



Intramural Flag Football Rules



TEAM

Men's and Women's: Each team shall consist of seven players. A minimum of five players is required to start or continue the game.

ELIGIBLE PLAYERS

- A. All current students who pay SVSU tuition for classes on the University Center campus are eligible. Also, any faculty or staff member is eligible.
- B. A team may add players at any time during the regular season, providing they have not already played for another team. A player can be added at game time provided he/she has proper identification. Rosters are frozen for teams participating in playoffs. To be eligible to participate in a playoff game, a team member must have signed in for at least one regular season game.
- C. Every player will be required to present his/her SVSU picture ID card to the game official prior to the start of the game. All eligible players will be listed on the score-sheet by the Program Desk following the first game they participated in. If a current SVSU picture ID is not presented, the student will not be allowed to play.
- D. An athlete listed on a varsity athletic roster for the current academic year or participating in varsity workouts for a parallel sport during the current academic year is ineligible to participate during the current year.
- E. A former collegiate varsity letter winner may participate providing one academic year is "sat out".
- F. A team is limited to one former varsity squad member regardless whether a letter was won or not. (A non-letter winner is not required to sit out one year.)
- G. Team captains are encouraged to clear any questionable player eligibility with the Intramural Sports staff.

FORFEIT POLICY

The IM Staff will allow a five-minute grace period for teams which do not have the minimum amount of players. If that time elapses and one team does not have the minimum number of players, the captain of the team that is prepared will have two options:

- 1) Take the win by forfeit, or
- 2) Give the opposing team an additional 5 minutes to show up.
 - If the team shows up during the additional time period, game time will be reduced by the number of minutes late the game begins. If the captain chooses to take the win by forfeit, the decision may not be changed. If the captain decides to play the game, the captain must accept the results of the game. After the additional five minutes have expired and the team still does not have the minimum number of players, the game will be forfeited.

PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

- A. Each player must wear shoes. They must be made of soft, pliable upper material (canvas, leather, or synthetic) that covers the foot attached to a composition bottom. Shoes with metal, ceramic, screwing, or detachable cleats are illegal. EXCEPTION: Cleats are legal if the screw is part of the cleat.
- B. Jerseys must be either long enough so they remain tucked in the pants/shorts during the entire down (no knots) or short enough so there is a minimum of 4 inches from the bottom of the jersey to the player's waistline. Players may only wear a stocking cap or a headband. No other headwear is permitted.
- C. No jewelry is allowed to be worn during Intramural activities *except* medical bracelets & stud earrings, which must be taped. The Intramural staff will not provide tape.
- D. A player wearing jewelry, billed hats, using sticky or foreign substance on equipment or body shall not be permitted to play. Players with leg and knee braces made of hard, unyielding material must have both sides and all edges covered with padding at least ½" thick.
- E. Each player must wear pants or shorts without any belt(s), belt loops, pocket(s), or exposed drawstrings. The pants or shorts must be a different color than the flags
- F. Each player must wear a one-piece belt with three flags permanently attached. Campus Recreation will provide flag belts. A flag belt must be worn free of any knots.
- G. The referee shall decide the legality of any ball. The game ball will be provided. The teams are responsible for retrieving the ball and having it ready for each play. The offensive team may keep the ball in their huddle.

GAME PROCEDURES

- A. The captain winning the toss shall have a choice of options for the first half or shall defer his/her option to the second half. The options for each half shall be:
 - a. To choose whether his/her team will start on offense or defense.
 - b. To choose the goal his/her team will defend. The captain, not having the first choice of options for a half, shall exercise the remaining option.
- B. The game shall consist of two 12-minute running clock halves. The clock will run continuously for the entire game with the exception of the last 2 minutes of the 2nd half where timeouts, incomplete passes, or running out of bounds will result in stoppage of the clock. Between the first and second half, the teams shall change goals.
 - a. Mercy Situation: If either team is 19 points ahead during the last 2 minutes of the game there will be a running clock for the remainder of the game.
- C. If a live ball foul, double foul, or inadvertent whistle occurs during the last timed down and the penalty is accepted, the period will be extended by one untimed down
- D. Each team will have one time-out per **game**. Time-out duration is thirty seconds.
- E. The field is divided into four 15-yard zones and two 10-yard end zones. A team in possession of the ball shall have four consecutive downs to advance to the next zone by scrimmage. The line to gain shall be the zone in advance of the ball, unless the distance was lost due to penalty or failure to gain. In such a case, the original zone in advance of the ball at the beginning of the series of downs is the line to gain.
- F. Unless moved by penalty, the ball shall be snapped on the 15 yard line to start each half and possession.
- G. A live ball becomes dead and an official shall sound the whistle or declare it dead:
 - a. When any part of the runner other than a hand or foot touches the ground.

