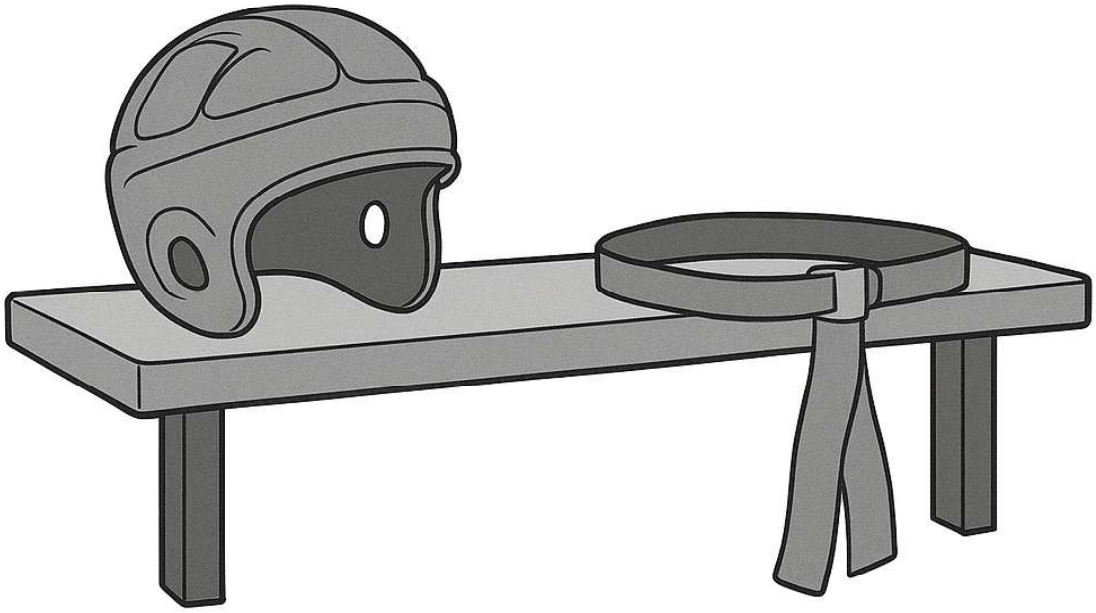
WOMEN'S FLAG FOOTBALL

2026 RULES BOOK

If you think you or your teammate have a CONCUSSION



DON’T HIDE IT. REPORT IT. TAKE TIME TO RECOVER.

IT’S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON.

WHEN IN DOUBT, GET CHECKED OUT.

For more information and resources, visit www.cdc.gov/headsup

2026 COLLEGIATE WOMEN'S FLAG FOOTBALL RULES AND INTERPRETATIONS

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JANUARY 2026

Manuscript Prepared By: RCX LLC and NWFOA LLC, Facilitators, Collegiate Women's Flag Football Rules Focus Group.

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Collegiate Women's Flag Football Rules Focus Group

The chart below lists the members of the Rules Focus Group who voted on and approved the rules included in this edition of the book. This information is being included for historical purposes.

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Note: A special thank you to Julie Johnson and Denise Crudup for their editing contribution. The NCAA Football Rules Book language served as the underpinning of this text. Great thanks to the NCAA Football Rules Committee for their modeling.

Those who find it necessary to contact the editor for interpretations of rules, play situations or for information and guidance regarding officiating, may send an e-mail to the address below. Requests should be sent to:

The CFFO
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Major Rule Changes for 2026

The numbers and letters in the left column refer to rule, section and article, respectively. Changed or altered items from previous collegiate rulebook renditions are identified by a blue shaded background, unless the change results in the deletion of the entire segment containing the change.

The Flag Football Focus Group made the following major changes for the 2026 season:

MAJOR RULE CHANGES FOR 2026

1-2-5 & 7	The Team box and sideline markers/indicators shall be a minimum of two (2) yards from the sideline
1-3-2	Number of game balls offered to officials for certification
1-4-10	Allows a manufacturer to submit tinted glasses or goggle for approval
2-1-4 a-b	Play Clock changed to a single 30 second clock throughout the game
2-14-3b	"T" signal defined as an invalid fair catch signal
3-3-1	Playing time extended to 15 minutes
3-6-1 f	Establishment of a two-minute timeout
5-3	Establishment of an Onside Conversion play
9-2-1	Screen Blocking section added
9-3-1	Use of Hands and Illegal Contact section added
9-4-1	Additional Unsportsmanlike Conduct actions
12-1-1	Addresses Instant Replay at member institutions

Index to Major Editorial Changes

1-3-1d	Updated ball specifications
1-3-4	Language regarding the placement of the down box and line to gain indicator
1-4-14	Prohibited Field Equipment added.
1-4-14	Coaches' Certification added
2-5-1c-d	Clarification on player eligibility throughout the down
2-15-1	Removal of ball marker language
3-3-2d-12	Clarifies clock status after a Two-Minute Timeout.
3-3-4	Timing Devices guidelines added
6-5-2	Clarified penalty enforcement common to the game
7-4-8c	Clarified illegal contact prior to a pass
8-2-1a	Clarification on when a touchdown is scored
8-3-2b	Clarification on ball placement during a try
10-1-6	Added language clarifying live vs dead ball fouls
10-1-7	Added language clarifying interval fouls
Appendix	Addition of A-I
Part 2	Officiating Standards added
Part 3	Interpretations and Approved Rulings section added

Points of Emphasis

The Collegiate Women's Flag Football Rules Focus Group takes its influence from the Football Code, which was introduced in 1916 and has been utilized to reinforce sportsmanlike conduct and the protection of defenseless players. These guidelines form a harmony of agreement among coaches, players, game officials and administrators that places each contest in an environment of fairness and sportsmanship. For the sport of flag football, it should be emphasized that the following are unethical practices relative to this game: "Using parts of the body, the ball or any piece of equipment to intentionally contact another player". Every participant in the collegiate flag football arena shares a responsibility for ethical conduct that enhances the future of this emerging American tradition.

PROTECTION OF A DEFENSELESS PLAYER

A defenseless player in flag football is a player who, because of their position or point of focus during a play (ex. attempt to pass a ball or to catch a pass), cannot reasonably protect themselves from contact. The penalty for initiating contact with a defenseless player that rises to the level of the type of contact that would be made to an opponent in the tackle game, will include an automatic disqualification. Coaches and officials must be diligent to ensure that players understand the non/limited contact nature of flag football. The appeals process for players disqualified from competition due to flagrantly contacting an opponent will begin in the 2027 season. If the national coordinator concludes that it is clearly obvious that the player should not have been disqualified, the ruling will be reversed.

CONCUSSIONS

Coaches and medical personnel should exercise caution in the treatment of a student-athlete who exhibits signs of a concussion. When in question, officials will declare an injury timeout for any player exhibiting signs of a concussion. See Appendix C for detailed information.

PRE-SNAP ACTIONS OR OFFENSE & DEFENSE/DISCONCERTING SIGNALS

The intent of pre-snap rules is to define and govern what is allowed by the offense and defense. The offense, by design, has an advantage of knowing the starting signal, cadence, or sound, and the defense has an advantage as they are not limited in terms of overall player movements before the snap. The offense may not use verbal or non-verbal signals that mimic the snap or defensive shifts. The defense may not use verbal or non-verbal signals that mimic or interfere with the offense's cadence, including

claps or start-of-play cues. To discourage tactics at the line of scrimmage designed to cause an opponent to foul or to give either team an undue advantage, officials must be on high alert for any type of illegal pre-snap actions by either team. Additionally, coaches should not teach illegal pre-snap actions designed to make their opponent foul.

FEIGNING AN INJURY

Although flag is already a fast game and hasn't yet seen the incorporation of this tactic from the tackle game, it should be noted that players feigning an injury in an attempt to slow down or break the rhythm of the opponent and/or try to gain an unwarranted time out is not a good look for the future of flag. Full protection under the rules should go to a player that indeed suffers an injury; however, on occasion some potential injuries are suspect, happen in unusual windows between plays and appear to be staged.

Head Coaches are expected to set a culture within their team to ensure that this type of dishonest action will not be tolerated. Feigning an injury is not ethical and is completely against the spirit of fair competition. It is a bad look for our game.

For the 2026 season, if a player presents as injured after the ball is spotted by the officials, that team will be charged a team timeout or a delay of game penalty if all timeouts have been used.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT/TAUNTING

Similar to tackle football, officials will be instructed to penalize any taunting action that is directed towards an opponent. Pregame warm-up rules are designed to ensure proper sportsmanship prior to the start of a contest. Officials should be vigilant during the time that players are on the field during this period. Unsportsmanlike actions will be penalized by game officials. This includes behavior that is disrespectful, disruptive to the game, or intended to provoke an opponent, official, or spectator. Postgame acts fall under the jurisdiction of game management. Coaches and players should be mindful of their actions. Conference protocol and policies will determine any postgame impacts to the participating players, coaches, and institutions.

SIDELINE CONTROL

Coaches that need to have conversations with officials about specific rulings within the game must do so from the Team Area. Coaches are encouraged not to enter the field of play or leave the Team Area to debate officiating decisions, and those that do so will have committed an automatic Unsportsmanlike Conduct Foul.

Coaches will be allowed to only step to the sideline to call offensive and defensive signals after all action has ceased. That working space (six-foot area just outside of the sidelines) is intended to allow officials to adequately perform their duties; to protect the safety of officials, players and coaches; and to allow teams to demonstrate good sportsmanship within the team area. If any player, coach, or team personnel approaches an official with a tablet to review or view video during the game, that will result in an automatic unsportsmanlike conduct foul. Special attention should be given

to the rule stating that if a coach receives two unsportsmanlike fouls in a single game, they are ejected.

ILLEGAL CONTACT AGAINST A QUARTERBACK/PASSER

Because of their position, the passer is often in a vulnerable position, with little or no opportunity to protect themselves from, or to prepare for, forcible contact at the head and neck, arms, waist or torso. In recognition of this, it should be noted that no defensive player shall make unnecessary or avoidable contact with a player while they are in a passing posture or after it is clear the ball has been released.

PACE OF PLAY, SUBSTITUTIONS, & LENGTH OF GAME

Where tackle football utilized a 40/25 play clock, flag football utilizes a 30-second play clock. This supports the use of the up-tempo offense commonly seen in flag football across the country. Similar to tackle, this style of play is often used to prevent the defense from being able to substitute, which may create an advantage for the offense. It becomes particularly advantageous in the last two minutes of each half.

The Flag Football Focus Group has decided to adopt the same tackle officiating mechanics to prevent the offense from gaining an unintended advantage by allowing the defense to match up when the offense substitutes. Note that the crew will work the substitution process any time Team A substitutes or Team A players go out of bounds into their team area, even if the substitution is into the huddle. Adherence to these guidelines will allow a reasonable amount of time for the defense to change personnel, if desired, following an offensive substitution.

