

# **SFX Flag Football Rules**

Updated September 2019

For rainout hotline, call 888-739-2569

## **I. Game**

- 1) At the start of each game, the head coach will meet at midfield with the referees and identify themselves, their assistant coaches, and the team captains. Captains from both teams will join the referee at midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball. The visiting team shall call the toss.
- 2) The winner of the coin toss gets to choose to be on offense at the start of the first, or second half. The loser of the coin toss gets to choose which endzone they defend at the start of the first half.
- 3) The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) plays to achieve a first down. First downs are typically achieved by crossing midfield, however a first down may also be achieved through penalty.
- 4) Once a team achieves a first down by crossing midfield, it has three (3) plays to score a touchdown.
- 5) If a team achieves a first down by crossing midfield, but is then pushed behind midfield as a result of penalty or loss of yardage, the team will not earn another first down by crossing midfield a second time.
- 6) If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
- 7) If the offensive team fails to cross midfield or achieve a first down, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- 8) All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
- 9) Teams change sides after the first half. At the start of the second half, the team that started the game on defense will possess the ball.
- 10) Coaches are only allowed on the field for the Rookie and NFC Divisions. For other divisions, the coaches must call a timeout before entering the field.

## **II. Terminology**

Ball Carrier – offensive player in possession of the ball.

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**Boundary Lines** – the outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines, and the rear end zone lines.

**Cleats** – Shoes with cleat studs that are meant to dig into ground upon impact to help avoid slippage. The bottom of the shoe varies in stiffness depending on the make and manufacturer, but is typically stiffer than a turf shoe and covered with 8 to 25 cleat studs made of metal or rubber.

**Dead Ball** – the period of time immediately before or after a play. Dead ball penalties are considered before or after the play and must be enforced before the start of the next play.

**Defense** – the squad opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.

**Downs (1-2-3)** – the offensive squad has three attempts or “Downs” to advance the ball. They must cross the Line-to-Gain to get another set of downs or to score.

**Ejection, Coach** – The removal of a coach for the duration of the game underway. The ejected coach must leave the vicinity of the playing field (100 yards) within 2 minutes of the ejection or the game will be forfeited.

**Ejection, Player** – The removal of a player for the duration of the game underway. The Player may remain on the sidelines but only in the Spectator area for the remainder of the game.

**Ejection, Spectator** – at the referee’s discretion a spectator may be ejected for language or behavior that is disruptive to the game. The offending Spectator will be asked to leave the vicinity of the playing field (100 yards) within 2 minutes of the Ejection. If the Spectator remains within 100 yards of the field after 2 minutes, the team with which he/she is affiliated will forfeit the game.

**End Zone** – 10-yard area in which scoring occurs.

**Established Position** - a player, standing in a set position with feet planted firmly on the ground, at least 1 yard away from the ball carrier.

**First Down Line** – midfield line, when the offense passes this line it gets a new set of downs.

**Flag Guarding** – an act by the ball carrier, accidental or intentional to prevent a defender from pulling the ball carrier’s flags. The ball carrier may be called for Flag Guarding by diving, leaping over a defender; blocking access to the runner’s flags with a hand or arm.

**Goal Line** – line at which the end zone begins.

**Inadvertent Whistle** – an official’s whistle that is performed in error.

**Lateral** – a backwards or sideways toss of the ball by the quarterback or ball carrier.

**Line of Scrimmage** – an imaginary line running through the point of the football and across the width of the field.

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**Live Ball** – the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties. Live Ball Penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.

**Offense** – the squad with possession of the ball.

**Passer** – the offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the Quarterback.

**Pass Interference** – It is pass interference by either team when any act by a player significantly hinders an eligible player's opportunity to catch the ball. Pass interference can only occur when a forward pass is thrown.

**Rusher** – defensive player(s) that rush the quarterback to prevent him/her from passing by pulling his/her flags or blocking the pass. The Rusher may not make any contact with the passer above the waist, even if unintentional, and may not make any contact with the passer unless it is a direct result of the rusher's attempt to pull a flag.

