

2018 Official Rules

Champions Together

Unified Sports® Flag Football



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These official rules for Unified Sports® Flag Football shall govern all Champions Together competition. This set of rules is based on the Flag Football rules adopted by USA Football in partnership with the NFL, as modified by Special Olympics in February 2018.



I. INTRODUCTION

Unified Sports® is a trademarked program of Special Olympics, Inc. that promotes sports training and competition for teams that include people with and without intellectual disabilities.

The focus of Unified Sports® is competition (not simply participation). Sports teach many life lessons: to work as a team, to follow rules and to be committed. Through sports we can find shared interests that allow friendships to form. By creating high expectations for students with intellectual disabilities we teach a new generation of regular education students that people with intellectual disabilities can be accountable, follow rules, be good teammates; and, as a result will be accepted as valued members of their school, community, or society in general.

Champions Together is a joint effort between the IHSAA and Special Olympics Indiana (SOIN) to incorporate Unified Sports® programs in IHSAA member schools recognizing and offering opportunities for students with and without disabilities to compete in an IHSAA sanctioned activity.

- Unified Sports® programs shall be administered by each participating member school and follow the requirements per IHSAA By-Laws for eligibility, rules, and program administration.
- Unified Sports® tournaments shall be administered by the IHSAA staff and the rules as approved by the IHSAA will govern the sport when applicable.



II. ELIGIBILITY

IHSAA By-Laws will govern eligibility of student-athletes competing, specifically Rule 200 pertaining to Unified Sports®. Topics in Rule 200 include definition of participants (Unified Student Athlete and Unified Student Partner).

III. ROSTERS

1. The Flag Football team roster may contain a maximum of 12 players.
2. The roster shall contain a proportionate number of athletes and partners.
3. During competition, teams shall field five (5) players to start the game (required).
 - a. The line-up shall never exceed three (3) athletes and two (2) partners at any time.
 - b. Teams may continue with a minimum of four (4) players (minus one partner or athlete) due to disqualification or injury.
 - c. Failure to adhere to the required ratio results in a forfeit.

IV. COACH EXPECTATIONS

1. Coaches are to help the players learn and enjoy the game. Parents are strongly encouraged to support the coach at all times.
2. Coaches are expected to adhere to the following rules and philosophies of Unified Sports® Flag Football and the code of conduct as IHSAA By-Laws Rule 8.
3. In order to be eligible to coach Unified Flag Football:
 - a. A coach must meet the criteria necessary to coach an IHSAA sport under IHSAA By-Laws Rule 7,
 - b. In addition to the training referred to in Rule 7, a coach must have successfully completed the NFHS course on Unified Sports®, and
 - c. Attend Unified Flag Football Training.

V. UNIFIED SPORTS® FLAG FOOTBALL FUNDAMENTALS

- a. Unified Sports® Flag Football is non-contact.
- b. In all aspects of Unified Sports® Flag Football, rulings shall be made with player safety as the primary consideration.
- c. The roster shall contain a proportionate number of athletes (students with disabilities) and partners (students without disabilities).
- d. During competition, teams shall field five players to start the game (required).
 - a. The line-up shall never exceed three athletes and two partners at any time.
 - b. Teams may continue with a minimum of four players (minus one partner or athlete) due to disqualification or injury.
- e. Failure to adhere to the required ratio results in a forfeit.
- f. The coach is responsible for the line-up and conduct of the team during competition.
- g. A partner as quarterback may NOT pass to another partner.
- h. Partners MAY handoff to another partner.
- i. Possessions
 - i. All possessions, except following an interception, start at the offensive team's 5-yard line.
 - ii. The offense has four plays to cross midfield.
 - iii. Once the offense crosses midfield, they have four additional plays to score a touchdown.
 - iv. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield or score a touchdown in a prescribed number of plays, possession of the ball changes and the opposite team starts at their 5-yard line.
 - v. The ball carrier may not spin, dive, hurdle, stiff arm, or use either arm to shield a defender from grasping his/her flag.
 - vi. The forward progress spot is the position of the ball when the player is declared down (carrier's flag belt is pulled or anything other than the runner's hand or foot touches ground).
 - vii. The ball is spotted near the middle of the field for each down by the Referee.
- j. Unfair Acts
 - i. No team shall repeatedly commit penalties/fouls which halve the distance to the goal line.
 - ii. Neither team shall commit any act which, in the opinion of the referee, tends to make a travesty of the game. This includes intentionally committing penalties/fouls to gain an advantage.
 - iii. The referee will enforce any penalty he/she considers equitable, including the award of a score for an unfair act.
- k. Partners shall NOT dominate play (as determined by a Games Committee).
- l. The Games Committee shall consist of the referee and a non-coaching adult school representative from each school (athletic director, special education faculty, etc.).

