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THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
SPORTS ACTIVITIES RULES COMMITTEE

composed of representatives of the Seventh-day Adventist academies, colleges and universities in North America.

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RULE BOOK HISTORY

The function of the Seventh-day Adventist Sports Activities Rules Committee (SDA-SARC) was to develop and distribute flag football rules for use in SDA academies, colleges and universities in the United States and Canada.

SDA-SARC was formed and the first rules compiled by the SDA college physical educators meeting in 1968. The rules were revised in 1969, 1972, 1974 and 1980. At the 1980 meeting it was decided to include optional rules for Hawaiian Flagball, No Block Flagball, and Restricted Block Flagball.

Seventh-day Adventist colleges and academies have been playing flag football in intramural programs for over 50 years. Each school had developed its own rules until the first publication of a rulebook in 1968. The rules in this book are thus, a product of the experience of numerous physical educators over many years.

The game is appropriate for physical education classes and intramural programs from grade seven through adult-hood The rule books have been used as student texts in flag football units in SDA academies and colleges. Additionally this rulebook is appropriate for use in interscholastic athletic competition.

Vernon Scheffel served as chair of the rule committee for 26 years, from 1969 to 1984. Committee members included Walt Hamerslough, Donald Moon, John Pangman and Wally Specht. In 1995 Tim Windemuth was elected by SDA-HPERA to serve as chair of SARC and a new committee was selected. The format of the rule book was changed so that actual photographs were used to illustrate rules rather than line drawings. The rule book was last updated in 2012, by Mike Boyd, with the production of the 7th edition. The SDA-SARC rules were maintained with some updates to language and formatting along with an elimination of the photograph depictions.

In 2017 a committee was formed of athletic directors and physical education teachers representing various regions of the country and levels of education. The committee spent 9 months meeting to review and discuss the rulebook. In reviewing the rule book and discussing changes there were two primary areas of focus, 1) improved player safety, and 2) ease of use and understanding for all involved. The committee worked to align the formatting with the NFHS Football rule book while maintaining the core of the SDA-SARC flagball game. The committee proposed a total of six rule changes and sent the proposed changes to member schools for feedback. After reviewing the feedback of the member schools the final document was reviewed and approved by the committee. The 8th edition was recommended for use beginning with the 2018-2019 school year.
A CODE OF CONDUCT

No set of rules is any better than the SPIRIT in which they are adhered to by those who play the game and those who are responsible for their enforcement.

The well-being of the player must be kept paramount in a modified contact game that has as its essence the absence of protective player equipment. Players should be made aware of their responsibility in the avoidance of unnecessary injury.

The officials are the key to keeping unnecessary rough play out of the game. Through preventative communication and enforcement officials can enforce safe game play and a spirit of sportsmanship. Coaches and administrators have a responsibility to see to it that players who are continually unnecessarily rough are either brought under control or eliminated from play. These statements are in no way intended to curtail hard, clean play, but rather to eliminate from the game the element that adds only ill-will and unnecessary injuries to the game.
Summary of 8th Ed. Rule Changes

The 8th edition of the SDA-SARC rule book focused on 1) improved player safety and 2) ease of use and understanding for all those involved. The changes that were made to accomplish these objectives are summarized below and then given a more detailed description in Appendix H (p. 62).

The 8th edition of the SDA-SARC rule book has a number of editorial changes, but also five major rule changes that will impact game play in the future.

- The first and most significant rule change is to blocking contact. Prior editions allowed elbow blocking but the 8th edition will only allow hands extended blocking. Important elements to be aware of with hands extended blocking are:
  - Proper blocking starts with proper positioning and good footwork. Blockers #1 priority should be to move their feet to stay in front of the opponent.
  - Contact must occur using the hands - not the shoulders, forearms, or elbows.
  - Contact must occur inside the frame of the opponents body, below the head, and above the waist.
  - Hands and elbows may not be locked or extended during contact - hands and arms should used to absorb contact.
  - Palms must remain open and may not be used to grasp, hold, or encircle opponents.
  - Launching into our through opponents is not allowed. Blocking in the back is also still illegal.
  - DEFENDERS are encouraged to use their hands as well to ward off blockers contact. Rules contact point, no holding, and no excessive contact apply to defenders just like offensive blockers. Bull rushing is still not allowed.

- The second rule change is another significant change that will impact game play. Punting has been an area of confusion in the prior editions with the touch-off and the rules surrounding it. The 8th edition eliminates the touch off zone in favor of a declared kick play while still maintain the elements of a fake kick that many appreciated in prior rule books.
  - Before a kick play can occur the kicking team must declare that they are kicking to the official who then must inform the return team prior to the play.
  - All kick team players except for the kicker (and holder on field goals) must be on the line of scrimmage and must remain there until the ball is kicked. The return team must remain on their side of the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.
Summary of 8th Ed. Rule Changes.

- The ball must be directly snapped to the kicker (or holder on field goals) and the ball must be immediately kicked. Any delay in kicking the ball, non-kicking related motions by the person receiving the snap, or movement by players on the the line of scrimmage down the field will initiate a fake kick scenario. If this occurs it become illegal for the kick team to kick the ball and the down continues like any other down with the offense trying to advance the ball by passing it or pitching/handing it off and running the ball forward. The defense is allowed to rush past the line of scrimmage as soon as a fake kick is initiated.
  - Attempts to kick the ball after a fake has been initiated are illegal and should be blown dead immediately.

- The third and fourth rule changes are similar to each other and deal with the status of the ball on the ground. In prior editions to the 8th edition the ball on the ground had multiple statuses - a fumble, and incomplete pass that strike the ground were declared dead but snapped balls and muffed balls on kick plays were considered live balls. This presented a few situations where player safety was compromised and confusion has occurred. The 8th edition has attempted to unify these rules to clear up confusion and improve player safety.
  - Fumbles and incomplete passes that contact the ground are still declared dead immediately.
  - Snapped balls that contact the ground are now declared dead balls immediately rather than being live balls that could be picked up and advanced or downed by the defense by touching. When a snapped ball contacts the ground without being touched the play will now be blown dead and the ball will be placed back on the line of scrimmage and the down will be lost. If a player touches the snapped ball and it then touches the ground the ball is dead and spot is determined in the same way as fumble situations.
  - Balls contacting the ground on kicking plays are live balls still but muffed kicks are now considered dead balls and spotted similarly to fumble situations. It is important to note that kicked balls on the ground may only be picked up and advanced by the return team.

- The fifth rule change is minor and likely already in use for many schools. In prior editions of the rule book there was no exception allowed for immediately throwing the ball into the ground after the snap in the last two minutes of each half in an attempt to stop the clock (spiking). This maneuver would, by prior rule books, be considered intentional grounding. The 8th edition includes an exception allowing for teams to legally stop the clock in the last two minutes using the above method.
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Rule 1 - Field and Equipment.

RULE ONE
FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

Section 1 - The Game
Art. 1 - The game shall be played by two (2) teams of six (6) players each.
Art. 2 - The game shall be administered by 2, 3, or 4 officials (See Appendix A - Officiating, p. 45)

Section 2 - The Field and Markings.
Table 1.1 – Field Diagram.

Art. 1 – The field shall be laid out in accordance with the above diagram.
Art. 2 – The game shall be played on a rectangular field, 40 x 100 yards including both end zones. Measurements for field markings should be taken from the inside edges of boundary lines due to the fact that such lines are out of bounds. The field surface shall be grass or turf and be relatively soft and free of holes or obstructions.
Art. 3 – Yard markers shall be of a soft, pliable material if placed within five (5) yards of a sideline. No hard object (chairs, tables, ez-ups, etc…) should be placed within five (5) yards of the sideline.
Art. 4 – A team box of five (5) yards extended off the sideline between the 20 yd. lines is recommended. No fans should be allowed within this box.
Art. 5 – Players and coaches should remain 2 ft. off of the sideline at all times to allow the officials ease of movement and spotting of out of bounds.
Rule 1.2 - The Field and Markings.  

Art. 6 - No team member on the sidelines may pass the twenty (20) yard lines on either sideline.

Art. 7 – The goal lines shall be as part of the end-zone as the edge nearest the field represents a vertical plane that needs only be momentarily penetrated by any part of the offensive players HIPS for a touchdown to be scored.

Art. 8 – It is recommended that that goal line be marked with red or bright orange pylons and/or cones along the sideline and baseline.

Art. 9 - If goalposts are available, they may be used in accordance with traditional rules of 11-Man Football.

Section 3 – Game Equipment.

Art. 1 – A Regulation sized football shall be used. For girls and/or Jr High teams a Youth sized football may be used. Material can be of leather, composite, or rubber material.

Art. 2 – An official downs marker should be used to establish the scrimmage line and the down. Downs marker shall have the numbers one to four (1 – 4) large enough to be seen across the width of the field. It is recommended that the downs marker switch sidelines at half time and always be opposite the line judge (see App. A – Officiating, p. 45).

Art. 3 – A timing device is required to keep game time and other timing factors (see App. A – Officiating, p. 45).

Section 4 – Player Equipment.

Art. 1 – No player shall wear tackle football padding or helmets made of hard material. Protective padding and braces are only permissible provided they are made of a soft and pliable material. Mouth pieces are recommended.

Art. 2 – A regulation uniform should consist of the following:

a. **Jersey.** It is recommended that home team wear light colors and visiting wear a contrasting dark color. Both teams should be prepared with pennies in case jersey colors are not contrasting. Jersey should remain tucked in at all times while players are on the field.

b. **Football Pant or Short.** It is required that pants or shorts have no side pockets or exposed belt loops that fingers could get caught in. Pants or shorts must contrast in color with the belt and flags.

c. **Belt and Flags.** Belts and flags should be of a contrasting color to the pant or short. Belts should be secured tight to the waist and a minimum of two flags should be positioned on the players hips. Any loose belt length must be tucked into the pant or short. Flag type may vary but Flag-a-Tag Sonic belts are recommended. Efforts to make the flags more difficult to pull through deception or manipulation of the socket is Unsportsmanlike Conduct Penalty (15 yards) NOTE: Officials are encouraged to check flags after scoring plays or by request.

d. **Shoes.** Must be worn. Rubber soled shoes or cleats are allowed. Metal cleats or spikes are not allowed.

Art. 3 – Officials should check for illegal equipment before play begins. If illegal equipment is discovered before the game, the player(s) will be given an opportunity to correct the issue before entering the game. If illegal equipment is not corrected and violations occur during the game an Unsportsmanlike Conduct Penalty (15 yards) will be enforced. The violating player(s) may be disqualified if illegal equipment is not corrected.
RULE TWO
DEFINITIONS OF PLAYING TERMS

Section 1 – Ball Status.
Art. 1 – A dead ball is a ball not in play. The ball is dead during the interval between downs.
Art. 2 – A live ball is a ball in play. The ball becomes live when the ball has been legally snapped or
free kicked and a down is in progress.
Art. 3 – A loose ball is a ball that is in play but not in possession of any player, such as a pass, kick,
or fumble.

Section 2 – Batting.
Art. 1 – Batting is intentionally slapping or striking the ball with the arm or hand.

Section 3 – Blocking.
Art. 1 – Blocking is when a teammate of a runner or passer obstructs an opponent by legally
positioning themselves in front of the opponent and contacting him/her with the palm(s) of the
hand(s).

NOTE: Flag Football is unique in that pads and helmets are not used. Because of this, particular care
should be made by players, coaches, and officials in using, teaching, and enforcing safe blocking
techniques. Fundamentally a quality block starts with good positioning of the feet and the body
between the defender and the runner or passer. Shoulders, arms, and/or hands should be used
primarily to help absorb contact and to protect both the offensive and defensive player.

Art. 2 – For a legal block to occur the following provisions must be met:
   a. The point of contact throughout the block must be inside the frame of the opponent’s body.
      EXCEPTION: When an opponent turns his/her back to the blocker during the block.
   b. The point of contact throughout the block must be at or below the shoulder(s) of the
      blocker and opponent.
      EXCEPTION: When the opponent attempts to squat, duck, or submarine under the block.
   c. If hand(s) are used they shall be in advance of the elbow at contact.
   d. The hand(s) and elbow are not locked or extending at any time during the block
   e. If hand(s) are used they may be open with palm(s) facing the frame of the opponent.
   f. The hand(s) and arm(s) are not used to hold, hook, grasp, pull, or encircle any part of an
      opponent’s body.
   g. The blockers hand(s), arm(s), or elbow(s) are not moving faster than his/her shoulders
      when any contact with an opponent is made.
   h. The blocker is not extending into or launching through the defender
   i. The blocker is not using a flying block or rolling block.
   j. Contact is not at or below the knee, or on a players back

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k. The defensive player must be aware of the block, no blind side or crack back blocking where defender doesn’t have an opportunity to avoid the block or slow momentum.

Art. 3 – A defensive player may also:

a. Use unlocked hands, hand, or arm to ward off an opponent who is blocking him/her, or is attempting to block him/her. Contact may not be excessive, nor restrain the movement of the offensive player for a prolonged amount of time (see Holding, Section 17, p. 13)

b. Contact must be at or below the shoulder(s) of the opponent and the defensive player

NOTE: Defensive use of hands when engaging with a blocker is required as it protects both the rusher and the blocker from a collision. Bull rushing, or lowering the shoulder, is considered an illegal form of defensive contact. Personal Foul – 10 yard penalty, spot foul unless behind line of scrimmage.

Art. 4 – Chop block is a combination block by two or more teammates where one of the blocks is low and one of the blocks is high. This is an illegal form of blocking. Illegal Block – 10 yard penalty, spot foul

Art. 5 – Crack Back Block is a legal form of blocking where runner momentum is going one direction on the field and a blocker sets a block opposite the runner’s direction on the pursuing defender(s). Though this block is legal, the defender should be considered a defenseless player until he/she has had opportunity see the block coming and protect themselves. Regardless of awareness level blockers should look to absorb the opponent's momentum and move his/her feet to stay in front of the defender. Excessive contact, and/or blocks on defenseless players should be considered Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty (spot foul, unless behind line of scrimmage)

Art. 6 – Blocking on kickoffs and punts are areas where K and R players should be particularly aware of contact. Since by nature of these plays players are running at full speed in opposite directions of each other care should be taken to have eyes up and to minimize your momentum and force as you approach an opponent to avoid dangerous collisions.

Section 4 – Catch.

Art. 1 – A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball which is in flight, and first contacting the ground inbounds while maintaining possession of the ball.

Art. 2 – Catching is always preceded by touching the ball; thus, if touching causes the ball to become dead, securing possession of the ball has no significance.

Art. 3 – A simultaneous catch is a catch in which there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are inbounds.

Section 5 – Clipping/Blocking in the Back.

Art. 1 – Clipping is a block against an opponent when the initial contact is from behind, and at or below the waist. Illegal Block – 10 yard penalty (spot foul, unless behind line of scrimmage)

Art. 2 – Blocking in the back is a block against an opponent when the initial contact is from behind. Blocking in the back should not be called when an opponent intentionally turns his/her back to avoid the block. Illegal Block – 10 yard penalty (spot foul, unless behind line of scrimmage)
Rule 2.6 - Direct Run.
SDA – SARC Flag Football Rules (8th ed.)