**Rush Line** – an imaginary line running across the width of the field 7 yards (into the defensive side) from the Line of Scrimmage.

**Shovel Pass** – a legal pass attempted behind the line of scrimmage by throwing the ball underhand or pushing it toward a receiver in a shot-put type manner.

**Suspension** – Barring of a coach, parent of player to take part in subsequent game(s).

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct** – is behavior that is inconsistent with the spirit of good sportsmanship including but not limited to rude, confrontational or offensive behavior or language. At the referee's discretion a coach or player called for Unsportsmanlike Conduct may also be Ejected from the game.

**Unnecessary Roughness** – any contact that is deemed excessive by the referee.

**Whistle** – the sound made by an official using a whistle that signifies the end of the play or a stop in the action for timeout, half time or the end of the game.

### **III. Eligibility & Rosters**

- 1) A player's age must fall within the specified age-range as of September 1st of the current year. Age will be verified by a valid birth certificate.
- 2) All rosters will be considered final by the 2nd Sunday of the season. No player can be replaced after that date regardless of the reason. Any player that is a replacement prior to that date must go through the registration process and be approved by the league.
- 3) Teams must field a minimum of five (5) players at all times. The referees will institute a 10-minute grace period, from the scheduled start of a game, to allow a team to field five players. If one team's players do not arrive, it will count as a forfeit for that team. If neither team is able to field a team by the end of the 10-minute grace period, both teams will forfeit the game.

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- 4) **FOR THE SENIOR DIVISION ONLY:** The game is played with six (6) players for each team on the field at a time. If a team does not have 6 players at the start of the game, they can field a team with five (5) players.
- 5) If a player is Ejected from the game leaving the team with fewer than 5 players, the team will forfeit the game.
- 6) Every player (except injured players) must play a minimum of every other possession. It is the coach's responsibility to make sure all players are getting into the game at this rate. While this is the minimum requirement it is the expectation that coaches are continually substituting new players into the game in order to insure playing time is equally distributed.
- 7) Any team caught playing a non-roster player will automatically forfeit that game and potentially be banned from the playoffs.