On plays in which the offense does not substitute, officials have been instructed that they are not to significantly increase the pace used to spot the ball and make it ready for play. Doing so would place the defensive team at a distinct disadvantage not intended by rule. It is important that a consistent pace be maintained when spotting the football and making it ready for play in all games. That will allow defensive coaches the ability to recognize how much time is available prior to the ball being ready for play and whether they will have an opportunity to make adjustments to personnel.

Proper implementation of these guidelines will ensure that the mechanics of game officials will not affect the balance between offense and defense and that neither team will gain an advantage not intended by rule regardless of the style of play.

Statement on Sportsmanship

Collegiate Women's Flag Football Rules Focus Group

- Similar to the tackle Football Rules Committee position regarding unsportsmanlike conduct, the Collegiate Women's Flag Football Rules Focus Group is firm in its support of unsportsmanlike conduct rules as they currently are written and officiated. Players who taunt their opponent or inappropriately draw attention to themselves in a premeditated, excessive or prolonged manner will be penalized with unsportsmanlike conduct. Players should be taught the discipline that reinforces flag football as a team game.

- The Focus Group reminds head coaches of their responsibility for the behavior of their players before, during, and after the game. Pre-game unsportsmanlike behavior can lead to confrontation between teams. Such action can lead to penalties enforced on the opening possession, possibly including disqualification of players. Repeated occurrence of such unsportsmanlike behavior by a team may result in punitive action by the conference against the head coach and their institution.

- All participants are expected to show sportsmanship in postgame activities. Postgame unsportsmanlike conduct may also result in institutional or individual disciplinary action.

The Flag Football Code

Flag football is a fast-paced, competitive, and non-contact sport that demands the highest standards of sportsmanship and integrity from all participants. Coaches, players, and others associated with the game are expected to uphold values of fairness, respect, and self-control at all times. There is no place for unfair tactics, unsportsmanlike conduct, or behavior deliberately designed to provoke, intimidate, or cause harm to an opponent.

The American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) Code of Ethics states:

a. The Football Code shall be an integral part of this code of ethics and should be carefully read and observed.
b. To gain an advantage by circumvention or disregard for the rules brands a coach or player as unfit to be associated with the sport.

The Flag Football Focus Group will endeavor to support the emerging community governing flag football. Specific standards will continue to develop; in the interim the Focus Group will stand by rule and appropriate penalty, to prohibit all forms of illegal contact, unfair tactics, and unsportsmanlike conduct. Rules alone cannot accomplish this end. Only the continued best efforts of coaches, players, officials, and allies of the game can preserve the ethical standards that the public has a right to expect in collegiate sport. Therefore, as a guide to players, coaches, officials, and others responsible for the welfare of the game, the Focus Group champions the following code:

COACHING ETHICS

Deliberately teaching players to violate or exploit the rules is indefensible. Coaches are educators whose primary responsibility is to model integrity and sportsmanship. Instruction that promotes illegal contact, flag guarding, obstruction, or disrespect toward officials undermines both the competitive integrity and educational mission of the sport.

Such instruction is unfair to one's opponent, harmful to the character of student-athletes, and has no place in a game that emphasizes skill, discipline, and respect.

The following are unethical practices in flag football:

a. Teaching or encouraging illegal contact, including pushing, screening, or impeding an opponent's movement.
b. Attempting to deceive opponents or officials through false injury, delay tactics, or deliberate misrepresentation.
c. Using profanity, disrespectful language, or gestures toward opponents, teammates, or officials.
d. Encouraging or tolerating any action that compromises player safety or the spirit of non-contact play.
e. Criticizing officials publicly or privately in a manner that undermines respect for the game.
f. Using nontherapeutic or performance-enhancing substances, which is inconsistent with the aims and purposes of amateur athletics.

Coaches must constantly reinforce that flag football is a game of strategy, skill, and quickness — not contact. Illegal contact is the most frequently called foul, and teams that play disciplined, controlled defense embody the highest ideals of the sport.

TALKING TO AN OPPONENT

Talking to an opponent in any manner that is demeaning, vulgar, taunting, or designed to provoke a response is unsportsmanlike and illegal. Players and coaches are expected to demonstrate respect before, during, and after the game. Competitive spirit should never come at the expense of character. Coaches are urged to emphasize these standards frequently and support all officials' actions to uphold them.

TALKING TO OFFICIALS

When an official imposes a penalty or makes a decision, they are performing their duty as they see fit. Officials are on the field to uphold the integrity of the game, and their judgments should be accepted with respect.
The AFCA Code of Ethics states:

a. On- or off-the-record criticism of officials to players or the public shall be considered unethical.
b. For a coach or player to address uncomplimentary or confrontational remarks to any official during the game—or to engage in conduct that might incite teammates or spectators against officials—is conduct unworthy of participation in intercollegiate athletics.

ILLEGAL CONTACT

Flag football is a non-contact sport. Any form of physical contact that impedes, displaces, or endangers an opponent is unfair and contrary to the spirit of the game. Illegal contact eliminates skill and strategy and must be strictly avoided. The objective of the game is to advance the ball by execution, teamwork, and speed—without using contact to gain advantage. Coaches and players must thoroughly understand the rules governing legal flag pulls, positioning, and body control. Because illegal contact is the most commonly called foul in flag football, it must be a point of continuous emphasis in practice, coaching, and player conduct.

SPORTSMANSHIP

The player or coach who intentionally violates a rule is guilty of unfair play and unsportsmanlike conduct. Whether or not such action is detected or penalized, it discredits the good name of the game. Respect for the opponent, the officials, and the game itself is the foundation of flag football. The true measure of success is not only the score, but the demonstration of integrity, discipline, and teamwork that define collegiate sport.

Part 1: The Rules

Collegiate Women's Flag Football Rules and Interpretations have been designated as either administrative rules or conduct rules. Typically, administrative rules are those dealing with preparation for the contest. Conduct rules are those that have to do directly with the playing of the contest. Some administrative rules (as indicated) may be altered by the mutual consent of the competing institutions. Others (as indicated) are unalterable. No conduct rule may be changed by mutual consent. NCAA member institutions may choose to follow these playing rules; however, the NCAA does not govern or enforce these playing rules.

In the Collegiate Women's Flag Football Rules and Interpretations, administrative rules that may be altered by mutual consent of the institutions include:

3-3-1-b	3-34-2-c and d
3-3-2-a	11-2-1

Administrative rules that may not be altered include:

1-1-1	1-2-4	1-4-15
1-1-2	1-2-5	1-4-16
1-1-3-a and b	1-2-6	3-2-4
1-1-4	1-2-7	3-4-2
1-1-5	1-2-8	11-1
1-1-6	1-2-9	11-2
1-2-1	1-3-1	
1-2-2	1-3-2	
1-2-3	1-4-12	

All other rules are conduct rules and may not be altered.

RULE 1
The Game, Field, Players and Equipment

SECTION 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The Game
ARTICLE 1. The game shall be played between two teams of no more than seven players each, on a rectangle field and with an inflated ball having the shape of a prolate spheroid. A team may legally play with fewer than seven players.

Goal Lines
ARTICLE 2. Goal lines, one for each team, shall be established at opposite ends of the field of play, and each team shall be allowed opportunities to advance the ball across the other team's goal line by running or passing it.

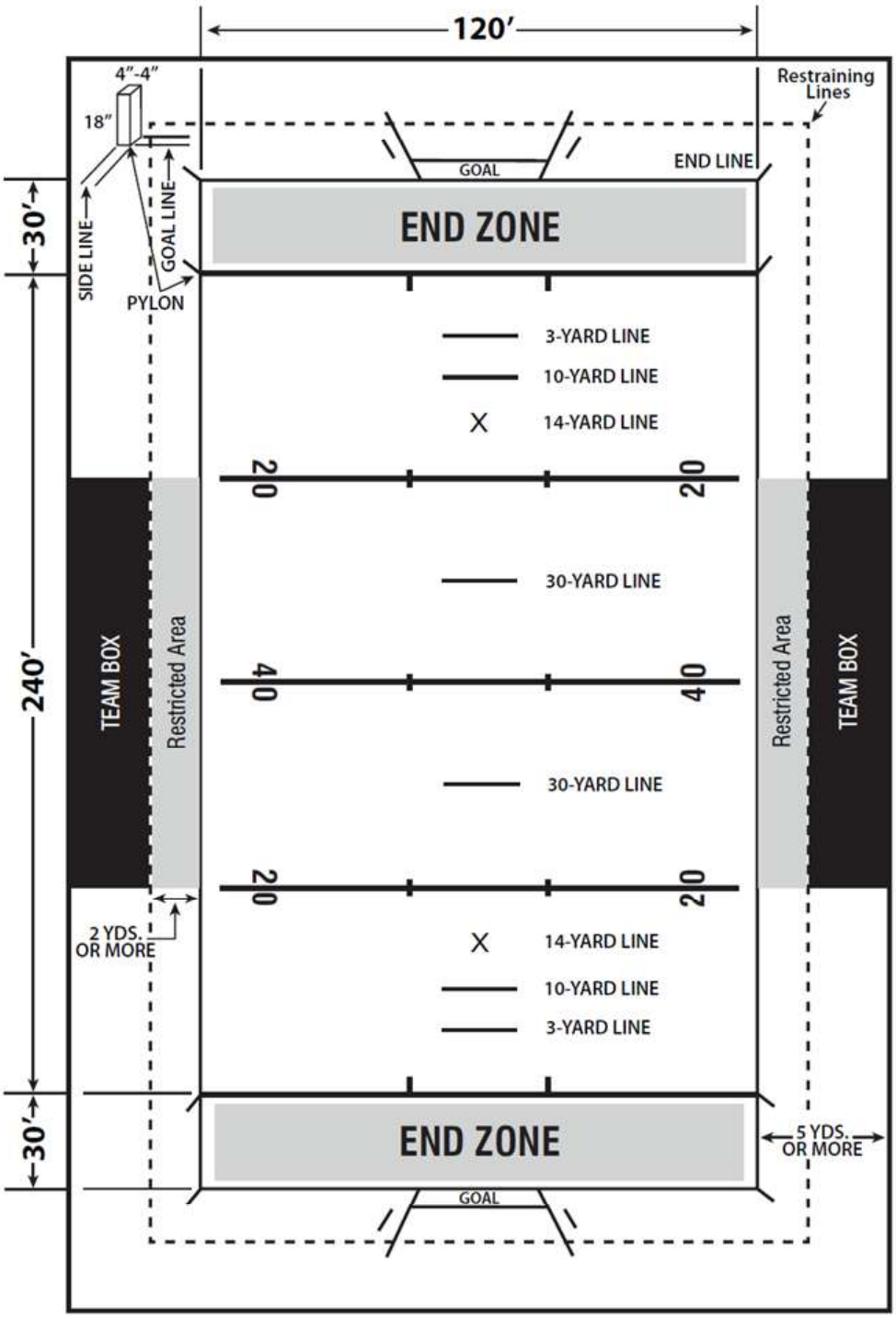
Winning Team and Final Score
ARTICLE 3. a. The teams shall be awarded points for scoring according to rule and, unless the game is forfeited, the team having the larger score at the end of the game shall be the winning team.
b. When the referee declares that the game has ended, the score is final.

