



General Information & Game Procedures

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

LEAGUE PLAY

The main emphasis of the league is a non-competitive schedule. Starting in 2011 there will be the choice of an advanced division to ensure that teams who have more experience have parity in their schedule. Regardless of Advanced or Developmental no points will be given or standings kept for league play. A year-end jamboree will be organized following the October long weekend. Again, at this tournament, all teams will play the same amount of games, and there will be no champions declared.

League play will be 5 on 5 For Colts and Stampeders Divisions and 7 on 7 for Hilltops and Huskies Divisions. In the Rules where it describes 7 on 7 please use the same rules with 2 fewer players.

COACHING

Parents are asked to act as coaches throughout the league. For those not familiar with the game, but still interested in coaching, a coaching clinic will be offered through Saskatoon Minor Football. This coaching clinic will outline skills and drills for flag football, as well as simple strategies. A flag football Skills Manual is available from Football Saskatchewan.

One coach from each team must be on the field at all times and are considered to be equal referees. One coach is in the offensive backfield counting steamboats 5(3). The other coach is in the defensive backfield. Coaches can assist in the offensive and defensive huddles, but there is to be NO COACHING once the play has started. (You are a referee now)

* Please discuss any "grey areas" you may feel necessary with the opposing coaches prior to kick off each game. This discussion and the agreements reached by the coaches will no doubt remove areas where conflict may arise. Please remember, we are trying to make the rules and the game simple for the kids to enjoy.

OFFICIATING

In order to keep league and individual costs to a minimum, each team will be required to supply one referee. As we are attempting to set this league up as completely noncompetitive, we would hope parents would have little difficulty officiating. For the

Coach/Official a rules clinic will be put on by Saskatoon Minor Football prior to the start of the season.

FIELD DIMENSIONS & GAME EQUIPMENT

The field of play should be 80 yards long by 40 yards wide with 10 or 15 yard end zones (for 7on7). Our recommendation for the younger age groups is a narrower field but the same length is fine. Any other field size may be used at the referee's discretion. Goal posts are not required or recommended for flag football.

The Wilson "TDY" or Wilson "TDJ" football or "Nike" synthetic is recommended also the Wilson "K2" for younger divisions. The Offensive team has the option to use their own ball while on Offense. 3 bean bags should be used to mark the ball, 5 yard rusher bag, and 1st down marker. Cones can mark the side lines as well as the end zones approximately 10 cones. Whistles are mandatory and officials flags are encouraged. During inclement weather, and at the discretion of the referee, the offensive team may take the ball to huddle to dry and clean it. A multi-cleated, rubber molded sole type shoe is recommended.

TEAMS AND PLAYERS

Each team consists of seven (7) players on the field. Maximum players on a team should be 14 to allow all participants to play. 10 players with 5 on 5 to increase participation.

may only enter the field when the ball is dead. A sleeper play is illegal.

2. GAME PROCEDURES

The game shall consist of sixty (60) minutes playing time divided into two halves of thirty (30) minutes each. Time will run continuously in the first and second halves. After thirty (30) minutes in the first and second halves the referee shall notify the team that "3 plays" remain in that half.

Coaches should expect be in the huddle no longer than 1 minute. It is important to have a playbook or play card to speed u the huddle process.

During "3 plays", time is ignored, kickoffs and convert attempts do not count as plays, and if a foul occurs, the non-offending team has the option of accepting the penalty thus having the play not count as one of the five plays.

A 5 minute half time is optional.

If a team does not have enough players to start a game on time the opposing team should lend a couple of players until enough players show up.

Before the start of the game, Coaches will bring a player up to flip a coin to decide which team has a choice of kicking off, receiving the ball or defending an end of the field.

The team that wins the coin toss can take the ball or defer their choice to the second half.

Ex: If team A wins the coin toss and chooses to receive the kickoff (take the ball). Team B has choice of ends. At the start of the 2nd half Team B has first choice.

Team captains may call one time out per half, but a team may not accumulate time outs.

The coach/referee shall be the sole judge as to whether or not first down yardage has been gained.

Once the referee has signaled play to begin, the ball is live after it has been kicked off or snapped until play is stopped by an official's whistle.

The Coaches/referees are encouraged to be in the huddle with their players. Coaches need to be aware of how much time they spending in the huddle. 30 seconds would be ideal, maximum time of 1 minute.

