



# Flag Football Rules

## **DIVISIONS OF PLAY**

*League age cut-off date is July 31st of the current year and shall be the participants' league age for the coming season.*

*There are no height or weight restrictions on players.*

*A player shall furnish a written consent to play from either a parent or legal guardian.*

*A signed medical form provided by PWLS is required to be submitted each year by a parent or legal guardian that attests the youth athlete is physically fit and there are no observable conditions which would contra-indicate playing football.*

## **FLAG FOOTBALL RULES**

### **RULE 1: PLAYERS**

*S1: A game is played between two teams consisting of seven (7) players each.*

*S2: Each team roster shall have a maximum of 18 players, and a minimum of 10 players. A forfeit will result when the minimum is not met.*

*S3: Only players appearing on the official team roster in the PW Roster System are to be counted as players. The Roster is completed and active in the PW Roster System before the first game of the season and verified by the league in a process called "certification."*

*S4: The offensive team must have (4) players on the line and (3) players in the backfield. The defensive team may choose any formation. A. Any defensive player lined up seven yards off the line of scrimmage is eligible to rush.*

*S5: Mandatory Play Rule: All players will play a minimum of 10 plays. Failure to abide by this rule will result in forfeiture of that game.*

*S6: A team will have 45 seconds to put the ball in play after the ready signal. (A. The quarterback has seven-second pass clock to get rid of the ball.*

### **RULE 2: PLAYING FIELDS**

*The field shall be rectangular with lines and zones and shall follow the design mentioned below.*

*A. 60-yard field: This field yardage includes 10-yard end zones and is 40 yards wide, divided into 2 zones of twenty yards each between two end zones of ten yards each.*

*B. Goal Posts are unnecessary as points after TD (conversion) are made only by passing or running and there are no field goals kicked.*

*C. A conversion line will be marked 3 yards from the goal line and at an equal distance from each sideline.*

*D. A kickoff area will be marked (usually by an "X") as follows:*

*Each possession starts at the 5-yard line after Scores, Turnover on downs and/or Halftime.*

*The following field equipment will be used:*

*A. A Down Marker will be used to indicate the number of the down.*

*B. A Zone Marker will be used to indicate the distance to go for a first down (placed at the forward zone line).*

*C. Corner Flags with flexible staffs will be placed at the four sections of the end zones and the sidelines. Soft pylons may be used if flags are unavailable.*

### **RULE 3: EQUIPMENT**

*S1: GAME BALL Each PWFF league will determine which ball will be used during its games.*

*S2: FLAGS*

*A. Each player must wear a belt with the number of flags designated as "standard" by the league, which will be 3 flags.*

*B. The flags will be attached to a belt and extend or hang from each side of the player's body (hip) and back.*

*C. Flags will be 14-20 inches long and a minimum of 2 inches wide.*

*D. The belt must be tight to prevent being turned around during a de-flagging.*

*F. The securing of flags to the body, waist or belt, other than provided by S-2-B, is illegal.*

*G. Jerseys cannot be worn over flags. (Jersey Tuck Rule)*

*H. If a player's flag is inadvertently lost, he is ineligible to handle the ball.*

*I. Flags are to be of contrasting colors, different from game uniform. Definitions of uniform shall be game pants and/or jersey.*

*NOTE: The flags will be attached to a belt made for that purpose. Such a belt has equal resistance at the point of attachment of flags, thereby ensuring an equal effort necessary to de-flag a player.*

### **S3: GAME UNIFORMS**

*A. All team members must wear the same color jersey.*

*B. All uniforms must have the Official Authorized Pop Warner Patch displayed in the designated areas as determined by National.*

*C. All jerseys will be numbered, front and back.*

*D. Any type of pants may be worn provided said pants have no front or side pockets.*

*E. Jerseys will be tucked in at all times.*

*F. Sneakers are the preferred shoe; however, non-detachable, rubber-cleated shoes are allowed. No other footwear is acceptable.*

*S4: EYE GLASSES Eye glasses, when worn, shall be of athletically-approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass).*

*S5: MOUTH GUARDS Mouth guards are required and keeper strap is not necessary.*

#### **RULE 4: PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT**

*S1: Spiked or street shoes.*

*S2: Padding of any kind, including hard surface padding, such as shoulder pads and hip pads. However, players may wear soft shell helmets, but they must be always secured while on the playing field.*

*S3: Hard metal or any other hard substance on a player's clothing or person.*

*S4: Anything that conceals the flags.*

*S5: Slick or sticky substances such as grease or glue.*

*S6: Any equipment, in the opinion of the referee that will endanger or confuse players.*

#### **RULE 5: REFEREES**

*S1: There will be at least two (2) referees. One from each team.*

*S2: The league may assign more than two referees for a game.*

*S4: Each game official will carry a handkerchief and drop it whenever an infraction occurs.*

#### **RULE 6: THE RULES OF THE GAME**

##### **S1: PLAYERS**

*A. The free substitution rule is always in effect and a player may enter the game any time the ball is dead.*

