

Regular Season Flag Football Rules

League Structure

League Play

- One game per week over the course of four weeks.

Divisions

- Fraternity
- Men's Residential
- Men's Open
- Women's Open
- Coed
- Faculty/Staff

Player Eligibility

- Participants may play on a maximum of ONE team in a qualifying division.
- Participants are responsible for determining their own eligibility.

Location

- All games will be played at the OU Recreation Fields, just east of Jenkins Ave.

Playoff Eligibility

- Teams with a .500 record, or better, and an appropriate sportsmanship rating, qualify for playoff competition.
- All Faculty/Staff teams qualify for the playoffs.

Playoff Tournament

- All qualifying teams will play in a single elimination tournament, for each division, at the conclusion of the regular season.

General Flag Football Information

- All participants must provide a valid OUID (with picture) prior to each contest.
 - No OUID = No Play
- 30 Minutes Before Competition
 - Equipment is issued.
- 15 Minutes Before Competition
 - OUID's are checked and rosters are verified.
- 5 Minutes Before Competition
 - Captains are called by supervisors and game officials.
- Game Time
 - The game will start on time or be forfeited (at the discretion of the OU Intramural Sports Staff).

The Game

- 1) Two twenty minute halves with a continuous running clock; the clock will only stop during the following scenarios:
 - a. Timeout
 - b. Injury
 - c. Touchdown
 - d. Official's Discretion
- 2) Clock stop rules will take place in the last two minutes of each half.
 - a. Major Stoppage (Clock starts on the snap): Timeouts, incompletions, out of bounds, Turnovers, Injuries, Scoring Play (PAT is untimed).
 - b. Minor Stoppage (Clock starts on the whistle): Penalties, First downs.
- 3) 1 minute between quarters
- 4) 3-minute half time
- 5) Each team is allowed three timeouts in 1-minute duration for each half; none may carry over into the second half or overtime; one timeout is given and can be used during the entire duration of overtime.
- 6) Any number of legal substitutes for either team may enter the game between periods, after a score or conversion, during the interval between downs, or during a timeout.
- 7) The field shall be eighty (80) yards in length, with four twenty yard zones denoted. X's shall mark the 14-yard line on each end, where the new possession for a team shall begin. Marks at the 3 and 10 yard lines will also be in place on each end of the field for conversion attempts.

Clothing and Equipment

- 1) The Intramural Sports Department provides colored pennies, flag belts and game balls for each contest.
 - a. Each team must wear contrasting colors; every player must wear a uniform.
- 2) The IM football will be the official ball of play, unless both teams agree to a ball of their choosing.
- 3) Women's Open may play with a junior football.
- 4) Clothing:
 - a. Athletic attire is required

- b. No pants or shorts with belt loops, denim, or khaki are allowed
 - c. Participants must wear some type of athletic shoe. No sandals
 - d. No metal cleats: appropriate cleats are allowed during play
 - e. Winter/wool hats, head/sweat bands are allowed; nothing that is tied or that forms a knot can be worn

 - f. Players must remove all jewelry prior to participating, including any viewable body piercings, earrings, necklaces, or bracelets
 - g. Shirts must be tucked in and appropriately worn, as to not interfere with the flag belts
 - h. Flag belts must be clipped in the front and all flags must be both unobstructed and extended to full length
- 5) Players may carry a playbook inside their clothing as long as it is not made of unyielding material and is not visible. If carried on the field, a player must keep it rather than throw it on the ground.

Personal Conduct

- Captains are responsible for the conduct of their players and fans.
- Only the captain is allowed to address an official during play.
- Acts of unsportsmanlike conduct including unnecessary roughness, arguing with officials, fighting, abusive language directed towards officials/opponents will result in player(s) involved being ejected from the game.
- Any player ejected from the game must leave the Recreation Park immediately and will automatically be suspended for one contest. Further, they will be ineligible to participate in any intramural sport until she/he meets with Jonathan Dewhirst, Intramural Sports Coordinator.
- The Intramural Sports Department has the final say in rule interpretations.

Coin Toss

- 1) A coin toss will be held prior to the start of the game; the winning captain shall have the choice of the following:
 - a) Offense or Defense first
 - b) Defending a goal
 - c) Deferring their choice to the second half
- 2) The losing captain shall choose from the remaining choices. Each half shall start by putting the ball in play by scrimmage on the offensive team's 14-yard line.