Game Officials
ARTICLE 4. The game shall be played under the supervision of the game officials as specified in Rule 11.

Team Captains
ARTICLE 5. Each team shall designate to the referee not more than four players as its field captain(s). One player at a time shall speak for their team in all dealings with the officials.

Persons Subject to the Rules
ARTICLE 6. a. All persons subject to the rules are governed by the decisions of the officials.
b. Those persons subject to the rules are: Everyone in the team area, players, substitutes, replaced players, coaches, athletics trainers, cheerleaders, band members, mascots, public-address announcers, audio/visual/lighting system operators, and other persons affiliated with the teams or institutions.

SECTION 2. THE FIELD



Dimensions
ARTICLE 1. The field shall be a rectangular area with dimensions, lines, zones, goals, and pylons indicated in Appendix D. If using a tackle football field, the dimensions and zones will be set to those specific to 7 on 7 flag football.

Field Markings
ARTICLE 2. The width of the field shall be lined at 20-yard intervals from goal line to goal line. All yard lines inside the boundaries shall stop 4" from each sideline. Hash marks are required and must be present. They shall run parallel with each sideline, located 15 yards “in” from each sideline. The 3 and 10-yard Try lines shall be 2 yards wide and 4" thick. Both 14-yard lines shall be marked with an “X” or appropriate indicator and shall have a height of 1 yard and a line thickness of 4". White is the recommended color for all field markings.

Limit Lines
ARTICLE 3. a. Limit lines shall be marked 12 feet outside the sidelines and the end lines. Limit lines designating team areas shall be solid lines.

b. No person outside the team shall be inside the limit lines. Game management personnel have the responsibility and the authority to enforce this rule. (***Exception***: Hand-held cameras under the supervision of the television partners may briefly be between the limit lines and the sideline after the ball is dead and the game clock has been stopped. This exception does not allow cameras to be on the field of play or in the end zone at any time).
c. Limit lines shall also be marked six feet from the team area around the side and back of the team area, if the stadium permits.

Goal Line.
ARTICLE 4. The entire width of the goal line shall be part of the end zone.

Team Box
ARTICLE 5. a. Each side of the field shall have a team box designated for the players and non-players. This team box shall be located a minimum of two (2) yards from the sideline, between the twenty (20) yard lines on both sides of the field. The home team shall have a designated home side, usually the side of the field with the press box. All team members who are not participating in the play shall remain in the Team Box during live-balls.

b. The team area shall be limited to squad members in full uniform. All persons in the team area are subject to the rules and are governed by decisions of the officials (Rule 1-1-6). The individuals not in full uniform shall wear special team area or university credentials.
c. Coaches are permitted in the coaching box (see Appendix D), which is the area bounded by the limit line and coaching line between the 20-yard lines.
d. No media personnel, including journalists, radio and television personnel, or their equipment, shall be in the team area or coaching box, and no media personnel shall communicate in any way with persons in the team area or coaching box. In stadiums where the team area extends to the spectator seating area, a pass-through area should be made available for media to move from one end of the field to the other on both sides of the field.
e. Game management personnel shall remove all persons not authorized by rule.

End Zone Pylons
ARTICLE 6. Soft, flexible four-sided pylons 4 inches by 4 inches with an overall height of 18 inches, which may include a 2-inch space between the bottom of the pylon and the ground, are required. They shall be red or orange in color. They are placed at the inside corners of the eight intersections of the sidelines with the goal lines and end lines. The pylons marking the intersections of the end lines and hash marks extended shall be placed three feet off the end lines.

Sideline Zone Markers, Down Indicators and Line-to-Gain Markers.
ARTICLE 7. Each line to gain, both 20-yard lines and the 40-yard line, shall have yard-line markers constructed of a soft and pliable material, which shall be located two (2) yards from the side lines. Team members shall remain behind the markers in the team box while not participating in the game.

Field Numbers
ARTICLE 8. White field yard line numbers shall be 6' in height and 4' in width, with the tops of the numbers 5 yards from the sidelines, if used.

Obstructions
ARTICLE 9. a. All obstructions within the playing enclosure shall be placed or constructed in such a manner as to avoid any possible hazard to players. This includes anything dangerous to anyone at the limit lines.

b. After the officials' pregame inspection of the playing enclosure, the referee shall order any hazardous obstructions located inside the limit lines removed.
c. The referee shall report to game management personnel any obstructions constituting a hazard within the playing enclosure but outside the limit lines. Final determination of corrective action shall be the responsibility of game management personnel.
d. After the officials have completed their pregame inspection of the playing enclosure, it is the responsibility of game management personnel to ensure that the playing enclosure remains safe throughout the game.

Field Surface and Slope
ARTICLE 10. a. No material or device shall be used to improve or degrade the playing surface or other conditions and give one player or team an advantage.
PENALTY - Live-ball foul. Five yards from the previous spot.

b. The referee may require any improvement in the field necessary for proper and safe game administration.
c. It is recommended there be a slope of 1/4" per foot from the center of the field to each sideline on a natural grass field.

SECTION 3. GAME EQUIPMENT

The Ball
ARTICLE 1. The ball shall meet the following specifications:

a. New or nearly new. (A nearly new ball is a ball that has not been altered and retains the properties and qualities of a new ball).

b. A tan-colored cover consisting of pebbled-grain, cowhide, or approved composition (leather) case without corrugations other than those formed by the natural seam and the lace on one of the grooves.
c. Laces shall be spaced evenly in a set of eight (8) or twelve (12). The lace shall begin and end 3 ¾ inches from either end of the ball.
d. It shall weigh between 12 and 14 ounces while inflated to 10 to 13 pounds per square inch (psi).
e. Each ball shall bear the authenticating mark.
f. Advertising is prohibited on the ball. All balls shall contain only the following permissible items:
    1. School name and/or logo.
    2. Conference name and/or logo.
    3. Ball manufactures name and/or logo.

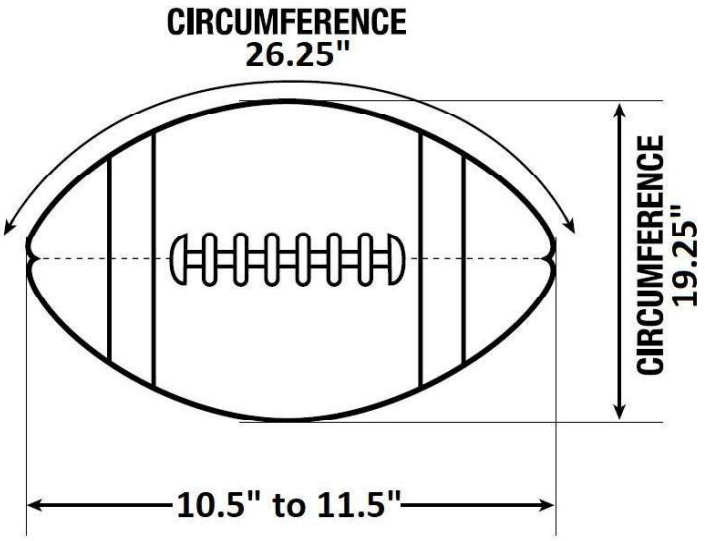
Administration and Enforcement

ARTICLE 2: a. The game officials shall test and be the sole judge of not more than 5 balls offered for play by each team before and during the game. The game officials may approve additional balls if warranted by conditions. The referee shall have the final decision on all balls which each team can use during the game.

b. Home management shall provide a pressure pump and measuring device.
c. The home team is responsible for providing legal balls and should notify the opponent of the ball to be used.
d. During the entire game, either team may use a new or nearly new ball of its choice when it is in possession, providing the ball meets the required specifications and has been measured and tested according to rule.
e. The visiting team is responsible for providing the legal balls it wishes to use while it is in possession if the balls provided by the home team are not acceptable.
f. All balls to be used must be presented to the referee for testing at least 45 minutes before the start of the game. Once the teams have presented the game balls to the referee, they remain under the general supervision of the officials throughout the game.
g. When the ball becomes dead in a side zone, is unfit for play, is subject to measurement in a side zone or is inaccessible, a replacement ball shall be obtained from a ball person

Marking Balls

Article 3. Marking a ball indicating a preference for any players or situation is prohibited.
PENALTY - Live-ball foul. 10 yards from the previous spot



Down Box

ARTICLE 4. One down box shall be used to indicate the line of scrimmage and will also indicate the number of the down. It shall be operated approximately 2 yards from the sideline. This box must be operated on the side of the field opposite the press box. One line to gain indicator shall be placed at the next line to gain. It shall be placed three yards from the sideline, directly behind the marker. During the try the down box shall be placed at the relative extra point line, and it shall display the point value which has been declared by Team A. The down box and line to gain indicator shall be operated by host institution personnel or auxiliary officiating personnel.

SECTION 4. PLAYERS AND PLAYING EQUIPMENT

Jersey

ARTICLE 1. a. Design.

1. The jersey may not be altered or designed to tear. The jersey must be full-length to be tucked into the pants. The jersey shall not have pockets. No other undergarment shall extend below the waistline at the torso. Vests and/or altered jerseys with zippers, Velcro, clasps, or other fasteners are not allowed.
2. Other than the player's number, the jersey may only contain:

Player's name.
School name.
Mascot name.
Sleeve Stripes.
Logo for school, conference, mascot, postseason-game, memorial, the military.
Graduate or academic recognition as part of an institutional or conference logo.
The letter "C" to identify a team captain.
American flag.
State flag.

3. Jerseys may not be taped or tied in any manner.

b. Color.

1. Players of opposing teams shall wear contrasting colored jerseys, numbered on the front and back. Players of the same team shall wear jerseys of the same color and design. The jersey includes:

(a) Shirt and undershirts.
(b) Pants and shorts.
(c) Headgear.
(d) Sweatbands and armbands
(e) Socks.
(f) Gloves.
(e) Shoes.

2. The home team shall wear jerseys that are of a dark color and the visiting team shall wear white jerseys; however, the home team may wear white jerseys if agreed to in writing prior to the game.

PENALTY - Administer as a dead-ball foul. 10 yards at the initial possession of the game. In addition, Officials shall charge a team timeout at the start of each quarter the illegal jerseys are worn, or a foul for delay of game if all timeouts have been used.

Players' Numbering

ARTICLE 2. a. All players shall be numbered 0 through 99. Any number preceded by the digit 0 such as "04" or "00" is illegal.

