should aim to assist teams to avoid penalties (preventative officiating). Cautions and teaching points are appropriate most times.

Article 2.
It is not the mission of the game officials to flag every small, nuanced infraction of traditional high-level football unless it produces a significant unfair

advantage. Preventative officiating examples include:

- Warning players about unsportsmanlike conduct during the coin toss
- Reminding coaches and players how the clock works
- Clarifying rules
- Tell the quarterback to "wait for my whistle"
- Give players warnings when appropriate
- Remind players on the line to "check with me / look at me" to help them line up correctly
- Announcing "10 seconds to snap, please" and counting down: five, four, three, etc.
- Yelling 'forward' or 'back' while observing a pass to leave no doubt what you saw

Article 3.
Prior to a snap, officials can require and warn players to adjust their flags to their proper alignment. Repeated warnings of this nature can result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.

SECTION 4. MECHANICS OF OFFICIATING

Article 1.
No penalty or penalty flag stops a live play EXCEPT flag guarding and Illegal Touching (when a receiver goes out of bounds and is the first to touch the ball).

Article 2.
Be 'game-aware' of where you should be to make your best call. Example: Rush line referee should be moving downfield during obvious long throw situations, and all referees should be running with interceptions or other long field plays.

Article 3.
Officiating is a team sport. Keep regular eye-contact with fellow officials and mimic their commands and hand signals.

Article 4.
Remember to 'dead ball' officiate. Just because the play is over doesn't mean you don't have to pay attention.

Article 5.
Officials must highly endeavor to announce down and distance before any snap. While it always the team coach's responsibility to be game aware, the officiating crew should always endeavor to keep them informed.

Article 6.
Resist the temptation to watch the ball in the air, no foul has ever occurred up there. Watch your players.

Article 7.
Resist the temptation of running with the whistle in your mouth to avoid inadvertent whistles.

Article 8.
Use short-underhand tosses to avoid hitting players with the ball when relaying the ball to a game official.

Article 9.
Officials should throw their hat to the ground when they see a player step out-of-bounds.

Article 10.
All officials will respect the calls of other officials. However, it is purely acceptable for an official to 'come over the top' of another official if the official had a better angle or saw something the other did not.

Article 11.
In order to be convincing and 'sell' your calls: use strong whistle and flag mechanics, clear and crisp signals and a strong and clear voice.

Article 12.
In the interest of safety do not attempt to throw your penalty flag to the exact spot of the foul when you may inadvertently hit a player with the thrown flag. Throw it somewhere parallel to the spot of the foul.

SECTION 5. MARKING THE SPOT

Article 1.
The ball will be spotted wherever the ball was at the time of the flag pull or the ball carrier left the field-of-play.

Article 2.
A ball spotter / ball marker or line judge shall be used to mark the line-of-scrimmage.

Article 3.
When a ball carrier's flag accidentally falls off — but not as a result of any action by the defense — that player will be downed by one-hand touch.

Article 4.
Flag guarding is notionally and effectively the end of the play.

Article 5.
If a defensive player initiates contact with a ball carrier while making an attempt to capture the ball carrier's flag and that force causes the ball carrier backward prior to the flag being captured 'forward progress' will be awarded as long as the ball carrier does not make a move under their own power to continue the play.

Article 6.
If the ball is intercepted in the end zone and intercepting team fouls in the end zone prior to the ball being brought back into the field (example: flag guarding) the result of the play will be a touchback and the foul will be administered from the touchback spot. This will not result in a safety.

Article 7.
If the entire ball is brought back into the field of play and then a foul occurs anywhere on the field, including the end zones, the penalty will be administered from the spot of the foul.

SECTION 6. PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

Article 1.
Penalties are assessed for live ball fouls in the order they occurred before dealing with dead ball fouls.

Article 2.
Live ball and dead ball fouls do not offset one another.

Article 3.
Officials may accept or decline penalties on a coach or captain's behalf if they are obvious. However, the coach or captain has the last word.

Article 4.
There is no limit of how many dead ball fouls can be enforced.

Article 5.
Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal when the yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

Article 6.
Fouls simultaneous to the snap, if accepted, will result in penalty yardage assessed and the down replayed.