Teams

- 1) A team will consist of 7 players
- 2) A team may start and play the game with as few as 6 players
- 3) If a player is ejected, for any reason, the team may still play with 7 players

Points

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 1) Touchdown | 6 Points |
| Safety | 2 Points |
| Point After Touchdown (PAT) | |
| a) Successful try from 3 yard line | 1 Point |
| b) Successful try from 10 yard line | 2 Points |
| c) Successful try from 20 yard line | 3 Points |

- 2) Any team that gains a 35-point advantage at any time in the fourth quarter will immediately be declared the winner.

Offense

- 1) All plays from scrimmage must be started by a legal snap. The player that receives the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the offensive line of scrimmage.
- 2) Lines of scrimmage for the offense and defense shall be one yard apart to begin each play and will be marked by the officials prior to each play.
- 3) A snap hitting the ground before being touched will be ruled dead at the spot it touched the ground.
- 4) No offensive players may be within five yards of the sideline when the ball is snapped unless ball is placed on hash mark. All players on this side must be lined up inside the nearest official.
- 5) The offensive team may have one player in motion prior to the snap as long as the motion is not toward his/her opponents' goal line. All players not in motion must come to a set position and hold that position for at least one second prior to the snap.
- 6) No offensive player, while on the line of scrimmage, may receive a snap.
- 7) The ball may not be handled or passed forward by any player once the ball has crossed the offensive line of scrimmage.
- 8) A ball carrier may pass the ball backwards at any time. A backwards pass or fumble may be caught in flight inbounds by any player and advanced.
- 9) All players are eligible to receive a forward pass. An offensive team may make only one forward pass from behind the line of scrimmage per play.
- 10) There is no intentional grounding once the quarterback is outside the three-yard zone on each side of the center and the ball goes to or beyond the line of scrimmage.
- 11) A pass is completed to a receiver who comes down with one foot inbounds (college rules).

- 12) A ball carrier may not use any part of the body, the ball or any clothing to prevent an opponent from pulling the flag (contact must occur). Spinning, diving, or jumping to avoid being deflagged shall be legal so long as such actions do not result in the ball carrier making contact with a defensive player. It is the offensive player's responsibility to avoid contact with the defense.

Defense

- 1) The defensive player shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct forward progress of a ball carrier when in the act of removing a flag. This is impeding and is a penalty.
- 2) Defensive players may not use their hand to grasp, push or pull an opponent in an attempt to get at the ball carrier.
- 3) All players become eligible to intercept the ball before it touches the ground. However, no receiving team member in front of the player receiving the ball may move from their position when a kick touches a player on the receiving team (See Kicking Section).

Blocking

- 1) The terms blocking/screening are synonymous terms and shall be executed by body position alone and without body contact. The offensive player setting a screen must interlock the hands behind the back. Two types of fouls may result from enforcement of this rule:
 - a) An offensive player is guilty of illegal blocking if he/she in any way initiates contact with defensive player who has established a path to the ball carrier. The player screening or blocking must move his/her body in such a manner as to cause the defensive player to travel the greatest distance to down the ball carrier. An offensive player may not leave his/her feet to screen or stick out legs or arms in an attempt to slow down the defender.
 - b) Defensive players are guilty of defensive charging if, in attempting to down the ball carrier, they charge over or use their hand on an offensive player in order to get to the ball carrier. An offensive player who established a position cannot be run over. An offensive player may establish a path that follows the movement of the ball behind the line of scrimmage. There shall be no blocking beyond the line of scrimmage.

Series of Downs

- 1) The team in possession of the ball shall have four consecutive downs to advance to the next zone.
- 2) The line to gain in any series shall be the zone line in advance of the ball. If distance has been lost due to penalty or plays, the original zone line in advance of the ball at the beginning of the series of downs is the line to gain.
- 3) A new series of downs shall be awarded when:
 - a) A team moves the ball into the next zone on a play free from penalty.
 - b) A penalty against the opponent moves the ball into the next zone.
 - c) A team has obtained legal possession of a ball as a result of a free kick, kick from scrimmage, touchback, pass interference penalty, or failure of opponent to gain the zone in advance of the ball.
- 4) After a safety or touchback, the new offense will start the ball at the 14 yard line.