1. The numbers must be clearly visible, permanent Arabic numerals measuring at least 8 and 10 inches in front and back, respectively.

b. No two players of the same team shall participate in the same down wearing identical numbers.

Pants/Shorts

ARTICLE 3. Players shall wear pants or shorts, which shall not have pockets of any type, zippers, exposed drawstrings, belts, and/or belt loops. The color of the pants/shorts shall be a school color, black or white and in contrasting color from the flags.

Flag Belt

ARTICLE 4. Each player shall wear a one piece, size appropriate belt without knots at the waistline with two (2) permanently attached standard pop flag holsters, accompanied by two standard pop flags. When worn correctly, the belt should sit at and be tight around the waist, there shall be one flag positioned over each hip. If the flags are not located as indicated, then the offending player shall be asked to readjust their flags until they are set in legal position. The dimensions of the flags shall be no less than 1-¾ inches wide and no less than 14-inches long when measured from the top edge of the belt. Excess material around the waist belt shall be tucked away or removed.

Mouthpiece

ARTICLE 5. Each player shall wear a mouthpiece. The mouthpiece must be an intra-oral device of readily visible color. It must not be white or transparent. It must be made with FDA-approved base materials and cover all upper teeth. It is recommended that the mouthpiece be properly fitted.

Gloves

ARTICLE 6. a. A glove is a fitted covering for a hand having separate sections for each finger and thumb without connected webbing. There is no restriction on color.

b. Gloves may be worn if they are made of a soft, non-abrasive, non-hardening material which meets the standards of, has been sanctioned by, and bears the logo of the approved sanctioning organization, unless made of unaltered plain cloth.

Head Gear

ARTICLE 7. a. Players may wear a soft helmet which meets the standards, has been sanctioned and wears the logo of a proper sanctioning organization.

b. Players shall not wear hats with a hard brim.

c. Headbands and hats are legal provided they are not considered dangerous to any player. They shall be made of nonabrasive cloth and the only logos permitted are the manufacturers and/or the school logo.

Pads

ARTICLE 8. Pads may be worn on the lower leg, knee, and ankle, if the material is soft and pliable. Soft yielding padded compression shorts and/or shirts may be worn underneath the players jersey, pants and/or shorts.

Play Books

ARTICLE 9. Players may wear a soft, pliable wrist/forearm band that contains plays. No playbook may be worn around the waist or flag belt.

Eye Wear

ARTICLE 10. Sports Eyewear specifically produced which are non-rigid, without sharp edges, and have shatter proof lenses. Tinted eyewear may be worn however must be non-mirrored. A manufacturer may submit a “tinted” eyewear product without mirroring or reflective effects for review to the Collegiate Women’s Flag Football Focus Group for the upcoming year. Neither the NCAA nor the Focus Group certifies the safety of the eyewear.

Face Shield

ARTICLE 11. Only a physician approved nose protectant face shield is allowable.

Illegal Player Equipment

ARTICLE 12. A player who is not properly equipped shall not be permitted to participate until the illegal equipment has either been repaired or removed. This applies to all equipment which an official deems dangerous and/or confusing. Types of equipment or substances which shall always be declared illegal include, but are not limited to the following:

a. Equipment worn by a player that could endanger other players.
b. Pants or shorts with any belts, belt loops, pockets, zippers, or exposed drawstrings
c. Jewelry of any type
d. Headgear other than that approved in Rule 1-4-7.
e. Casts and braces worn above the waist.
f. Jerseys which do not remain tucked in.
g. Hoods of any type.
h. Shoes with metal cleats.
i. Exposed metal on the uniform or clothing of a player. This includes “O” or “D” rings used to secure flag belts.

j. Towels, hand warmers, playbooks, and other items not specifically approved according to rule attached at the players waist.

PENALTY–Unsportsmanlike Conduct, Illegal Player Equipment, Ten yards.

Missing or Illegal Player Equipment

ARTICLE 13. When any required player equipment is missing or when illegal equipment is found on any incoming substitute or player, correction shall be made before participation. Players will be sent off the field to correct the issue.

Prohibited Field Equipment

ARTICLE 14. Jurisdiction regarding the presence and location of communication equipment (cameras, sound devices, etc.) within the playing enclosure resides with game management personnel.

a. Computers, tablets, etc. are not allowed in the coaches' booth.
b. Media communication equipment, including cameras, sound devices, computers and microphones, is prohibited on or above the field, or in or above the team area.
c. Drones are not allowed over the field or the team area when squad members are present within the playing enclosure. Outside the limit lines, game management (or conference policy) govern drone activity. This governance will include all federal, state, and local laws including campus policy where appropriate.
d. No one in the team area or coaching box may use any artificial sound amplification for communication.
e. Any attempt to record, either through audio or video means, any signals given by an opposing player, coach or other team personnel is prohibited.
f. Institutional ball personnel are prohibited from wearing smart watches or any communications technology while on the opponent's sideline and shall stay outside their opponent's team area when their team does not have the ball.

Coaches' Certification

ARTICLE 15. The head coach or their designated representative shall certify in writing to the umpire before the game that all players:

a. Have been informed what equipment is mandatory by rule and what constitutes illegal equipment.
b. Have been provided the equipment mandated by rule.
c. Have been instructed to wear and how to wear mandatory equipment during the game.
d. Have been instructed to notify the coaching staff when equipment becomes illegal through play during the game.

Coaches' Field Equipment

ARTICLE 16. Local Area Network (LAN) phones and/or headsets may be used by coaches, other nonplayers, and players. However, players may use LAN phones and/or headsets only (when the officials grant a team, injury or media timeout) during authorized sideline conferences.

PENALTY–Unsportsmanlike Conduct, Ten yards.

Referee Communication

ARTICLE 17. a. A microphone is strongly encouraged for the referee to be used for all game announcements. It is strongly recommended that it be a lapel-type microphone. The microphone must be controlled by the referee. It may not be open at other times. Microphones

on other officials are prohibited.

b. A protected wireless official-to-official communication system open only to the officiating crew is permitted.

RULE 2
Definitions

SECTION 1. THE BALL: LIVE, DEAD, LOOSE, READY FOR PLAY

Live-ball
ARTICLE 1. A live-ball is a ball in play. A pass, kick or fumble that has not yet touched the ground is a live-ball in flight.

Dead-ball
ARTICLE 2. A dead-ball is a ball not in play.

Loose Ball
ARTICLE 3. a. A loose ball is a pass, fumble, or a kick. A loose ball that has not yet touched the ground is in flight. A grounded loose ball is one that has touched the ground. Any loose ball continues to be a loose ball until a player secures possession of it or until it becomes dead by Rule, whichever comes first.
b. All players are eligible to touch, catch or recover a fumble or a backward pass in flight.
c. Eligibility to touch a kick is governed by kick rules (Rule 6).
d. All players are eligible to touch a forward pass (Rule 7).

When Ball Is Ready for Play
ARTICLE 4. A dead-ball is ready for play when:
a. With the 30 second play clock running, an official places the ball at a hash mark or between the inbounds marks and steps away to their position.
b. With the play clock set at 30 seconds after an injury to a defensive player, the referee sounds their whistle and either signals to start the game clock or signals that the ball is ready for play.

SECTION 2. SCREEN BLOCKING

Screen Blocking
ARTICLE 1. Screen blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without using any part of the body to initiate contact and while remaining within the frame of the body.

Frame of the Body
ARTICLE 2. The frame of a player's body is at the shoulders or below other than the back. It does not include extended limbs.

Blind-Side Block
ARTICLE 3. A blind-side block is an open field screen block against an opponent that is initiated from outside the opponent's field of vision, in a direction back towards the original position of the ball, or otherwise in such a manner that the opponent cannot reasonably navigate around the block and results in a collision.

SECTION 3. CATCH, RECOVERY, POSSESSION

Possession
ARTICLE 1. Possession refers to custody of (a) a live-ball as previously defined or (b) a dead-ball to be snapped. It may refer either to player possession or team possession.

a. Player Possession.
The ball is in player possession when a player has the ball firmly in their grasp by holding or controlling it with hand(s) or arm(s) while contacting the ground inbounds.

b. Team Possession.
The ball is in team possession:
1. When one of its players has player possession, including when they are attempting a kick; or
2. While a forward pass thrown by a player of that team is in flight; or
3. During a loose ball if a player of that team last had player possession; or
4. When the team is next to snap the ball.

c. A team is in legal possession if it has team possession when its players are eligible to catch or recover the ball.

Belongs To
ARTICLE 2. "Belongs to,'' as contrasted with "in possession", denotes custody of a dead-ball. Such custody may be temporary, because the ball must next be put in play in accordance with rules governing the existing situation.

Catch, Interception, Recovery
ARTICLE 3. a. To catch a ball means that a player:
1. Secures firm control with the hand(s) or arm(s) of a live-ball in flight before the ball touches the ground, and
2. Touches the ground inbounds with any part of the body, and then
3. Maintains control of the ball long enough to enable that player to perform an act common to the game, i.e., long enough to pitch or hand the ball, advance it, avoid an opponent, etc., and
4. Satisfies paragraphs b, c, and d below.

b. If a player goes to the ground in the act of catching a pass (with or without contact by an opponent) the player must maintain complete and continuous control of the ball throughout the process of contacting the ground, whether in the field of play or in the end zone. This is also required for a player attempting to make a catch at the sideline and going to the ground out-of-bounds. If the player loses control of the ball which then touches the ground before

they regain control, it is not a catch. If the player regains control inbounds prior to the ball touching the ground it is a catch.

c. If the player loses control of the ball while simultaneously touching the ground with any part of their body, or if there is doubt that the acts were simultaneous, it is not a catch. If a player has control of the ball, a slight movement of the ball, even if it touches the ground, will not be considered loss of possession; the player must lose control of the ball for there to be a loss of possession.
d. If the ball touches the ground after the player secures control and continues to maintain control, and the elements above are satisfied, it is a catch.
e. An interception is a catch of an opponent's pass or fumble.
f. A catch by any kneeling or prone inbounds player is a completion or interception. (Rule 7-4-6)
g. A player recovers a ball if they fulfill the criteria in paragraphs a, b, c, and d for catching a ball that is still alive after hitting the ground.
h. When in question, the catch, recovery or interception is not completed.

Simultaneous Catch or Recovery
ARTICLE 4. A simultaneous catch or recovery is a catch or recovery in which there is joint possession of a live-ball by opposing players inbounds. (A.R. 7-3-3 I-II)

SECTION 4. DOWN, BETWEEN DOWNS AND LOSS OF DOWN

Down
ARTICLE 1. A down is a unit of the game that starts after the ball is ready for play with a legal snap and ends when the ball becomes dead.

Between Downs
ARTICLE 2. Between downs is the interval during which the ball is dead.