Article 7.
An official shall have the authority to rectify an error and correct a down until the series has ended.

Article 8.
Penalties associated with automatic first downs: An offended team may accept the automatic first down portion of a penalty but decline the yardage portion or they may accept both the yardage and the automatic first down.

Article 9.
Yardage portions of any penalty may be declined.

Article 10.
Disqualifications, Ejections and Unsportsmanlike Conduct are the only three penalties that cannot be declined.

Article 11.

The loss-of-down aspect of a penalty has no significance following a change of possession or if the line to gain is reached after the enforcement.

SECTION 7. ESTABLISHING ZONE-LINE-TO-GAIN

Article 1.
To determine if a first down was achieved on any given running or passing play, the official will mark off any un-administered live-ball penalty yards before making the determination.

Article 2.
If a penalty awards an automatic first down (e.g., roughing the passer) and the original line-to-gain was not achieved after the yardage was resolved, the original line-to-gain will remain in effect.

SECTION 8. PACE OF PLAY

Article 1.
Officials will hustle but not hurry. They must control the game and not let an anxious team set the pace. Please keep a consistent and brisk pace throughout the game to ensure teams get the maximum amount of playing time possible.

Article 2.
If a snap occurs before the officials are ready, ready-to-play whistle or announcement, the ball will be blown dead and the quarterback issued a warning for the first offense. For the second offense a Delay-of-Game penalty will be earned.

Article 3.
Officials may stop the clock as they see fit in order to administer a fair, controlled contest.

Article 4.
Offensive teams may not take advantage of defensive substitutions to run "quick snap" plays to catch defensive teams not ready.

SECTION 9. MOMENTUM RULE

Article 1.
If the ball is intercepted between the 5-yard line and the goal line and the player's momentum takes them into the End Zone where the ball becomes dead in their possession or the intercepting team fouls in the end zone (example: flag guarding) the ball belongs to the intercepting team and the penalty will be assessed from the spot where it was intercepted. It is not a touchback. It is not a safety.

SECTION 10. CONTACT ABOVE THE SHOULDERS

Article 1.
Safe play is our utmost concern. Officials will penalize any noteworthy contact above the shoulders (head, neck, or face) between players, even if accidental.

SECTION 11. HOLDING

Article 1.
Holding is a judgement call. Officials will penalize any noteworthy hold that provides a significant unfair advantage. A simple tug or momentary grasp may not necessarily constitute holding. Holding is an attempt to gain a physical advantage by using hands or arms to hook, lock, clamp, grasp, encircle or restraining an opponent. Be aware defenders will be given the benefit of the doubt if the ball carrier's shirt is untucked.

SECTION 12. ILLEGAL PERSONAL CONTACT

Article 1.
No player may make contact with an opponent that is judged to be unnecessary or provokes rough-play or retaliation.

Article 2.
In the judgement of the game official, when one player uses enough force to knock another to the ground by pulling, tripping, bear-hugging, charging, sweeping, flinging, shoving, 'bodying-up' etc. Whether or not the player goes to the ground is irrelevant.

Article 3.
It is possible for a player(s) to go to the ground and it not be considered Illegal Contact, such as unintentional collision, i.e., the runner and defender meeting in the same space during the play, when a defender is making a fair, safe and reasonable attempt to capture the ball carriers flag and the ball carrier is making a fair, safe and reasonable attempt to avoid the defender. Simply stated, two solid objects tried to occupy the same space at the same time.

Article 4.
If a defender trips or compresses a ball carrier while pursuing the offensive player from the rear (typically seen in break-away plays), even if the defender is making a fair and reasonable attempt to capture the ball carrier's flag, the defender will be called for Illegal Contact. The defender is obliged to make a fair, SAFE and reasonable attempt.

Article 5.
Safety is paramount.

Article 6.
Incidental contact between opponents that does not grant either player an advantage should not be penalized.

SECTION 13. COOL DOWN PERIOD

Article 1.
Before, or instead of, disqualification or ejection an official may order (but is not required to) a player a "cool down" period if the official chooses.

Article 2.
Players should think of this 'cool down' as a warning before being ejected and be thankful for it.

Article 3.
This period will consist of five plays and will be tracked by the official that ordered the 'cool down'.