Penalties

- 1) A delay of game penalty is consuming more than 25 seconds of game-time after the ball is declared ready for play. All delay of game penalties will automatically stop the clock during the last two minutes of each half.
- 2) Deliberately advancing the ball after it is blown dead. Any act which would, in the judgment of the official, cause undue delay of regular play.
- 3) The offensive team shall be prohibited from obstructing an opponent with extended hand or arm. This includes the use of a "stiff arm" extended to ward off an opponent.
- 4) Contact by an opponent that interferes with an eligible player who is beyond the neutral zone and the ball is in flight, is pass interference. Except as judged incidental by the official, no contact shall be allowed between opponents.
- 5) If a penalty is declined, the down will be the next in order.
- 6) Unless relocated by penalty, both team's retraining lines shall be the line of scrimmage.
- 8) Whenever, in the judgment of any game official, the following acts are deliberate or flagrant, the players or coaches shall be ejected from the game.
 - a) Using fist, kicking or kneeling.
 - b) Using locked hands, elbows or any part of the forearm or hand to initiate contact.
 - c) Tackling the ball carrier as in regulation football.
 - d) Tying flag belt together.
 - e) Any other act deemed deliberate or flagrant.
- 9) There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct by players on the field or bench, substitutes, coaches, or team supporters including:
 - a) Abusive or insulting language.
 - b) Any acts of unfair play.
 - c) Managers, coaches, or others on the field of play at any time without permission, or their interference of any nature with the progress of the game.
 - d) A substitute or any other person interfering with a player or play while the ball is alive. This includes players running onto the field once the ball is snapped, even if their team doesn't have enough players on the field.
 - e) Using a "hideout play" by placing a player or players near the sideline whose intention is to participate in the play.
 - f) Failure of an offensive player to secure the flag belt or have their shirt properly tucked in prior to the snap.
 - g) A defensive player removing the flags from an offensive player as the ball is snapped or during a play with the obvious intent of making the offensive player ineligible to become a pass receiver or a ball carrier.

- h) Any player tying the flag belt in such a way that it will not come off freely when pulled.
- 10) The referee may enforce any penalty considered equitable, including the awarding of a score, in the following situations:
 - a) If a team refuses to play within one minute after being instructed to play by the referee.
 - b) If a play is interfered with by an obviously unfair or unsportsmanlike act not specifically covered by these rules.
 - c) If a team repeatedly commits fouls which can be penalized only by halving the distance to the goal line.
 - d) If any member of a team commits a foul to prevent an apparent touchdown.
 - e) For refusal to play, for repeated fouls, or for an ejected team member failing to leave the playing field within one minute, the referee shall, after warning the team captain, forfeit the game to the opponents.
- 11) No player shall commit a personal foul during any period of play or intermission. Any act prohibited under the following or any other act of unnecessary roughness shall be considered a personal foul:
 - a) There shall be no contact with any opponent who is on the ground.
 - b) There shall be no tripping, clipping, or hurdling an opponent.
 - c) An offensive player shall not dive to block an opponent.
 - d) There shall be no unnecessary roughness of any nature.
 - e) The ball carrier shall not deliberately drive or run into a defensive player. The offensive player is responsible for avoiding contact.
 - f) Any attempt to guard the flag will be considered a personal foul.

Deflagging

- 1) There are some basic rules that are established for flag football because of legal or illegal removal of flags that do not apply to regular or touch football:
 - 1) Deflagging is only allowed under special circumstances similar to tackling in football. Offensive players must have possession of the ball before they can legally be deflagged.
 - 2) A flag removed inadvertently (not removed by grabbing and pulling) does not cause play to stop. Play should continue as if the flags had not been removed.
 - 3) In circumstances where flags are removed inadvertently or illegally, the play should continue with the option of the penalty or the play.
 - 4) In all situations where a play is in progress and a ball carrier loses his/her flags either accidentally, inadvertently, or on purpose, the deflagging reverts to a one hand touch of the ball carrier below the neck.
 - 5) Deliberately faking a deflagging to cause an inadvertent whistle shall be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