Section 6 – Direct Run.
Art. 1 – A ball exchange must occur after the snap before the ball can be carried across the line of scrimmage. No direct runs are allowed. **Direct Run – 5 yard penalty (loss of down, line of scrimmage)**

Section 7 – Down and Loss of Down.
Art. 1 – A down is the action which starts with a legal snap (beginning a scrimmage down). A down ends when the ball next becomes dead.
Art. 2 – Loss of a down is the loss of the right to replay a down

Section 8 – Encroachment (i.e. Offsides).
Art. 1 – Encroachment occurs when a player is illegally in the neutral zone during the time interval starting when the ball is marked ready for play and until the ball is snapped. **False Start/Offsides – 5 yard penalty (blown dead immediately, line of scrimmage)**
Art. 2 – An entering substitute is not considered to be a player until he is on his team’s side of the neutral zone.

Section 9 – Fighting.
Art. 1 – Fighting is an attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage a player or non-player in a combative manner unrelated to the sport. Such acts that include but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s) or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty + Ejection (Play should be blown dead immediately, enforcement from previous spot)**

Section 10 – Flag Pulling or Downing.
Art. 1 – Flag pulling or downing refers to the action of legally stopping the progress of a runner by pulling the runners flag(s). The runner is also considered down when any part of the runner other than hand(s) or feet touches the ground.

Section 11 – Force.
Art. 1 – Force is the result of energy exerted by a player which provides movement of the ball. A new force results from a carry, fumble, kick, pass or snap.
Art. 2 – Responsibility for forcing the ball from the field of play or across the goal line is attributed to the player who carries the ball. A runner who is forced out of bounds by the direct or indirect motion of an opponent shall be considered a tackle. **Tackling – 10 yard penalty (Automatic First Down – Possible Touch Down if last defender)**

Section 12 – Formation.
Art. 1 – A scrimmage formation requires a minimum of three (3) offensive players legally on their line at the snap. **Illegal Formation – 5 yard penalty (line of scrimmage)**

Section 13 – Fouls and Penalties.
Art. 1 – A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed.
Rule 2.13 - Fouls and Penalties.

SDA – SARC Flag Football Rules (8th ed.)

Art. 2 – Types of fouls are:
  a. **Dead ball** – a foul which occurs in the time interval after a down has ended and before the ball is next snapped or kicked.
  b. **Double** – one or more live ball fouls that are committed by each team during a down. The penalties offset and are not enforced. The type of penalty and distance of enforcement has no significance.
     EXCEPTION: Unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are always enforced
  c. **Live ball** – a foul which occurs during a down.
  d. **Multiple** – two or more live ball fouls (other than unsportsmanlike) are committed during the same down by the same team. Only one of the fouls shall be penalized. The captain of the offended team may choose which penalty to enforce, or he/she may choose to decline the penalties.
     e. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** (see Section 41)
     f. **Unnecessary Roughness** (see Section 42)

Art. 3 – No foul causes loss of the ball.
Art. 4 – No foul causes a live ball to become dead.
  a. Pre-snap fouls like false start or encroachment should be enforced immediately even if enforcement is simultaneous to or after the ball has become live.
     EXCEPTION: Fighting (See 2-9-1)

Art. 5 – A penalty is a result imposed by rule against a team or team member that has committed a foul.

**Section 14 - Fumble**
Art. 1– A fumble is loss of player possession other than by passing, kicking, or handing the ball.
Art. 2 – A fumble that contacts the ground becomes a dead ball immediately. The team last in possession of the ball prior to the fumble retains possession of the ball. The spot shall be determined by the foremost portion of the players hips at the time of the fumble, not the spot at which the ball lands. No forward progress should be awarded to a team for a forward fumbled ball.
Art. 3 – A fumble gathered before contacting the ground remains a live ball.

**Section 15 – Guarding the Flag.**
Art. 1 – Guarding the flag is the use of any part of the ball carrier’s body or the ball to obstruct the opponent from pulling the flag. This includes lowering the head or shoulders and stiff arm moves. Guarding the Flag – 5 yard penalty (loss of down, spot foul)
Art. 2 – For a guarding the flag foul to occur the ball carrier must make contact with an opponent. Running with arms or the ball at your sides is not a guarding the flag foul unless contact with an opponent occurs.
Section 16 – Handing.
Art. 1 – Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one player to a teammate in such a way that the ball is still in contact with the first player when it is touched by the teammate. Handing the ball is not a pass. Loss of player possession by unsuccessful execution of the attempted handing is a fumble.
Art. 2 – No player shall hand the ball forward beyond the line of scrimmage or after receiving a kick. Illegal Handoff – 5 yard penalty (loss of down, spot foul)
Art. 3 – At least one ball exchange (pass, hand off, pitch) must occur before the ball may cross the line of scrimmage. NO DIRECT RUN BY QB. Direct QB Run – 5 yard penalty (loss of down, line of scrimmage)

Section 17 - Holding
Art. 1 - Illegal contact by a player that restrains the movement of an opponent. (see Rule 9, Section 4, p. 37) Offensive or Defensive Holding - 10 yard penalty (replay down, line of scrimmage)

Section 18 – Huddle.
Art. 1 – A huddle is two or more players of the same team grouped together before a down.

Section 19 – Hurdling.
Art. 1 – Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump (hurdle) with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent who is contacting the ground with one or both feet. Hurdling is an illegal maneuver in flag football. Personal Foul – 10 yard penalty (spot foul)
Art. 2 – Leaping, jumping, and spinning are not hurdling. These are all LEGAL maneuvers in flag football. The runner in attempting these moves may not run over or charge into a defender. Running Over Defender – 10 yard penalty (spot foul).

Section 20 – Interception.
Art. 1 – An interception is the catch of an opponent's fumble or pass.

Section 21 – Kicks.
Art. 1 – A kick is the intentional striking of the ball with the knee, lower leg, or foot. In flag football there are two types of kicks; free kicks and scrimmage kicks.
Art. 2 – A kick ends when a player gains possession or when the ball becomes dead while not in player possession.
Art. 3 – A kickoff is a free kick which puts the ball in play at the beginning of each half of the game and after a conversion attempt following a touchdown. A kickoff is executed as a place kick where the ball is held in place by a kicking tee, or by a teammate who holds it.
Art. 4 – A punt is a legal kick by a player who drops the ball and kicks it before it has touched the ground. A punt may be used for a free kick following a safety, or for a scrimmage kick. (See Rule 6 Section 2)
Art. 5 - A field goal or try for point is a legal kick by a player who kicks the ball from the hand(s) of a holder who catches the snap in the back field. This is considered a scrimmage kick (See Rule 6 Section 2)
Rule 2.22 - Line of Scrimmage.

Section 22 – Line of Scrimmage.
Art. 1 – The line of scrimmage for each team is a vertical plane through the point of the ball nearest the team’s goal line. It is determined when the ball is marked ready for play and remains until the next ready for play signal.
Art. 2 – An offensive player is considered to be on his/her line of scrimmage when he/she is within 1 yard of the line of the ball and set for one second without moving. Three offensive players are required to be on the line of scrimmage for a legal formation. Illegal formation – 5 yard penalty (line of scrimmage)

Section 23 – Lines.
Art. 1 – The boundary lines are the end lines and sidelines, they are considered out of bounds.
Art. 2 – The end line is the outer limit of each end zone.
Art. 3 – The goal line is the vertical plane which separates the field of play from the end zone. A team’s own goal line is the one it is defending.
Art. 4 – The sideline is the lateral limit of the field of play and the end zones. It extends from one end line to the other.
Art. 5 – The line to gain bisects the sideline at the following yard markers; twenty (20), forty (40), and twenty (20). When a new series (first down) is awarded the line to gain is established as the next line on the field as a team moves down the field towards an opponent’s goal line. If a penalty or negative play moves an offensive team behind another line to gain a new line is not established. The offensive team will now need to cross two lines to be awarded a new series of downs.

Section 24 – Motion.
Art. 1 – The movement of one offensive player prior to the snap or at the moment that the ball is snapped. Motion cannot be forward and the player must have come set and then clearly moved in motion at least one second prior to the snap. Illegal Procedure (5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage)

NOTE: There still must be three offensive players set on the line of scrimmage at the snap. Illegal Formation (5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage)

Section 25 – Muff.
Art. 1 – A muff is the touching of a loose ball by a player in an unsuccessful attempt to secure possession.
Art. 2 - A muffed ball that contacts the ground is considered a dead ball and may not be advanced by the offense or defense. Spot is determined by the foremost portion of the returner’s hips when the ball is muffed.

Section 26 – Neutral Zone.
Art. 1 – The neutral zone is the space between the two free-kick lines during a free kick down and between the two scrimmage lines during a scrimmage down. For a free-kick down, the neutral zone is 10 yards wide and for a scrimmage down it is as wide as the length of the football. It is established when the ball is marked ready for play.
Rule 2.27 - Out of Bounds.
SDA – SARC Flag Football Rules (8th ed.)

Section 27 – Out of Bounds.
Art. 1 – A player or other person is out of bounds when any part of the person is touching anything, other than another player or game official that is on or outside the sideline or end line.
Art. 2 – A ball in player possession is out of bounds when the runner or the ball touches anything, other than another player or game official that is on or outside a sideline or end line.
Art. 3 – A loose ball is out of bounds when it touches anything including a player or game official that is out of bounds.

Section 28 – Participation.
Art. 1 – Participation is any act or action by a player or non-player that has an influence on a play.

Section 29 – Passing.
Art. 1 – Passing the ball is throwing a ball that is in player possession. In a pass, the ball travels in flight.
Art. 2 - A forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction toward the opponent’s end line. A forward pass ends when it is caught, touches the ground or is out of bounds.
Art. 3 - A backwards pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the runner’s end line. A backward pass ends when it is caught, touches the ground or is out of bounds.

Section 30 – Player Designations.
Art. 1 – A player is one of the 12 team members who is designated to start either half of the game or who subsequently replaces another player. A player continues to be a player until a substitute enters the field and indicates to the player that he/she is replaced, or when the substitute otherwise becomes a player.
Art. 2 – A player of A is A1 and teammates are A2 and A3… Other abbreviations are B1 for a player of B, K1 for a player on a kicking team and R1 for a player on a return team.
Art. 3 – A captain of a team is a player designated to represent his/her team in the following ways:
   a. The pregame and overtime coin toss. (Limit of four captains in game uniform.)
   b. Leading his/her team in positive sportsmanship at all times.
Art. 4 – A field captain (only one designated at a time) is a player designated to represent his/her team in the following ways:
   a. Penalty decisions following a foul.
   b. Ball placement on a try, a kickoff, after a safety, after a touchback, and to start an overtime
   c. Leading his/her team in positive sportsmanship at all times.
Art. 5 – An offensive blocker is a player who is blocking or in a position to block by being between the potential tackler and the runner.
Art. 6 – A disqualified player is a player barred from further participation in a game.
Art. 7 – A kicker is any player who legally punts or place kicks.
Art. 8 – A non-player is a coach, athletic trainer, other attendant, a substitute, or a replaced player who does not participate by touching the ball, hindering an opponent or influencing the play.
   Extra Player on the Field (5 yard Penalty): Illegal Participation (10 yard penalty, loss of down if committed by offensive team).
Art. 9 – A passer is a player who throws a legal forward pass.
Rule 2.30 - Player Designations.

Art. 10 – A replaced player is one who has been notified by a substitute that he/she is to leave the field. A player is also replaced when the entering substitute becomes a player.

Art. 11 – A runner is a player who is in possession of a live ball.

Art. 12 – A snapper is the player who is facing his/her opponent’s goal line with his/her shoulders approximately parallel thereto and who snaps the ball.

Art. 13 – A substitute is a team member who may replace a player or fill a player vacancy. A substitute becomes a player when he/she enters the field and communicates with a teammate or a game official, enters the huddle, is positioned in a formation, or participates in the play. An entering player is not considered to be a player for encroachment restrictions until he/she is on his/her team’s side of the neutral zone. A team member entering the field to fill a player vacancy remains a substitute until he/she is on his/her team’s side of the neutral zone.

Art. 14 – A defenseless player is a player who, because of his/her physical position and focus of concentration, is especially vulnerable to injury.

Section 31 – Possession.

Art. 1 – A ball in player and team possession is a live ball held or controlled by a player after it has been snapped, handed, kicked, or passed to him/her.

Art. 2 – A change of team possession occurs when the opponent gains player possession during the down.

Section 32 – Power Running.

Art. 1 - A situation where the offensive team goes into a tight formation at the line of scrimmage and performs a running play where the ball is handed off and all the players push forward together towards the line to gain or end zone. *(For use in future rule books)*

Section 33 – Ready for Play.

Art. 1 – Ready for play signifies the referee has signaled the ball may be put in play by a snap or free kick and the 30-second count is to begin.

Section 34 – Scrimmage.

Art. 1 – Scrimmage is the action of the two teams during a down which begins with a legal snap.

Section 35 – Shift.

Art. 1 – A shift is the action of one or more offensive players who, after a huddle or after taking set positions, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap. Players must be set for at least one (1) second prior to the snap. *Illegal Procedure (5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage)*

Section 36 – Snap.

Art. 1 - A snap is the legal act of passing or handing the ball backward from its spot on the ground.

a. The snap begins when the snapper first moves the ball legally other than in adjustment.

b. The snap ends when the ball touches the ground or any player.

c. Snapped balls that contact the ground are immediately blown dead and the ball is spotted back at the line of scrimmage, the down is lost.
Section 37 – Spots.
Art. 1 – The spot is determined by the foremost point of the player’s hips.
Art. 2 – The basic spot is a point of reference for penalty enforcement. (See 10-4, p. 43)
Art. 3 – The enforcement spot is the point from which a penalty is enforced.
Art. 4 – The dead-ball spot is the spot under the foremost point of the runner’s hips ball when the ball becomes dead by rule.
Art. 5 – The out of bounds spot is the foremost point of the runner’s hips when the ball becomes dead out of bounds.
Art. 6 – The previous spot is where the ball was last snapped or free kicked.
Art. 7 – The spot of a foul is where the foul occurs. If a foul occurs out of bounds, the spot of the foul is at the lateral point on the field opposite where the foul occurred.
Art. 8 – The succeeding spot is where the ball would next be snapped or free kicked if a foul had not occurred. When a foul occurs during a down in which a touchdown is scored, as in Rules 8-2-2 and 8-2-3, the succeeding spot may, at the option of the offended team, be the subsequent kickoff.

Section 38 – Tackling.
Art. 1 – Tackling is the use of hands, arms, legs or body by the defensive player in his/her attempt to hold a runner or to bring him/her to the ground. Tackling (10 yard penalty, automatic first down – possible touchdown)

Section 39 – Team Designations.
Art. 1 – The offense is the team which is in possession of the ball. The opponent is the defense.
Art. 2 – (A) is the team which puts the ball in play. The opponent is (B).
Art. 3 – (K) is the team which legally kicks the ball. The opponent is (R).
Art. 4 – Team designations are retained until the ball is next marked ready for play.

Section 40 – Touching.
Art. 1 – Touching refers to any contact with the ball, i.e., either by touching or being touched by it.
Art. 2 - Touching by a game official in the field of play or end zone is ignored.