- b. When a backward pass, fumble or muff touches the ground. A snap that hits the ground before or after reaching the intended receiver is at the spot where it hits the ground.
 - c. When a runner has a flag belt removed legally by a defensive player. A flag belt is removed when the clip is detached from the belt.
 - d. When a passer is deflagged prior to releasing the ball.
 - e. Anytime the ball in player possession touches the ground, the ball shall be declared dead at the spot.
- H. During the regular season, a tie constitutes a win for both teams. There will be no overtime play.
- a. In case of a game ending in a tie score during the **playoffs**, the field captains shall be brought together and a coin toss will be flipped to determine the options, as in the start of the game. There will be only one coin flip during the overtime period, called by the team that did not call the toss at the beginning of the game. Field captains will alternate choices, if additional overtime periods are played. The winner of the toss shall be given options of offense, defense, or direction. All overtime periods are played toward the same goal line. Each team will be given four downs from the same 15-yard line (15-yards for a touchdown). If the first team which is awarded the ball scores, the second team will still have four downs to win or tie the game. The ball will be placed on the 15-yard line to begin their series of four downs. Try-for-points will be attempted and scored. If the defense intercepts the ball and returns it for a touchdown, they will win the game. If they do not return the interception for a touchdown, the series is over, the ball will be placed at the 15 yard line and the original defense will begin their series of 4 downs. Each team is entitled to one time-out only, during the entire overtime.

HANDLING THE BALL

- A. At least 4 players must be on the offensive scrimmage line at the time of the snap. There is no minimum number of players that must be on the defensive line of scrimmage.
- B. Players may use a two, three or four point stance.
- C. A backward pass or fumble that touches the ground between the goal lines belongs to the team last in possession of the ball unless lost on downs.
- D. Motion – Anyone who goes in motion must be only going parallel or backward at the snap. A player in motion is not considered to be one of the 4 players on the scrimmage line.
- E. Center may snap the ball between the legs; or outside the legs.
- F. No direct snaps to oneself. The player receiving the snap must be at least two yards behind the offensive scrimmage line. Direct snaps are illegal.
- G. Failure to snap the ball after 30 seconds of being placed by the referee will result in a Delay of Game penalty.
- H. All players of either team are eligible to touch or catch a pass.
- I. During a scrimmage down and before team possession has changed, a forward pass may be thrown provided the passer's feet are behind his/her team's offensive scrimmage line when the ball leaves the passer's hand. Only one forward pass may be thrown per down.
- J. Offensive Pass Interference: After the ball has been snapped and until it has been touched by a receiver, there shall be no offensive pass interference beyond team A's scrimmage line while the ball is in flight.

- K. Defensive Pass Interference: After the pass is thrown and until it is touched, there shall be no defensive pass interference beyond team A's scrimmage line while the ball is in flight. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged/tagged prior to touching the ball on a pass thrown beyond team A's scrimmage line. Note: Intentionally hindering an opponent's vision is also included in this rule.
- L. The referee in the back field will give the "3 arm count" to signal the defense to rush. The defense must wait until the referee raises their arm before crossing the line of scrimmage.
- M. The defense is allowed one Blitz per half. A blitz is when the defense chooses not to wait for the referee's 3 arm count. The ONE defensive player that is going to blitz must acknowledge the back field referee by raising their arm and standing 7 yards off the line of scrimmage.

SCORING

- A. Scoring shall be as follows:
 - a. A touchdown is worth 6 points
 - b. A safety is worth 2 points
 - c. Points after touchdown are:
 - A. Running or passing from 3-yards----1 points
 - B. Running or passing from 10-yards----2 points
 - C. Running or passing from 20-yards----3 points
 - D. If a team B player intercepts a pass or aired fumble during the try and returns it for a touchdown, they score 2 points.
- B. After the PAT the ball shall be snapped by the opponents of the scoring team at their own 15 yard line.
- C. After a touchback, the ball shall be snapped from the nearest 15-yard line.
- D. After a safety, the ball shall be snapped by the scoring team at their own 15-yard line, unless moved by penalty.
- E. The player scoring the touchdown must raise their arms so that the nearest official can deflag the player. If the player is not deflagged with one pull and the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed and the player is disqualified and it is a foul. PENALTY: 10-yards from the previous spot and loss of down.