VI. EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

1. A Youth (#8) size football will be used.
2. A protective mouthpiece must be worn at all times.
3. A one-piece, three-flag belt will be worn during the game at all times (with teams purchasing from the IHSAA-approved supplier).
4. All participants must have a playing uniform consisting of matching shirts with matching numbers on front and back which should be tucked in at the waist to avoid obstruction of flag pulling.
5. No jewelry may be worn (rings, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, etc.)
6. All players must wear similar color athletic shorts or athletic pants. No blue jeans will be allowed.
7. Players must wear rubber-cleated or flat-soled athletic shoes. Metal cleats, spikes, hiking boots or other equipment deemed dangerous by officials will not be allowed.
8. When Unified Sports® Flag Football athletes or partners require the use of wheelchairs or other mobility assistance devices, participation in team sports (basketball, softball, volleyball, and flag football) likely creates undue health and safety risks for that athlete and others in the game. The school may apply to the IHSAA for special consideration for potential team members who require such assistance. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Athletes in question should not compete at any level without previous approval. Such requests will go to the Risk & Competition Committee of the IHSAA, in care of the Commissioner.



VII. TERMINOLOGY

Center	The player who snaps (passes) the ball backward through his/her legs to a teammate to begin play.
Dead Ball	A dead ball is a ball when not in play. The ball is dead during the interval between plays.
Defense	The team opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.
Defer	One option for the team winning the coin toss. If a team defers, it delays having the first choice of offense-defense-or end of the field until the start of the second half.
Downs	A down is action which starts with a legal snap and ends when the ball next becomes dead. The offensive team has four downs to advance the ball to midfield or goal line.
Fumble	A fumble is any loss of player possession.
Inadvertent Whistle	Official's whistle that is performed in error.
Lateral/Pitch	A backward pass – when the initial direction of the ball is parallel with or toward the runner's end line.
Line of Scrimmage	The line of scrimmage for each team is a vertical plane through the point of the ball nearest the team's goal line.
Live Ball	A live ball is a ball in play. A ball becomes live when the ball is legally snapped by the center.
No Run Zones	Five-yard areas of the field as a team approaches midfield or its opponent's goal line where running the ball is prohibited.
Offense	The team with possession of the ball.
Out of Bounds	A player 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.

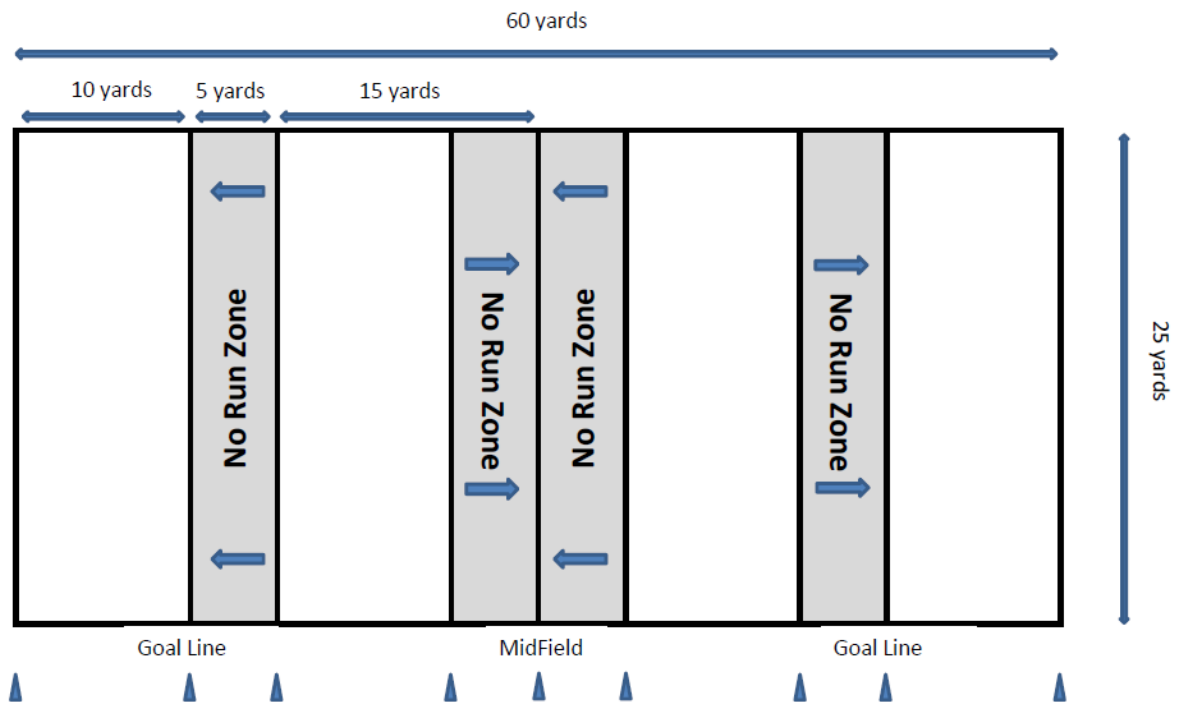
Passer	A passer is the player who throws a legal forward pass. This player does not have to be the quarterback (player who received the snap to start a down.)
Quarterback	The offensive player to whom the ball is snapped. The quarterback may not run the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
Rush Line	An imaginary line running across the width of the field seven yards (on defensive side) from the line of the scrimmage. The rusher(s) must be behind the rush line until ball is snapped.
Rusher	The defensive player(s) assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.
Screen Blocking	A legal obstruction of an opponent without initiating contact with him/her with any part of the screen blocker's body.
Shielding (Flag Guarding)	An act by the ball carrier to prevent a defender from pulling the ball carrier's flags by stiff arm, lowering elbow or head, or by blocking access to the runner's flags with a hand or arm.
Shift	A shift is the action of one or more offensive players who, after a huddle or taking set positions, move to a new set position prior to the snap.
Shovel Pass	A legal pass attempted from behind the line of scrimmage by throwing the ball underhand or pushing it towards a receiver beyond the line of scrimmage.
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	Actions by a player outside the spirit of sportsmanship. This includes profanity, showboating, disrespecting the officials, or taunting opponents.