Section 41 - Unsportsmanlike Conduct.
Art. 1 – If a violation of Rule 1.4 – Player Equipment occurs and the player(s) don’t make the needed corrections after being notified of the violation or if the violation is such that it is designed to give the player an unfair advantage a penalty shall be assessed. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty, line of scrimmage
Art. 2 – Any act may be deemed unsportsmanlike if it in the opinion of the referee, it engenders ill-will or is degrading to the spirit and/or safety of the game.
Art. 3 – Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct are as follows:
   a. Using insulting, profane, or vulgar language or gestures
   b. Attempting to influence a decision by a game official.
   c. Disrespectfully addressing a game official.
   d. Indicating objections to a game official’s decision.
Rule 2.41 - Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

e. Refusing to comply with a game officials request.
f. Using disconcerting acts or sounds prior to the snap that interfere with an opponent's signals.
g. Any delayed, excessive, or prolonged act by which a player attempts to focus attention on himself/herself.
h. Failure to start a period on time, or be ready to play on time after a time-out.
i. Coach, substitute or other non-players coming onto the field without authorization from an official.
j. Being outside of the team box area without authorization by team personnel and failure or refusal to return.
k. Disorderly conduct by crowd or followers of a team who behave in an uncooperative manner when behavior is addressed.
l. Deceptive touch-off during punts.
m. Intentionally pulling or removing a flag from a player who doesn’t have the ball.
n. Spiking the ball, taunting, or baiting an opponent or other similar theatrics.
o. Unnecessarily rough play by any player.
p. Hitting, kneeing, kicking towards any player or non-player whether contact was made or not.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty, line of scrimmage. These fouls shall always be enforced – mandatory 1 play sit out, and/or possible disqualification.

Section 42 - Unnecessary Roughness.
Art. 1 - Excessive or dangerous contact by a player that compromises the safety of the game.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty, line of scrimmage. These fouls shall always be enforced – mandatory 1 play sit out, and/or possible disqualification.
RULE THREE
PERIODS, TIME FACTORS, AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Section 1 – Length of Periods.
Art. 1 – The clock running time for a game shall be forty (40) minutes with two twenty (20) minute halves and a five (5) minute intermission.
   NOTE: For purposes of tournament play timing rules may be altered. (see App. F – 7 Tournament Timing, p. 59)
Art. 2 – By mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee, any remaining time period may be shortened at any time or the game terminated.
Art. 3 – Games interrupted because of events beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority shall be continued from the point of interruption, unless the teams agree to terminate the game with the existing score.
Art. 4 – When weather conditions are construed to be hazardous to life or limb of the participants, the crew of game officials is authorized to delay or suspend the game.
Art. 5 – The referee shall have the authority to adjust errors in timing.

Section 2 – Starting a Period.
Art. 1 – Each half of the game shall be started by a kickoff. Before the scheduled game starting time, the referee, in the presence of the field captains, shall instruct the visiting team captain to give a “heads” or “tails” choice before the coin toss.
Art. 2 – The winner of the toss shall have first choice of options for the first half. The loser shall have the second choice of options for the first half. At the intermission teams will switch options for the second half. The options for the teams to choose from shall be:
   a. To choose whether his/her team will kick or receive.
   b. To choose the goal his/her team will defend.

Section 3 – Ending a Period.
Art. 1 – Approximately two (2) minutes before the end of each half the referee shall stop the clock and notify the team captains and coaches of the time remaining (TWO MINUTE WARNING), then the signal ready-for-play will be given and the clock will start with the snap.
Art. 2 – If the time for any period expires during a down (clock indicates 00:00), play shall continue until the down ends.
Art. 3 – A period shall be extended by an untimed down if one of the following occurred during a down in which time expires:
   a. There was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted, except for those fouls listed in 3-3-4b
   b. There was a double foul.
   c. There was an inadvertent whistle.
   d. If a touchdown was scored, the try is attempted unless the touchdown is scored during the last down of the second half and the point(s) would not affect the outcome of the game.
e. If (a), (b), (c), or (d) occurs during the untimed down the procedure is repeated.

Art. 4 – A period shall not be extended by an untimed down if one of the following occurred during a down in which time expires:

a. When the defense fouls during a successful try and the offended team accepts the result of the play with enforcement of the penalty from the succeeding spot
b. There was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted for:
   1. Unsportsmanlike fouls,
   2. Non-player fouls,
   3. Fouls that specify a loss of down,
   4. Fouls that are enforced on the subsequent kickoff as in Rule 8-2-2 and 8-2-3; or
   5. Fouls for which enforcement, by rule, result in a safety.

   NOTE: The score is cancelled in the event of an accepted penalty that specifies a loss of down

Art. 5 – If a dead-ball foul occurs after time expires for either half, the penalty shall be measured from the succeeding spot.

Section 4 – Starting and Stopping the Clock.

Art. 1 – Following a free kick the game clock shall be started when the ball is legally touched in the field of play.

   NOTE: If R fields a free kick in his/her end zone, starts to run it out, then stops for a touchback, no time should run off the clock.

Art. 2 – The clock shall run continuously with the exception of the following:

a. The last two (2) minutes of each half,
b. A scoring play,
c. Official time out, or
d. Team time out.

Art. 3 – During the last two (2) minutes of each half the clock shall stop for the following:

a. Time outs,
b. Live ball out-of-bounds,
c. An incomplete forward pass,
d. A penalty enforcement,
e. A first down,
f. A score,
g. During a try for point, or
h. An injured player

Art. 4 – The clock shall start with the ready-for-play signal in the following situations:

a. An officials time-out
b. Under the last two minutes, following any foul provided:
   1. There has been no charged time-out during the dead ball interval.
   2. The down is not an untimed down at the end of a half, or a try.
   3. The foul was not timing related, i.e. delay of game

   c. Under the last two minutes, if the clock is stopped due to an inadvertent whistle

   d. Under the last two minutes, following placement after a first down.
Rule 3.4 - Starting and Stopping the Clock.

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Art. 5 – The clock shall start with the snap, or when any free kick is touched, in all situations other than those covered in Rule 3-4-4.

Art. 6 – When a team attempts to conserve or consume time illegally, the referee shall order the clock started or stopped.

Section 5 – Charged and Official’s Time-Outs.

Art. 1 – Each team is entitled to two (2) free time-outs during each half. Unused first half time-outs cannot be used for the second half. Unused second half timeouts cannot be used in overtime.

Art. 2 – A charged team time-out occurs when the ball is dead and:
   a. The request of either a player or the head coach (or head coach’s designee) is legally granted. When a decision on a penalty is pending, a time-out shall not be granted to either team until the captain makes his/her choice.
   b. The repair of faulty player equipment requires the assistance of a team attendant, or which, without the assistance of a team attendant delays the ready-for-play signal for more than 30 seconds.
   c. A time-out is requested and granted for the purpose of reviewing a game officials application of a rule which may have been misapplied or misinterpreted. The time-out remains charged to the requesting team, if no change in the ruling results. A change to the ruling would result in an officials time-out and not be charged to the requesting team.

Art. 3 – A single charged time-out shall not exceed sixty seconds. The referee shall notify the teams within five seconds after the timeout expires and shall mark the ball ready-for-play. Charged time-outs shall be reduced in length only if both teams are ready to play prior to the 30-second ready-for-play signal by the referee.

Art. 4 – Successive charged time-outs may be granted during the same dead-ball period. An official’s time-out may follow a charged time-out if it is for the continuance of a coach-referee conference, or if safety considerations are involved. When a team’s permissible charged time-outs for the half have been used, its captain and coach should be notified.

Art. 5 – After a team has used its permissible charged timeouts for the half any subsequent requests shall be denied unless it is for:
   a. An apparently injured player who is so designated when the request is made. The injured player must come off the field for at least one down. A 30 second runoff of the game clock occurs if in the last two minutes of the half. The clock is then stopped until the snap so player can be replaced.
   b. Necessary repair to player equipment. The player must come off the field for at least one down. A 30 second runoff of the game clock occurs if in the last two minutes of the half. The clock is then stopped until the snap so player can be replaced.
   c. The review of a possible misapplication or misinterpretation of a rule. A 30 second runoff of the game clock occurs if in the last two minutes of the half unless officials determine an error has been made, wherein the clock would start on the ready for play whistle from the referee.

Art. 6 – An official’s time out (which is not charged to either team) occurs during a dead ball:
   a. When a first down is declared (last two minutes only)
Rule 3.5 - Charged and Officials Time Outs.  

SDA – SARC Flag Football Rules (8th ed.)

b. When captains or coaches are notified of time remaining

c. For a player in need of equipment repair.

d. To dry or change the game ball

e. For unusual heat or humidity which may create a health risk to the players.

f. For any issue of player or spectator safety.

g. When a coach-referee conference concerning the misapplication of a rule results in the referee altering his/her ruling (See Rule 3-5-8)

h. After a foul, to administer the penalty.

i. For any unusual delay in getting the ball marked ready for play.

j. For any delays in sideline personnel (downs marker) being in position for the ready-for-play signal.

Art. 7 – An official’s time-out (which is not charged to either team) occurs, and the player shall be replaced for at least one down, unless halftime or an overtime intermission occurs when:

a. An apparently injured player is discovered by a game official while the ball is dead and for whom the ready-for-play signal is delayed, or for whom the clock is stopped.

b. Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (See NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports at www.NFHS.org)

c. A game official discovers any player who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person. The player shall be directed to leave the game until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to competition. (See NFHS Communicable Disease Procedures at www.NFHS.org)

NOTE: A 30 second runoff of the game clock will be issued if this occurs in the last two minutes unless the injured players team calls a timeout.

Art. 8 – A player, directed by his coach or the head coach, may request and be granted a timeout for the purpose of the coach and the referee reviewing a decision which may have resulted from misapplication or misinterpretation of a rule, provided request is made prior to the time the ball becomes live following the play to be reviewed, unless the period has officially ended. When a timeout is so granted, the referee will confer with the coach at the sideline in front of his team box in the field of play. If the conference results in the referee altering his ruling, the opposing coach will be notified, the revision made, and the timeout shall be an official’s timeout. If the referee’s ruling prevails, the timeout remains charged to the team requesting the timeout for the conference.

Section 6 – Ball Ready for Play and Delay.

Art. 1 – The ball is marked ready for play when, after it has been placed for a down, the referee gives the ready-for-play signal. The 30 second play count shall begin.
Rule 3.6 - Ball Ready for Play and Delay.

Art. 2 – Action or inaction which prevents promptness in putting the ball in play is delay of game (Delay of Game - 5 Yard Penalty, line of scrimmage). This includes the following:
   a. Failure to snap or free kick within the 30 seconds after the ball is marked ready for play.
   b. Unnecessarily carrying the ball after it has become dead.
   c. A coach-referee conference after all permissible charged time-outs for the coach’s team have been used, and during which the referee is requested to reconsider the application of a rule and no change in the ruling results.
   d. Failure to properly wear legal or required player equipment when the ball is about to become live.
   e. Snapping or free kicking the ball before it is marked ready for play.
   f. Any other conduct which unduly prolongs the game.

Art. 3 – Game management is responsible for clearing the field of play and the end zones at the beginning of each half so play may begin at the scheduled time.

Art. 4 – A team shall play within two minutes after being ordered to do so by the referee. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of the game.

Section 7 – Substitutions.

Art. 1 – Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players. Upon meeting the criteria of Rule 2-30-13, replaced players shall begin to leave the field within three seconds. No substitutes shall enter during a down. Illegal Substitution – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.

Art. 2 – A player, replaced player, or a substitute is required to leave the field at the side on which the team box is located and go directly to his team box.

Art. 3 – During the same dead-ball interval, no substitute shall become a player and then withdraw and no player shall withdraw and re-enter as a substitute unless a penalty is accepted, a dead-ball foul occurs, there is a charged time-out or the period ends. Illegal Substitution – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.

Art. 4 – During a down a replaced player or substitute who attempts unsuccessfully to leave the field and who does not participate in or affect the play, constitutes an extra player on the field penalty. Extra Player on Field – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.

Art. 5 – An entering substitute shall be on his/her team’s side of the neutral zone when the ball is snapped or free kicked. Foul will not be assessed until the ball is snapped or kicked per Rule 2-30-13. Encroachment – 5 yard penalty, blown dead at the snap/kick, line of scrimmage.

Art. 6 – During a down a replaced player, substitute, or other non-playing team personnel who enters or remains on the field and participates in the play or impacts the play by their presence constitutes an illegal participation penalty. Illegal Participation – 10 yard penalty, loss of down if committed by offensive team, line of scrimmage.
RULE FOUR
BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL, AND OUT OF BOUNDS

Section 1 – Putting the Ball in Play.
Art. 1 – To start each half and to resume play after a scoring play, the ball shall be put in play by a kickoff.
Art. 2 – A free kick shall also put the ball in play:
   a. After a safety.
   b. When a free-kick down is replayed.
Art. 3 – A snap shall put the ball in play when a free kick is not specified.
Art. 4 – After being put in play, the ball remains live until the down ends.
Art. 5 – The ball remains dead and a down is not begun if a snap or free kick is attempted before the ball is marked ready for play, or there is an illegal snap, other snap infraction or a dead-ball foul occurs.

Section 2 – Dead Ball and End of Down.
Art. 1 – A game officials whistle causes the ball to become dead. Should a foul occur prior to a snap or free kick the game official should blow his/her whistle to indicate the ball remains dead.
Art. 2 – The ball becomes dead and the down is ended:
   a. When a runner’s flag is pulled or a passer’s flag is pulled before the ball leaves his/her hand.
   b. When a runner whose flag is missing is given an observable tag other than on the head or neck.
   c. When a runner goes out-of-bounds, is held/tackled, or allows any part of his/her person other than hand(s) or feet to touch the ground.

Flag Football Specific Note: There is only one way that an opponent can legally stop a runner in flag football and this is by pulling the runner’s flag. A runner who goes out-of-bounds must do so by his/her own force. Similarly, if a runner falls down he/she has stopped himself/herself and must have done so by his/her own force. Actions or forces in motion around the runner may have caused the runner to go out of bounds or fall. However, no direct force should be applied by an opponent to cause a runner to go to the ground or out of bounds.
   d. When a live ball (kick) goes out-of-bounds, is downed by K by a touch, or by R by kneeling, muffing, or fumbling.
   e. When a snapped ball contacts the ground.
   f. When any forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete or is simultaneously caught by opposing players.
   g. When a fumble, muff, or a backward pass strikes the ground.
   h. When a score is made.
   i. When during a try for point, Team B secures the ball.
   j. When an official sounds his/her whistle inadvertently.
   k. When the ball is stripped or stolen. Stealing the ball - 10 yard penalty, replay the down from infraction spot or line of scrimmage if foul occurred in the backfield.
Rule 4.2 - Dead Ball and End of Down.

Art. 3 – An inadvertent whistle ends the down. Inadvertent whistles are administered as follows:
   a. The down shall be replayed if an inadvertent whistle is sounded while a legal pass, snap, or kick is in flight.
   b. The team in possession may choose to either accept the results of the play at the dead-ball spot or replay the down if an inadvertent whistle is sounded while the ball is in player possession.
   c. The penalty shall be administered as determined by the basic spot and takes precedence over inadvertent whistle administration if, during a down, a live-ball foul occurs prior to the inadvertent whistle and the penalty is accepted.

Section 3 – Out-of-Bounds and Inbounds Spots.

Art. 1 – A player is out-of-bounds when he/she touches anything that is out-of-bounds other than another player or official.

Art. 2 – A player who goes out-of-bounds under his/her own force during a down may not participate in the remainder of that down. Illegal Participation – 10 yard penalty, loss of down if committed by offensive team, line of scrimmage.

Art. 3 – A ball that goes out-of-bounds shall be spotted at the nearest inbounds spot.

Art. 4 – When a runner goes out of bounds, the ball shall be spotted at a point lateral to the location of the foremost point of the runner’s hip’s when the runner went out of bounds.

Art. 5 – When a kick or backward pass goes out-of-bounds, it shall be spotted lateral to where is crossed the sideline.