A team shall have 3 downs to gain the required ten yards for a first down. The ball may be advanced passing or carrying.

*****The quarterback cannot cross the line of scrimmage with the football.*****

Qb must toss, pitch, hand off or throw the ball

* Colt Division players, Stampeder Division, and Hilltop Division (may change to 3 if agreed upon by coaches) players will continue to use the 5 "steamboat" count*

* Huskie Division players will use the 3 "steamboats" count*

Quarterbacks may hand off or pitch the ball, once the ball leaves the Quarterback's hands any/all of the defensive players may cross the line of scrimmage to pursuit the ball carrier.

Play of the Ball

3. The ball is considered live:

When the Quarterback does not catch the snap, the play should continue. Steamboats will still be counted from the time of the snap. After the 5th or 3rd steamboat is called, the rusher can pursuit to the QB.

When the ball carrier falls, then immediately gets up without being flagged by an opponent (officials call it dead if defender is within (3 yards).

4. The ball is whistled dead:

- If a ball carrier shields/guard his or her flags at any time the play should be whistled dead. Ball will be spotted at the point of the shielding/guarding.
- Any time the football hits the ground and a defender is within 3 yards.
- When the ball carrier is flagged or flag removed.
- When a forward pass touches the ground.
- When a defender jumps over a fallen ball carrier to avoid bodily contact and possible injury.
- When the ball strikes the goal post at any time.
- When a player tips a pass, is deliberately flagged by an opponent then catches the ball. This is a "bobbled ball" and is dead at the point where the receiver was deliberately flagged.
- When a kicked or punted ball touches the ground before traveling at least 10 yards. Re-kick or punt from the original line of scrimmage.
- When the quarterback crosses the line of scrimmage while in possession of the Ball.

5. KICK OFF

The kicking team has option to kick off or punt the ball after the referee blows the whistle for play. The ball shall be kicked off/punted from any point on the 25 yard line following a td/convert or at the beginning of a half.

A kick off/punt must travel 10 yards towards the receiving team or the play will be blown dead. If the ball strikes the goal post assembly in flight, the ball is blown dead and the receiving team shall scrimmage first down at its own 10 yard line, no option. No point is awarded to the kicking team.

If the ball goes out of bounds without being touched, the receiving team can have the kick off/punt repeated 10 yards back, or take the ball where the ball went out of bounds. If the ball is kicked through the end zone or through the side of the end zone 1 point will be awarded to the kicking team.

The kicking team cannot regain possession of the ball. If the kicking team touches the ball, the ball is dead and the receiving team starts their first down at the place where the ball was touched.

There is no blocking on kicked or punted balls. It is suggested that player's not returning the ball should stand still to avoid collisions.

If the ball is fumbled, the ball is considered dead when it hits the ground when there is an opposing player within 3 yards of the ball.

On any fumble the ball can be picked up and play resumes if there is no opposing player within 3 yards.

6. SCRIMAGE/SNAP

When the ball is put into play, only the offensive center must be on the line of scrimmage. Any other offensive player may be in motion or on the line of scrimmage and the quarterback must be at least 5 yards from the line of scrimmage.

All defensive players must be 5 yards off the line of scrimmage and the rusher must be at least 5 yards (see RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK) from the line of scrimmage. If the ball is inside the 5 yard line the defense may line up on the goal line.

The center may get the ball back to the quarterback in any way possible with the exception of kicking or handing off. The center may throw overhand, underhand, regular snap, side ways snap, etc. For any variations of a regular snap, the center may pick up the ball and assume a "set" position. From the "set" position (minimum 1 second) the center may then throw back to the quarterback or wait for a signal from the quarterback. On the snap of the ball the five/three steamboat count begins.

If quarterback may bobbles/fumbles the snap from center the defense is not allowed to rush the quarterback until the steamboats have expired.

No player on either team shall encroach in the 1 yard neutral zone until the ball is snapped. No defensive player shall voice signals that might mislead offensive players

7. RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

The Rusher's entire body must be 5 yards from the line of scrimmage for a period of FIVE OR THREE STEAMBOATS.

This five/three second span will be counted by the coach or referee in the Offensive backfield. While counting, one hand (or arm - so long as rusher knows the signal) shall be raised and then dropped after saying the fifth or third steamboat.

