

## **Ages & Divisions:**

- There will be only one (1) division of play
- Ages five (5) – seven (7)

## **Validation & Rosters:**

- Each team roster shall have a maximum of 16 players and a minimum of 12 players.
- In the event that a flag organization has more than 16 players but not enough to create two (2) teams, the organization may create two (2) rosters for play.
- Only one (1) roster will be able to play per game
- **When there are 2 rosters for play, players will be split into an experienced team and an inexperienced team.**

## **The Game:**

A game is played between two (2) teams consisting of eight (8) players each.

### Offense:

- The offensive team must have five (5) players on the line of scrimmage
  - Of the five (5) offensive lineman, the three (3) middle players must be in a two-point stance
  - These three (3) middle players are also ineligible receivers
  - The five (5) offensive players on the line of scrimmage should space themselves by extending each arm out.
  - When the players are spaced so that only their fingertips are touching, then they are correctly spaced.
- The offensive team must also have three (3) players in the backfield

### Defense:

- The defensive structure that must be used for Flag Teams' Defense is known as a "3-3-2" Defense.
- The "3-3-2" Breakdown:
- The defensive line must consist of three (3) players on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap

- Three (3) additional players should be positioned on the second line, three (3) yards off of the line of scrimmage
- Two (2) additional players should be position on the third line, seven (7) yards off of the line of scrimmage
- Teams have thirty seconds to put the ball into play after the “ready” signal
- Every player must play a minimum of one (1) full quarter
- **No player can play the same position for more than one half of any game.**
- This requires teams to rotate players, and is intended to promote awareness of the different positions and the game of football in general.
- **Defenders will have the ability to line up 7 yards from the Line of Scrimmage with and rush as many players as the want.**
- **We will no longer do the 3 one thousand count.**
- **Rushers that will be lined up at the Line of Scrimmage must run Left to Right and not cross the Line until either:**
  - **The quarterback hands off the ball to a running back**
  - **The quarterback commits to the run across the Line of Scrimmage.**
- **Teams will not line up their Defensive formations with 8 players stacked up on the line of scrimmage on Defense.**

## Playing Field

- The field shall be rectangular with lines and zones
- The field will measure fifty yards in length divided into five (5) zones
- The field will measure thirty yards in width
- A zone line to gain will be used to indicate the distance needed to reach a first down
- “Zone Line to Gain” is defined as: **The next line on the playing field in the direction of, and parallel to, the opponent's goal line.**
- The down box is stationed at the zone line to gain

## Equipment

### 1) Game Ball:

Approved game ball is the Tachikara Model# SF2R – Jr. Ball, measuring 8"x5"x5."



## 2) Flags:

- Two (2) flags will be attached to each player's belt:
  - One (1) flag should be positioned on the Left side of the player's body
  - One (1) on the Right side of the player's body
- Flags will be 14-20 inches long, or, when fully extended, no more than five (5) inches from the ground
- Flags need to be a minimum of two (2) inches in width
- Players need to ensure their lower-body outerwear (e.g., shorts, football pants, sweats) in a color that is NOT the same color as their flags
- Players' jerseys should be tucked in and CANNOT be worn over the flags
- All flag belts must be tight so the flags do not bunch together
- If a player's flag is inadvertently lost, he is ineligible to handle the ball until said flag is found or the player is able to put one of their team's back-up belts on, if available
- If a flag comes off of the ball-carrier's belt for ANY reason during an active play, the ball will be considered a dead ball at that time

## 3) Game Uniforms:

- All teams must wear the same colored jersey (t-shirt)
- Jerseys must be tucked in at all times
- Any **type** of pants may be worn (keep in mind the flag color-contrast rule)
- Athletic shoes and / or cleats are preferred (no metal-spike cleats allowed)
- Mouth guards are optional and should be at parents' discretion
- To help differentiate between offensive and defensive players, defensive players are required to wear one (1) white wristband on their Right wrist to identify themselves as such

#### 4) Prohibited Equipment / Dangerous Items:

- Spiked cleats
- Non-athletic shoes (anything not considered a sneaker or tennis shoe)
- Padding of any kind
- Helmets
- Casts (while not "equipment," any player with a cast is not approved for game play)
- Any other equipment deemed to be a danger to other players, as determined by the coaches
- No jewelry of any kind is allowed on the game field

## Referees

- There will be two referees – one coach from each team or other teams – appointed prior to the game by the site Director
- Each appointed referee / official will carry a yellow flag and will drop it when an infraction / penalty occurs

## Rules of Play

#### 1) General Rules:

- The free substitution rule is always in effect and a player may enter the game any time the ball is dead.
- All players, except the three (3) offensive linemen, are eligible to run or receive the ball.
- There's no maximum number of coaches permitted on the field at the same time.
- Each game will consist of two 20-minute or two 25-minute running halves, stopping only for injuries. (No stopping for timeouts)
- There will be one 5-minute break between halves.
- Teams are allotted one (1) timeout per half
- Water breaks during active game play will be initiated in the case of levels of heat and / or humidity which could be considered a health risk to the players.

2) Start of The Game:

- The referee will toss a coin to decide who will start the game on offense. The opposing team will start the second half on offense.
- The offensive team will start on its own 40 yard line.
- The same procedure will be followed after a safety.

3) Punting:

No punts are allowed.

4) Down and Zone to go:

- Each team will have four (4) downs to advance the ball into the next zone or to score a touchdown.
- Once a team enters the next zone, it is first down and a new series of downs begins.
- If a team fails to reach the next zone within the four downs, they lose possession of the ball and the opposing team takes over.
- When the opposing team takes over the ball, play will begin on their own 40 yard line, and a new series of first down and zone will begin.
- The forward part of the ball touching any line will be the determining factor in measuring for a first down.
- When the offensive team is within the last zone and has a first down, it will be first down and goal to go.
- At the conclusion of each down, the referee will place the ball in the center of the field.