Art. 6 – If the out-of-bounds spot is behind the goal line, it is a safety or a touchback. If the ball touches a pylon, it is considered out of bounds behind the goal line.
Section 1 – Series of Downs.
Art. 1 – The team which puts the ball in play for a scrimmage down following a free kick or touchback is awarded a series of four consecutively numbered downs in which to advance the ball to the line to gain.
   a. Each awarded first down starts a new series of four consecutively numbered downs.
   b. The referee shall correct the number of the next down prior to the ball becoming live after a new series of down is awarded.
Art. 2 – A new series of downs is awarded:
   a. After a first, second, or third down, a new series of downs shall be awarded only after considering the effect of any act during the down other than non-player unsportsmanlike conduct fouls by team A, and any dead-ball foul by team B.
   b. After a fourth down, a new series of downs shall be awarded only after considering the effect of any act during the down, except a non-player unsportsmanlike foul.
Art. 3 – When a scrimmage down ends with the ball in the field of play or out of bounds between the goal lines, a new series is awarded to:
   a. A, if the ball belongs to A on or beyond the line to gain.
   b. B, if the ball belongs to B at the end of any down.
   c. B, if at the end of the fourth down, the ball belongs to A behind the line to gain.
   d. R, if K legally punts the ball during any scrimmage down and the ball is recovered by R, downed by K, goes out of bounds, or becomes dead with no player possession.

Section 2 – Down and Possession after Penalty.
Art. 1 – When a penalty is declined, the number of the next down is the same as if the foul had not occurred. If a double foul occurs during a down, the number of the next down is the same as the down in which the double foul occurred (replay the down). After a distance penalty, the ball belongs to the team in possession at the time of the foul. Team possession may then change if a new series is awarded.
Art. 2 – When a foul occurs during a scrimmage down and before any change of team possession, and before a receiver is first to touch a punt while it is beyond the neutral zone, the ball belongs to A or K after enforcement. The number of the next down is the same as that of the down during which the foul occurred unless penalty acceptance includes a first down or loss of down, or the enforcement or the advance results in a first down.
Art. 3 - 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 enforcement.
Art. 4 – When a foul occurs prior to a scrimmage down, or simultaneously with the snap, the number of the next down after enforcement is the same as the number established before the foul occurred, unless enforcement for a foul by B results in a first down.
Art. 5 – When a foul occurs prior to or during a free-kick down and before any change of team possession, the down which follows enforcement is a free-kick down (replay the kick)
Rule 5.2 - Down and Possession after Penalty.  

Art. 6 – Following a foul, a series of downs ends when:

a. The acceptance of a penalty includes the award of an automatic first down.
b. The acceptance or declination of any penalty leaves A in possession beyond the line-to-gain (first down for A)
c. Declination of any penalty leaves A in possession behind the line to gain after fourth Down.
d. Declination of any penalty leave B in possession.
e. There is acceptance or declination of the penalty for any foul which occurs after team possession changes during the down.
f. Acceptance of a penalty on fourth down which carries a loss of down and leaves A in possession behind the line to gain.

Section 3 – The Line to Gain.

Art. 1 - The line to gain corresponds with the yardage lines (see Table 1-1, p. 7). The next line (20 yd., 40 yd., 20 yd., or G.) for an offensive team to reach as they move towards their opponents goal is considered the line to gain. If A establishes possession 1 yard away from the 20 yard line then the line to gain is 1 yard away, and the subsequent line to gain would be the 40 yard line. To achieve the line to gain the ball must be spotted on or past the established line to gain.

Art. 2 – All penalties must be assessed before a new series of downs and line to gain is established. The line to gain then remains fixed until the series ends and a new line to gain is established.
RULE SIX
KICKING THE BALL

Section 1 – The Kickoff and Other Free Kicks.
Art. 1 – For any free kick, a free-kick line, corresponding to a scrimmage line, is established for each team. These lines are always 10 yards apart. Unless moved by a penalty, K’s free-kick line is:
   a. Its 30-yard line for a kickoff
   b. Its 20-yard line for a punt after a safety.
Art. 2 – A free kick shall be made from any point along K’s free-kick line between the inbounds lines.
A punt may not be used for a free kick other than after a safety. Once designated, K must kick from that spot. In certain situations, such as a pool of water on K’s free-kick line, the referee has authority to move the ball to a playable line. In which case, both free kick lines are moved to compensate.
Art. 3 – After the ball is marked ready for play, and until the ball is kicked, the following formation requirements must be met:
   a. No player other than the kicker, or the holder if one is used, may be beyond his/her free-kick line. Encroachment – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.
   b. No K players, other than the kicker may be more than 5 yards behind the kicking team’s free-kick line. A player satisfies this rule when no foot is on or beyond the line 5 yards behind K’s free-kick line. Illegal Formation – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.
   c. No R players may go past the free-kick line until after the kick. Encroachment – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.
   d. At least two (2) R players must be within five yards of their free-kick line (10 – 15 yards from the ball) at the time of the kick. Illegal Formation – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.
Art. 4 – Any receiver may catch or recover a free kick in the field of play and advance.
Art. 5 – A free kick is not repeated unless:
   a. A foul occurs prior to a change of possession and the penalty acceptance requires a replay of the down.
   b. There is a double foul.
   c. There is an inadvertent whistle while the kick is in the air.
Art. 6 – A free kick shall not be kicked directly out of bounds between the goal lines without being touched by a member of R. If a kick goes directly out of bounds without being touched, R has the following choices:
   a. Accept a Free Kick Out of Bounds – 5 yard penalty, replay the kick.
   b. Decline the penalty and put the ball in play at the inbounds spot.
   c. TOURNAMENT RULES: For timing purposes, rules may be designated for tournament play that a ball kicked out of bounds is automatically placed on R’s 30 yard line.
Art. 7 – If a free kick goes out of bounds between the goal lines touched inbounds by R, the ball is put in play lateral to the out of bounds spot, or the foremost point of R’s hips if the ball contacts the ground in bounds after touching and before going out of bounds.
**Section 2 - Scrimmage Kicks.**

Art. 1 - Team A must declare the Intent to Kick in order to kick the ball from scrimmage. Declaring the Intent to kick does not mean Team A must kick the ball, but they cannot kick the ball without first making a declaration. **Scrimmage Kick Violation - 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.**

Art. 2 - The referee will be notified by the captain of Team A of the Intent to Kick. The referee will notify the captain of Team B of Team A’s Intent to Kick.

Art. 3 - All players of Team A except the kicker and/or holder must be on the line of scrimmage. **Illegal Formation - 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.**

Art. 4 - After a declaration of Intent to Kick, no player of team A may be in motion at the time of the snap.

Art. 5 - The ball must be snapped directly to the kicker or holder. **Scrimmage Kick Violation - 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.**

Art. 6 - Team A must take immediate action to kick the ball unless a fake kick is executed.

Art. 7 - No player of Team A may move from line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. **Scrimmage Kick Violation - 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.**

Art. 8 - A fake kick is indicated by:
   a. A player from Team A crossing the line of scrimmage before the ball is kicked.
   b. The kicker or holder taking any action, with or without the ball, which is not part of a typical kicking action.

Art. 9 - No player from Team B may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. **Scrimmage Kick Violation - 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.**

Art. 10 - In a fake kick situation, any player from team B may cross the line of scrimmage when:
   a. A player from Team A crosses the line of scrimmage.
   b. The kicker or holder takes any action, with or without the ball, which is not part of a typical kicking action.

Art. 11 - On a scrimmage kick, a snapped ball that touches the ground before touching any other player, is dead.

Art. 12 - A muffed snap on a scrimmage kick is dead and spotted where the muff occurred.

Art. 13 - On a scrimmage kick, the holder must remain on at least one knee to receive the snap. The holder standing up or moving from his spot before or after receiving the snap indicates a fake kick.

Art. 14 - Executing a scrimmage kick without first declaring the Intent to Kick incurs an unsportsmanlike conduct foul and loss of down. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct - 15 yard penalty, loss of down, line of scrimmage.**
Art. 15 - If any element of a fake kick occurs, and Team A kicks the ball, Team A incurs an Scrimmage Kick Violation - 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage. Such action may possibly be deemed unsportsmanlike conduct by the referee.

Section 3 – Receiving and Fielding a Kick.
Art. 1 – Any member of R may catch or field a kick and advance.
Art. 2 – A muffed kick that contacts the ground is a dead ball and will be spotted at the foremost point of the receivers hips when the ball was muffed.
Art. 3 – K team shall not touch a kick until it has touched a receiver or the ground. Any attempt to interfere with a receivers opportunity to field the ball is considered a foul. Kicking Team Interference – 10 yard penalty, spot foul.
Art. 4 – K may down a kick, by touching it, after the ball has touched the ground, thus forcing R to take possession at that point.
Art. 5 – After a punt touches the ground only the receiving team may field the ball and advance it. The kicking team may only down the ball by touching it.

Section 4 – Touchback and Safety.
Art. 1 – It is a touchback if any free kick or scrimmage kick:
   a. Breaks the plane of R’s goal line prior to striking the ground,
   b. Is downed in R’s end zone by either K or R before the ball is advanced past the goal line.
Art. 2 – If R establishes possession in front of the goal line and then carries the ball into the end zone and then downs the ball, fumbles the ball in the end zone, or has his/her flag pulled in the end zone it will be considered a safety.
Rule 7 - Snapping, Handing, and Passing the Ball. SDA – SARC Flag Football Rules (8th ed.)

RULE SEVEN
SNAPPING, HANDING AND PASSING THE BALL

Section 1 – Before the Snap.
Art. 1 – The snapper may be over the ball but his/her feet must be behind the neutral zone and no part of his/her person, other than hand(s) on the ball, may be beyond the foremost point of the ball.
Art. 2 – The snapper may lift, tilt, and rotate the ball but may not relocate it. Movement of the ball must take place before teammates get set and movement can occur only once per down prior to the snap.
Art. 3 – Following the ready-for-play signal and after touching the ball, the snapper shall not:
   a. Remove both hands from the ball.
   b. Make any movements that simulate a snap.
   c. Fail to clearly pause before the snap.
   d. Following adjustment, lift or move the ball other than in a legal snap.
   NOTE: In wet or muddy conditions a towel may be carried by an official to help dry the ball before it is placed ready-for-play.
Art. 4 – An illegal snap or other snap infraction causes the ball to remain dead. Illegal Snap – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.
Art. 5 – No player shall encroach on the neutral zone after the ball is marked ready for play. Once the ball is marked ready-for-play and the snapper has placed his/her hand(s) on the ball, encroachment occurs if any player breaks the plane of the neutral zone. Encroachment – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage. (Play is blown dead immediately)
Art. 6 – After the ball is marked ready for play and before the snap begins, no false start shall be made by any A player. It is a false start (False Start – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage) if:
   a. There is movement by hands or the body that simulates action at the snap.
   b. Any act that is clearly intended to cause B to encroach.

Section 2 – Formation/Position, Numbering, and Action at the Snap.
Art. 1 – After the ball is declared ready-for-play, ALL players of Team A must, at least momentarily, be within ten (10) yards of the ball. This can be done in the huddle, or on the line of scrimmage. Players on Team A may then shift out all the way to the sideline if desired after they have established themselves within 10 yards of the ball. Failure to establish position within 10 yards of the ball is a foul. Illegal Formation – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.
   NOTE: This rule is to prevent the sleeper play, which is where a player for Team A acts as if he/she is leaving the field but instead goes to the sideline and participates in the play.
Art. 2 – At least three (3) Team A players must be within one yard of the line-of-scrimmage and be set for at least one second prior to the snap. Illegal Formation – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.
Art. 3 – After a huddle or a shift, all players of Team A shall come to an absolute stop and shall remain stationary simultaneously without movement of hands, feet, head, or body for at least one (1) second before the snap.

Art. 4 – Only one A player may be in motion at the snap and then only if such motion is not toward his opponents goal line. He/she must have set when the rest of the team did after the huddle or a shift and then gone in motion. There still must be 3 players on the line of scrimmage set for one second prior to the snap.

Art. 5 – A snap must be such that the ball immediately leaves the hand or hands of the snapper and touches a backfield player or the ground before it touches the snapper or the other two players set on the line-of-scrimmage.

Section 3 – Handing the Ball.
Art. 1 – Any player may hand the ball backward at any time.
Art. 2 – No player shall hand the ball forward beyond the line of scrimmage, or after receiving a kick. Illegal Handoff – 5 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.
Art. 3 – At least one ball exchange must take place before the ball may cross the line of scrimmage. NO DIRECT RUN ALLOWED IN 6-MAN FLAG FOOTBALL. Direct Run – 5 yard penalty and loss of down, line of scrimmage.
Art. 4 – The snapper may not receive a hand-off unless he/she has first turned 180 degrees from the line of scrimmage.

Section 4 – Fumble, Muff, Backward Pass, and Snap.
Art. 1 – A fumble (see Rule 2-14, p. 12) shall be dead when it hits the ground and belongs to the last team in possession. The spot shall be marked at the foremost portion of the player’s hips at the time of the fumble. The player may not gain yardage through the act of fumbling the ball forward.
Art. 2 – If a fumble is caught in the air by any player, he/she may advance it and maintain possession.
Art. 3 – Any player may make a backward pass (Rule 2-29-3, p. 15) to any other player.
Art. 4 – A backwards pass becomes dead when it strikes the ground. The spot is established where the ball touched the ground.
Art. 5 – A snapped ball that contacts the ground is declared dead when it strikes the ground. The ball will be spotted back at the line of scrimmage and the down will be lost. If the ball is touched before striking the ground it shall be declared dead and spotted at the foremost point of the players hips.

Section 5 – Forward Pass.
Art. 1 – It is a legal forward pass, if during a scrimmage down and before team possession has changed, a player of A throws the ball with both feet of the passer in or behind the neutral zone when the ball is released. Only one forward pass may be thrown during the down.
Art. 2 – An illegal forward pass is a foul Illegal Forward Pass – 5 yard penalty, spot foul. Illegal forward passes include:
   a. A forward pass after team possession has changed during the down (punt or interception).
   b. A forward pass on a free kick down.
   c. A pass from beyond the neutral zone.
Rule 7.5 - Forward Pass.

- **d.** A second and subsequent forward pass(es) thrown during a down.
- **e.** A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an offensive receiver.
- **f.** A pass intentionally thrown incomplete to save loss of yardage or conserve time.
  
  EXCEPTION: It is LEGAL to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving a direct snap in an attempt to stop the game clock in the last two minutes of each half.

Art. 3 – If the penalty for an illegal forward pass is accepted, measurement is from the spot of the forward pass. If the offended team declines the distance penalty, it has the choice of having the down counted at the spot of the illegal forward pass or (if the illegal forward pass is caught or intercepted) of having the ball put in play as determined by the action which followed the catch.

Art. 4 – A forward pass, legal or illegal, is complete and the ball may be advanced when caught by any player of A or B. If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by opponents, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team.

Art. 5 – A forward pass, legal or illegal, is incomplete and the ball becomes dead when it touches the ground. It is also incomplete when a player in the air possesses the ball and then lands so that his/her first contact with the ground or anything other than a player or game official is on or outside a boundary. When an incompletion occurs the down counts unless the pass is after a change of possession. If the pass is legal, the passing team next snaps the ball the previous spot, unless lost after fourth down.

NOTE: To establish a completed pass inbounds a player need only touch one foot inbounds.