#### **IV. Equipment**

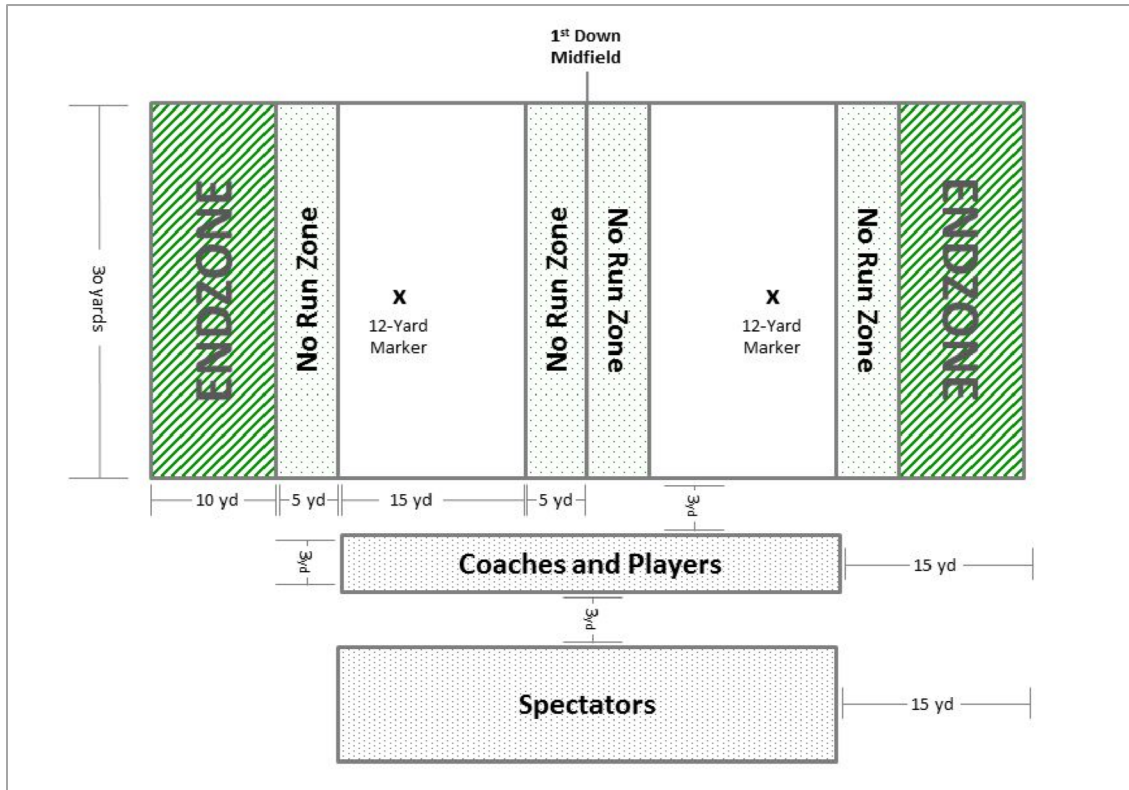
- 1) The SFX Flag Football League provides each player with a home and away jersey, flag belts and each team with two footballs. Each division must play with a regulation NFL Flag football that is specified for the division. Teams can only play with the regulation flag belts and footballs supplied by SFX.
- 2) Home teams wear dark jerseys, visiting teams wear light jerseys.
- 3) Each team provides at least one football, which must be fully inflated throughout the game. Either team may use the other team's ball at any time.
- 4) The player's uniform consists of SFX supplied jersey. Black colored shorts or pants are preferred. Colored shorts or pants are allowed by discretion of referees and/or SFX officials. The coach's uniform consists of an SFX supplied shirt and hat.
- 5) The flag belt adjustable strap must be completely tucked in. Flag belts must not be tampered with.
- 6) Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and Knee pads. Braces or wraps with exposed metal are not allowed.
- 7) Cleats, turf shoes, or sneakers may be worn. While cleats may be worn, only plastic, non-removable cleats are allowed.
- 8) Players must remove all watches, earrings and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
- 9) **MOUTHPIECES ARE MANDATORY!**
- 10) If a player is found in violation of the above rules, an Illegal Equipment penalty will be called and the player will not be permitted to play until the offending equipment is replaced and the player is in compliance.

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- 11) Player jerseys must be tucked into the pants if they hang below the belt line. If an untucked jersey interferes with a flag pull, the player can be called down at the spot of the attempted flag pull.
- 12) Pants or shorts with belt loops or pockets must be taped. If a pocket is not taped and is pulled by a defender, it is considered a flag pull.

If a player's jersey is untucked or pockets untapped, and the jersey or pockets interfere with pulling of the flag, the play can be called dead at the referee's discretion. The ball carrier will be considered down at the location where the flag would have been pulled.

#### V. Field



- 1) The field size is 30 yards by 70 yards with two 10-yard end zones and a midfield first down line. No Run Zones (a 5-yard zone before midfield and before the end zones) precede the first down line and goal line.
- 2) No-Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the No-Run Zones, teams may not run the ball. Shovel passes are legal in this area. All plays, including those that begin with a handoff, must be pass plays. The quarterback can be rushed as normal.
- 3) Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds. Once a player has stepped out of bounds, the player may not re-enter the field for the duration of play. A player who re-enters the field and affects the play will be called for illegal touching.