5) De-Flagging:

- NO tackling is allowed.
- The player who has possession of the ball during the time of active play is considered “down” when the flag is removed from his waist (“de-flagging”).
- The defensive player who removed the flag should hold the flag over his head and stand still.
- The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier to remove his flag. A defensive player may not run over, push, or pull a blocker away from him.
- A defensive player must go for the passer’s flag. He cannot touch the passer’s **arm**.

6) Blocking:

- A blocker must be on his feet at all times while blocking. All linemen, except the center, must NOT assume the three-point stance. They

should simply stand at the line of scrimmage and await the snap.

- Cross-blocking and roll-blocking are not allowed.
- A blocker cannot use his hands, or “stiff-arm” another player.
- “Shadow blocking,” or “brush blocking,” is defined as legally obstructing an opponent without contacting him with any part of the body.
- A defensive player cannot block or push a ball carrier out of bounds.
- Only one-on-one blocking is allowed at all times (NO two-on-one blocking is allowed at any time).
- Blocking a player from behind is not permitted.

7) Ball Carrier:

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

8) Ball Carrier – Quarterback:

Only the three (3) down lineman, on defense, may rush the quarterback after waiting for the “One-two-three GO!” count after the snap of the ball.

9) Center:

- The center may snap the ball between his legs or stand to either side of the ball and “flip” the ball. This is known as the “backyard” snap.
- He may also snap the ball directly to the quarterback when the quarterback is **directly** behind the center.

10) Passing:

- All back-field players are eligible passers.
- Passing will be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage only.

11) Receiving:

- All players, except the three (3) blocking offensive linemen, are eligible to receive forward passes.
- A receiver must catch the ball with at least one foot in-bounds for the pass to be considered “complete.”
- Two or more receivers may touch a ball in succession resulting in a completed pass.
- If an offensive player 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.

- If the ball is intercepted by the defensive team, they will gain possession and start a new series of downs on their own 40 yard line.

#### 12) Dead Ball:

- A “dead ball” is defined as “any ball touching the ground once the football is snapped.
- Examples of a dead ball include when:
  - The ball carrier touches the ground with his body, other than hands or feet.
  - The ball carrier has been “de-flagged.”
  - The ball goes out of bounds for any reason.
  - The center snap hits the ground before reaching a backfield person.
  - The ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble or “muffed” ball (There are NO fumble recoveries in Flag Football).
  - A lateral pass touches the ground. The ball is declared dead at that point.

#### 13) Completion of the Game:

- All flag games must be over by **10:45 a.m.** to allow time for the next division to set up.
- No score will be kept.
- Each team will congratulate each other upon completion of the game with a cheer and a handshake.

#### 14) Injured Players:

Once removed from a game because of injury, a player must sit out for at least one play of game.

#### 15) Weather Policy:

- Teams are expected to show up at game site prepared to play.
- **Anytime a cloud-to-ground strike of lightning can be seen, or thunder heard, risk is present, and play should discontinue.**

## Penalties

- Because a smaller-sized field is used for Flag Football, penalties are adjusted accordingly.
- The offended team will always have the choice of accepting or declining a penalty.
- When the penalty is greater than the distance of the goal line, the penalty will be half the distance to the goal line.

### Line of Scrimmage

Offside: Offensive or Defensive	3 yards
Failure to observe 30-second rule	3 yards
Illegal Motion (more than one man in motion)	3 yards
Illegal Formation	3 yards

### Passing

Illegal Forward Pass	3 yards
Passer Crosses Scrimmage Line	3 yards & loss of down
Intentional Grounding	3 yards & loss of down
Offensive Pass Interference	5 yards from line of scrimmage & loss of down
Defensive Pass Interference	First down at point of infraction

### Flag Wearing and De-Flagging

Any tackling	10 yards
Wearing Flags Illegally	5 yards, if necessary (try to fix, not penalize)
Ball Carrier Using Hands to Prevent De-Flagging	10 yards
Holding, Pushing, or Hitting Ball Carrier while De-Flagging	10 yards
Intentionally wearing only one (1) or two (2) flags	15 yards

### Illegal Hand-off

If ball is handed forward beyond the Scrimmage Line	5 yards
Handing or snapping ball to lineman	5 yards

### Blocking

Leaving Feet to Block	10 yards
Cross Body Checking	10 yards
Illegal Use of Hands by Blocker	10 yards
Holding a Defensive Player	10 yards
Defensive Player Blocking or Pushing	10 yards

Ball Carrier Out of Bounds	10 yards
Butting, Elbowing, or Knee-Blocking	10 yards
Defensive Player – Illegal Use of Hands	5 yards
More Than Two Blockers	10 yards
Clipping	10 yards

Ball Carrier	
Stiff Arming	10 yards
Lowering Head to Drive or Run Into Defensive Player	10 yards
Use of Head	10 yards
Use of Hand or Arms to Protect Flags	10 yards
Hurdling	5 yards

Unnecessary Roughness	
Offensive and Defensive	10 yards
Second Repeated Offense by Same Player	10 yards

Unsportsmanlike Conduct	
Fighting	15 yards
Defensive Player Pulling Offensive Player's Flag to Make Him Ineligible for Play	10 yards
Insulting, Abusive Language or Spitting	10 yards & 1 quarter suspension
Illegal Play	10 yards
Interference with Progress of Game by Coaches, Other Team Personnel, or Parents	Disqualification
Any questioning of any officials' call	10 yards