Art. 6 – Pass interference restrictions begin for ALL players at the snap. Team A may block on the line of scrimmage and then move out for a pass and Team B may contact A players as they rush into the backfield, but B players may not initiate that contact. Blocking or checking receivers on the line of scrimmage is illegal (Checking Receivers on the Line – 10 yard penalty, line of scrimmage) as is blocking downfield before a pass Illegal Block – 10 yard penalty, spot foul unless behind line of scrimmage).

Art. 7 – It is pass interference if:

- **a.** Any player of A or B interferes with an opponent’s opportunity to move toward or catch the pass.
- **b.** Any player hinders an opponent’s vision without making an attempt to play the ball, even though no contact is made.

Art. 8 – It is not pass interference if:

- **a.** Unavoidable contact occurs when two or more opponents are making a simultaneous, bona fide attempt to move toward or catch the pass.

  **Defensive Pass Interference – Penalty enforced by spotting the ball at the point of the foul and an automatic first down for the offended team, if foul occurs in the end zone ball should be placed on 1 yard line.**

  **Offensive Pass interference – 10 yard penalty and loss of down, line of scrimmage.**
Rule 8 - Scoring, Safety, and Touchback.

RULE EIGHT
SCORING, SAFETY, AND TOUCHBACK

Section 1 – Scoring.
Art. 1 – The game is won by the team which accumulates the most points. Points are scored as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POINT VALUES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Touchdown</td>
<td>6 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Goal</td>
<td>3 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try-for-point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Touchdown from 10 yard conversion spot</td>
<td>2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Touchdown from 3 yard conversion spot</td>
<td>1 pt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Field Goal</td>
<td>1 pt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety (points awarded to opponent)</td>
<td>2 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Art. 2 – Forfeited games shall be scored as Offended Team: 1, Opponent: 0. But, if the offended team is ahead at the time of the forfeit, the score stands.

Section 2 – Touchdown.
Art. 1 – A touchdown is scored under the following conditions:
   a. When a runner advances the ball to a point where any part of his/her hips touches the opponents goal line (vertical plane extended from the edge of the goal line nearest the field of play)
   b. When possession is secured in the end zone of the opponent.
Art. 2 – For fouls occurring during a touchdown scoring down the offended team may accept the result of the play and choose enforcement of the penalty:
   a. On the try attempt, or
   b. On the subsequent kickoff.
Art. 3 – Fouls occurring after a scoring play and before the ready-for-play signal of the next down can be accepted and enforced:
   a. On the try attempt, or
   b. On the subsequent kickoff.

Section 3 – Try.
Art. 1 – After a touchdown the scoring team shall attempt a try during which the ball is snapped from a spot at the following yard mark options, unless moved by penalty:
Rule 8.3 - Try.

a. 3 yard line for a 1 point try attempt.  
NOTE: If field goal posts are present teams may choose to attempt a scrimmage kick  
Conversion in line with  
b. 10 yard line for a 2 point try attempt.  
EXCEPTION: If a touchdown is scored during the last down of the second half, the try shall not  
be attempted unless the point(s) would affect the outcome of the game or playoff qualifying.

Art. 2 – The try begins when the ball is marked ready for play. It ends when:  
a. B secures possession.  
b. The try is successful.  
c. The ball becomes dead for any other reason (flag is pulled, incomplete pass, etc.).

Art. 3 – If during a successful try, a foul by A occurs, the down must be replayed unless it is a foul that  
results in loss-of-down. If it is a loss-of-down foul there is no score and no replay.  
Art. 4 – If during a successful try, a foul by B occurs, A is given the choice of:  
a. Accepting the penalty and replaying the down following enforcement, or  
b. Accepting the result of the play and enforcement of the penalty on the ensuing kickoff.  
Art. 5 – If during an unsuccessful try:  
a. A foul by A occurs, the penalty is obviously declined, the results of the play stand (no  
score) and there is no replay.  
b. A foul by B occurs, and the penalty is accepted, the down is replayed after enforcement.

Art. 6 – If a double foul occurs the down shall be replayed.

Section 4 - Field Goal.  
Art. 1 - If field goal posts are present, a field goal is scored when a scrimmage kick passes above the  
crossbar and between the uprights. See appendix F, Article 2, p. 58

Section 5 – Force, Safety, and Touchback.  
Art. 1 –Responsibility for forcing the ball from the field of play or across a goal line is attributed to the  
player who carries, snaps, passes, fumbles, or kicks the ball, unless a new force is applied  
a. The accidental touching of a loose ball by a player who was blocked into the ball is  
ignored and does not constitute a new force.

Art. 2 – It is a safety when:  
a. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his/her own goal line, and it  
becomes dead there in his/her team’s possession  
EXCEPTION: The MOMENTUM RULE wherein a defensive player intercepts an opponent’s  
forward pass, or an R player catches or recovers a kicked ball and possession is secured in  
the field of play but the player’s original momentum in possessing the ball carries him/her into  
the end zone. This is considered a TOUCHBACK and not a safety because the force of the  
pass or kick moved the player into the end zone rather than the players own force.  
b. A fumble or backward pass strikes the ground in the end zone, or goes out of bounds  
and was last touched in the end zone.  
c. A snapped ball goes out of bounds in the end zone.
Rule 8.5 - Force, Safety, and Touchback.

A player on offense commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and enforcement is a spot in his/her end zone, or an illegal forward pass is thrown from the end zone and the penalty is declined in a situation that leaves him/her in possession at the spot of the illegal pass and with the ball having been forced into the end zone by the passing team.

Art. 3 – Following a safety the team whose goal line was involved shall put the ball in play by a free kick punt from their own 20-yard line. Two (2) points shall be awarded to the opposing team.

Art. 4 – It is a touchback when:
   a. Any free kick or punt becomes dead on or behind R’s goal line
   b. A kicked ball is touched or muffed in the field of play but the momentum of the kick carries the ball into the end zone where it is then downed.
   c. A forward pass is intercepted in B’s end zone and becomes dead there in B’s possession.

Art. 5 – Following a touchback the team whose goal line was involved shall put the ball in play on its own 20-yard line by a snap once the ready-for-play signal is given.
RULE NINE
CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND OTHERS

Section 1 – Avoidance of Collision.
Art. 1 – A runner shall not deliberately run over or charge into a defender who has established his/her position in the line of the runner. It is the responsibility of the runner to attempt to avoid the collision by executing an evasive maneuver, such as spinning or changing direction, when confronting an opponent. Running Over Defender - 10 yard penalty and loss of down, spot foul.

Art. 2 – The runner shall look to minimize contact in congested or sideline areas where evasive maneuvers are impossible. Running Over Defender - 10 yard penalty and loss of down, spot foul.

Section 2 – Guarding the Flag.
Art. 1 – A runner is not permitted to ward off an opponent as he/she attempts to remove his/her flag. The following actions should be considered guarding if contact with the defender is made during the flag pull attempt:
   a. Lowering head or shoulder into the defender.
   b. Stiff arm motion by the runner towards a defender.
   c. Carrying the ball below the level of the hips.
   d. Swinging arms below the level of the hips.
   e. Dipping the elbow below the level of the hips.
Guarding the Flag – 5 yard penalty and loss of down, spot foul.

Section 3 – Helping the Runner.
Art. 1 – An offensive player shall not push, pull or lift the runner to assist his forward progress. Helping the Runner – 5 yard penalty, spot foul.

Section 4 – Illegal Use of Hands and Holding.
Art. 1 – An offensive player (except the runner) shall not:
   a. Use a blocking technique which is not permissible by Rule 2-3-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (see p. 9 and 10) Illegal Block – 10 yard penalty, spot foul unless behind the line of scrimmage.
   b. Use his/her hands, arms, or legs to hook, lock, clamp, grasp, encircle, or hold in an effort to restrain an opponent. Offensive Holding – 10 yard penalty, spot foul unless behind line of scrimmage.

Art. 2 – The runner may not grasp a teammate.
Art. 3 – A defensive player shall not:
   a. Use a technique that is not permissible by Rule 2-3-3 (see p. 10) Personal Foul (Illegal Rush) – 10 yard penalty.
   b. Use his/her hands to hook, lock, clamp, grasp, encircle, or hold in an effort to restrain an opponent. Defensive Holding – 10 yard penalty, spot foul unless behind the line of Scrimmage.
Rule 9.4 - Illegal Use of Hands and Holding.

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c. Contact a receiver once he/she has moved past the neutral zone and may no longer be a blocker. Once a completed pass or running play happens B players may again make legal contact with A players. Checking Receivers on the Line – 10 yards, line of scrimmage. -or- Defensive Pass Interference – Penalty enforced by spotting the ball at the point of the foul and an automatic first down for the offended team, if foul occurs in the end zone ball should be placed on 1 yard line.

Section 5 – Illegal Blocking.

Art. 1 – An illegal block is considered as any contact not outlined in Rule 2-3-1, 2, 5 (see p. 9 and 10). Illegal Block – 10 yard penalty, spot foul unless behind line of scrimmage.

Art. 2 – The following types of blocks are by their nature specifically defined as being illegal:

a. Chop Blocking (see Rule 2-3-4 on p. 10)
b. Blocking in the Back (see Rule 2-5-2 on p. 10)
c. Clipping (see Rule 2-5-1 on p. 10)
d. Tripping a non-runner.
e. Excessive contact
f. Contact on a defenseless player

All actions listed above are considered fouls. Illegal Block – 10 yard penalty, spot foul unless behind line of scrimmage.

Section 6 – Illegal Personal Contact (Personal Foul)

Art. 1 – No player or nonplayer shall fight. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty, line of scrimmage. Offending player(s) or nonplayer(s) are disqualified.

Art. 2 – No player or nonplayer shall intentionally contact a game official. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty, line of scrimmage. Offending player(s) or nonplayer(s) are disqualified.

Art. 3 – No player or nonplayer shall:

a. Swing the foot, shin, or knee into an opponent, nor extend the knee to meet a blocker.
b. Charge into or throw an opponent to the ground. Bull rushing is not allowed, you must attempt to go around the blocker rather than go through.
c. Pile on any player who is lying on the ground.
d. Hurdle an opponent

NOTE: Leaping, jumping, and spinning are not hurdling. They are legal maneuvers. Care should be given in these legal maneuvers to avoid running over or charging into a defender.
e. Positioning oneself on the shoulders or body of a teammate or an opponent to gain an Advantage.
f. Make any other contact with an opponent, including a defenseless player which is deemed unnecessary or excessive and which incites roughness. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty, line of scrimmage. Offending player(s) must sit out at least one play.

g. Strike an opponent with his/her fist, locked hands, forearm or elbow, nor kick or knee him/her. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty, line of scrimmage. Offending player(s) or nonplayer(s) may be disqualified, mandatory one play sit out.
Rule 9.6 - Illegal Personal Contact (Personal Foul).  
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Art. 4 – Roughing the passer. Defender must play the flag and not the body, arm, or the ball while in possession of the passer. Any action, such as jumping to block a pass must be executed in such a way that the path of the jumper will not carry him/her into the passer. Allowances shall be made if the offensive player moves into the jumpers path in such a way that the jumper couldn’t anticipate and respond to the move after he/she had left the ground. Roughing the Passer – 10 yard penalty and automatic first down, line of scrimmage.

Art. 5 – Running into or roughing the kicker. Defender must play the flag and not the body, leg, or the ball while in possession of the kicker. Any action, such as jumping to block a kick must be executed in such a way that the path of the jumper will not carry him/her into the kicker, touch-off players, or the touch-off zone in the case of a punt. Allowances shall be made if the offensive player moves into the jumpers path in such a way that the jumper couldn’t anticipate and respond to the move after he/she had left the ground. Roughing the Kicker – 10 yard penalty and automatic first down, line of scrimmage.

Section 7 – Illegal Participation

Art. 1 – Prior to a change of possession, or when there is no change of possession, no player of A or K shall go out of bounds and return to the field during the down unless blocked out of bounds by the opponent. If the player is blocked out of bounds by an opponent and returns to the field during the down, he/she shall return at the first opportunity.

Art. 2 – No player shall intentionally go out of bounds during the down and return to the field, intentionally touch the ball, influence the play, or otherwise participate.

Art. 3 – No replaced player, substitute, coach, athletic trainer, or other attendant shall hinder an opponent, touch the ball, influence the play or otherwise participate.

Art. 4 – It is illegal participation (see Rule 3-7-6, p. 23):
   a. When any player, replaced player, substitute, coach, athletic trainer, or other attendant enters and participates during a down.
   b. If an injured player is not replaced for at least one down; unless the halftime or overtime intermission occurs.
   c. To have 7 or more players participating at the snap or free kick. NOTE: If player is making an effort to get off the field, and by doing so they are not impacting the play this is NOT illegal participation (see Rule 3-7-4, p. 23)
   d. To fake a substitution prior to the snap in an effort to deceive an opponent
   e. For a player to be lying on the ground, or to be standing next to the sideline (without shifting or moving in motion after becoming set near the ball) in an effort to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap or free kick.
   f. For a disqualified player to enter the game.

Illegal Participation – 10 yard penalty, loss of down if committed by offensive team, line of Scrimmage.

Section 8 – Illegal Kicking and Batting.

Art. 1 – No player shall intentionally kick the ball other than as a free kick or punt, and no kick should be made into an opponent. Punting into Rusher – 10 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.
Rule 9.8 - Illegal Kicking and Batting.  

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Art. 2 – Any player may bat a pass or a fumble that is in flight, or a low kick in flight which he/she is attempting to block in or behind the neutral zone (free kick – 10-15 yards from the ball, punt – line of scrimmage).

Art. 3 – A ball in player possession shall not be batted forward by a player of the team in possession. Illegal Forward Pass – 5 yard penalty and loss of down, spot foul.

Section 9 – Stealing the Ball.
Art. 1 – A player may not attempt to steal the ball from a runner when the ball is in his/her possession. Stealing the Ball – 10 yard penalty, spot foul.

Section 10 – Tackling.
Art. 1 – It is a foul to tackle a runner in flag football. Examples of tackling are:
   a. Tripping a runner.
   b. Pushing a runner out-of-bounds.
   c. Pushing another player into the runner causing him/her to fall or go out-of-bounds.
   d. Grasping and holding the belt, jersey, or body of a runner.
   e. Bringing a runner to the ground by colliding with the runner or pulling him/her down.
   NOTE: If a defender has established position ahead of the runner the responsibility for avoiding collision lies with the offensive player. If in an effort to avoid the defender the runner falls tackling shall not be called as long as the defender had established position and he/she is deemed to have been making an attempt to pull the flag.

Art. 2 – If the runner is tackled or held by the last defender before or as he/she moves into the clear before the goal line and it is an OBVIOUS attempt by the defender to deny the touchdown, a touchdown shall be awarded on enforcement of the penalty. When determining if the foul should result in a touchdown a line should be established from the runners hips to both sidelines, if no defender was in front of this line at the time of the tackle then a touchdown should be awarded.
   Tackling – 10 yard penalty and automatic first down (or possible TD if last defender), spot foul.

Section 11 – Unfair Acts.
Art. 1 – A player or non-player or person(s) not subject to the rules shall not hinder play or commit an act of interference that has no specific rule coverage.

Art. 2 – No team shall repeatedly commit fouls which halve the distance to the goal line.

Art. 3 – No player shall hide the ball under a jersey.

Art. 4 – Neither team shall commit any act, which in the opinion of the referee, tends to make a travesty of the game.