VIII. PLAYING FIELD

1. The playing field is 60 yards long (including the end zones) and 25 yards wide. If insufficient space is available, a slightly smaller space can be used.
2. A space of at least 5 yards around the field must be free and clear of obstructions. The field can be marked with chalk, paint, and/or traffic cones.
3. “No Running Zones” are located 5-yards before the midfield line and goal line.
 - i. Any ball snapped from these zones must be passed.
 - ii. The purpose of “No Running Zones” is to avoid short yardage power running situations.

Diagram of Flag Football Playing Field



IX. COIN TOSS

1. A coin toss determines first possession.
2. Each team will provide two captains (one partner and one athlete).
3. The officials and team captains will meet at least three minutes prior to the start of the contest to conduct the coin toss.
4. The winner of the coin toss will choose offense, defense or end of field to defend. The team winning the coin toss may also defer its choice to the second half.

X. TIMING AND OVERTIME

Timing

1. The game shall consist of two 20-minute halves (running time) until the last minute of each half at which time the clock will stop on all dead ball whistles (incomplete pass, out of bounds, penalties, and change of possession).
2. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion (injuries, delays).
3. The clock will stop on all timeouts.
4. Each team receives one 60-second timeout per half.
5. An unused timeout in the first half does not carry over to the second half.
6. There shall be a 5-minute break at halftime.
7. The ball must be put in play promptly and legally and any action or lack of action by either team that tends to prevent this is considered a delay of game. This includes:
 - a. Consuming more than 30-seconds to snap the ball after it is ready for play
 - b. Failing to remove an injured player following an injury timeout
 - c. Deliberately advancing the ball after it has been declared dead

Overtime - If the score is tied at the end of regulation play

1. All regulation rules and penalties are in effect.
2. Following a two-minute intermission, a coin toss is held in the same manner as the pregame toss.
3. If multiple overtimes, teams will alternate possessions until there is a winner (the team who did not have first choice in the first overtime has first choice to start the second).
4. Team possession for each team in overtime starts at midfield.
5. Each team is awarded two plays.
6. There are no timeouts.
7. If one team intercepts a pass they automatically win the game.
8. If the team with the first attempt in overtime scores on the first play, the opposing team must also score on its first play to extend the game.
9. If neither team scores a touchdown, the team gaining the most yards in their two plays is considered the winner.
10. The team gaining the most yards or scoring a touchdown when the other team does not is awarded one point and wins the game.

XI. SCORING

1. **Touchdown:** 6 points
2. **Extra Point:** 1 point from the 5-yard line
2 points from the 10-yard line
3. **Safety:** 2 points

XII. LIVE BALL / DEAD BALL

1. Positions/Snap
 - a. The ball must be snapped between the center's legs to start each play.
 - b. No minimum number of players is required to line-up on the line of scrimmage.
2. Dead Ball - play is ruled dead when:
 - a. The ball carrier's flag is pulled
 - b. The ball carrier loses his/her flag
 - c. A receiver catches a ball without his/her flags attached
 - d. The ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - e. Any part of the ball carrier's body other than the hand or foot touches the ground
 - f. A touchdown, extra point, or safety is scored
 - g. When during a try-for-point the defense obtains possession of the ball
 - h. When a snap, pass, or lateral strikes the ground
 - i. When a pass is caught simultaneously by opposing players (the offense retains possession)
 - j. A pass is intercepted (no returns)
 - k. A snapped ball touches the ground
 - l. When there is an inadvertent whistle
3. Fumbles
 - a. A ball fumbled by the runner is dead when it hits the ground and remains in possession of the offensive team (unless it is fourth down).
 - b. If fumbled forward, the ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet were at the time of the fumble.
 - c. If fumbled backwards, it is marked where it hits the ground.
4. Inadvertent Whistle – In case of an inadvertent whistle, the team in possession of the ball may choose to accept the result of the play at the point where the play was blown dead or choose to replay the down.
5. Substitutions (athlete for athlete / partner for partner)
 - a. Any player on the roster may enter upon the completion of a play (dead ball).
 - b. A substitute must play at least one down prior to being replaced.
 - c. A replaced player must leave the field immediately.
6. False Start – No member of the offensive team may simulate the start of the play before the ball is snapped.