Article 4.
The player must be off the field for five plays regardless. A score or other event does not release the player back to the field. They must stay off the field for five plays.

SECTION 14. DISQUALIFICATIONS AND EJECTIONS

Article 1.
Disqualifications, Ejections and Unsportsmanlike Conduct are the only three penalties that cannot be declined. They are completely the option of the game officials. The yardage portion of the penalty may be declined but infraction itself cannot.

Article 2.
The determination to choose between disqualification and ejection is completely the determination of the presiding referee and may not be appealed.

Article 3.
Disqualifications are normally reserved to address lower-level transgressions.

Article 4.
A disqualification will last for the remainder of the contest the player was disqualified for.

Article 5.
A disqualified player may play in the next scheduled contest.

Article 6.
An ejected player may not play in the next scheduled contest. They must sit out at least one additional game.

Article 7.
Any official or facility representative may disqualify a player.

Article 8.
To eject a player all officials must agree and it must be reported to the Manager on Duty or League Director prior to play resuming.

Article 9.

Ejections / disqualifications may occur for but are not limited to:

- A second unsportsmanlike or personal foul on a single player
- Any act deemed egregious by the head official
- Disrespectfully addressing or intentionally touching a game official
- Four unsportsmanlike and /or personal fouls by one team (forfeiture)
- Fighting of any kind, with punches thrown or landed, or involving yourself with a fight in order to escalate the situation without control.

SECTION 15. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Article 1.
Disrespect toward an official, coach, spectator or another player will constitute unsportsmanlike conduct.

Article 2.
Players shall not 'showboat', taunt, spike the ball or flag belt toward an opponent, or be excessive in any way, to include using force against or verbally attack or harass another player.

Article 3.
Celebrations are fine but keep them short, conservative and not directed at an opponent.

Article 4.
Use of inflammatory words or gestures is prohibited.

Article 5.
If unsportsmanlike conduct occurs during a live play and the team did not score on that play, the penalty will be assessed from the new line-of-scrimmage, i.e., will be added to or subtracted from the end of the play.

SECTION 16. FIGHTING

Article 1.
Fighting will lead to immediate ejection, possible suspension or lifetime exclusion.

Article 2.
Fighting is any act or attempt to act by a player or non-player to strike or engage a player or non-player in a combative manner unrelated to football. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempting to or striking with the arms, hands, legs, feet, or foreign object whether or not there was contact.

Article 3.
Any player who comes off the sideline to participate in a fight will be disqualified or ejected.

Article 4.
If either team leaves the bench during a fight the game will be forfeited immediately.

Article 5.
Any player who fights or makes threats will automatically be disqualified from all remaining contests for the day, and may not participate in the next scheduled contest.

SECTION 17. BENCH FOULS / WARNINGS

Article 1.
Teams may incur bench fouls for a variety of reasons. These may be flagged as either a Delay of Game or Unsportsmanlike. It is up the the referee's discretion. The fouls are to include but not limited to:

- Players or non-players interfering with play or an official
- Disrespect toward officials or other players or non-players
- Players or non-players in the designated restricted zone during a live play
- Non-players on the field of play
- Teams not remaining in the designated team box
- Coaches on the field or becoming entangled in a live play

SECTION 18. INADVERTENT WHISTLE

Article 1.
If an official blows an inadvertent whistle they will declare the ball dead where the ball was at the time the inadvertent whistle. The team against which the action offended may have the option of accepting the play (i.e., the yards gained and the down advances) or replaying the down from the original line-of-scrimmage.

Article 2.
If the ball was in the air when the inadvertent whistle occurred it will be returned to the line-of-scrimmage and the down will be replayed.

Article 3.
If a penalty marker is thrown prior to an inadvertent whistle, an accepted penalty will be administered as in any other play situation. When the foul is accepted, the inadvertent whistle is disregarded.

Article 4.
When an inadvertent whistle is triggered by an unfair act or an act used to deceive or confuse a game official the officiating crew may use their collective judgement to fairly adjudicate the situation. It may result in yardage awarded, a score granted, and/or the guilty player disqualified, etc. It is solely up to the officiating crew to decide.