Kicking

- 1) The offensive team must declare a punt at any time prior to a play from scrimmage. The ball must be snapped to the kicker.
- 2) When the ball is legally kicked, all players of the kicking team must be inbounds, and all players must be behind their restraining lines.
- 3) At least three players of the receiving team must be within 5 yards of their restraining line until the ball is kicked.
- 4) Any player on the receiving team may catch a kicked ball.
- 5) Any kick that hits the ground and bounds away from the kicking team can be retrieved by the receiving team if it is fielded cleanly by a receiving team member.
- 6) The ball shall be dead if a member of the kicking team touches it before it touches a member of the receiving team at that point of touching.
- 7) Any ball not caught will be blown dead when:
 - a) The ball crosses the goal line.
 - b) Ball is untouched and stops on the field of play.
 - c) Kick goes out-of-bounds.
 - d) Ball is muffed by receiving team member.
- 8) Scrimmage kicks (quick-kick) may NOT be executed at any time. Kicks must be declared in advance.
- 9) When the ball is kicked out-of-bounds, it will be put in play at the point it crossed the sideline.
- 10) When the ball becomes dead behind the goal line, it will be put in play at the 14-yard line (touchback).
- 11) If the receiving team bats the ball forward, the ball becomes dead at the point which it was batted.
- 12) A kick that bounces toward the kicking team on the initial bounce will be declared dead at that spot. If the initial bounce continues away from the kicking team, play will continue. This is to ensure the safety of both teams.
- 13) Both teams must remain behind their lines of scrimmage and neither team may enter the neutral zone prior to the snap.

Live Ball

- 1) After having been declared ready for play, a dead ball becomes live when it is snapped or free kicked legally or illegally.
- 2) A live ball becomes dead when:
 - a) It goes out-of-bounds, crosses a goal line or end line.
 - b) Any part of a ball carrier other than the feet or hands touches the ground.
 - c) The ball hits the ground, be it passed, kicked, fumbled or muffed. The ball is dead at the spot of the contact except that a ball fumbled forward is considered dead at the spot where the fumble occurred.
 - d) Any portion of a ball carrier touches the sideline, end line or ground/fixture outside of these lines.
 - e) A legal ball carrier has the flags pulled. EXCEPTION: When a player's flags become detached inadvertently, the player must be one hand touched anywhere below the neck to be downed.

Overtime

- 1) If the game is tied at the end of regulation overtime will commence.
- 2) A coin toss will determine choice of possession and which goal will be used. All overtime periods are played on the same goal. Alternating first team on offense each overtime period (ie. The team that was on offense second during the first overtime shall be the first team on offense if a second overtime is needed and so on)
- 3) Each team will start first and goal from the 10-yard line.
- 4) An overtime period consists of a series of downs by each team.
- 5) If the score is still tied after one period, play will proceed to a second period or as many as are needed to determine a winner.
- 6) If the defense intercepts a pass and returns it for a touchdown, they win the game.
- 7) If they do not return the interception for a touchdown, the series is over, the ball is placed at the 10-yard line and the original defense will begin their series of downs.

Additional Flag Football Definitions

- 1) Conversion: After a touchdown is scored, a successful running or passing play is attempted. All conversions attempted are dead ball situations and the defensive team cannot score.
- 2) Onside Conversion: A team may elect to attempt an onside conversion at any time in the second half if they score a touchdown unless they are leading by 19 or more following the try. The onside conversion starts on the 20-yard line. If successful the ball will be snapped from the opponent's 30-yard line by the scoring team, if unsuccessful the ball will be snapped by the opponent of the touchdown scoring team at their opponents 30-yard line.
- 3) Flag Guarding: An illegal act whereby the ball carrier uses any part of the body, the ball, or clothing to prevent an opponent from pulling the flag (contact must occur).
- 4) Free Kick: A kick made under restrictions that prohibit either team from advancing beyond established retraining lines until the ball is kicked.
- 5) Pass Interference: The act in which a player contacts another player, while the ball is in flight, to prevent one from catching a thrown ball. Contact is a required element of pass interference.
- 6) Screening: The act of protecting the ball carrier by body position without initiating contact.
- 7) Snapping the ball: The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position on the ground with a quick and continuous motion of the hand. The snap can go directly to anyone at least three yards behind the offensive line of scrimmage.

Co-Rec Modifications

- 1.) Coed teams must consist of at least three males and three females on the field at all times.
- 2.) There are no restrictions on running, throwing, or receiving during play, in regards to male/female participation.
- 3.) Open/closed plays do not exist within our league.
- 4.) All touchdowns will be awarded 6 points.

Faculty/ Staff Modifications

- 1) Faculty and Staff teams must consist of at least one male and one female on the field at all times.

For rules not specifically mentioned above refer to NIRSA Official Rules.