*B. All offensive players are eligible including the center*

##### **S4: TIME**

*There will be:*

*A. Two 20-minute running clock halves for all divisions.*

*B. Three (3) time-outs per half. (30 seconds)*

*C. Ten (10) minutes between halves.*

*S1: 7u Division Rules & Goals*

*A. UNLIMITED Runs*

*B. 45-second play clock*

*C. ONE Coach is allowed on the field for both offense and defense*

### **S5: LAST MINUTE OF THE GAME**

*The clock WILL stop in the final minute of the game on these actions:*

*A. Incompletions*

*B. Out of Bounds*

*C. QB Sack and kneel downs*

*D. Change of Possession*

*E. Penalties. (NOTE: If it is an offensive penalty, the clock WILL start on the official unless it is a dead ball foul) a turnover on downs and/or Halftime.*

### **S6: NO KICKOFFS**

*Each possession starts at the 5-yard line after scores.*

### **S7: PUNTING**

*Teams are not permitted to punt.*

### **S8: DOWNS (First down and zone to go)**

*A. Each team will have three consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone or to score a touchdown.*

*B. Once a team enters into the next zone, it is a first down and a new series of downs begin*

*C. A team failing to move the ball into the next zone will lose possession. The opposing team takes over at the point where the ball is declared dead and begins its series of first down and zone to go.*

*D. The forward part of the ball touching any line will be the determining factor in measuring for a first down.*

*E. A down will be repeated if provided for by the rules*

*F. When the offensive team is within the last zone and has a first down, it will be first down and goal to go.*

*G. At the conclusion of each down, the referee will place the ball in the center of the field (equal distance from sidelines- not on a hash mark).*

### **S9: DE-FLAGGING**

*A. There shall be NO tackling of the ball carrier, passer, or kicker.*

*B. The player carrying or having possession of the ball is down when the flag is removed from his waist (de-flagging). The defensive player shall hold the flag above his head and stand still.*

*C. The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier to remove his flag. An accidental touch of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag shall not be considered a violation; however, touching of the head or face shall be considered a violation.*

*D. A defensive player may not run over, push, or pull a blocker away from him. He may push him sideways if he gets past him, but he cannot push the blocker down.*

*E. A defensive player must go for the passer's flag. He cannot touch the passer's arm.*

#### **S10: BLOCKING**

*Blocking is not permitted.*

#### **S11: BALL CARRIER**

*A. The ball carrier cannot use his hands or arms to protect his flags. The defensive player must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier's flags.*

*B. The ball carrier cannot lower his head to drive or run into a defensive player.*

*C. Stiff-arming by the ball carrier is illegal.*

*D. The ball carrier cannot spin, hurdle or dive to prevent a defensive player from removing his flags. He may run in any direction until the ball is declared dead.*

#### **S12: CENTER**

*A. The center must snap the ball between his legs.*

*B. Center cannot take a handoff from the QB.*

#### **S13: PASSING**

*A. All backfield men are eligible passers.*

*B. Passing will be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage only.*

*C. A lateral pass is a pass thrown parallel to the line of scrimmage or back toward the passer's own goal line. A lateral pass is not considered a forward pass.*

*D. A forward pass is a pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage toward the defensive team's goal line.*

#### **S14: RECEIVING**

*A. All players are eligible to receive forward passes.*

*B. A receiver may catch a ball even if he steps out-of-bounds or out of the end zone as long as he comes down with one foot in bounds.*

*C. Two or more receivers may touch a ball in succession resulting in a completed pass.*

*D. If an offensive and defensive player catch a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch and the passing team is awarded possession.*

E. An offensive player cannot be out-of-bounds and return inbounds to catch a pass. This will be ruled an incomplete pass.

### **S15: DEAD BALL**

All balls touching the ground are immediately dead. For example, the ball is declared dead at the following times:

A. When the ball carrier touches the ground with his body, other than hands or feet.

B. When the ball carrier's flag has been pulled.

C. If a pass receiver or ball carrier has a missing flag (ball is dead at that spot).

D. Following a touchdown, safety or touchback.

E. When the ball goes out-of-bounds for any reason.

F. If the center snap hits the ground before reaching a backfield man.

G. When the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble or muffed ball. **THERE ARE NO FUMBLE RECOVERIES IN PWFF!**

H. If a lateral pass touches the ground (ball is declared dead at that point). If a lateral pass goes out-of-bounds, the ball is ruled dead at the point it crosses the boundary line.

I. If a forward pass strikes the ground or is caught at the same time by an opposing player(s).

### **RULE 7: SCORING VALUES**

Touchdown..... 6 points

Point after TD by run or pass..... 1 point

Point after TD by kick..... 2 points

Safety (awarded to opponent) ..... 2 points

Field goal..... 3 points

### **RULE 9: INJURED PLAYERS**

Once removed from a game because of injury, a player must sit out at least one down, and may not re-enter the game without the approval of attending medical personnel.

Although the game is serious to the kids, from Pop Warner's viewpoint, this division is a training level, completely free of any pressure to win, with a total emphasis on learning. With that being said, we want to be flexible with our rules and get our student athletes lined up properly as well as teach them the fundamentals of football.

The Deception Rule will be in effect to help with the integrity of the passing game for both offense and defense.

**The QB does any type of hand-off/toss fake – the defense can rush the QB/ball carrier can cross the line of scrimmage to the ball carrier. In this situation the QB still cannot run beyond the line of scrimmage without throwing/pitching the ball.**