Loss of Down
ARTICLE 3. "Loss of down" is an abbreviation meaning "loss of the right to repeat a down."

SECTION 5. FLAG REMOVAL

Flag Removal
ARTICLE 1. The Flag is considered "removed" and the play is dead in the following situations:
a. When either flag is clearly removed from its belt coupling.
b. If a flag or belt apparatus inadvertently comes off a ball carrier during a down, the play is ruled dead at that spot.
c. If a flag or belt apparatus inadvertently comes off a non-ball carrier during a down, the play shall be ruled dead once that player possesses the ball.
d. If a flag is legally removed or inadvertently comes off a non-ball carrier during a down, the player may reattach the flag prior to gaining possession and continue to participate throughout the down.
e. If a flag is torn into more than one piece or a flag belt is torn off.

ARTICLE 2. A defensive player may not intentionally remove the flags of a player who is clearly not in possession of the ball.

Flag Guarding
ARTICLE 3. Flag Guarding is the act of physically preventing a defensive player from removing an opponent's flags.

SECTION 6. FORWARD, BEYOND AND FORWARD PROGRESS

Forward, Beyond
ARTICLE 1. Forward, beyond or in advance of, as related to either team, denotes direction toward the opponent's end line. Converse terms are backward or behind.

Forward Progress
ARTICLE 2. Forward progress is a term indicating the end of advancement by the ball carrier or airborne pass receiver of either team and applies to the position of the ball when it becomes dead by rule.

SECTION 7. FOUL AND VIOLATION

Foul
ARTICLE 1. A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed.

Personal Foul
ARTICLE 2. A personal foul is a foul involving illegal physical contact that endangers the safety of another player.

Flagrant Personal Foul
ARTICLE 3. A flagrant personal foul is illegal physical contact so extreme or deliberate that it places an opponent in danger of catastrophic injury.

Violation
ARTICLE 4. A violation is a rule infraction for which no penalty is prescribed. Since it is not a foul, it does not offset a foul.

SECTION 8. FUMBLE, MUFF; BATTING AND TOUCHING THE BALL; BLOCKING A KICK

Fumble
ARTICLE 1. To fumble the ball is to lose player possession by any act other than passing, kicking or successful handing. The status of the ball is a fumble.

Muff
ARTICLE 2. To muff the ball is to touch the ball in an unsuccessful attempt to catch or recover it. Muffing the ball does not change its status.

Batting
ARTICLE 3. Batting the ball is intentionally striking it or intentionally changing its direction with the hand(s) or arm(s). When in question, the ball is accidentally touched rather than batted. Batting the ball does not change its status.

Touching
ARTICLE 4. a. Touching a ball not in player possession denotes any contact with the ball. It may be intentional or unintentional, and it always precedes possession and control.
b. Intentional touching is deliberate or intended touching.
c. Forced touching results when a player's contact with the ball is due to (i) an opponent blocking a player into it, or (ii) the ball being batted or illegally kicked into that player by an opponent. If the touching is forced, the player in question by rule has not touched the ball.
d. When in question, a ball has not been touched on a kick or forward pass.

Blocking a Punt
ARTICLE 5. Blocking a punt is touching the kicked ball by an opponent of the kicking team in an attempt to prevent the ball from traveling beyond Team B's side of the neutral zone (Rule 6-2-5-b).

SECTION 9. LINES

Sidelines
ARTICLE 1. A sideline runs from end line to end line on each side of the field and is part of the vertical plane that separates the field of play from the area that is out-of-bounds. The entire sideline is out-of-bounds.

Goal Lines and Pylons
ARTICLE 2. The goal line at each end of the field of play runs between the sidelines and is part of the vertical plane that separates the end zone from the field of play. The two goal lines are 80 yards apart. The plane of the goal line extends between and includes the pylons, which are out-of-bounds. The entire goal line is in the end zone. A team's goal line is that which it is defending.

End Lines
ARTICLE 3. An end line runs between the sidelines 10 yards behind each goal line and separates the end zone from the area that is out-of-bounds. The entire end line is out-of-bounds.

Boundary Lines
ARTICLE 4. The boundary lines are the sidelines and the end lines. The area enclosed by the boundary lines is "inbounds," and the area surrounding and including the boundary lines is "out-of-bounds."

Yard Lines
ARTICLE 5. A yard line is any line in the field of play parallel to the end lines. A team's own yard lines, marked or unmarked, are numbered consecutively from its own goal line to the 40-yard line

Hash Marks
ARTICLE 6. The two hash marks are 15 yards from the sidelines. Hash marks and short yard-line extensions shall measure 24 inches in length.

SECTION 10. HANDING THE BALL

ARTICLE 1. a. Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one teammate to another without throwing, fumbling or kicking it.
b. Except when permitted by rule, handing the ball forward to a teammate is illegal.
c. Loss of player possession by unsuccessful execution of attempted handing is a fumble by the last player in possession.
d. A backward handoff occurs when the ball carrier releases the ball before it is beyond the yard line where the ball carrier is positioned.

SECTION 11. HUDDLE

A huddle is two or more players grouped together after the ball is ready for play and before a snap.

SECTION 12. HURDLING

ARTICLE 1. a. Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent while that opponent is still on their feet.
b. "On their feet'' means that no part of the opponent's body other than one or both feet is in contact with the ground.

SECTION 13. KICKS; KICKING THE BALL

Kicking the Ball; Legal and Illegal Kicks
ARTICLE 1. a. Kicking the ball is intentionally striking the ball with the knee, lower leg, or foot.
b. A legal kick is a punt by a player in possession when such a kick is permitted by Rule. Any punt continues to be a punt until it is caught by a player or becomes dead. Kicking the ball in any other manner is illegal.
c. When in question, a ball is accidentally touched rather than kicked.

Punt
ARTICLE 2. A punt is a kick by a player who drops the ball and kicks it before it touches the ground. Once a punt is declared, both teams are prohibited from advancing beyond their scrimmage line until the ball is punted.

SECTION 14. FAIR CATCH

Fair Catch
ARTICLE 1. a. A fair catch of a punt is a catch beyond the neutral zone by a Team B player who has made a valid signal during a punt that is untouched beyond the neutral zone.
b. A valid or invalid fair catch signal deprives the receiving team of the opportunity to advance

the ball. The ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch or recovery. If the catch precedes the signal, the ball is dead when the signal is first given.
c. If the receiver shades their eyes from the sun without waving their hand(s), the ball is live and may be advanced.

Valid Signal
ARTICLE 2. A valid signal is a signal given by a player of Team B who has obviously signaled their intention by extending one hand only clearly above their head and waving that hand from side to side of their body more than once.

Invalid Signal
ARTICLE 3. An invalid signal is any waving signal by a player of Team B:
a. That does not meet the requirements of Article 2 (above); or
b. Including a "T" signal given during a scrimmage kick (punt)
c. That is given after a punt is caught beyond the neutral zone, strikes the ground or touches another player beyond the neutral zone.

SECTION 15. THE NEUTRAL ZONE

ARTICLE 1. a. The neutral zone is the space between the two scrimmage lines extended to the sidelines. Its width is one yard.
b. The neutral zone is established when the ball is ready for play.
c. The neutral zone exists until there is a change of team possession, until a kick crosses the neutral zone or until the ball is declared dead.

SECTION 16. ENCROACHMENT AND OFFSIDE

Encroachment
ARTICLE 1. After the ball is ready for play, encroachment occurs when an offensive player is in or beyond the neutral zone when the snap is imminent.

Offside
ARTICLE 2. After the ball is ready for play, offside occurs when a defensive player:
a. Is in or beyond the neutral zone when the ball is legally snapped; or
b. Contacts an opponent beyond the neutral zone before the ball is snapped; or
c. Contacts the ball before it is snapped; or
d. Threatens an offensive player positioned on the line, causing an immediate reaction, before the ball is snapped; or
e. Crosses the neutral zone and charges toward a Team A back.

SECTION 17. PASSES

Passing
ARTICLE 1. Passing the ball is throwing it. A pass continues to be a pass until it is caught or intercepted by a player or the ball becomes dead.

Forward and Backward Pass
ARTICLE 2. a. A pass is forward if the ball first strikes the ground, a player, an official or anything

else beyond the spot where the ball is released. All other passes are backward passes.
b. When in question, the ball is passed and not fumbled during an attempted forward pass.
c. A snap becomes a backward pass when the snapper releases the ball.

Crosses Neutral Zone
ARTICLE 3. a. A legal forward pass has crossed the neutral zone when it first strikes the ground, a player, an official or anything beyond the neutral zone inbounds. It has not crossed the neutral zone when it first strikes the ground, a player, an official or anything in or behind the neutral zone inbounds.
b. A player has crossed the neutral zone if that player's entire body has been beyond the neutral zone.
c. A legal forward pass is beyond or behind the neutral zone where it crosses the sideline.

Catchable Forward Pass
ARTICLE 4. A catchable forward pass is an untouched legal forward pass beyond the neutral zone to an eligible player who has a reasonable opportunity to catch the ball. When in question, a legal forward pass is catchable.

SECTION 18. PENALTY

A penalty is a result imposed by rule against a team that has committed a foul and may include one or more of the following: loss of yardage, loss of down, automatic first down, ejection, subtraction from the game clock.

SECTION 19. SCRIMMAGE

Scrimmage Down
ARTICLE 1. A scrimmage down is the action between the two teams during a down that begins with a legal snap. A Try down is a scrimmage down that begins when the referee declares the ball ready for play after a touchdown attempt.

Scrimmage Line
ARTICLE 2. The scrimmage line for each team is established when the ball is ready for play. It is the yard line that defines the vertical plane passing through the point of the ball nearest a team's own goal line.

SECTION 20. SHIFT

ARTICLE 1. a. A shift is a simultaneous change of position or stance by two or more offensive players after the ball is ready for play but before a legal snap.
b. A shift ends when all players have been motionless for one full second.
c. A shift continues if one or more players are in motion before the end of the one second interval.

SECTION 21. SNAPPING THE BALL

ARTICLE 1. a. A legal snap is passing the ball backward from its position on the ground with a quick and continuous motion of the hand or hands, with the ball actually leaving the hand or

hands in this motion.

b. The snap starts when the ball is moved legally and ends when the ball leaves the snapper's hands; the ball then becomes alive.
c. Unless moved in a backward direction, the movement of the ball doesn't start a legal snap. It is not a legal snap if the ball is first moved forward or lifted.
d. The snap need not go between the snapper's legs; but to be legal, it must be a quick and continuous backward motion.
e. The ball must be snapped on or between the hash marks.

SECTION 22. SERIES AND POSSESSION SERIES

Series
ARTICLE 1. A series comprises up to four consecutive downs that each begins with a snap.

Possession Series
ARTICLE 2. A possession series is a team's continuous possession of the ball in an extra period. It may consist of one or more series.