PLAYER CONDUCT

- A. The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have their hands and arms at their side or behind their back. Any use of the arms, elbows or legs to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal.
- B. Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent.
- C. A runner shall neither charge into nor contact an opponent in his/her path nor attempt to run between two opponents or between an opponent and a sideline, unless the place is such as to provide a reasonable chance for him/her to go through without contact. If a runner in his/her progress has established a straight-line path, he/she may not be crowded out of that path, but if an opponent is able to legally establish a defensive position in that path, the runner must avoid contact by changing direction (this is the same principle as the block/charge in basketball). Diving is permissible only in attempt to deflag an opponent. **Diving for extra yards or in the instance of charging – as mentioned above – is not.**
- D. The ball carrier shall not guard their flags by blocking, with arms or hands, the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. The ball carrier shall be prohibited from contacting an opponent with an extended hand or arm. Examples of flag guarding include, but are not limited to:

- a. Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt.
- b. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt.
- c. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt.
- E. Offensive players must have possession of the ball before they can be legally deflagged. A flag belt that becomes detached inadvertently (not removed by grabbing and pulling) does not cause play to stop. In circumstances where a flag belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of the penalty or the play. In all situations where a play is in progress and a ball carrier loses the flag belt accidentally, inadvertently or on purpose, the deflagging reverts to a one-hand tag of the ball carrier between the shoulders and knees. Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage including tying, using foreign materials or other such acts. PENALTY: 10-yards from the previous spot, loss of down and player disqualification.
- F. A second unsportsmanlike foul by the same player or non-player results in disqualification.

PENALTIES

- a. 5-yard penalties
 - a. Delay of Game (Dead Ball)
 - b. Encroachment (Dead Ball)
 - c. False Start (Dead Ball)
 - d. Helping the Runner
 - e. Illegal Forward Pass
 - f. Illegal Formation
 - g. Illegal Shift
 - h. Illegal Snap (Dead Ball)
 - i. Illegally Conserving or Consuming Time
 - j. Infraction of Scrimmage Formation
 - k. Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down)
 - l. Intentionally Throwing Backward Pass or Fumble, Out-of-Bounds (Loss of Down if by Team A)
 - m. Offensive Player Illegally in Motion
 - n. Offensive Player Not Within 15 yards of Ball
 - o. Player Out-of-Bounds When Ball is Snapped
 - p. Receiving Snap Within 2 Yards of Scrimmage Line
 - q. Required Equipment Worn Illegally
 - r. Illegal Substitution (Dead Ball)
- b. 15-yard penalties
 - a. Batting a Free Ball
 - b. Contact Before or After Ball is Dead
 - c. Contact With Opponent on Ground
 - d. Defensive Use of Hands
 - e. Dive or Run into a Player
 - f. Forward Pass Interference – Defensive (Automatic First)
 - g. Forward Pass Interference – Offensive (Loss of Down)
 - h. Guarding the Flag Belt
 - i. Hurdle any Player
 - j. Illegal Flag Belt Removal
 - k. Illegal Kicking
 - l. Illegal Offensive Screen Blocking or defensive bull-rush
 - m. Illegal Participation

- n. Illegal Player Equipment
- o. Illegal Substitution/Replaced Player
- p. Illegally Secured Flag Belt on Touchdown (Loss of Down by Offense) (Automatic First Down if by Defense)
- q. Interlocked Interference
- r. Kick Catch Interference
- s. Obstructing or Holding the Runner
- t. Position Upon Shoulders or Body
- u. Pretended, Unfair Substitution
- v. Quick Kick
- w. Roughing the Passer (Automatic First Down)
- x. Spiking, Kicking, or Throwing Ball During Dead Ball
- y. Stiff Arm
- z. Strip or Attempt to Strip the Ball
- aa. Tackle Runner
- bb. Throw Runner to the Ground
- cc. Two or More Consecutive Encroachments, During Same Interval Between Scrimmage Downs
- dd. Unnecessary Contact of any Nature
- ee. Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Coaches, Substitutes, Fans
- ff. Unsportsmanlike Player Conduct
- c. Disqualification associated with 15-yard penalties
 - a. Flagrant Personal Foul
 - b. Flagrant Spiking, Kicking or Throwing Ball
 - c. Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Players, Coaches, Substitutes or Others Subjected to the Rules
 - d. Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Player Conduct
 - e. Intentional Tampering With Flag Belt-Defense (Auto 1st Down)
 - f. Intentional Tampering With Flag Belt-Offense (Loss of Down)
 - g. Intentionally Contacting an Official
 - h. Intentionally Kicking at or Swinging an Arm, Hand, or Fist at any Opposing Player
 - i. Tackle the Runner

WEATHER POLICY

Games will persist if rain is in the forecast. At the first sight of lightning games will be suspended for 5 minutes. If lightning has not ceased after those five minutes, **games will be counted as they stand.** At that time the Intramural Staff will remove everyone from the field.

The department of Campus Recreation reserves the right to modify any rule stated above without prior notice to Intramural participants.

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