XIII. RUNNING

1. Handing the Ball
 - a. Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one player to a teammate without throwing it.
 - b. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted.
 - c. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the quarterback / offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage.
 - d. The offense may use multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage.
 - e. Center Sneak – The ball must completely leave the center’s hands on the snap and he/she must step backwards off the line of scrimmage in order to receive the direct handoff from the quarterback / offensive player before advancing the ball.
2. Running
 - a. The quarterback (player receiving the snap) cannot advance the ball across the line of scrimmage.
 - b. A partner may handoff to a partner behind the line of scrimmage.
 - c. The player who takes a handoff can pass the ball, as long as he/she does not pass the line of scrimmage.
 - d. “No Running Zones” are located 5-yards before the midfield line and goal line.
 - i. Any ball snapped from these zones must be passed.
 - ii. The purpose of “No Running Zones” is to avoid short yardage power running situations.
 - e. The ball carrier may not spin, dive, hurdle, stiff arm, or use either arm to shield a defender from grasping his/her flag.
 - f. The ball is marked at the spot of the position of the ball when the player is declared down (flag belt is pulled or any part of body other than hand or foot touches the ground).
3. Shielding (Flag Guarding)
 - a. Runners shall not shield (flag guard) by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove their flag belt.
 - b. Shielding includes:
 - i. Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt
 - ii. Stiff arms
 - iii. Placing the ball in a possession over the flag belt
 - iv. Lowering the shoulders or arm over the flag belt
4. Hurdling
 - a. Jumping over or attempting to jump over a player, by the ball carrier, to avoid being downed or to gain additional yardage is illegal.
 - b. Jumping over a player, who is on the ground to avoid injury, by official’s judgment, is legal.
5. Diving is illegal when used to down a player or advance a ball.



XIV. PASSING / RECEIVING

1. All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. All players are eligible to receive a forward pass, including the Quarterback, if he/she has legally handed-off. However, if a partner throws a pass, only athletes are eligible receivers.
4. Only one player is allowed in motion at the snap and he/she may not be moving toward the line of scrimmage at the snap.
5. A player must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch.
6. Interceptions change possession of the ball at the point of the interception. Exception: A ball intercepted in the end zone is spotted at the 5-yard line.
7. If a player steps out of bounds, he/she may not be the first player to touch the ball.
8. A defensive or offensive player may dive to catch a pass.
9. Pass Eligibility
 - a. All offensive and defensive players are eligible to receive a pass.
 - b. Partners are ineligible when another partner on his/her team is throwing a pass.
 - i. Unified Sports® teams are expected to comply with this rule without intervention by officials.
 - ii. Failure to “self-patrol” will be considered unsportsmanlike, and will be penalized accordingly.



XV. RUSHING THE PASSER

1. All players who rush the quarterback must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
2. The Linesman (official) starts each play on the sideline 7 yards beyond the line of scrimmage, and serves as the “marker” designating the rush line.
3. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend the line of scrimmage.
4. Once the quarterback hands off the ball, the 7-yard zone no longer exists, and all defenders are eligible to rush.



XVI. SCREEN BLOCKING

1. Screen blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without contacting him/her with any part of the screen blocker's body.
2. The screen blocker shall have his/her arms either at his/her side, or extended downward in front or behind his/her body.
3. Any use of arms, elbows, legs, or shoulders to initiate contact during the screen block is illegal.
4. A player must be on his/her feet before, during, and after screen blocking.
5. Screen blocking is the only form of legal blocking that can be used by any player at any time.
6. There are two form of legal screen blocking:
 - a. Backfield Blocking: If any of the provisions listed are violated, and contact results, the screener has committed an illegal block.
 - i. The screen blocker must give an opponent at least one (1) step.
 - ii. The screen blocker must not initiate contact with opponent.
 - iii. The screen blocker may not take a position so close to a moving opponent that this opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing directions.
 - iv. After the snap of the ball, a blocker may move laterally or backward two (2) steps.
 - b. Downfield Blocking: A basketball style (non-moving) screen is the only acceptable form of downfield blocking. The blocker may not run between a rusher and ball carrier impeding a defender's progress to the flag.

XVII. FLAG PULLING

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. If a player's flag belt inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends
3. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball (penalty).
4. Flag Guarding / Shielding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defense's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.
5. It is illegal (penalty) to attempt to pull or strip the ball from the carrier's possession at any time in an attempt to stop the run.



XVIII. FORMATIONS

1. Line of Scrimmage
 - a. The line of scrimmage for each team is a vertical plane through the point of the ball nearest the team's goal line.
 - b. Each player on a team must be on his/her side of the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
2. Motion – Only one player of the offensive team may be in motion at the snap.
 - a. This player must be behind the line of scrimmage and not moving toward the line of scrimmage at the time the ball is snapped.
 - b. If the player comes to a stop he/she must be set for one second.
3. Shift – A shift is the action of one or more offensive players who, after a huddle or taking set positions, move to a new set position prior to the snap. A player who shifts must reset for one second prior to the snap.
4. Snap – A snap is the legal act of passing the ball through the center's legs from the ground to the quarterback to start a play.