SECTION 23. SPOTS

Basic Spot
ARTICLE 1. Benchmark for locating the enforcement spot for penalties.

Dead-Ball Spot
ARTICLE 2. The point at which the ball became dead.

Enforcement Spot
ARTICLE 3. The point at which the penalty for a foul or the result of a violation is enforced.

Inbounds Spot
ARTICLE 4. The intersection of the nearer hash mark line and the yard line passing through either the dead-ball spot or the spot where a penalty leaves the ball in a side zone.

Out-of-Bounds Spot
ARTICLE 5. The point at which the ball becomes dead by rule because of going or being declared out-of-bounds.

Post Scrimmage Kick Spot
ARTICLE 6. a. The spot where a kick ends.
b. When a punt ends in Team B's end zone, the post scrimmage kickspot is the 14-yard line.

Previous Spot
ARTICLE 7. The point at which the ball was last put in play.

Spot of the Foul
ARTICLE 8. The point at which a foul occurs. If out-of-bounds between the goal lines, the foul is at the intersection of the nearer hash mark and the yard line extended through the spot of the

foul. If out-of-bounds between the goal line and the end line or behind the end line, the foul is in the end zone.

Spot Where Kick Ends
ARTICLE 9. When a kick is caught or recovered or where it is declared dead by rule.

Spot Where Run Ends
ARTICLE 10. The spot where the run ends is the point:
a. Where the ball is declared dead in player possession.
b. Where player possession is lost on a fumble.
c. Where handing of the ball occurs.
d. Where an illegal forward pass is thrown.
e. Where a backward pass is thrown.
f. Where an illegal kick is made beyond the line of scrimmage.
g. Where a punt return ends.
h. Where player possession is gained under provisions of the "momentum rule" (Rule 8-4-1a Exceptions).

Succeeding Spot
ARTICLE 11. The point where the ball is next to be put in play.

SECTION 24. TEAM AND PLAYER DESIGNATIONS

Teams A and B
ARTICLE 1. Team A is the team designated to put the ball in play. Team B is their opponent. The teams retain these designations until the ball is next ready for play.

Offensive and Defensive Teams
ARTICLE 2. The offensive team is the team in possession. The defensive team is their opponent.

Kicker
ARTICLE 3. The kicker is any player who legally punts. A player becomes a kicker when their knee, lower leg, or foot makes contact with the ball before it strikes the ground. The kicker is considered a runner until they punt.

Passer
ARTICLE 4. The passer is the player who throws a forward pass.

Player
ARTICLE 5. A player is any participant in the game who is not a substitute or replaced player.

Runner and Ball Carrier
ARTICLE 6. a. The runner is a player in possession of a live-ball or simulating possession of a live-ball.
b. A ball carrier is a runner in possession of a live-ball.

Snapper
ARTICLE 7. The snapper is the player who snaps the ball.

Substitute
ARTICLE 8. a. A legal substitute is a replacement for a player or a player vacancy during the interval between downs.
b. A legal incoming substitute becomes a player when they enter the field of play or end zones and communicate with a teammate or an official, enters the huddle, is positioned in an offensive or a defensive formation, or participates in the play.

Ejected Player
ARTICLE 9. An ejected player is one who is declared ineligible for further participation and is not allowed to remain in the team area. This player must leave the playing enclosure under the escort of team personnel before the next play after their ejection. They must remain out of view of the field of play under team supervision for the duration of the game.

Player Inbounds and Out-of-bounds
ARTICLE 10. a. A player is out-of-bounds when any part of their body touches anything other than another player or game official on or outside a boundary. An out-of-bounds player who becomes airborne remains out-of-bounds until they touch the ground inbounds.
b. An inbounds player is a player who is not out-of-bounds. An inbounds player who becomes airborne remains inbounds until they are out-of-bounds.

SECTION 25. TIMING DEVICES

Game Clock
ARTICLE 1. The game clock is any device under the direction of the appropriate official used to time the 60 minutes of the game.

Play Clock
ARTICLE 2. Each stadium shall have a visual play clock at each end of the playing enclosure. The play clock must be capable of counting down from 30 seconds. It should automatically default to 30 seconds and start immediately upon being reset by the play-clock operator when any official signals that the ball is dead after a play.

SECTION 26. PLAY CLASSIFICATION

Forward Pass Play
ARTICLE 1. A legal forward pass play is the interval between the snap and when a legal forward pass is complete, incomplete, or intercepted.

Running Play
ARTICLE 2. a. A running play is any live-ball action other than a forward pass play or punt play.
b. A run is that segment of a running play during which a ball carrier has possession.
c. If a ball carrier loses possession by a fumble, backwards pass or illegal forward pass, the spot where the run ends is the yard line where the ball carrier loses possession. The running play includes the run and the loose-ball action before a player gains or regains possession or the ball is declared dead.

Punt Play
ARTICLE 3. A punt play is the action during the interval between the snap and when a punt comes into player possession or the ball is declared dead by rule.

SECTION 27. FIELD AREAS

Field
ARTICLE 1. The area within the limit lines and includes the limit lines and team areas.

Field of Play
ARTICLE 2. The area enclosed by the sidelines and goal lines.

End Zone
ARTICLE 3. The rectangle at each end of the field is defined by the goal lines, sidelines and end line. The goal line and goal line pylons are in the end zone. A team's end zone is the one it is defending.

Playing Enclosure
ARTICLE 4. The area is bounded by the stadium, dome, stands, fences, or other structures. Scoreboards are not considered within the playing enclosure.

Side Zone
ARTICLE 5. The area between the hash marks and the near sideline.

SECTION 28. FIGHTING

ARTICLE 1. Any attempt by a player, coach, or team member in uniform to strike an opponent in a combative manner unrelated to football.
a. An attempt to strike an opponent with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact.
b. An unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes any opponent to retaliate by fighting.

SECTION 29. THREE-AND-ONE PRINCIPLE

ARTICLE 1. The Three-and-One Principle of penalty enforcement applies when the penalty statement for a foul does not specify the enforcement spot. Application of this principle is described in Rule 10-2-3.

SECTION 30. DELIBERATE DEAD-BALL ADVANCE

ARTICLE 1. Deliberately advancing a dead ball is an attempt by a player to advance the ball after any part of their body, other than a hand or foot, has touched the ground or after the ball has been declared dead by rule.

RULE 3
Periods, Time Factors and Substitutions

SECTION 1. PREGAME AND COIN TOSS

ARTICLE 1. Pregame Warmup. Prior to the game, teams must have access to the field for pregame warm-ups at least 30 minutes before the beginning of the first period. This may be altered in advance through mutual agreement of the teams. (***Exception***: If it is not the first game played in a series, by mutual agreement of the involved teams, the warmup time may be shortened to as few as 15 minutes starting when the previous game's teams have vacated the playing field).

ARTICLE 2. a. Three minutes prior to the scheduled starting time, the referee shall conduct a coin toss at midfield in the presence of no more than four captains from each team and another game official, first designating the speaking captain of the visiting team to call the coin toss. Before the second half, the referee will obtain the teams' second half options.

b. During the coin toss, each team shall remain in their team area on or behind their respective sideline. The coin toss begins when the captains vacate their respective sideline and ends when they return to their team area.

PENALTY - 5 yards from the succeeding spot

c. The winner of the toss shall choose one of the following options:
   1. Choose whether their team will start on offense or defense.
   2. Choose the goal their team will defend.
   3. Defer their choices to the second half

d. The opponent shall exercise the remaining available option, 1 or 2 above.

e. For the second half the loser of the toss, or the winner who chooses option 3 above, shall choose option 1 or 2 above. The opponent then chooses the remaining available option.

SECTION 2. START OF EACH PERIOD

First and Third Periods

ARTICLE 1. Unless moved by penalty, the ball shall be snapped on the Team A 14-yard line to start the first and third periods.

Second and Fourth Periods

ARTICLE 2. Between the first and second periods and also between the third and fourth periods,

the teams shall defend opposite goal lines.
a. The ball shall be relocated at a spot corresponding exactly, in relation to goal lines and sidelines, to its location at the end of the preceding period.
b. Team possession, number of the next down, and zone line-to-gain remain unchanged.

Extra Periods
ARTICLE 3. a. If the game is tied after four periods, the officials shall conduct another coin toss as done prior to the start of the game. There will only be one coin toss prior to the start of overtime. If additional overtime periods are played, the captains shall alternate choices. The winner of the toss may not defer the choice and must choose one of the following:
1. Whether to start on offense or defense.
2. Which goal to advance towards for the entirety of overtime.

b. The loser of the toss shall exercise the remaining option for the first extra period and shall have the first choice of the two options for the subsequent even-numbered extra periods.

ARTICLE 4. a. Definition. An extra period shall consist of two possession series with each team putting the ball in play at the 10-yard line closest to the selected goal. This becomes the opponent's 10-yard line.
b. Possession Series. Each team retains the ball during a possession series until it scores or fails to do so in the four allotted downs (unless changed by penalty). The ball remains alive after a change of team possession until it is declared dead. However, Team A may not retain possession if they regain possession after a loss of team possession and do not score during that down. Beginning with the third extra period, a team's possession series will be one play for a one point try from the three-yard line, unless moved by penalty.
Team A and B designations are the same as defined in Rule 2-24-1.
c. Scoring. The team scoring the greater number of points during regulation and extra periods shall be declared the winner. There shall be an equal number of possession series, as described in (b) above, in each extra period, unless Team B scores other than on the try.
d. Fouls and Penalties. Fouls and penalties are administered similar to regulation with the following exceptions:
1. Automatic First Down Penalties. Penalties that result in an automatic first down will start a new series of downs but will not change the line to gain, which will remain the goal line.
2. Fouls After a Change of Team Possession.
a. Penalties against either team are declined by rule in extra periods. (***Exceptions***: Penalties for flagrant personal fouls, dead-ball personal fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, and live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls are enforced on the succeeding play.)
b. A score by a team committing a foul during the down is canceled (***Exception***: Live-ball foul treated as a dead-ball foul.)
c. If both teams foul during the down and Team B had not fouled before the change of possession, the fouls cancel and the down is not repeated. (***Exceptions***: Penalties for flagrant personal fouls, dead-ball personal fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, and live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls are enforced on the succeeding play.)

e. Timeouts. Each team is allowed one timeout for the entirety of overtime. Timeouts not used in regulation do not carry over into extra periods.

SECTION 3. PLAYING TIME AND INTERMISSIONS

Length of Periods and Intermissions

ARTICLE 1. Playing time shall be 60 minutes divided into four periods of 15 minutes each with one-minute intermissions between the first and second periods (first half) and between the third and fourth periods (second half).

a. No period shall end until the ball is dead and the referee declares the period ended.
b. The intermission between the second and third period of a regular season game shall be 15 minutes, unless shortened before the game by mutual agreement of the administrations of both schools. Immediately after the second period ends, the referee should begin the intermission by signaling to start the game clock.