Art. 5 – Tackling a runner when you are the last defender.
   Unfair Acts – the referee enforces any penalty he/she considers equitable, including the award of a score. Repeated unfair acts may result in a forfeited game.
Section 12 – Unsportsmanlike Conduct.
Art. 1 – If a violation of Rule 1.4 – Player Equipment occurs and the player(s) don’t make the needed corrections after being notified of the violation or if the violation is such that it is designed to give the player an unfair advantage a penalty shall be assessed. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty, line of scrimmage.
Art. 2 – Any act may be deemed unsportsmanlike if it in the opinion of the referee, it engenders ill-will or is degrading to the spirit and/or safety of the game.
Art. 3 – Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct are as follows:
   a. Using insulting, profane, or vulgar language or gestures
   b. Attempting to influence a decision by a game official.
   c. Disrespectfully addressing a game official.
   d. Indicating objections to a game official’s decision.
   e. Refusing to comply with a game officials request.
   f. Using disconcerting acts or sounds prior to the snap that interfere with an opponent's signals.
   g. Any delayed, excessive, or prolonged act by which a player attempts to focus attention on himself/herself.
   h. Failure to start a period on time, or be ready to play on time after a time-out
   i. Coach, substitute or other non-players coming onto the field without authorization from an official.
   j. Being outside of the team box area without authorization by team personnel and failure or refusal to return
   k. Disorderly conduct by crowd or followers of a team who behave in an uncooperative manner when behavior is addressed.
   l. Deceptive touch-off during punts.
   m. Intentionally pulling or removing a flag from a player who doesn’t have the ball.
   n. Spiking the ball, taunting, or baiting an opponent or other similar theatrics.
   o. Unnecessarily rough play by any player.
   p. Hitting, kneeing, kicking towards any player or non-player whether contact was made or Not.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 15 yard penalty, line of scrimmage. These fouls shall always be enforced – mandatory 1 play sit out, and/or possible disqualification.
RULE TEN
ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES

Section 1 – Procedure After a Foul.
Art. 1 – When a foul occurs during a live ball, the referee shall, at the end of the down, notify both captains. He/she shall inform the captain of the offended team regarding the rights of the penalty acceptance or declination and shall indicate to him/her the number of the ensuing down, line-to-gain, and status the ball for each available choice. If the penalty is declined, or if there is a double foul, there is no loss of distance. In the case of a double foul, the captains are not consulted since the penalties offset. The captains choice of options may not be revoked. Decisions involving penalties shall be made before any charged time-out is granted for either team.
Art. 2 – When a foul occurs during a dead ball between downs or prior to a free kick or snap, the officials shall not permit the ball to become alive.
Art. 3 When a live-ball foul by one team is followed by a dead-ball foul by the opponent, the penalties are administered separately and in the order of occurrence.
Art. 4 – When the same team commits a live-ball foul followed by one or more dead-ball fouls, all fouls may be penalized.
Art. 5 – Enforcement of a penalty cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team’s goal line. If the prescribed penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway from the spot of the enforcement to the goal line.
Art. 6 – The following fouls by A include loss of the down:
  a. Guarding the Flag
  b. Illegal Forward Pass and/or Hand Off
  c. Direct Run
  d. Intentional Grounding
  e. Offensive Pass Interference
  f. Illegal Participation by A
Art. 7 – The following fouls by B give A an automatic first down:
  a. Defensive Pass Interference
  b. Tackling
  c. Roughing the Passer or Kicker

Section 2 – Double and Multiple Fouls.
Art. 1 – If both teams commit fouls during the same down, it is a double foul, the penalties offset and will not be enforced and the down shall be replayed.
 NOTE: It is still a double foul even if enforcement distance for the fouls is different. Only exception is that unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are always enforced unless both teams commit the same number in which case the distance would offset.
Art. 2 – If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of team possession, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided:
Rule 10.2 - Double and Multiple Fouls.

a. The foul by the team last gaining possession is not prior to the final change of possession, and
b. The team last gaining possession declines the penalty for its opponent’s foul(s), other than a non-player or unsportsmanlike foul.

In this case, the team that was not last in possession has no penalty options until the team last in possession has made its penalty decision on the fouls prior to the change of possession. After that decision by the team last in possession, the team not last in possession may decline or accept the penalty by the team last in possession or choose which foul to have enforced in the case that the team last in possession committed more than one foul following the change.

Art. 3 – If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of possession and all R fouls are post-scrimmage kicks fouls, then R may retain the ball, provided R declines the penalty for K’s foul(s), other than an unsportsmanlike foul. In this case, the team that was not last in possession has no penalty options until the team last in possession has made its penalty decision. After that decision by the team last in possession, the team not last in possession may decline or accept the penalty by the team last in possession or choose which foul to have enforced in the case that the team last in possession committed more than one foul following the change.

Art. 4 – When two or more live-ball fouls (other than unsportsmanlike fouls) are committed during the same down by the same team (multiple fouls), only one penalty may be enforced. The offended captain may choose which one shall be administered, or the captain may decline all penalties. When a team commits an unsportsmanlike foul during that same down, it is administered from the succeeding spot as established by the acceptance or declination of the penalty for the other foul.

Art. 5 – Enforcement of unsportsmanlike dead-ball fouls:

a. Are administered separately and in order of occurrence. A dead-ball foul is not coupled with a live-ball foul or another dead-ball foul to create a double or multiple foul.

b. If both teams commit unsportsmanlike fouls the distance penalty for an equal number of 15-yard unsportsmanlike fouls will offset. Any remaining penalties will be enforced separately and in order of occurrence.

c. A disqualified player or nonplayer shall be removed.

Art. 6 – A foul during a try is not paired with a dead-ball foul to create a double or multiple foul.

Section 3 – Types of Play.

Art. 1 – A loose-ball is action during:

a. A free kick or punt while the ball is in flight.
b. A legal forward pass while the ball is in flight.
c. A backwards pass, or fumble made by A from in or behind the line of scrimmage.

Art. 2 – A running play is any action not included under 10-3-1.
Art. 3 – The end of the run is where the ball becomes dead in the runner’s possession.

Section 4 – Basic Spots.

Art. 1 – If a foul occurs during a down, the basic spot is determined by the action that occurs during the down. This is the basic spot for penalty enforcement.
Rule 10.4 - Basic Spots.

Art. 2 – The basic spot for a foul committed when the ball is dead is the succeeding spot.
NOTE: After a touchdown if a dead-ball foul occurs before the try the enforcement would be at the spot of the next kick off.

Art. 3 – The basic spot is the previous spot (line of scrimmage) for a foul, which occurs simultaneously with the snap or free kick.

Art. 4 – The basic spot for fouls while a legal forward pass is in flight is the previous spot.
NOTE: Pass interference fouls are an exception to this rule and should enforced at the spot of the foul.

Art. 5 – The basic spot for fouls while a free kick or punt is in flight before being touched by a player is the previous spot.

Art. 6 – The basic spot is the spot where the related run ends for a foul which occurs during a running play as defined in 10-3-2. The following are exceptions to this rule:
a. If the foul is committed by A behind where the run ends. In this case the basic spot shall be the spot where the foul occurred.
b. Fouls against the passer or kicker are enforced at the previous spot (line of scrimmage).
c. Fouls by team B during a running play that ends at the goal line, or in the end zone are penalized on the succeeding kick off. EXAMPLE: tackling the runner into or on the goal line.

Art. 7 – The basic spot is the succeeding spot:
a. For an unsportsmanlike foul.
b. For a dead-ball foul.
c. For a nonplayer foul
d. When the final result is a touchback.

Section 5 – Special Enforcement Rules.

Art. 1 – The position of the ball in relation to the line-to-gain is determined after all penalty enforcements are made concerning fouls that occurred during the previous live ball play.

Art. 2 – Pass interference by B in the endzone results in the ball being placed on the one-yard line, first down, Team A’s ball.

Art. 3 – If A throws an illegal forward pass from its end zone or commits any other foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from on or behind its goal line, it is a safety.

Art. 4 – After spotting the ball, the referee shall announce the number of the down and the approximate yardage to the line-to-gain, and then give an audible and visual ready-for-play signal.

NOTE: IF ANY RULE, OR RULE INTERPRETATION IS NOT CLEARLY STATED OR EXPLAINED IN THIS BOOK, YOU MAY REFER TO THE CURRENT NFHS FOOTBALL RULES BOOK or 7TH EDITION SDA-SARC FLAG FOOTBALL RULE BOOK.
Section 1 – Basic Guidelines.
Art. 1 – FUNDAMENTALS: Quality officiating is important for maintaining safe and fair play. However, coaches and players must keep in mind the spirit of the game as well as endeavor to maintain safe and fair game play regardless of the official’s role. Officials are imperfect and at times will make mistakes all participants should keep this in mind, as it is unrealistic to expect perfection. Quality officiating is an art which only personal improvement will develop. The following information will help officials develop a basic knowledge and awareness, but continual study and practice is required for continued improvement of officiating skill.

Art. 2 – NFHS OFFICIALS CODE OF ETHICS (https://www.nfhs.org/nfhs-for-you/officials/officials-code-of-ethics/)

a. Officials shall master both the rules of the game and the mechanics necessary to enforce the rules, shall exercise authority in an impartial, firm and controlled manner.

b. Officials shall work with each other and the league and officials association in a constructive and cooperative manner.

c. Officials shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interaction with student-athletes, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, colleagues, and the public.

d. Officials shall prepare themselves both physically and mentally, shall dress neatly appropriately, and shall comport themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.

e. Officials shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all contractual Obligations.

f. Officials shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that student-athletes, coaches, and the public hold for the profession.

g. Officials shall, while enforcing rules of play, remain aware of the inherent risk of injury that competition causes to student-athletes. Where appropriate, they shall inform event management of conditions or situations that appear unreasonably hazardous.

h. Officials shall take reasonable steps to educate themselves in the recognition of emergency conditions that might arise during completion.

i. Officials shall maintain an ethical approach while participating in forums, chat rooms, and all forms of social media.

Art. 3 – SDA-SARC BASICS:

a. Know Your Rules: This will give you the confidence to make positive decisions.

b. Know Your Position and Role: Being in the correct spot on the field and knowing what to watch for will help you make the best possible decisions between you and your colleagues.

c. Know Your Signals: Communication is crucial and knowing your signals will help you to communicate with fellow officials, players, coaches, and spectators in an effective way. This also will help instill confidence in everyone who watches you officiate.
Appendix A.1 - Basic Guidelines.

SDA – SARC Flag Football Rules (8th ed.)

Art. 4 – SDA-SARC DON’TS:
   a. DON’T be too quick to blow the whistle when you THINK a flag has been pulled. An early whistle can really negatively impact a team, and blowing it a few seconds late will hurt no one.
   b. DON’T fraternize with players, before, during, or after the game or during intermissions even if they are your friends. They’ll respect your role more and the spectators will regard the whole situation in a better light if you are professional in your interactions.
   c. DON’T be overbearing. The role of the officials is to HELP the players to have a better game by keeping a team from taking advantage of the other. BE COURTEOUS, but firm, in your actions.
   d. DON’T forget the SPIRIT of officiating. Sportsmanship, fair play, and the higher human values are what you are there to maintain.
   e. DON’T be a “BY THE BOOK” official. It is important to know the rules and enforce them, but action that occurs that has no bearing on the play and is not unsportsmanlike or endangering to the safety of a player can be ignored.
   f. DON’T be too easily offended by criticism and try to have thick skin. However, it is your responsibility to keep critical comments or actions to a minimum.

Art. 5 – EQUIPMENT NEEDED:
   a. A 16”x16” yellow flag with a fairly heavy-weight sewn into the corner (so that you can throw it on the SPOT-OF-THE-FOUL)
   b. A cap to mark other spots on the field (don’t use your penalty flag as a marker as it is confusing to everyone but you)
   c. A whistle
   d. A timing device to keep game and play clock
   e. A striped shirt
   f. Black pants or shorts
   g. A coin for the toss
   h. A score-card and pen/pencil
   i. Cleats or closed toe athletic shoes so that you can move effectively and safely with the play.

Art. 6 – PREVENTATIVE OFFICIATING: “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is a saying that has no better application than football. ANYTIME a foul can be avoided by warning or by mentioning to a player that he/she is inadvertently committing or about to commit an infraction, it should be done. FOR EXAMPLE: On a kickoff, if the receivers don’t have two players within five (5) yards of the restraining line, the umpire should not give his ready signal until he/she has had them move up into the correct area. Preventive officiating is a courtesy extended by the officials to the teams, not an obligation. Therefore, failure to officiate in this manner does not justify a complaint by the team(s), but it keeps a game as free of unnecessary delays and penalties as possible.
Section 2 – Mechanics and Responsibilities.

Art. 1 – Definition: “Mechanics” refer to the movements of officials in relation to each other and the play. To be where you are supposed to begins by starting from the right spot and covering your area of primary responsibility. COVER YOUR OWN AREA. Rarely should you make a call in someone else’s area of coverage; they are in better position than you if they are following good mechanics. If they are not, remind them (but not in front of the players, officials must “stick” together). Every official has three basic responsibilities:

a. Position
b. Primary Observation
c. Secondary Movement Coverage
d. Spotting

Art. 2 – Three Person Officiating.

a. REFEREE: (Position) behind the offense on the opposite side of the field as the linesman. Should be in position to be able to see the full backfield. (Primary Observation) Watch the offense for illegal procedure, illegal motion and contact in the backfield. (Secondary Coverage) on pass plays, protect the passer and observe blocking in the backfield; on running plays, cover sideline on your side of the field and move up the field behind all other officials. (Spotting) Place the ball near the center of the field and signal ready for play.

b. UMPIRE: (Position) on the side of the field on the opposite side of the field as the Linesman and the same side as the Referee. Should be about 5-10 yards down the field from the line of scrimmage on the defensive side of the ball. Must move with the ball downfield. (Primary Observation) Watch for contact on the line (i.e. checking wide receivers) and the ball coming out of the backfield. (Secondary Coverage) On pass plays must cover receivers downfield. Attempt to move ahead of the play. (Spotting) Responsible for determining the downfield spot. Establishes the spot on the side of the field opposite the Linesman while the Referee places the ball ready for play.

c. LINESMAN: (Position) On the line-of-scrimmage near the sideline, opposite to the downs marker. (Primary Observation) False Starts and Illegal Formation (not enough players on the line) for the offense. Encroachment of the defense. (Secondary Coverage) On pass plays watch to be sure all forward passes are made from behind the line of scrimmage. Watch for option on any running plays. Let the play move past and then follow it up the field covering the sideline and watching action around the play. (Spotting) Responsible for determining the sideline spot opposite the Referee and Umpire. Establishes the spot on the side of the field opposite the Umpire while the Referee places the ball ready for play.
Art. 3 – Two Person Officiating.
  a. REFEREE: (Position) On the line of scrimmage about half way from the sideline and opposite the downs marker. Should be in position to be able to see the full backfield and play along the line of scrimmage. (Primary Observation) False Starts, Illegal Formation (not enough players on the line), and Illegal Motion/Procedure for the offense. Encroachment of the defense. (Secondary Coverage) on pass plays, protect the passer and observe blocking in the backfield; on running plays, cover sideline on your side of the field and move up the field behind the play. Should also watch for the Linesman (3 Man) Secondary Coverage responsibilities. (Spotting) Responsible for determining the backfield spot. Establishes the sideline spot on the side opposite the Umpire. Places the ball near the center of the field and signal ready for play in coordination with the Umpire.
  b. UMPIRE: (Position) on the side of the field on the opposite side of the field as the Referee. Should be about 5-10 yards down the field from the line of scrimmage on the defensive side of the ball. Must move with the ball downfield. (Primary Observation) Watch for contact on the line (i.e. checking wide receivers) and the ball coming out of the backfield. (Secondary Coverage) On pass plays must cover receivers downfield. Attempt to move ahead of the play. (Spotting) Responsible for determining the downfield spot. Establishes the sideline spot on the side of the field opposite the Referee. Assists with placing the ball ready for play if the Referee is holding the spot.