XIX. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

1. The officials may disqualify any player who participates in rough or unsportsmanlike play, including seeking to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier at any time, or a ball carrier failing to make an effort to avoid a defender who has established his/her position.
2. Any player who is charged for two unsportsmanlike fouls is automatically disqualified from the game.
3. No coach, player, substitute, or team attendant shall behave in an unsportsmanlike manner. Examples are, but not limited to:
 - a. Unnecessarily rough play
 - b. Profanity
 - c. Disrespecting the officials
 - d. Failure to comply with equipment and uniform requirements
 - e. Taunting opponents
 - f. Any act in which a player attempts to focus attention on him/herself (e.g. spiking the ball, showboating, dancing following a good play)

















XX. PENALTIES













1. Coaches may decline or accept the penalty based on result of the play.
2. The penalty may be accepted while the yardage is declined.
3. All penalties are assessed from the line of scrimmage.
4. No penalty may take the ball more than half the distance to the offender's goal line.
5. Offense: 10-yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down
 - a. Delay of Game (failing to snap within 30 second of ready)
 - b. False Start (shift or feigned charge that simulates action at the snap)
 - c. Flag Guarding (diving, spinning, warding off, or hurdling to prevent defender from pulling flag)
 - d. Illegal Backward Pass (any lateral or backward pass)
 - e. Illegal Forward Pass (Pass not completed beyond the line of scrimmage; partner to partner pass; pass made from beyond line of scrimmage)
 - f. Illegal Contact (holding, blocking, bumping, stiff arming);
 - g. Illegal Motion (more than one player moving at snap, moving forward at snap);
 - h. Illegal Procedure (quarterback run);
 - i. Intentional Grounding (Pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an offensive team receiver, pass intentionally thrown to save loss of yardage}
 - j. Pass Interference (Interfering with an opponent's opportunity to move toward or catch as pass)
6. Defense: 10-yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down
 - a. Illegal Contact (holding, blocking, bumping, stripping)
 - b. Illegal Flag Pull (before receiver has ball)
 - c. Illegal Rushing (rushing quarterback inside 7-yards of the line of scrimmage)
 - d. Offside (in or beyond neutral zone at snap)
 - e. Pass Interference (Interfering with an opponent's opportunity to move toward or catch as pass)



PENALTY CHART

Offensive Team Penalties – 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down			
Delay of Game	<i>Failing to snap the ball within 30 seconds of the Ready for Play.</i>		
False Start	<i>Shift or feigned charge that simulates action at the snap</i>		
Flag Guarding	<i>Diving, spinning, warding off, or hurdling to prevent defender from pulling flag.</i>		
Illegal Contact	<i>Holding, blocking, bumping, stiff arming and defender</i>		
Illegal Forward Pass Backward Pass	<i>Pass not completed beyond the line of scrimmage; any backward pass; partner to partner pass; pass made from beyond line of scrimmage</i>		
Illegal Motion	<i>More than one player moving at the snap; moving forward at the snap</i>		
Illegal Procedure	<i>Quarterback runs beyond line of scrimmage</i>		
Intentional Grounding	<i>Pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible receiver, pass intentionally thrown to save loss of yardage</i>		
Pass Interference	<i>Interfering with an opponent's opportunity to move toward or catch as pass</i>		

Defensive Team Penalties – 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down		
Illegal Contact	<i>Holding, blocking, bumping, or attempting to strip the ball from the runner</i>	
Illegal Flag Pull	<i>Pulling the flag before a receiver catches the ball</i>	
Illegal Rushing	<i>Rushing the quarterback from closer than 7 yards from the line of scrimmage</i>	
Offside	<i>Being in or beyond the line of scrimmage at the snap</i>	
Pass Interference	<i>Interfering with an opponent's opportunity to move toward or catch as pass</i>	

Other Officials Signals				
Dead Ball			Loss of Down	
Disqualification			Ready for Play	
End of Period			Safety	
First Down			Timeout	
Illegal Participation			Touchdown	
Incomplete Pass			Unsportsmanlike Conduct	

UNIFIED SPORTS® FLAG FOOTBALL OFFICIALS MANUAL

Unified Sports® Flag Football uses a three-person officiating crew.

- Referee (R)
- Linesman (L)
- Line Judge (LJ)

Unless otherwise noted in this document, the basic principles of high school football mechanics and game management apply.



UNIFORM

The standard high school football officials uniform is approved for use in Unified Sports® Flag Football. This includes:

- 2" Striped Shirt (long or short sleeve)
- Black Striped Officials Slacks
- Football Officials Cap (white for referee)
- Black Belt
- Black Shoes and Socks
- Whistle
- Yellow Penalty Flag
- Bean Bag
- Game Card

PRE-GAME

The officiating crew shall follow this pregame procedure before each game.