Timing Adjustments

ARTICLE 2. Before the game starts, playing time and the intermission between periods may be shortened by the referee if they are of the opinion that conditions may interfere with the game or present safety concerns. The four periods must be of equal length if the game is shortened before its start.

a. Any time during the game, the playing time of any remaining period or periods may be shortened by mutual agreement of the opposing head coaches and the referee.
b. Timing errors on the game clock may be corrected but only in the period in which they occur.
c. If the referee has definitive knowledge of the elapsed time, they will reset and appropriately start the game clock.
d. Timing errors on the play clock may be corrected by the referee. The play clock shall start again.
e. When the play-clock count is interrupted by circumstances beyond the control of either team (without positive knowledge of game clock elapsed time), a new count shall start.
f. The 30 second clock is not started when the game clock is running with fewer than 30 seconds, respectively, in a period. The play clock shall be set appropriately and continuously display 30 seconds.
g. The game clock should not be stopped if the play clock is started in conflict with paragraph f above.

Extension of Periods

ARTICLE 3. a. A period shall be extended for an untimed down if one or more of the following occurs during a down in which time expires in the second or fourth period:

1. A penalty is accepted for a live-ball foul(s). At the option of the offended team, the period is not extended if the foul is by the team in possession and the statement of the penalty includes a loss of down.
2. There are offsetting fouls.
3. An official sounds their whistle inadvertently or otherwise incorrectly signals the ball dead.

b. Additional untimed downs will be played until a down is free of the circumstances in statements 1, 2, and 3 or Rule 3-2-3a above.
c. If a touchdown is scored during a down in which time in a period expires, the period is extended for the try (***Exception***: Rule 8-3-2a).

Timing Devices

ARTICLE 4. a. *Game Clock*. Playing time shall be kept with a game clock that may be either a stopwatch operated by the field judge or back judge, or a game clock operated by an assistant under the direction of the appropriate judge. The type of game clock and the location of the game clock operator shall be determined by the game management. The game clock operator may be located on the sideline or in the traditional press box area. If the clock operator is in the traditional press box, it is recommended the location is between the goal lines. This location shall be shielded from public interference and shall afford a direct and unobstructed view of the playing field. The game clock shall not display tenths of seconds.

b. *30-Second Clock.* 1. When an official signals that the ball is dead, the play clock shall begin a 30-second count.
   2. If the 30-second clock does not start or the count is interrupted for reasons beyond the control of the officials or the play-clock operator (e.g., clock malfunction), the referee shall stop the game clock and signal (both palms open in an over-the-head pumping motion) that the play clock should be reset at 30 seconds and started immediately.
   3. In the event that the 30-second play clock is running and reads under 10 seconds before the ball is ready to be snapped, the referee shall declare a timeout and signal that the play clock be set at 10 seconds. When play is to be resumed, the referee will give the ready-for-play signal and the play clock shall begin the 10-second count (A.R. 3-3-4) The game clock will start on the snap unless it had been running when the referee declared a timeout; in that case, it will start on the referee's signal (Rule 3-3-2-f).

c. *30-Second Clock.* If the officials signal the game clock to be stopped for any of the following reasons, the referee shall signal (one open palm in an over-the-head pumping motion) that the clock should be set at 30 seconds:
   1. Penalty administration.
   2. Charged team timeout.
   3. Two-Minute Timeout.
   4. Media timeout.
   5. Injury timeout for a player of the offensive team only. The play clock is set to 40 seconds for an injury to a player of the defensive team except after a charged team timeout or when the game is stopped for the Two-Minute Timeout.
   6. Team B is awarded a first down.
   7. After a kick down.
   8. Score other than a touchdown (not the try).
   9. Start of each period.
   10. Start of a team's possession series in an extra period.
   11. Other administrative stoppage.

d. *Device Malfunction*. If a visual 30-second timing device becomes inoperative, both coaches shall be notified by the referee immediately and both clocks shall be turned off.

Minimum Time For A Play After Spiking The Ball

ARTICLE 5. If the game clock is stopped and will start on the referee's signal with three or more seconds remaining in the quarter, the offense may reasonably expect to throw the ball directly to the ground and have enough time for another play. With two seconds or one second on the game clock there is enough time for only one play. (A.R. 3-2-5)

SECTION 4. TIMEOUTS

Timeout

ARTICLE 1. a. An official shall signal timeout when the rules provide for stopping the clock or when a timeout is charged to a team or taken by the referee. Other officials should repeat timeout signals. The referee may declare a discretionary timeout for any contingency not covered elsewhere.

b. When a team's charged timeouts are exhausted and it requests a timeout, the request shall not be acknowledged.

c. Once the game begins, players shall not practice with a ball on the field of play or the end zones except during the half-time intermission.

Suspending the Game

ARTICLE 2. a. The referee may suspend the game temporarily when conditions warrant such action.

b. When the game is stopped by actions of a person(s) not subject to the rules, or for any other reasons not specified in the rules, and cannot continue, the referee shall:
   1. Suspend play and direct the players to their team areas.
   2. Refer the problem to those responsible for the game's management.
   3. Resume the game when conditions are satisfactory.

c. If a game is suspended under Rules 3-4-2-a and b before the end of the fourth period and cannot be resumed, there are four possible options:
   1. Resume the game at a later date;
   2. Terminate the game with a determined final score;
   3. Forfeit of the game; or
   4. Declare a no contest.

The option that takes effect shall be determined by conference policy if both institutions are members of the same conference. In non-conference competition, the directors of athletics at the participating institutions or their designees, in consultation with the coaches, must agree on one of the four options. This agreement will include the final score if the game is terminated (Rule 8-1-2).

In the event that the directors of athletics do not reach an agreement, the conference policy of the home team shall be used to determine the outcome.

d. If a game is suspended under Rules 3-4-2-a and b after four periods of play and cannot be resumed, the game shall be ruled a tie. The final score shall be the score at the end of the last completed period. (Note: If a winner must be determined in a conference playoff game, conference policy shall determine when and where the game will be resumed).

e. A suspended game, if resumed, will begin with the same time remaining and under the identical conditions of down, distance, field position and player eligibility.

Charged Team Timeouts

ARTICLE 3. Provided teams have timeouts remaining and the ball is dead, an official shall award a team timeout when requested by any player or head coach.

a. Each team is entitled to three charged team timeouts each half.

b. Successive charged timeouts may be granted to each team during a dead-ball period, but consecutive charged team timeouts are not allowed by the same team in any dead-ball period.

c. A head coach must be in or in the vicinity of their team area to request a timeout while the

ball is dead.

d. If a coach believes a rule has been enforced improperly, they may request a conference with the referee. If the rule enforcement is not changed, the coach's team will be charged a timeout or a delay penalty if all timeouts have been used.
   1. Only the referee may stop the clock for a head coach's conference.
   2. A request for a head coach's conference must be made before the ball is next snapped and before the end of the second or fourth period.
   3. After a head coach's conference, the full team timeout is granted if charged by the referee.

Two-Minute Timeout

ARTICLE 4. a. When the game clock is running and the ball is not live, the Referee shall stop the clock with exactly two minutes remaining in the second and fourth quarters for a Two-Minute Timeout. If the ball is live when the game clock reaches two minutes in the second and fourth quarters, play will continue, and the Referee or covering official shall stop the clock when the ball is declared dead for a Two-Minute Timeout.

Injury Timeout

ARTICLE 5. a. In the event of an injured player(s), an official will declare a timeout and the player must leave the game for at least one down.

1. That player must remain out of the game even if a team timeout is granted
2. The player(s) may not return to the game until receiving approval of professional medical personnel designated by their institution.
3. Medical personnel shall give special attention to players who exhibit signs of a concussion
4. Whenever a participant is bleeding, has blood saturated on the uniform, or has blood on exposed skin, the player shall exit the game to attend to said blood. They may not return to the game without approval of medical personnel.

b. An injury timeout may follow a charged team timeout.

c. The referee will declare a timeout for an injured official.

d. Following a timeout for an injured player of either team, the play clock shall be set at 30 seconds.

e. Ten-Second Runoff. If the player injury is the only reason for stopping the clock with less than two minutes in the half, the opponent has the option of a 10-second runoff.
   1. The play clock will be set at 30 seconds for an injury to a player of either team.
   2. If there is a 10-second runoff the game clock will start on the referee's signal. If there is no 10-second runoff the game clock will start on the snap.
   3. The 10-second runoff may be avoided by the use of a charged team timeout if available.
   4. There is no option of a 10-second runoff if there are injuries to opposing players.

Length of Timeouts

ARTICLE 5. a. Each timeout will be 60 seconds in length.

b. The referee shall notify both teams after 45 seconds. They will mark the ball ready for play 15 seconds later.

c. If the team charged with a timeout wishes to resume play before the expiration of one minute and its opponent indicates readiness, the referee will declare the ball ready.

d. The length of a referee's timeout depends on the circumstances of each timeout.
e. Penalty options must be exercised before a team timeout.
f. The intermission after a safety or try shall be not more than one minute.

SECTION 5. DELAYS/CLOCK TACTICS

Delaying the Start of a Half
ARTICLE 1. a. Each team shall have its players on the field for the opening play for the scheduled time for the beginning of each half. When both teams refuse to enter the field first for the start of either half, the home team must be the first to enter.
b. The home management is responsible for clearing the field of play and end zones at the beginning of each half so that the periods may start at the scheduled time. The referee may waive the penalty for circumstances beyond the control of home management.
PENALTY – Ten yards from the succeeding spot.

Illegal Delay of the Game
ARTICLE 2. a. The officials shall make the ball ready for play consistently throughout the game. The play clock will start its countdown from 30 seconds, by rule depending on circumstances. A foul for illegal delay occurs if the play clock reaches :00 before the ball is put in play.
b. Illegal delay includes:
1. Deliberately advancing the ball well after it is dead.
2. When a team is not ready for play after an intermission between periods, after a score, after a media timeout, or anytime the referee orders the ball put in play.
3. When a team is granted a timeout after having expended its allotted number of timeouts for the half or overtime period.
4. Defensive verbal or auditory tactics that disconcert offensive signals.
5. Defensive actions designed to cause a false start.
6. Putting the ball in play before it is ready for play.
7. Sideline Interference.
8. Action clearly designed to delay the officials from making the ball ready for play.
PENALTY – Dead-ball foul. Five yards from the succeeding spot.

Unfair Clock Tactics
ARTICLE 3. The referee has the authority to order the game clock or play clock be started or stopped when:
a. Either team conserves or consumes time in a manner that is obviously unfair.
b. If the game clock is stopped to complete a penalty for a foul by the team ahead in the score (or either team if the score is tied) inside the last two minutes of a half, it will start on the snap, at the option of the offended team.
c. The game clock will start on the ready-for-play signal after Team A throws an illegal forward or backward pass to conserve time.