Art. 4 – GAME RESPONSIBILITIES:
  a. PRE-GAME – (Referee) Check the field for safety and correct markings. Administer the coin toss, give the players and/or coaches an opportunity to ask questions concerning rules and enforcements. Hold a conference with the other officials and the game administrator to be sure of how you will work together. (Umpire) Check player equipment and notify players and coaches of violations so that they can be corrected before kickoff. This is good preventive officiating. (Linesman) Get the downs marker ready and meet with the people running it. Work out a fast and efficient method of moving them without losing the spot.
  b. IN-GAME – (Referee) Responsible for keeping the play clock and scorecard for timeouts and game score. Meets with the captains and administers penalty enforcement. Communicates with both sidelines. (Umpire) Responsible for keeping the game clock. Responsible for relaying communication to their sideline area. (Linesman) Responsible for checking the down and line-to-gain. Responsible for relaying communication to their sideline area.
  c. POST-GAME – (Referee) Responsible for giving final result to game administrator. Communicates a game report and any ejections with assignor and/or league, game, or tournament administrator.
Section 3 - Mechanics Diagrams

3 Person Officiating Positions

2 Person Officiating Positions
### APPENDIX B
#### SUMMARY OF PENALTIES.

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#### Loss of 5 Yards – Loss of down from line of scrimmage

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#### Loss of 10 Yards – Replay the down from line of scrimmage

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<td>20. Guarding the flag</td>
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#### Loss of 10 Yards – Replay the down from line of scrimmage

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<td>3.7.4 or 9.6</td>
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<tr>
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#### Loss of 10 Yards – Replay the down from line of scrimmage

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### Appendix B - Summary of Penalties

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<td><strong>Loss of 10 Yards – Loss of down from point of infraction (spot)</strong></td>
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<td>32. Running over the defender</td>
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<td>9.1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>34. Stealing the ball from runner (beyond line of scrimmage)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Loss of 10 Yards – Loss of down from line of scrimmage</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>35. Offensive pass interference</td>
<td>7.5.5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Loss of 10 Yards – Automatic first down from point of infraction (spot)</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>9.5.1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Loss of 10 Yards – Automatic first down from line of scrimmage</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.5.2,3,5; 9.5; 9.8.1</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix C - Official Football Signals

OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS

1. Ball ready for play
   "Untimed down"

2. Start clock

3. Time-out
   Discretionary or injury time-out
   (followed by tapping hands on chest)

4. TV/radio time-out

5. Touchdown, field goal, point(s) after touchdown

6. Safety

7. Dead ball foul, touchback
   (move side to side)

8. First down

9. Loss of down

10. Incomplete forward pass
    Penalty declined
    No play, no score
    Toss option deferred

11. Legal touching of forward pass or scrimmage kick

12. Inadvertent whistle

13. Disregard flag

14. End of period

15. Sideline warning

16. First touching
    Illegal touching

17. Encroachment

18. False start
    Illegal formation

19. Illegal shift
    (2 hands)
    Illegal motion (1 hand)

20. Delay of game

21. Substitution infraction

PlayPics courtesy of Referee magazine.
Appendix C - Official Football Signals

SDA – SARC Flag Football Rules (8th ed.)

OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS

23 Failure to wear required equipment
24 Illegal helmet contact
25 Illegal horse-collar tackle
27 Unsportsmanlike conduct Noncontact foul
28 Illegal participation

29 Sideline interference (Face press box)
30 Running into or Roughing kicker or holder
31 Illegal batting/kicking (Followed by pointing toward tee for kicking)
32 Invalid fair catch Illegal fair catch signal
33 Forward pass interference Kick catching interference

34 Roughing passer
35 Illegal pass/forward handing (Face press box)
36 Intentional grounding
37 Ineligible downfield on pass
38 Personal foul

39 Clipping
40 Blocking below waist Illegal block
41 Chop block
42 Holding/obstruction Illegal use of hands/arms
43 Illegal block in the back

44 Helping runner Interlocked blocking
45 Grasping face mask or helmet opening
46 Tripping
47 Disqualification

PlayPic® PlayPics courtesy of Referee magazine. Note: Signal numbers 17 and 26 is for future expansion.
### APPENDIX D
SDA-SARC SCORECARD.

#### Summary of Penalties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Five (5) Yards</th>
<th>Ten (10) Yards</th>
<th>Fifteen (15) Yards (Always enforced)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extra player (no effect on game, line of scrimmage)</td>
<td>Illegal participation (loss of down if by offensive team)</td>
<td>Unsportsmanlike Conduct: illegal equipment, swearing, hitting, kneeling, deceptive touch-off, sleeper plays, unnecessary roughness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guarding the flag (loss of down, spot foul)</td>
<td>Punting into rusher (line of scrimmage)</td>
<td>Defense &amp; Offensive Holding (spot foul unless behind line)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal forward pass or handoff (loss of down, spot foul)</td>
<td>Kicking team interfering with receiver trying to catch ball</td>
<td>Stripping the ball (Spot foul)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No handoff/QB direct run (loss of down, line of scrimmage)</td>
<td>Illegal block (spot foul, unless behind line of scrimmage)</td>
<td>Tackling (Automatic first down- Possible TD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch off violation/Blocking punt (line of scrimmage)</td>
<td>“Checking” receivers on line of scrimmage (line of scrim)</td>
<td>Running over defender (Spot foul)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False Start/Off sides (Blown dead before snap)</td>
<td>Defensive &amp; Offensive holding (spot foul unless behind line)</td>
<td>Personal fouls: late hit, hands to the head or neck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or 4 point stance on line of scrimmage (line of scrimmage)</td>
<td>Less than 3 players on line of scrimmage-Illegal formation</td>
<td>Roughing passer/kicker (Automatic 1st down, line of scrim)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 players on line of scrimmage-Illegal formation</td>
<td>Stripping the ball (Spot foul)</td>
<td>Offensive pass interference (line of scrim, loss of down)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Loss of down Penalties


#### Automatic First Down Penalties

1. Defensive Pass interference. 2. Tackling. 3. Roughing QB
APPENDIX E
SDA-SARC CHEAT SHEET.

Basics
● **Field** – 100x40 yards,
  ○ 4 – 20 yard four down line-to-gain zones. Zones are marked with lines and marker cones
  ○ 2 – 10 yard end zones
● **Timing** – 2 – 20 minute halves. Running clock except for scoring plays and the last two minutes of both halves
  ○ 2 minute warning – both teams are notified that it is the two minute warning and given a 1 minute time out. When play resumes the clock starts on the snap and only stops for the following reasons:
    ■ Incomplete pass
    ■ Runner steps out of bounds
    ■ First down, clock stops until the ball is spotted by the official.
    ■ Time Out
  ○ Time Outs – each team gets 2 - 1 minute time outs per half
  ○ 30 second play clock is used
● **Players** – two teams of 6 players each
● **Scoring** – touchdowns are worth 6 pts and conversions are either worth 1pt (ball is played from the 3 yd line) or 2pts (ball is played from the 10 yd line)
● **Equipment**
  ○ No pockets allowed on pants or shorts.
  ○ Footballs can be rubber, synthetic, or leather. Official size for boys varsity and Youth size for Girls and Jr High
  ○ Downs Marker – spots the line of scrimmage and signals the down. Switch sidelines at half time
  ○ Flags – all teams should be using Flag-A–Tag Sonic flag football belts or something similar. Flag loops should be pointing away from the hips and extra belt length should be tucked in. Flags should contrast in color to the pant/shorts worn.
  ○ Jerseys - should be tucked into the pants/short or be above belt length. Home and away teams should wear contrasting colors (white/dark is not necessary)

Game Play
● **Downs and Line-to-Gain** - The offensive team has 4 downs in which to move the ball into the next 20-yard zone.
● **Offsides and False Starts** are immediately whistled dead. The penalties are automatic.
● **Players set on the line** - There must be 3 players set within 1 yard of the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball. Players in motion are considered backfield players. Only one player may be in motion at the snap.
  ○ After the ball is declared ready-for-play, ALL players must be within 10 yards of the ball. This may be in the huddle or on the line of scrimmage. Players may shift my shift all the way to the side line if desired. All players must be set for one second after a shift.
● **Spot** - The ball is spotted where the hips are when the flag is pulled, not the ball. If a player fumbles the ball, the ball shall be marked at the player’s hips. A player cannot gain yards by fumbling the ball forward.
- **Muffs and Fumbles** - A ball that is muffed or fumbled and hits the ground will be dead and spotted at the foremost point of the players' hips when the ball was muffed or fumbled. A snapped ball that hits the ground will be spotted at the line of scrimmage and the down is lost.
- **Snap** - The snap must be to a backfield player.
  - The snapper may not receive a hand-off unless he/she has turned 180 degrees from the line of scrimmage.
- **NO Direct Run** - At least one ball exchange must occur before the ball can be run across the line of scrimmage.
- **Backwards Pass** - Any player may make a backward pass to any other player. A backward pass that strikes the ground is dead at the spot where it lands.
- **Illegal forward passes** include: intentional grounding, pass thrown from beyond the line, and more than one forward pass. (Spiking the ball in the last two minutes is allowed to conserve time)
- **Ball carrier rules**
  - The ball carrier must make an attempt to go around a defender who has established position.
  - Diving and hurdling by the ball carrier are not legal maneuvers. Spinning and jumping are not hurdling and are considered legal maneuvers.
- **Guarding the flag** - the ball carrier’s arms or hands go below the waist and **ANY** contact is made between the defender and the ball carrier
  - the hand or arm is used to push away the defender
  - the ball is used to hold a defender’s hand away
  - the flags are held or moved by the ball carrier
  - the flag belts are worn so that the flags do not point outward from the waist
- **Blocking** - Hands and arms extended—the arms may be used to keep the rusher in front of them; if the arms are brought in to absorb contact, they cannot go back out in a shoving motion.
  - A blocker may not shove a defender straight backwards.
  - Elbows cannot be used to block and cannot move faster than the shoulder.
  - You can’t leave your feet when you block.
  - All contact must occur between the shoulders and the waist
  - Clipping is blocking a player from behind. It is not clipping when an opponent intentionally turns his back to avoid the block. Clipping must be a clear shot at the player from behind.
  - No excessive force to be used in blocking and no blocking of a defenseless player
- **Defending**
  - No checking or interfering with offensive players as they leave the line of scrimmage.
  - No player shall interfere with an opponent’s opportunity to reach or catch a forward pass.
  - Defensive players may push or pull the blocker to the side (as long as contact is not excessive or prolonged) using only the hands. No bull rushing or running through offensive blockers is allowed.
  - Defensive rushers may not push or pull the blocker to the ground
  - Defensive rushers may not use shoulders, forearms or elbows to make contact with a blocker and all contact must occur between the shoulders and the waist.
  - No 3 or 4-point stances on the line of scrimmage
  - A rusher cannot touch the ball or any part of the quarterback’s arm while attempting a forward pass. The ball can be touched only after it has left the hand of the passer.
  - A defender may not strip the ball from a ball carrier.
Appendix E - SDA-SARC Cheat Sheet

- **Tackling** should be called any time the runner’s progress is impeded causing him/her to break stride or lose momentum. The following are examples of tackling: Tripping a runner, pushing a runner out-of-bounds, pushing another player into the runner, and knocking or pulling him/her to the ground.
- A runner who has broken into the clear and is tackled from behind in an OBVIOUS attempt to keep the player from scoring a touchdown, shall be awarded a touchdown. Allowance shall be made for a legitimate attempt to play the flag that accidentally results in a tackle; only a penalty for tackling shall be enforced in such cases.

- **Kickoffs** - The start of each half will begin with a kick-off from the 30-yard line. There will also be a kick-off following the PAT.
  - Following a safety, a free kick will occur from the 20-yard line. This can be a place kick or a punt.
  - The receiving team must have 2 players between 10-15 yards of the kicking line.
  - A kick-off that goes out-of-bounds can be assessed a 5-yard penalty and re-kicked or in tournament play (for timing reasons) the receiving team can choose to accept the ball at the 30-yard line or the spot where the ball went out of bounds.
  - A ball that is muffed is considered a dead ball at the point it was dropped. The receiving team may pick up and advance a kicked ball on the ground provided it hasn’t contacted a player. The kicking team can only down the ball by touching it and may not advance it.

- **Scrimmage kicks (punts and field goals)** - Team A must declare that they are going to kick prior to any kick plays.
  - Kicker, or holder and kicker, stands behind the snapper and directly receives snap and kicks the ball immediately.
  - All other team A players must remain on the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.
  - Team B cannot cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked or a fake kick is executed.
  - A fake kick is executed by any team A member crossing the line of scrimmage prior to the kick, or by the kicker and/or holder making any non-kicking related move.
  - If a fake is initiated team A may not kick and team B may run past the line of scrimmage to defend the ball.

- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** - Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct include: Swearing, using sounds that interfere with quarterback’s signals, wearing illegal equipment, intentionally kicking or striking an opponent, actions by substitutes to confuse the defense, disorderly crowd behaving in an uncooperative manner, deceptive touch off during a punt, intentionally pulled a flag from a player that does not have the ball, spiking the ball or taunting following a touchdown.
APPENDIX F
RULE ADAPTATIONS AND POINTS OF EMPHASIS.

Section 1 – Possible Rule Adaptations.
NOTE: Below is a list of some possible rule adaptations that individual leagues, conferences, or tournaments may look to institute as supplement or replacements to the SDA-SARC rule book. It is expected that if any of the below listed adaptations are going to be used that this be well communicated with all involved teams before competition begins.

Art. 1 – No kick-off, put the ball on the 20-yard line and start play.

Art. 2 - Field Goal Posts - if field goal posts are present teams may, by mutual agreement of both teams, attempt field goals and try for point conversions using scrimmage kick rules outlined in Rule 6, Section 2, p. 29

Art. 3 – 7 player flagball, played with standard SARC rules with the lone exception that direct run by the player receiving the snap is allowed.

Art. 4 – Overtime Procedures:
   a. In case of a tie at the end of regulation there will be a coin flip to start the overtime Period.
   b. The coin flip winner has the option of starting on offense or defense.
   c. Place the ball ready for play on the 20-yard line. Team A has 4 plays to score a touchdown and attempt to convert a try. If the ball is intercepted Team A loses possession.
   d. Place the ball ready for play on the 20-yard line. Team B now has 4 plays to score a touchdown and attempt to convert a try. If the ball is intercepted Team B loses possession.
   e. At the conclusion of c. and d. if one team is ahead in points scored they will be declared the winners of the game. If the score remains tied procedures c. and d. will be repeated until a winner can be declared. If after two unsuccessful attempts to break the tie both teams will be required to go for a 2-pt. conversion on their next try attempt(s).