The rusher will then be allowed to proceed Violation of this rule is an offside penalty.

While waiting, the rusher has the same rights as any other defensive player. Once the designated rusher crosses the line of scrimmage, all defensive players can rush. The Rusher has the right to an unobstructed, direct path to the quarterback.

If the QB rolls out either direction the rusher can shuffle across to mirror him or her. The rusher must stay 5 yds from the line of scrimmage until steamboat count is up.

If the QB fakes a handoff then the rusher can approach the line of scrimmage and may wait there until the steamboats expire and the QB is eligible to be rushed by the designated rusher. The official will drop his/ her arm indicating the QB is eligible to be rushed by the rusher. All other players may make a play on the Runningback.

8. QUARTERBACKS PASSING THE BALL

Quarterbacks may hand the ball off in any direction.

If the ball is handed off in a forward direction the ball carrier may only run the ball.

If the ball is handed off or tossed backwards, the player in possession of the ball may throw the ball in a forward direction, before crossing the line of scrimmage.

If an offensive player and a defensive player catch the ball at the same time the reception will be awarded to the offensive player.

A forward pass to be legal, must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage and be the first pass thrown by the offense towards the defense's goal line.

Any offensive player may be the passer and all players on either team are eligible receivers.

A forward pass is considered to be complete when caught by any player regardless of how many other players touched the pass.

When a player of either team is interfered with in the target area, the penalty is a 10 yard penalty against the guilty team and automatic 1st down.

Any exchange of the football from the quarterback to a teammate in a forward direction, whether it be overhand, underhand or hand off, will be considered a forward pass. The receiver must advance the ball, no more "forward passes" may be made on the play.

An offside pass is illegal and usually occurs when an offensive player receives a forward pass, then throws the ball forward to a teammate. Ball is dead, where the second pass is thrown.

After a change of possession (ie. kick off, punt or interception) if a player throws a pass forward to a teammate, this is also an offside pass. The ball is then returned to the point

of origin of the offside pass and the subsequent play is run from that point. An offside pass may be legally intercepted by the defense.

Any interference made by a player against an opponent before the ball has been caught or before the play has been blown dead is illegal. The waving of hands or arms in front of a receiver's face is also considered to be pass interference.

Contact between two opponents is illegal unless such contact results from a simultaneous attempt to play the ball at the possible point of completion of the pass.

Defensive and offensive players have equal rights to the path of the ball. An offensive player may not contact or obstruct a defensive player from playing the ball.

On a forward pass, when a player catches the ball in the air and then lands out of bounds due to player contact, the pass is ruled complete. Also, upon completion of a pass, if the player has one foot in bounds and the other foot in the air, the pass is considered complete regardless of where the other foot comes down.

Anytime the ball is snapped is within 9 yards of the end zone, the offensive team must make a forward pass to score.

9. SCORING

A touchdown (6 points) is scored when a team passes or carries the ball into the opponent's end zone. If the ball is being carried toward the end zone, it is considered a touchdown when the ball crosses the goal line or breaks the "plane" of the goal line, even for a split second. A touchdown shall not be awarded if a player is in the opponent's end zone, with possession of the ball, but the play is ruled dead with the ball not having crossed or touched the "plane" of the goal line.

A safety touch (2 points) is awarded to the opponents if the ball has been carried, passed, batted or kicked from the field of play by a player into his/her own end zone and the ball is ruled dead in the end zone. A safety touch will also be awarded to the opponents when the offense attempts to punt from their own end zone and the ball is ruled dead without having crossed the goal line. A safety touch will not be awarded if a player intercepts a pass near his/her own goal line and that player's momentum carries the player into his/her end zone where he/she is touched. The intercepting team is awarded first down at the point of interception on the field of play. After a safety touch, the team scored against must kick off/punt from its own 25 yard line, no option.

A rouge (1 point) is scored when the ball is punted into the end zone by the opponent and becomes dead in possession of a team in its own end zone, or is downed in the end zone, or goes out of bounds in the end zone. A rouge is also awarded if, on a kick off, the ball goes out of bounds in the end zone. A Rouge is not scored when a pass is intercepted in the end zone by the defense. The defense shall have the first down at its own 10 yard line.

After a rouge has been scored, the team scored against shall scrimmage first down at their own 25 yard line.