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- 4) Each offensive squad approaches only two No Run Zones in each drive (one zone 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
- 5) Teams and coaches must remain at all times in the Coaches and Players area, at least 3 yards behind the sideline and at least 15 yards from the end of the field. A Coach or Player who leaves the area and interferes with play on the field will be called for unsportsmanlike conduct.
- 6) Coaches will be held responsible for keeping their team's and spectators' sidelines in order.
- 7) Officiating will be done by two on-field referees. One referee on the field is responsible for keeping score; the other referee is responsible for time-keeping.

Note: The Prospect Park fields require a permit to play. Coaches and SFX Officials are asked to call PEP to remove non-permit holders from Prospect Park fields (646-613-1200).

#### **VI. Timing and Overtime**

- 1) Games are played on a 40 minute clock. There are two 20 minute halves. The first 18 minutes of each half are played on a continuous clock.
- 2) The clock is stopped at the 2 minute warning with an official 1 minute time out. In the final 2 minutes of each half, the clock is stopped for incomplete passes, out of bound plays and change of possession.
- 3) Halftime is 5 minutes long.
- 4) Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball
- 5) During the two-minute warning, any offensive penalty will result in a 10 second run off of a running clock. If there is less than 10 seconds on the clock at the time of the penalty, the game will be over. A timeout can be taken to avoid a 10 second runoff. Defensive penalties will stop the clock.
- 6) The clock continues to run on a dropped snap or hand-off.
- 7) Each team has two 60 second time outs per half.
- 8) Officials (SFX league officials and referees) can stop the clock at their discretion.
- 9) In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
- 10) If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game goes into sudden death overtime. Possession is determined by a coin toss. The visiting team shall call the toss.
- 11) The overtime period will be 10 minutes on a continuous clock with a one minute warning. Each team will have one 60 second time out. The first team that scores wins the game. If the score remains a tie at the end of the 10 minute overtime period, the game will end in a tie.

## 12) Scoring

- a) Touchdown: 6 points
- b) PAT (Point After Touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (12-yard line)
- c) A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt. conversion (from the 12-yard line). Once the ball is set, any change in the decision will be charged time out.
- d) Interceptions on conversions can be returned for the number of points attempted.
- e) Safety: 2 points. A Safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player while the ball is in the endzone, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety may also occur on an offensive penalty in the end zone.

## VII. Coaches

- 1) Coaches and League Officials are volunteers. Parents are encouraged to support the coach at all times.
- 2) Coaches must be in possession of these rules during each game.
- 3) A team can designate up to three coaches.
- 4) One coach at a time is allowed on the field to direct players only in the 9-11 Division. Coaches must move to the designated Coaches and Players area behind the sidelines before the snap of the ball.
- 5) Coaches must adhere to both the SFX Youth Sports and NFL-FLAG philosophies, coaching guidelines and codes of conduct. The coaching guidelines and codes of conduct may be found at [SFXYouthsports.com](http://SFXYouthsports.com)
- 6) Coaches, players, parents and spectators must adhere to the SFX Youth Sports code of conduct available at [SFXYouthsports.com](http://SFXYouthsports.com).
- 7) Coaches are allowed to speak with the referees about incidental matters, for example to ask the referee to repeat a call made on the field or inquire about time remaining. However, any non-routine verbal communication must be preceded by a Challenge Flag being thrown. Any non-routine conversation initiated by the Coach that is not accompanied by a Challenge Flag will be called as Unsportsmanlike Conduct if deemed inappropriate by the referees.
- 8) Spectators can inquire with the referees about time, score, etc, but the referee is not obligated to answer. At the referee's discretion a warning may be issued for the first infraction. If a spectator refuses to abide by this rule, the team associated with the spectator will be charged with Spectator

Ejection. If the parent refuses to leave the field the team with which he/she is affiliated will forfeit the game.

- 9) For player safety, if a player is injured the referee can ask the player to sit out at their discretion.
- 10) Coaches are requested to report any injuries to the league as soon as practical after completion of the game. If the player is unable to complete the game due to injury, the coach will not allow the player to return to the playing field the subsequent week unless the parent confirms that the player is eligible to play.