1. **All officials**
 - a. inspect the field for safety
 - b. observes teams to ensure legal equipment
2. **Referee** verifies timing procedures with Timer.
3. **Linesman** checks down box and reviews procedures with down box official.
4. **Line Judge** obtains and approves game ball(s) and meets with ball person(s).
5. Crew meets with head coaches, starting with the home team coach to verify team is legally equipped, reinforce the importance of sideline control, obtain captains' numbers, and check for any unusual / trick plays.
6. Crew meets with captains (one athlete and one partner) at midfield.
7. Following coin toss, move to positions at the appropriate end of the field and be prepared for start of the contest.

COIN TOSS

1. The coin toss should be held at midfield three minutes before the scheduled start of the game.
2. Have captains face each other with their backs to their sideline.
3. In the presence of the crew, referee instructs the visiting speaking captain to give “heads” or “tails” choice before the coin toss.
4. Referee tosses coin and determines the winner.
5. The winner of the coin toss will choose offense, defense or end of field to defend. The team winning the coin toss may also defer its choice to the second half.
6. Referee moves captains to face the appropriate goal line and signals “First Down” while standing next to captains of the team who will first possess the ball.

SCRIMMAGE PLAYS

Referee

1. To start the game:
 - a. Spots ball on the 5-yard line.
 - b. Moves to a position approximately 10 yards from the line of scrimmage on the throwing-hand side of the quarterback.
 - c. Signals “first down.”
 - d. When teams are ready to start, signals Ready for Play.
 - e. Responsible for offensive team’s goal line. (possible safety for muffed snap)
2. For each play:
 - a. Spots the ball at the middle of the field.
 - b. Moves to a position approximately 10 yards from the line of scrimmage on the throwing-hand side of the quarterback.
 - c. Communicates to offensive team for all “No Run” plays (play within 5 yards of midfield or opponent’s goal line)
 - d. Observes offensive team action before the snap.
 - e. After the snap:
 - 1) Monitors action of the quarterback
 - 2) Ensures offensive player(s) screening defenders are not initiating contact
 - 3) Monitors passes – no backward passes, must cross line of scrimmage
 - 4) Marks forward progress behind line of scrimmage
 - 5) Sounds whistle immediately if muffed or fumbled ball strikes the ground.
 - 6) Follows play if ball proceeds downfield.
 - f. When play ends, spot the ball and signal the next down.
 - g. Monitor 30 seconds allowed before next snap. (delay of game)
 - h. Signals first down if play ends beyond midfield.

Linesman

1. To start the game:
 - a. Straddles the 5-yard line one yard beyond the sideline on the visiting team's side of the field.
 - b. Signals down.
 - c. Counts the members of the offensive team.
2. For each play:
 - a. Mark forward progress for all plays ending beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - b. Straddle the line of scrimmage one yard beyond the sideline on the visiting team's side of the field.
 - c. Signal the down.
 - d. Monitor substitutions.
 - e. Observe the line of scrimmage for encroachment or false start. (dead ball foul)
 - f. Legality of running plays to your side of the field.
 - g. Pass plays to your side of the field up to 20 yards downfield.
 - h. Responsible for your sideline.
 - i. Communicate first down to referee if ball is advanced beyond midfield.

Line Judge

1. To start the game:
 - a. Straddles the 12-yard line one yard beyond the sideline on the home team's side of the field.
 - b. Signals down.
 - c. Counts the members of the defensive team.
 - d. Establishes communication with defenders planning to rush the quarterback.
2. For each play:
 - a. Mark forward progress for all plays ending more than 10 yards beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - b. Straddle the line 7 yards beyond the line of scrimmage one yard beyond the sideline on the home team's side of the field.
 - c. Signal the down.
 - d. Monitor substitutions.
 - e. Ensure defenders rushing the quarterback are at least 7 yards beyond the line of scrimmage (your position) before the ball is snapped.
 - f. Legality of running plays to your side of the field.
 - g. Pass plays to your side of the field up to 20 yards beyond the line of scrimmage and all passes more than 20 yards beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - h. Responsible for your sideline.
 - i. Responsible for goal line.

EXTRA POINT

1. Immediately after a touchdown, referee obtains offensive team's choice for either a one or two-point attempt.
 - a. Spot ball at 5-yard line for one-point attempt.
 - b. Spot ball at 10-yard line for two-point attempt.
 - c. If the offensive team fails to communicate its choice within 5 seconds, place the ball at the 5-yard line for a two-point attempt.
2. Crew officiates play according to standard play mechanics.
3. Signal "touchdown" or "incomplete" at the end of the extra point attempt.
4. Place ball at the 5-yard line to the succeeding possession.

TIMEOUTS

1. Each team has one timeout per half. Each timeout is one minute in length.
2. When requested, the covering official signals timeout and the team who requested it.
3. The **Referee** mirrors the signal, then moves to ball.
4. All officials mark their game card accordingly.
5. The **Linesman and Line Judge** monitor team activity at the sideline during the timeout, then beckons the team to return to the field upon a signal (whistle) from the Referee after 45 seconds of the timeout.
6. The **Referee** signals "Ready for Play" at 60 seconds, and the offensive team then has 30 seconds to snap the ball.