SECTION 19. UNFAIR ACTS RULE

Article 1.
Neither team shall commit act(s) which, in the judgment of the game officials, tends to make a travesty of the game.

Article 2.
The head official may enforce any penalty or remedy any situation with anything he/she considers equitable — including the award of a first down, a line-zone-to gain, a replay, a score, forfeiture, removal of forfeiture or any administrative issue or situation or not covered specifically covered in these rules.

Article 3.
If an ineligible player (ex: not on the roster, previously disqualified or previously ejected) is discovered by any means (ex: observation, challenge, etc.) participating in a live ball play that team will forfeit the game and the Unfair Act is assessed to the offending team.

SECTION 20. LAST PLAYER RULE AND PENALTY

Article 1.
If the last defensive player physically contains the ball carrier (e.g., bear hugs, flagrantly holds, pushes the ball carrier out-of-bounds above the hip, tackles, attempts to tackle, etc.) without making a clear, legal attempt to pull the ball carrier's flag or commits illegal contact, the offensive team will be awarded at least one line-zone-to-gain distance from the spot of foul and an automatic first down.

Article 2.
In the spirit of the Unfair Acts Rule: Officials have the discretion to award a score if a flagrant foul occurred inside the final line-zone-to-gain or they reasonably believe a foul is the only thing that prevented the ball carrier from scoring. To evoke this rule we require there must be total agreement of all game officials that saw the foul. (IAW Rule 9-9-5 NFHS).

Cheat Sheets

Penalties

Penalty	Yardage	Pentalty Assessment	Result
Flag Guarding	5	Spot	Loss of Down
Illegal Advancement	5	Spot	Loss of Down
Illegal Forward Pass	5	Previous Spot	Loss of Down
Offensive Pass Interference	5	Previous Spot	Loss of Down
Defensive Pass Interference	10/Spot Offense Choice	Prev Spot/Spot	Automatic 1st Down
Personal Foul	15	End of the play or previous spot	Offense: Loss of Down Defense: Automatic 1st Down
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	15	End of the play or previous spot	Offense: Loss of Down Defense: Automatic 1st Down
Roughing the Passer	10	Previous Spot	Automatic 1st Down
Delay of Game	5	Dead ball - Previous spot	Replay Down
False Start	5	Dead ball - Previous spot	Replay Down
Offsides	5	Previous Spot	Replay Down
Encroachment	5	Dead ball - Previous Spot	Automatic 1st Down
Cool Down Period	0	No Foul	Player must sit out 5 plays
Illegal Shift or Illegal Motion	5	Previous Spot	Loss of Down
Stripping or Attempted Stripping	5	Previous Spot	Automatic 1st Down
Illegal Contact	5	Previous Spot or spot of the foul	Offense: Loss of Down Defense: Automatic 1st Down
Early Flag Pull	5	Previous Spot	Automatic 1st Down
Illegal Participation	5	Previous Spot	Offense: Loss of Down Defense: Automatic 1st Down
Illegal Blocking	5	Spot foul or from previous spot if behind LOS	Loss of down
Holding	5	Spot	Automatic 1st Down
Impeding the Rusher	5	Previous Spot	Loss of Down
Charging	5	Spot	Loss of Down
Last Man Rule	15 or TD	Spot	Automatic 1st Down or TD if inside the 5 yardline

Overtime

OT #	Who chooses Offense or Defense	Starting Yard Line	Downs to Score	PAT Options
1	Coin toss winner	midfield	3	1 or 2
2	Coin toss loser	12	3	1 or 2
3	coin toss winner	5	3	1 or 2
4+	coin toss loser	5	1	2

Pro Clock

Clock stops for:	Clock resumes when:
Change of Possession	On the Snap (unless PAT)
First Down	On the Snap
Inadvertent Whisle	On Ready Whistle
Incomplete Pass	On the Snap
Intentional Grouding	On Ready Whistle
Runner Out of Bounds	On the Snap
Penalty Administration (other than delay of game)	Depends on previous play
Delay of Game	On the Snap
Referee Timeout	Referee Discretion
Score	On the Snap (except PAT)
Team Timeout	On the Snap
Injury (see referee timeout)	(see referee timeout)