## **VIII. Live Ball/Dead Ball**

- 1) The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
- 2) The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. In regards to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back beyond the line.
- 3) A false start or offsides by the offense will result in a dead ball. Offsides on defense will not result in a dead ball until the conclusion of the play.
- 4) A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
- 5) The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals, by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. Any violation of this rule will result in unsportsmanlike conduct.
- 6) Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- 7) Any official can whistle the play dead.
- 8) Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground.
  - b. The ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
  - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
  - e. The ball carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground.
  - f. The ball carrier’s flag falls out.
  - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one flag
  - h. An inadvertent whistle is performed (at the spot where the ball was whistled dead)
  - i. The 7-second pass clock expires.  
*Note, the 7-second clock expires at the beginning of the 7th second (at the end of the 6th second).*
- 9) In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the team with possession has two options:



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- a. Take the play from where the ball was when the whistle blew.
- b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is considered dead, spotted where the ball was released, and remains in the possession of the team previously in possession of the ball (except in the case of turnover on downs). Possession is determined by the discretion of the referee.

- 10) A coach is allowed to question an official's rule interpretation by throwing a red challenge flag or verbally indicating a challenge. The referees on the field will confer and agree on any rule interpretation in order to give each team the full benefit of the call. If the referee's initial ruling is overturned, the time out will not be charged and the revised ruling will be enforced. If the ruling on the field stands, the team making the challenge will be charged a time out.
- 11) In the event of a challenge, the referee will inform the opposing coach. However, the opposing coach must stay on the Coaches and Players area behind the sideline and not engage in conversation with the refs or questioning the opposing coach while the refs are making their decision. If the opposing coach does not adhere to this rule the referee may call the coach for unsportsmanlike conduct
- 12) A team is allowed to use 2 challenges per game. If a team wins both challenges, a 3rd and final red challenge flag will be awarded to them. Each team is afforded one challenge in the overtime period.

#### **IX. Running**

- 1) The ball is spotted where the ball is when the runner's flag is pulled, the runner steps out of bounds or the play is otherwise blown dead. The ball is not placed where the runner's feet are at the dead ball whistle.
- 2) The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball without first handing the ball off to another offensive player. The quarterback does have the ability to scramble in the back field, but cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. The quarterback is the offensive player that receives the snap.
- 3) Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs.
- 4) Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind.
- 5) "No-Run Zones," located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones IF the subsequent line is LIVE. (Reminder: Each offensive squad approaches only TWO No-Run Zones.)
- 6) The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

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- 7) Once the ball has been handed off in front or behind the quarterback, all defensive players are eligible to rush from wherever they are.
- 8) Runners may not leave their feet in an attempt to hurdle another player. Spinning is allowed, but diving to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding and not permitted.
- 9) No blocking or “screening” (running with the ball carrier) is allowed at any time. Basketball style picks are allowed as long as the offensive player sets the pick with at least 1 yard separating him/her from the defensive player. The player setting the pick must have arms down and hands in front of their body below the waist. Once the pick is set, the player must remain stationary until the defender passes him/her. Once the defender passes him/her, the player is allowed to move.
- 10) Ball carriers must run in a manner that conspicuously avoids making contact with a defender. For example, a ball carrier must not run with elbows extended, shoulders hunched or head lowered in anticipation of contact. A ball carrier who runs with elbows extended, shoulders hunched or head lowered will be charged with unnecessary roughness.
- 11) Flag Obstruction –
  - a) All jerseys MUST BE tucked in before play begins if it obstructs the flags. The flags must be on the player’s hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.
  - b) If the ball carrier’s jersey is un-tucked and is blocking the flags and the defender grabs the jersey while attempting to pull the flag, it will be considered a flag pull at the referee’s discretion.
  - c) If the jersey is un-tucked by a defender during the play, there will be no penalty for another defensive player pulling the jersey while going for the flag.