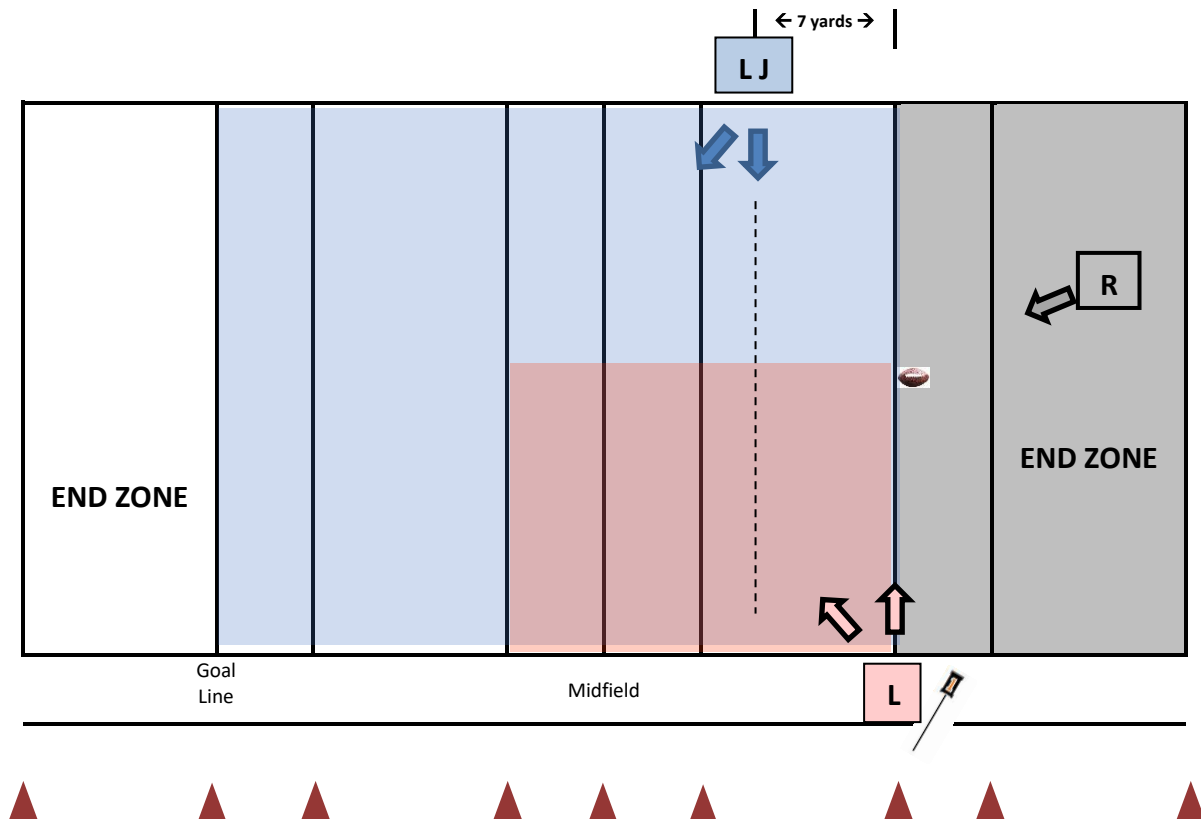
OVERTIME

1. Following a two-minute intermission, a coin toss is held in the same manner as the pregame toss.
2. The offensive team is allowed to run up to two plays starting from midfield.
3. All regulation rules and penalties are in effect, except there are no timeouts in overtime.
4. If the team first in possession scores a touchdown, the ball is spotted at midfield for their opponent to attempt to tie the game. If the team with the first attempt in overtime scores on the first play, the opposing team must also score on its first play to extend the game.
5. If the team first in possession fails to score, mark their forward progress with the down box. Their opponent then has two plays from midfield. The team second in possession wins the game if their score a touchdown.
6. If neither team scores a touchdown, the team gaining the most yards in their two plays is considered the winner.
7. If the game remains tied at the end of an overtime period, repeat the process until a winner is determined. Teams will alternate possessions until there is a winner. The team who did not have first choice in the first overtime has first choice to start the second.
8. If one team intercepts a pass they automatically win the game.

ADMINISTERING PENALTIES

1. The clock does not stop for penalty administration until the last minute of each half, so officials must move expeditiously.
2. All fouls (offense or defense) are 10 yards (or half the distance to the goal) and are measured from the previous spot.
3. Offensive team fouls include a loss of down.
4. Defensive team fouls include an automatic first down.
5. Double fouls offset, and the down is replayed.
6. Ensure the down box is not moved until the penalty is marked off.
7. The calling official(s) communicate fouls to the **Referee** who signals to press box (visiting) side of the field; then marks the distance off for the penalty.
8. The **Linesman** proceeds to the succeeding spot, then instructs the down box to be moved.
9. The **Line Judge** moves to the previous line of scrimmage and remains there until the penalty is enforced.