Art. 5 – NCC Yellow Card – Red Card Policy: The Northern California Conference has established a yellow and red card policy for flag football. This policy relates to any unsportsmanlike conduct and/or excessive contact. A player CAN be given any level of card, 1 yellow, 2 yellow, 1 red, for a single play. If a yellow/red card is given, a 15 yard penalty will be assessed and the offending player(s) will be required to sit out at least 1 play. Coaches and sidelines can be given yellow/red cards as well.
   a. 1st Yellow- 15 yard penalty, 1 play sit out
   b. 2nd Yellow- 15 yard penalty, 1 play sit out
   c. 3rd Yellow = 1 red card.
   d. 1 red card = disqualification from the current game and suspension from the next game, or remainder of a tournament if the action occurs during tournament play.
Appendix F - Rule Adaptations & Points of Emphasis

Art. 6 – **Mercy Rule**: If a team is trailing by 17 or more points at or after the 2 minute warning in the second half the game will be ended. ALTERNATE OPTION: Running clock in the last two minutes instead of stop clock.

Art. 7 – **Tournament Timing**:
   a. 20+2 (Friday and Sunday) – Both halves of the game the clock will run continuous for 20 minutes except for timeouts and injury or safety concerns. Injury and safety stoppages are at the official’s discretion. At the conclusion of 20 minutes both teams will be notified that play has entered the last two minutes of the half. Standard stop clock procedures will apply to the last two minutes of each half.
   b. 18+2 (Saturday night) – Running time is shortened to 18 minutes in each half to help facilitate fitting in games after sundown. Stop clock rules in the last two minutes will stay the same.
   c. Kickoffs that go out of bounds will be automatically placed at the 30-yard line, or at the spot where the ball went out of bounds.


Section 2 – Points of Emphasis.

NOTE: Below is an overview of some specific areas that all participants – administrators, coaches, officials, players, and parents should be aware of.

Art. 1 – **Risk Minimization**:
   a. Concussions – schools should be aware of proper concussion protocol. A concussion management plan should be in place at all levels of play. This should include a return to play policy that prevents athletes from returning prematurely before they have been cleared by a trained medical professional. Coaches and game officials need to become familiar with the signs and symptoms of concussed athletes so that appropriate steps can be taken to safeguard the health and safety of participants. It is recommended that coaches be trained yearly on concussions and players and parents sign a concussion symptoms awareness form before participation.
   b. Sudden Cardiac Arrest – schools should have in place an emergency action plan to deal with sudden cardiac arrest. This action plan should include an easily accessible AED and trained personnel on site able to administer the AED and perform CPR. Coaches and game officials need to be aware of the signs and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest so that appropriate steps can be taken to safeguard the health and safety of participants. “If in doubt, sit them out” applies here and if coaches are recognizing symptoms they should require athletes to be cleared by a trained medical professional before returning to play. It is recommended that all coaches have current CPR and AED certification in place. It is also recommended that players and parents sign a sudden cardiac arrest awareness form before participation.
c. Heat Illness – schools should have in place an emergency action plan to deal with heat illness. This should include strategies for rapid cooling of at-risk athletes and guidelines for practice/game modification when needed. Coaches need to remain open and flexible to change practice and game plans if environmental conditions are such that their players are at risk for heat illness. The most widely referenced tool for heat illness risk is Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT). Particular attention should be paid to this area during pre-season training where students may not be used to work loads and the temperatures can be higher.

Art. 2 – Blocking Contact: When proper blocking techniques are taught by coaches and executed by players, risks of injury are minimized. Excessive contact and improper techniques put athletes at significant risk of injury. This is of particular concern in flag football where there is an absence of padding and protection for the athletes. Particular care should be taken to use the minimal amount of contact necessary to successfully execute the block. Awareness of and caution towards defenseless players on kickoffs and crack backs should be taught, practiced, and enforced.

Art. 3 – The Spirit of Sports: At all times coaches, athletes, officials, and spectators should uphold the highest ideals of sports. Character education and the growth of the student-athlete as a whole person should far outweigh the importance of the competition. Schools should take particular care to emphasize this in preseason coach, athlete, and parent meetings. Corrective steps should be taken to address areas of concern that detract from the spirit of the game.
APPENDIX G
HEALTH GUIDELINES.

Administrators, coaches and officials are encouraged to review the health guidelines and resources available at [http://www.nfhs.org/resources/sports-medicine/](http://www.nfhs.org/resources/sports-medicine/)

Additional sports medicine training is provided for those involved in the game at [https://nfhslearn.com/](https://nfhslearn.com/)

Editorial Changes:

- Format - committee members worked to align the format of the rule book to the 2017 NFHS Football rule book. The rationale is that it will now be easier to find what you are looking for due to alphabetical order of the sections and clear page headers similar to the 6th edition. This is also of benefit to officials who are new to the game of flag football but familiar with the tackle football rule book.
- Language changes - the rule book was updated to be more gender inclusive by making changes like “his” to “his/her”. Also, where possible the wording of the rule book was matched with the NFHS football rule book or 7th edition language for flag football specific rules.
- Rule Enforcement - penalties and their enforcement are now listed in the text where violations are defined. This makes for easier reference of rules and associated penalties instead of having to look in two separate places. An appendix with a summary of penalties and references to rule and page number is included in addition to the in text references.

Rule 1 - Field and Equipment

- Table 1.1 - field goal posts were removed from the diagram and field description in Section 2. A possible rule adaptation where field goal posts are used is included in Appendix F.
- Section 2, Article 4 - A team box was added for player safety and separation from parents and fans.
- Section 2, Article 5 - A 2 foot space from the sideline was added to help officials better see the sideline and move safely down the sideline without interference.
- Section 2, Article 6 - Restrictions on no team member passing the 20 yard line on either side of the field was added. Helps officials better see the sideline and end zone in scoring situations.
- Section 3, Article 2 - The 15 yard chain was eliminated with the line to gain being determined by 4 - 20 yard zones.
- Section 4, Article 1 - Allowance for soft pliable football equipment was allowed. This could include football pants with soft foam inserts in the thighs, hips, etc… and it could also include soft pliable headbands or helmets. Regular tackle football helmets and padding are still not allowed. This change clarifies the rule in regards to new equipment updates that can help improve player safety without putting others at risk.

Rule 2 - Definition of Playing Terms

- Formatting changes are most evident in this section. 7th edition listed definitions by category whereas the 8th edition will list definitions alphabetically. Also, the 8th edition has centralized all definitions into one section while maintaining the specific references in other rule areas. The hope was this would make for easier reference.
Appendix H - 8th Ed. Rule Modifications.

- Section 3 - Previous SDA-SARC editions have only addressed blocking under Rule 9. Rule 9 in the 8th edition will primarily address illegal blocks and enforcement whereas Rule 2 will define legal blocking.
  - Blocking was changed to hands extended blocking only and elbow blocking was eliminated for safety reasons. Specific focus shall be placed on preventing holding by officials.
- Section 4 - Moved the definition of a Catch to Rule 2. In 7th edition this was covered in Rule 7 Article 5.
- Section 5 - added Article 2 which includes a definition of blocking in the back and discusses enforcement.
- Section 6 - added a definition of a direct run
- Section 7 - added a definition of down and loss of down
- Section 8 - added a definition of encroachment/offsides
- Section 9 - added a definition of fighting
- Section 11 - added a definition of force
- Section 12 - added a definition of formation
- Section 13 - added articles 3, 4, and 5.
- Section 14 - added articles 2 and 3
- Section 15 - added article 2 to definition of “guarding the flag”. Article 2 addresses the fact that contact must occur for guarding the flag to be called. This was previously mentioned in Rule 9 but it made sense to mention it here as well when people are looking for the definition of what is guarding the flag.
- Section 16 - added articles 2 and 3 to definition of “Handing”
- Section 17 - added a definition of holding
- Section 18 - added a definition of a huddle
- Section 19 - added article 2 to definition of hurdling. This article was included elsewhere in the rule book previously but makes sense to combine it here with the definition of hurling for easy reference.
- Section 20 - added a definition of an interception
- Section 21 - added articles 1 and 2 which define the act of kicking and when a kick ends.
- Section 23 - added definitions of lines.
- Section 24 - added a definition for motion.
- Section 25 - added article 2 by majority vote of committee, Art. 2 - A muffed ball that contacts the ground is considered a dead ball and may not be advanced by the offense or defense. Spot is determined by the foremost portion of the returner's hips when the ball is muffed. The rationale is that this will reduce safety issues related ball on the ground for kick plays and snaps.
- Section 26 - added a definition of neutral zone
- Section 27 - added a definition of out of bounds
Appendix H - 8th Ed. Rule Modifications.  

- Section 28 - added a definition of participation.
- Section 30 - added article 2 which defines player designations. In the 7th ed these designations were included in Rule 1.4.2 and defined as left end, center, right end, left back, right back, and quarterback. 8th ed defines positions simply as A1 offense, B1 defense, K1 kicking, and R1 return team. Also, added article 5-14 all of which were not included in the 7th ed.
- Section 31 - added a definition on possession.
- Section 32 - added a definition of power running
- Section 33 - added a definition of ready for play
- Section 34 - added a definition of scrimmage
- Section 35 - added a definition of shift
- Section 37 - added articles 1-4 which included definitions for spots not included in the 7th ed.
- Section 40 - added article 2, definition of touching by a game official
- Section 41 - added a definition of unsportsmanlike conduct
- Section 42 - added a definition of unnecessary roughness

Rule 3 - Periods, Time Factors and Substitutions
- Section 1 - added articles 4 and 5
- Section 2 - eliminated the defer option. Teams simply have the choice between kick/receive, or the direction for first half and then it switches for second half. Most tournaments are already doing this.
- Section 5, article 2 - added when a charged timeout occurs
- Section 5, Article 3 - changed time outs from 90 seconds in the 7th ed to 60 seconds in the 8th ed
- Section 5, Article 5 - added clarification on what happens if a team is out of timeouts in a half. Including a 30 second runoff rule if certain situations occur in the last two minutes. 30 second runoff rule discourages tactics to unfairly preserve time after all timeouts have been used.
- Section 5, Article 6 and 7 - added a few situations where officials may issue an officials timeout. This includes situations of concussion and/or blood.
- Section 5, Article 8 - added timeouts for discussion with referees for the possible misinterpretation or misapplication of a rule.
- Section 6, Article 3 - added requirement for game management to make sure field is cleared and ready for play at the start of each half.

Rule 4 - Ball in Play, Dead Ball, and Out of Bounds
- Section 1 - added articles 4 and 5, ball remaining live until the down ends and dead ball status if a play is made before the ready for play signal
- Section 2 - added article 3, inadvertent whistles

- Section 3 - added article 6, out of bounds beyond the goal line.

Rule 5 - Series of Downs, Possession, and Line-to-Gain
- Section 3 - the 15 yard chain for first down in 7th ed. was changed to 20 yard line to gain zone for first downs.

Rule 6 - Kicking the Ball
- Section 2 - Scrimmage kick rules were changed to a declared kick and the touch off zone was eliminated.
- Section 3, Article 2 - a muffed kick that contacts the ground was changed to a dead ball instead of a live ball.
- Section 4 - Section was added covering touchback and safety rules

Rule 7 - Snapping, Handing, and Passing the Ball
- Section 4, Article 5 - a snapped ball that contacts the ground was changed to a dead ball.
- Section 5, Article 2, Item f. - an exception was added to allow the ball to be spiked to the ground immediately after receiving the snap in an effort to conserve time in the last two minutes of each half.
- Section 5, Article 3 - added clarification on illegal forward pass penalty enforcement.

Rule 8 - Scoring, Safety, and Touchback
- Section 1 - Separated rules related to forfeits from the scoring table (touchdown, extra points, etc…) with an added article in Section 1
- Section 2 - Added articles 2 and 3 related to fouls occurring during touchdown scoring plays and the protocol for enforcement.
- Section 3 - Added articles 5 and 6. Article 5 discusses what happens when a foul occurs during an unsuccessful try attempt. Article 6 discusses what happens when a double foul occurs.
- Section 5 - added article 1 which discusses responsibility for forcing the ball out of play.
- Section 5 - combined articles 1 and 2 from 7th edition into article 2 for the 8th edition.
- Section 5 - added Article 5 which discusses placement of the ball after a touchback.

Rule 9 - Conduct of Players and Others
- Section 3 - added article 1 which covers offensive teammates helping the runner.
- Section 7 - added a section on illegal participation which was not included in the 7th edition.
Appendix H - 8th Ed. Rule Modifications.  

SDA – SARC Flag Football Rules (8th ed.)

- Section 8 - added a section on illegal kicking and batte which was previously included in unsportsmanlike conduct section in 7th edition.

Rule 10 - Enforcement of Penalties

- This rule was included in the 7th edition but the content was blank. The contents of this section match up with what was listed in the 6th edition and the NFHS rule book.

Rule Changes for Future Consideration

Power Running

- The following rule change was proposed but the committee determined after reviewing member feedback that more discussion was needed before making this change. For future editions the committee recommends; 1) Analyze and discuss the need for a change in this area. Are injuries occurring in this area, what are other leagues doing with this, is this rule consistent with the rest of our rule book? 2) Develop an improved definition of what a "power run" is. The current proposal was ambiguous and not clear enough for officials to enforce and players and coaches to understand. 3) Utilize more discussion with schools that utilize this strategy to determine solutions to improve safety while not drastically changing the game.

  - PROPOSED CHANGE: No run is allowed up the middle if there are any offensive players within 5 yards of the ball at the snap. The middle is defined as an area within 5 yards of the ball along the line of scrimmage at the snap. PENALTY: Illegal Run (similar to direct run rule in 7th ed.) 5 yard penalty from line of scrimmage and loss of down.

  - RATIONALE FOR THE CHANGE: PowerT/I formations and situations near the goal line or first down lines can create safety concerns and officiating challenges. Teams that get in tight and try to run straight ahead through the defense rely on physicality to gain an advantage. The physical contact is hard to monitor for officials and the collision potential is high. Creating more space allows officials to better spot illegal blocks and excessive physical contact. It also creates more space for players so that collisions are minimized.

  - This would be a big change for some teams that rely on this strategy in close yardage situations. However, player safety is our priority and we feel like this could be a beneficial change in that area. Teams will still be able to run up the middle but must do so from a more spread out formation.
Defenseless Receiver

- The following rule change was initially discussed by the committee but a change was not proposed for a vote. However, after reviewing the survey feedback of the membership and discussing it further the committee determined that this is an area of the rule book that does merit consideration for a future rule change. For future editions the committee recommends; 1) Analyze and discuss the need for a change in this area. Are injuries occurring in this area, what are other leagues doing with this, is this rule consistent with the rest of our rule book? 2) Develop a definition that is easy to enforce for officials and understand for coaches and athletes. 3) Utilize more discussion with schools that utilize this strategy to determine solutions to improve safety while not drastically changing the game.

  ○ SITUATION: A defender impedes the path of a receiver who is turned around looking at the quarterback. He/she catches the ball, and simultaneously runs over the defender. The rule change would make this contact illegal on the part of the defender because they put themselves in that position and the offense had no opportunity to avoid the contact. In these situations, the defender typically gets knocked over and hurt from the force of the offensive player running into them. But how could the offense avoid that?

  ○ THINGS TO CONSIDER: The committee discussed a possession rule similar to tackle football fumble rules - the offense must possess the ball and make a “football move” before they can be contacted by the defense. For enforcement purposes the committee discussed how this could work like a block/charge call in basketball. The defender would be called for a “Contact on a Defenseless Receiver Penalty” if the contact on the receiver occurs before the offense has an opportunity to avoid contact. The offensive player would then be called for a “Running Over Defender Penalty” if the contact occurs after the offensive player has had the opportunity to avoid the contact.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reference(s)</th>
<th>Page(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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