#### **X. Passing**

- 1) All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage and thrown forward. Sideways passes are considered backward.
- 2) Shovel passes are allowed.
- 3) There is no intentional grounding, a pass may be thrown away as long as it is a forward pass.
- 4) The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock,” with the whistle blown on seven, not after. If a pass is not thrown or handed off by the quarterback within seven seconds then the play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. If the QB retains the ball for 7 seconds and is standing in the end zone when the whistle is blown, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).
- 5) An illegal forward pass is called when the passer’s whole body is over the line of scrimmage when the ball is released.

## **XI. Receiving**

- 1) Only one offensive player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion by the offensive player must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted toward the line of scrimmage.
- 2) All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- 3) A player's first foot must be inbounds when making a reception.
- 4) An offensive receiver or pass defender may not make contact with a player who is attempting to make a play on a ball in the air. In the event both players have equal opportunity to catch the ball, incidental contact by a player's hands, arms, or body below the shoulders may be allowed. However any contact—even incidental contact—above the shoulders will be called as Pass Interference against the player least likely to catch the ball.
- 5) Pass interference cannot be called on a ball that is deemed uncatchable by the referee.
- 6) In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- 7) Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception.
  - a. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
  - b. Interceptions are returnable

## **XII. Rushing the Passer**

- 1) A special marker, or the referee, will designate a Rush Line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players can verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
- 2) Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.
- 3) All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage before rushing.
- 4) If the rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass, the rusher will be called for an Illegal Rush (10 yards from the LOS and will repeat the down) even if the rusher does not pull any flags.
- 5) Any number of players can rush the quarterback so long as any rusher starts from the Rush Line. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- 6) Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect and any defender may cross the line of scrimmage.

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- 7) If a rusher leaves the rush line early, he/she may return to the rush line, reset, and then legally rush the quarterback.
- 8) If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, no penalty will be called.
- 9) If a rusher leaves the 7-yard line before the snap, he/she may immediately drop back to act as a defender with no offside penalty enforced.
- 10) Any defensive player who crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped will be called for Offsides (5 yards from the LOS and the down will be repeated).
- 11) Any defensive player who did not line up at the rush line but crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed-off will be called for an Illegal rush (10 yards from the LOS and will repeat the down).
- 12) Even if a team does not rush the passer, the seven second clock is still in effect.
- 13) Players rushing the Quarterback may attempt to block a pass. However, NO contact can be made with the passer above the waist, even if unintentional. The Rusher may not make any contact with the passer unless the contact is directly related to the Rusher's attempt to pull a flag. Any other contact with the passer will result in a penalty of Roughing the Passer (10 Yards from LOS and first down). The ball is an extension of the passers arm as long as the player has possession.
- 14) The center is allowed to set a pick to slow down the rusher. The center can then go into a pass pattern.
- 15) For a running back to not be called for an illegal pick for impeding the blitzer they must be running a clear and obvious route in the referee's judgement or setting a legal pick.
- 16) A Sack occurs if the QB's flag is pulled behind the line of scrimmage before the ball has been released. The ball is placed where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
- 17) A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone. On a safety the defensive team gains possession of the ball and are awarded 2 points.

#### **XIII. Flag Pulling**

- 1) A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- 2) Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through a ball carrier when pulling flags.
- 3) It is illegal to attempt to strip, or pull, the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.
- 4) If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately and the play ends.

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- 5) If a receiver has one flag when the ball is caught the ball is spotted where the reception was made.
- 6) A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flag off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
- 7) Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping of head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering flags with the football.