After a touchdown, a team may try for a 1 point convert from the 5 yard line, or a 2 point convert from the 10 yard line.

1 point - 5 yard convert – must make a forward pass

2 point - 10 yard convert – can handed off, tossed or passed

Punt or place kick is illegal during convert. All regular rules for a scrimmage play apply to a convert attempt.

If the defensive team intercepts the ball in the air they can return it to the offensive teams end zone for 1 or 2 points. (1 point if the offense was on the 5 yard line, 2 points if they were on the 10 yard line.)

10. PUNTING

-When a team decides to punt, you must declare to the other team that you are going to punt on 3rd down.

- When punting, the punter cannot hold the ball intentionally allow the coverage to get down the field.

- Coverage can leave as soon as the ball is snapped

-No rushing is allowed. During an obvious attempt to punt, if the ball strikes any part of the punter's leg, this is considered a punt and all punting rules apply. If the punt attempt is missed and the ball touches the ground, it is dead at that point.

On any punt which does not travel further than 10 yards the play will be whistled dead and the ball will be punted again.

On a declared punt, no player of the punting team, including the punter, is allowed to touch the ball before the receiving team. They must allow 5 yards for reception of the ball, otherwise "no yards" shall be called.

If "no yards" is called in the end zone, no score shall be awarded and the receiving team shall scrimmage first down at the 10 yard line. When a punt from the field of play strikes the opponent's goal post assembly, the ball is blown dead from the first down awarded to the receiving team at its own 10 yard line. No point is awarded to the punting team.

** If the person catching the ball on a declared punt is not given 5 yards to catch the ball a "no yards" penalty is called, the penalty is 10 yards.

COLT DIVISION ADAPTATION: Colt division teams will be given 3 downs to gain 10 yards if the team is unsuccessful the ball will be placed 25 yards downfield for the opposition to take over on downs. If the ball is within 25 yards of the endzone the ball will be turned over on downs and the opposition will take over where the ball was previously scrimmaged from. If the ball is outside of 25 yard zone the team will take over 25 yards from their own endzone.

Rules

11. FOULS AND PENALTIES

Interference is applicable to both teams and is committed when a player obstructs, blocks, pushes off, or illegally contacts an opponent.

All offensive players must permit direct access to the ball carrier for the Rusher and all other defenders. If direct access is not given; the penalty is 10 yards for obstruction/slash blocking. Receivers can stand still to ensure no blocking penalty will be given.

For any major foul, the penalty shall be disqualification of the offending player and a 25 yard penalty against the offending team. Major fouls are kicking, kneeling or striking an opponent, or any act of rough play that in the referee's discretion warrants a player disqualification.

Flag football is a non-contact sport, therefore, acts such as piling on, tripping, diving forward with the ball, contacting the passer, or the punt receiver, and any rough plays shall be penalized as personal fouls. Defensive players are permitted to dive in an attempt pull the ball carriers flags. Offensive players are not allowed to dive or jump while carrying the ball. Offensive diving or jumping will be a 10 yard penalty from the spot the foul.

The use of obscene language, or gestures and threats to any player, official or spectator is considered to be an objectionable conduct. Any arguing, even by a team captain, shall also be penalized as objectionable conduct. Any conduct in which the ball, kicking tee or any object is thrown at an opponent, official or spectator by any player or from the team bench shall also be penalized as objectionable conduct. Once again, if any serious infraction is committed by any player or team member, that person will be ejected from the game. The referee has the option to penalize a player and send him off the field for 5 plays if the player needs time to cool off.

Penalties:

- OFFSIDE / PROCEDURE - 5 YARDS

- OBSTRUCTION (BLOCKING) - 10 YARDS
- NO YARDS (PUNT) – 10 YARDS
- PASS INTERFERENCE
- DEFENSIVE - 10 YARDS (from the line of scrimmage)
- OFFENSIVE - 10 YARDS (from line of scrimmage)

- OBJECTIONABLE CONDUCT (ARGUING SWEARING) - 15 YARDS
- PERSONAL FOUL (ROUGH PLAY) - 15 YARDS
- MAJOR FOUL (KICKING OR STRIKING AN OPPONENT OR ANY ACT OF ROUGH PLAY THAT IN THE REFEREE'S DISCRETION WARRANTS A

PLAYER DISQUALIFICATION)- 25 YARDS + PLAYER
DISQUALIFICATION