



## Gridiron Australia Flag Football Competition Rules

### **THIS EVENT IS NON-CONTACT, BLOCKING AND TACKLING ARE NOT ALLOWED.**

- A coin toss determines first possession. The winner of the coin toss has possession of the football. Losers of the coin toss have choice of end zone to defend.
- The team that loses the coin toss gets possession at the beginning of the second half starting at its own 5-yard line.
- There are no kickoffs.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line. An automatic first down by penalty will overrule the other requirements regarding four (4) plays to make either a first down or score.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- Teams change end zones after the first 20 minutes.

### **Number of Players**

- Teams consist of 6 players (5 on the field with 1 substitute) and may consist of 7 players (5 on the field with 2 substitutes) if a female player is on the roster.
- Teams may play with a minimum of four (4) players (due to injuries).
- If less than 4 players are available, the game is forfeited by the side that is unable to field a team.

### **Timing/Overtime**

- Game length is 40 minutes. (2 x 20 minute halves)
- The time is running time except the last two minutes of each half will be "official timing". If the ball carrier is out of bounds, the game clock will stop, if a pass is incomplete, the clock will stop – time will NOT stop after every play. The players will learn how to manage the game clock as it is in professional football. Flag football is the educational tool to learn the mechanism of the football.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- In the event of a tied game, overtime will be played. The period between the end of the game and the start of the overtime period will be 2 minutes. A coin toss determines first possession of overtime. The team winning the coin toss starts with the ball on its own 5-yard line. Play continues as in regulation until one team scores. There will be no time outs granted during the overtime period.
- Each time the ball is spotted the offense has 30 seconds to snap the ball.
- Each team has two 60-second timeouts per half. These cannot be carried over to the second half or overtime.
- Timeouts can be called by Head Coach and on field players only.
- Clock will stop for the length of the timeout.
- Clock will stop to warn teams that there are two minutes left to play in the each half (no time out is given).
- Period for half - time will be 2 minutes.
- The clock will start at the snap after it has been stopped.

### **Scoring:**

Touchdown:	6 points.
Extra point:	1 point. (played from midpoint of 5-yard line only)
	2 points (played from midpoint of 12-yard line only)
Safety:	2 points.

**Note:** An Interception return to opponent's end zone on any extra point play by the defense will result in the defense scoring 2 points plus possession for next series at its 5-yard line.

### **Running:**

- To start the play, the ball must be snapped between the legs of the snapper.
- The center is the player who gives the ball to the quarterback via a snap.
- The center cannot take a direct hand off back from the quarterback (no center sneak play).
- The quarterback is the player who receives the ball directly from the snap.
- The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage, unless he has handed the ball off, tossed or pitched, and it has been returned to him.
- An Offense may use multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage. Only backward & lateral handoffs are allowed during the down.
- Tosses or sweeps behind the line of scrimmage are allowed and are running plays.
- Once the ball carrier has crossed the line of scrimmage the ball cannot be handed off, tossed, pitched or passed in any way.
- "No-running zones," are located 5 yards in front of each end zone. When the ball is on or inside the 5-yard line going towards the opponent's end zone, the offense cannot run.
- The player who takes the handoff, toss or pitch can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- All defensive players are eligible to rush once the ball has been handed off or tossed, or there is a play action fake or fake handoff.
- Spinning is allowed, but the ball carrier cannot dive forward or jump to avoid a defensive player or gain yardage (no diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are placed when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

### **Receiving:**

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or tossed behind the line of scrimmage).
- As in the NFL, one player may be in motion, but not in motion towards the opponent's end zone at the snap.
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

### **Passing:**

- Only players starting 7 yards from the line of scrimmage can rush the passer.
- The quarterback has seven seconds to throw the ball. If a pass is not thrown within seven seconds, the play is dead, with a loss of down and the ball is spotted at the previous line of scrimmage.
- Only one forward pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage is allowed in a down.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball.
- Interceptions can be returned by the defense.
- On Interceptions that occur and remain in the end zone, the ball will become dead and will result in the ball belonging to the intercepting team at its 5-yard line.
- Should an interception occur in the end zone and the ball carrier leave the end zone, the ball will belong to the intercepting team at the spot the ball becomes dead. However should the ball carrier return to the end zone and be deflagged or the ball become dead the result would be a safety for the other team.

### **Dead Balls:**

- Substitutions may be made only when ball is dead.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
  - An official blows his whistle.
  - Ball carrier's flag is pulled or becomes illegal.
  - Points are scored.
  - When any part of the ball carrier's body, other than his hand or foot touches the ground.
- If a ball carrier's flag falls off, the play will be whistled dead and the ball will be spotted at the spot where the flag fell off.
- Players are ineligible to catch a pass or receive the ball by hand off toss or pitch, if their flag has fallen off.

**Note:** There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the ball left the ball carrier's hand(s). If the ball is fumbled during the snap, the ball will be placed at the line of scrimmage

### **Rushing the Quarterback:**

All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or tossed, or there is a play action fake or fake handoff, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or a game official, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage.