#### **XIV. Formations**

- 1) An offensive team must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the Center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
- 2) Only one offensive player at a time may go in motion parallel to the line of scrimmage. No motion is allowed toward the line of scrimmage, except if a running back is motioning to a wide receiver position.
- 3) Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the one player in motion. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
- 4) The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

#### **XV. Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. SFX YOUTH SPORTS MAINTAINS A "ZERO TOLERANCE" POLICY TOWARD FOUL PLAY, OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- 1) If the referee or SFX Youth Sports Official witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals!
- 2) Offensive or confrontational language will not be tolerated. Officials have the right to determine offensive language by players, coaches and/or spectators. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee may, but is not obligated, to give one warning. If it continues, the player, coach and/or spectator will be ejected from the game.
- 3) Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent or official.
- 4) Ball carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an Established Position. An established Position is defined as a set position at least 1 yard away from the ball carrier.
- 5) Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.

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- 6) Fans must also adhere to tenets of good sportsmanship. Failure to comply will result in a forfeit for that sideline's team as well as disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from SFX programs.
  - a. You may cheer for your team, but not harass, taunt or provoke officials or other teams.
  - b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
  - c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.
  - d. Sideline cheering (coaches, players or spectators) to intentionally disrupt or harass the opposition will result in that person being removed from the ball field.
  - e. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kid friendly.
  - f. Spectators, including their children and equipment such as coolers, bikes, bags, blankets, and chairs must be at least 9 yards behind the sidelines and at least 15 yards from the end of the field.

#### **XVI. Penalties**

- 1) The referee will call all penalties.
- 2) All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted (spot fouls).
- 3) Only coaches may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls. Any player who questions judgment calls of the referee can be charged with a Delay of Game penalty.
- 4) Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines the penalty.
- 5) Penalties are assessed Live Ball then Dead Ball. Live Ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered completed.
- 6) Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
- 7) 5-yard penalties include:
  - Illegal Equipment
  - Offside
  - Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc.)
  - Illegal forward pass (throwing a pass beyond the line of scrimmage)
  - Illegal touching (player goes out of bounds and is the first player to touch the ball)
  - Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)
  - Screening, Blocking or Running with the ball carrier
  - Delay of game
  - Defense Illegal contact (holding blocking etc.)
- 8) 10-Yard Penalties
  - Roughing the passer
  - Taunting
  - Unsportsmanlike conduct
  - Charging

## SFX Flag Football Rules

Unnecessary roughness

Stripping

Flag Guarding

Defense Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)

Defense Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball)

Note: If a taunting or unsportsmanlike conduct penalty is called against the offensive team after the offense has scored a touchdown, the 10-yard penalty will be marked off from the line of scrimmage of the PAT attempt

### 9. Defensive Penalties

Offside	5 yards from and replay the down
Illegal contact (Holding, blocking, etc.)	Spot foul, 5 yards from & first down
Illegal flag pull (Before receiver has ball)	10 yards from the LOS and replay the down
Illegal rushing ( <i>Starting rush from inside 7-yards</i> )	10 yards from the LOS and replay the down
<i>Roughing the passer</i>	10 yards from the LOS and first down
Taunting	10 yards from the LOS and first down
Unnecessary Roughness	10 yards from the end of the play & auto first down
Stripping	10 yards from the end of the play & first down
Defensive Pass Interference	Spot foul & first down

## 10. Offensive Penalties

Illegal motion ( <i>More than one person moving, false start, etc.</i> )	5 yards from the LOS & replay the down
Illegal forward pass ( <i>Pass thrown beyond the line of scrimmage</i> )	5 yards from the LOS & loss of down
Offensive pass interference ( <i>Illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender</i> )	5 yards from the LOS & loss of down
Flag guarding	Spot foul, 10 yards & loss of down
Unsportsmanlike conduct	Spot foul, 10 yards & loss of down
Screening, Blocking or Running with the ball carrier	Spot foul, 5 yards & loss of down
Charging	Spot foul, 10 yards & loss of down
Taunting	Spot foul, 10 yards & loss of down
Delay of game	5 yards from the LOS & replay the down
Offensive Unnecessary Roughness	Spot foul, 10 yards & loss of down
Offside	5 yards from the LOS & replay the down

**SFX FLAG FOOTBALL is a noncontact sport.**  
**Intentional bumping by the defense or offense is not allowed!**