POSITIONS AND COVERAGE FOR A SCRIMMAGE PLAY



GAME CARD – FLAG FOOTBALL

VISITOR				COLOR			
COACH				CAPTAIN #s			
Coin Toss:				W-L-D		O-D-EOF	
Timeouts (1 per half):				①		②	
SCORING:							
Notes:							
HOME				COLOR			
COACH				CAPTAIN #s			
Coin Toss:				W-L-D		O-D-EOF	
Timeouts (1 per half):				①		②	
SCORING:							
Notes:							

UNIFIED SPORTS® FLAG FOOTBALL RULES TEST

T	F	1. A team may start the game with 4 players.
T	F	2. There are two No-Run Zones for each team consisting of the 5 yards before the midfield line and the 5 yards before the goal line.
T	F	3. A team that intercepts a pass in overtime automatically wins the game.
T	F	4. All possessions start at the offensive team's 5-yard line.
T	F	5. The ball carrier may not spin, dive, hurdle, stiff arm, or use either arm to shield a defender from grasping his/her flag.
T	F	6. Each team received one 60-second timeout per game.
T	F	7. The quarterback (player receiving the snap) cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage.
T	F	8. After the snap, a blocker may move laterally or backward up to 3 steps to screen a defender.
T	F	9. Captains have the opportunity to decline or accept the penalty based on the result of the play.
T	F	10. It is illegal to pull a receiver's flag before he/she catches the ball.
T	F	11. A protective mouthpiece must be worn at all times.
T	F	12. A rusher is the defensive player who starts at least 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage and rushes the quarterback to pull his/her flag or block the pass.
T	F	13. Any use of arms, elbows, hips, legs, or shoulders to initiate contact during the screen block is legal.
T	F	14. Unified Sports® Flag Football is non-contact.
T	F	15. The game consists of two 20-minute halves.
T	F	16. The only time the clock stops is during the last minute of each half when an incomplete pass, runner out of bounds, penalty, or change of possession occurs.
T	F	17. Deliberately advancing the ball after it has been declared dead is a 10-yard penalty and loss of down from the dead ball spot.

T	F	18. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are allowed.
T	F	19. Only one player may rush the quarterback, and he/she must start at least 7 yards before the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
T	F	20. All penalties are assessed from the line of scrimmage.
T	F	21. If the team with the first attempt in overtime scores on the first play, the opposing team must also score on its first play of overtime to continue the game.
T	F	22. The ball is dead if a receiver catches a ball without his/her flags attached.
T	F	23. A fumble may be recovered by the defense, but they may not run after recovering.
T	F	24. A ball intercepted in the end zone is spotted at the 5-yard line for the next play.
T	F	25. Laterals (backward passes) are allowed behind the line of scrimmage.
T	F	26. There are no fumbles.
T	F	27. An offensive or defensive player may dive to catch a pass, but a runner may not dive to gain extra yardage.
T	F	28. A player who shifts must be set for one second before the snap.
T	F	29. In overtime each team receives 4 plays from midfield and the team gaining the most points or yards is awarded 1 extra point and wins the game.
T	F	30. Penalties against the defensive team are always 10 yards and an automatic first down.
T	F	31. If a partner throws a pass, only athletes are eligible to receivers.
T	F	32. All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
T	F	33. If a player's flag belt inadvertently falls off during the play, that player is down and the ball is dead immediately upon catching a pass.
T	F	34. The ball must be snapped between the center's legs to start each play.
T	F	35. A player is not disqualified after his/her second unsportsmanlike penalty.

UNIFIED SPORTS® FLAG FOOTBALL RULES TEST – ANSWER KEY

		QUESTION	RULE REFERENCE
T	F	1. A team may start the game with 4 players.	<i>Will insert once rules finalized</i>
T	F	2. There are two No-Run Zones for each team consisting of the 5 yards before the midfield line and the 5 yards before the goal line.	
T	F	3. A team that intercepts a pass in overtime automatically wins the game.	
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T	F	5. The ball carrier may not spin, dive, hurdle, stiff arm, or use either arm to shield a defender from grasping his/her flag.	
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T	F	9. Captains have the opportunity to decline or accept the penalty based on the result of the play.	
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T	F	11. A protective mouthpiece must be worn at all times.	
T	F	12. A rusher is the defensive player who starts at least 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage and rushes the quarterback to pull his/her flag or block the pass.	
T	F	13. Any use of arms, elbows, hips, legs, or shoulders to initiate contact during the screen block is legal.	
T	F	14. Unified Sports® Flag Football is non-contact.	
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T	F	19.	Only one player may rush the quarterback, and he/she must start at least 7 yards before the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.	
T	F	20.	All penalties are assessed from the line of scrimmage.	
T	F	21.	If the team with the first attempt in overtime scores on the first play, the opposing team must also score on its first play of overtime to continue the game.	
T	F	22.	The ball is dead if a receiver catches a ball without his/her flags attached.	
T	F	23.	A fumble may be recovered by the defense, but they may not run after recovering.	
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