## **REMEMBER, BLOCKING AND TACKLING ARE NOT ALLOWED.**

### **Sportsmanship/Roughing:**

If the referee witnesses any acts of flagrant contact, tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the tournament.

### **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

Trash talking is illegal. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators.) Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

### **Penalties:**

- **All penalties are 5 yards.** The down will be repeated unless otherwise noted, and will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- All penalties may be declined, except a false start (dead ball foul).
- Penalties will not exceed half the distance to the opposing team's goal line from the line of scrimmage.
- Game officials determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- Only the team captain and Head Coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players and Coaches cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
- Penalties after an interception shall be assessed after the return is over and/or the play is blown dead.

### **Defensive Penalties:**

- Offside — 5 yards.
- Substitution fouls — 5 yards. (player enters field after ball is blown ready for play, i.e. to deceive the opponents, or 6 men on field )
- Disconcerting signals — 5 yards. (signals to distract / simulate offensive signals prior to snap )
- Interference with opponent or ball at the snap — 5 yards.
- Illegal rushing — 5 yards. (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)
- Interference — 5 yards and automatic first down.
- Illegal contact — 5 yards and automatic first down. (holding, blocking, etc)
- Illegal flag pull — 5 yards and automatic first down. (before receiver has ball)

### **Offensive Penalties:**

- Flag guarding — 5 yards.
- Delay of game — 5 yards.
- Substitution fouls — 5 yards.
- Illegal motion — 5 yards. (more than one person moving, etc.)
- False start — 5 yards (cannot be declined).
- Illegal snap — 5 yards.
- Illegal shift or failure to pause for 1 second — 5 yards.
- Offensive holding — 5 yards.
- Diving/Jumping - 5 yards
- Player out of bounds — 5 yards. (if player goes out of bounds, player cannot return to the field and catch ball)
- Illegal forward pass — 5 yards and loss of down. (a second forward pass or after ball has crossed the line of scrimmage )
- Offensive pass interference— 5 yards and loss of down. (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)
- Running inside a no running zone is a loss of down at the previous spot.

### **Tournament tie breaker system:**

1. Head to head results.
2. Total net point differential.
3. Play an overtime period.

### **Attire:**

No padding or headwear shall be allowed.

Cleats are allowed, but must be rubber. Inspections must be made.

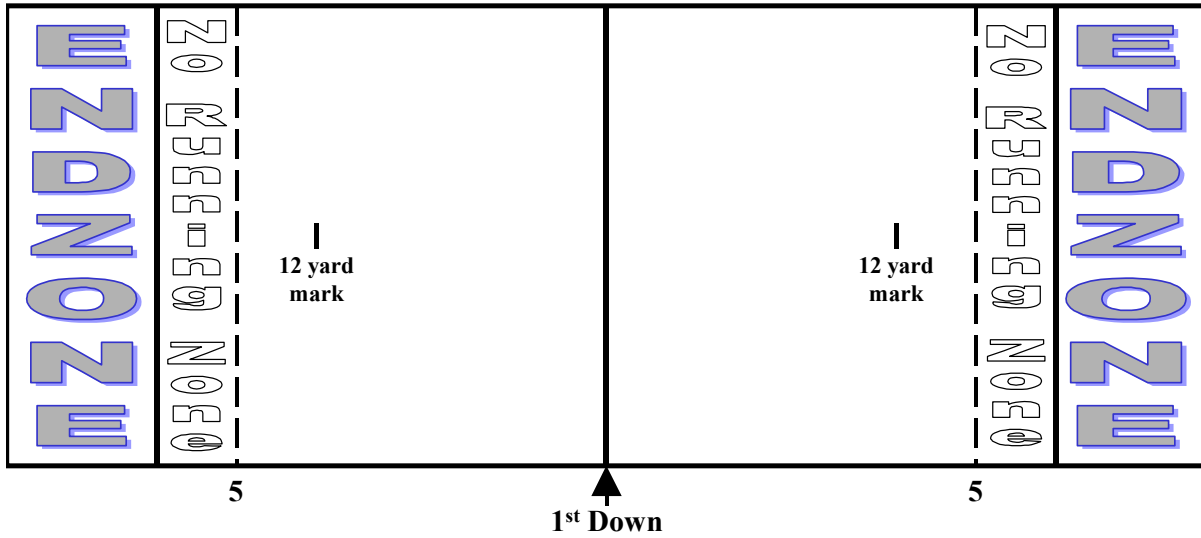
All players must wear a protective mouthpiece; there are no exceptions.

Official tournament jerseys must be worn during play.

**Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.**

**Minimum Field Markings:**

**FIELD DIAGRAM**



**Field Dimensions:**

Length: 60 (or 80) yards

Width: 30 (or 20) yards

End Zones:

No Running Zones:

Maximum 10 yards deep, minimum 7 yards deep.  
These must be marked 5 yards from each goal line.