SECTION 6. STARTING AND STOPPING THE CLOCK

Scrimmage Down
When a period begins with a scrimmage down, the game clock shall be started when the ball is legally snapped. On all other scrimmage downs, the game clock shall be started when the ball is

legally snapped or on a prior signal by the referee. The game clock shall not run during a try, during an extension of a period or during an extra period

First 22 Minutes of Each Half

ARTICLE 1. The game clock will run continuously for the first 22 minutes of each half unless stopped for a(n):

a. Team Timeout. Following a team timeout, the clock will start when the ball is legally snapped.
b. Official's Timeout. Following an official's timeout, the clock will start when the ball is marked ready for play.
c. Foul(s) & Penalty Enforcement. Following penalty enforcement, the clock will start when the ball is ready for play, unless the enforcement begins a period or is after a scoring play.
d. Scoring Play. Following a score, the clock will start when the ball is legally snapped to begin the following succeeding possession. The clock will not run during the Try.
e. End of first or third period. The clock will start when the ball is legally snapped to begin the next period.
f. *Two-Minute Timeout.* When the game clock is running and the ball is not live, the Referee shall stop the clock with exactly two minutes remaining in the second and fourth quarters for a Two-Minute Timeout. If the ball is live when the game clock reaches two minutes in the second and fourth quarters, play will continue, and the Referee or covering official shall stop the clock when the ball is declared dead for a Two-Minute Timeout.

Last 2 Minutes of Each Half

ARTICLE 2. Under 2 minutes in each half, the clock will stop on a referee's signal and start on the snap for each of the following:

a. Incomplete forward pass.
b. Legal kick down ends.
c. Period ends.
d. Ball carrier, fumble, or backward pass ruled out-of-bounds.
e. Safety.
f. Team B is awarded a first down.
g. Team timeout.
h. Touchback.
i. Touchdown.
j. Team A commits a delay-of-game foul while in a scrimmage-kick formation
k. Two-Minute Timeout is declared.

ARTICLE 3. Under 2 minutes in each half, the clock will stop on a referee's signal and start when the ball is marked ready for play for each of the following:

a. First down for Team A.
b. Head coach conference.
c. Illegally conserving time.
d. Inadvertent whistle.
e. Injury timeout.
f. Official's timeout.
g. Team A forward fumble out-of-bounds.
h. Penalty and enforcement.

ARTICLE 4. Whenever one or more incidents from ARTICLE 3 occur in conjunction with any

incident from ARTICLE 2, the game clock shall start on the snap.

10-Second Runoff from Game Clock - Foul

ARTICLE 5. a. With the game clock running and less than two minutes remaining in either half, before a change of team possession if either team commits a foul that causes the clock to stop immediately, the referee will subtract 10 seconds from the game clock at the option of the offended team. The fouls that fall in this category include but are not limited to:

1. Any foul that prevents the snap (e.g., false start, encroachment, defensive offsides by contact in the neutral zone, etc.).
2. Intentional grounding to stop the clock.
3. Incomplete illegal forward pass.
4. Backward pass thrown out-of-bounds to stop the clock.
5. Any other foul committed with the intent of stopping the clock.

The offended team may accept the yardage penalty and decline the 10-second runoff. If the yardage penalty is declined the 10-second runoff is declined by rule.

b. The 10-second rule does not apply if the game clock is not running when the foul occurs or if the foul does not cause the game clock to stop immediately (e.g., illegal formation).

c. After the penalty is administered, if there is a 10-second runoff, the game clock starts on the referee's signal. If there is no 10-second runoff, the game clock starts on the snap. Note: This rule supersedes Rule 3-6-4.

d. If the fouling team has a timeout remaining, they may avoid the 10-second runoff by using a timeout. In this case the game clock starts on the snap after the timeout.

e. The 10-second runoff does not apply when there are offsetting fouls.

SECTION 7. SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions Procedures

ARTICLE 1. Any number of legal substitutes for either team may enter the game between periods, after a score or try, or during the interval between downs only for the purpose of replacing a player(s) or filling a player vacancy(ies).

Legal Substitutions

ARTICLE 2. A legal substitute may replace a player or fill a player vacancy provided none of the following restrictions is violated:

a. No incoming substitute shall enter the field of play or an end zone while the ball is in play.

b. No player, in excess of 7, shall leave the field of play or end zone while the ball is in play.

PENALTY – Live-ball foul. Five yards from the previous spot.

c. 1. An incoming legal substitute must enter the field of play directly from their team area, and a substitute, player, or departing player must depart at the sideline nearest their team area and proceed to their team area

2. A departing player must immediately leave the field of play, including the end zones. A departing player who leaves the huddle or their position within three seconds, after a substitute becomes a player, is considered to have left immediately.

d. Substitutes who become players must remain in the game for at least one play and replaced players must remain out of the game for at least one play, except during the interval between periods, after a score, or when a timeout is charged.

PENALTY – Dead-ball foul; Five yards from the succeeding spot.

e. The referee may prevent the ball from becoming live if they deem that the defense has not

been afforded ample opportunity to match a substitution made by the offense. If the play clock expires during this period, it is a delay of game penalty against the offense.

More Than Seven Players on the Field

ARTICLE 3. a. Team A may not break the huddle with more than 7 players nor keep more than 7 players in the huddle or in a formation for more than three seconds. Officials shall stop action whether or not the ball has been snapped.

PENALTY – Dead-ball foul. Five yards at the previous spot.

b. Team B is allowed to briefly retain more than 7 players on the field to anticipate the offensive formation, but it may not have more than 7 players on the field when the ball is snapped. The infraction is treated as a live-ball foul.

PENALTY – Live-ball foul. Five yards at the previous spot.

After the Two-Minute Timeout in either half, if the defense commits a substitution foul and 8 or more players are on the field and participate in a down, officials will penalize the defense for the foul and at the option of the offended team, reset the game clock back to the time displayed at the snap. The game clock will then restart on the next snap. If the 8th defender was attempting to exit but was still on the field at the snap and had no influence on the play, then the normal substitution penalty would be enforced with no clock adjustment.

RULE 4
Ball in Play, Dead-ball, Out-of-bounds

SECTION 1. BALL IN PLAY – DEAD-BALL

Dead-ball Becomes Live
ARTICLE 1. After a dead-ball is ready for play, it becomes a live-ball when it is legally snapped. A ball snapped before it is ready for play remains dead.

Live-ball Becomes Dead
ARTICLE 2. a. A live-ball becomes a dead-ball as provided in the rules or when an official sounds their whistle (even though inadvertently) or otherwise signals the ball dead. If an official sounds their whistle inadvertently or otherwise signals the ball dead during a down:

1. When the ball is in player possession, the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where declared dead or repeat the down.
2. When the ball is loose from a fumble, backward pass, illegal pass or illegal kick, the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or repeat the down.
3. During a legal forward pass or legal kick, then the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down repeated.
4. After Team B gains possession on the try or during an extra period, then the try is over or the extra-period possession series is ended.

b. If a foul or violation occurs during any of the above downs, the penalty or violation privilege shall be administered as in any other play situation if not in conflict with other rules.

Ball Declared Dead
ARTICLE 3. A live-ball becomes dead and an official shall sound their whistle or declare it dead:
a. When any part of the ball carrier's body, except their hand or foot, touches the ground.
b. When the ball or a ball carrier goes out-of-bounds.
c. When a ball carrier has a flag removed legally by an opponent. A flag is removed once it becomes detached from the belt.
d. When a player gains possession of the ball with their flag(s) detached.
e. When a defender attempts a flag pull of a runner in possession of a ball with their flags covered

f. When a touchdown, touchback, safety, or successful try is made.
g. When the ball strikes the ground following illegal touching by A.
h. When A catches a punt, or an untouched punt comes to rest and no player attempts to secure it.
i. When A's punt breaks the plane of B's goal line.
j. When a forward pass is ruled incomplete.
k. When there is a simultaneous catch or recovery of a live-ball.
l. When a backwards pass or fumble strikes the ground. A snapped ball that hits the ground before or after getting to the intended receiver is dead at the spot where it hits the ground.
m. When a live-ball not in player possession touches anything inbounds other than a player, a player's equipment, an official, an official's equipment or the ground (inadvertent-whistle provisions apply).
n. When a ball carrier simulates placing their knee on the ground.

Ball Ready for Play
ARTICLE 4. No player shall put the ball in play before it is ready for play.
PENALTY—Dead-ball foul. Five yards from the succeeding spot.

Play-Clock Count
ARTICLE 5. The ball shall be put in play within 30 seconds after it is made ready for play, unless, during that interval, play is suspended. If play is suspended, the play-clock count will start again.
PENALTY–Dead-ball foul for delay of game. Five yards from the succeeding spot.

SECTION 2. OUT-OF-BOUNDS

Player Out-of-bounds
ARTICLE 1. a. A player is out-of-bounds when any part of their person touches anything, other than another player or game official, on or inside a boundary line.
b. An out-of-bounds player who becomes airborne remains out-of-bounds until they touch the ground inbounds without simultaneously being out-of-bounds.
c. A player who touches a pylon is out-of-bounds.

Held Ball Out-of-bounds
ARTICLE 2. A ball in player possession is out-of-bounds when either the ball or any part of the ball carrier touches the ground or anything else that is out-of-bounds, or that is on or outside a boundary line, except another player or game official.

Loose Ball Out-of-bounds
ARTICLE 3. a. A ball not in player control is out-of-bounds when it touches the ground, a player, a game official, or anything else that is out-of-bounds, or that is outside a boundary line.
b. A loose ball that touches a pylon is out-of-bounds behind the goal line.
c. If a live-ball not in player possession crosses a boundary line and then is declared out-of-bounds, it is out-of-bounds at the crossing point.

Out-of-bounds at Forward Point
ARTICLE 4. a. If a live-ball is declared out-of-bounds and the ball does not cross a boundary line, it is out-of-bounds at the ball's most forward point when it was declared dead.
b. A touchdown is scored if the ball is inbounds and has broken the plane of the goal line before

or simultaneous to the ball carrier going out-of-bounds.

c. A receiver who is in the opponent's end zone and contacting the ground is credited with a completion if they reach over the sideline or end line and catch a legal pass.

d. The forward most point of the ball when declared out-of-bounds between the goal lines is the point of forward progress (***Exception***: When a ball carrier is airborne as they cross the sideline (including a striding runner), forward progress is determined by the position of the ball as it crosses the sideline).

RULE 5

Series of Downs, Line to Gain

SECTION 1. A SERIES: STARTED, BROKEN, RENEWED

When To Award Series

ARTICLE 1. a. A series of up to four consecutive scrimmage downs shall be awarded to the team that is next to put the ball in play by a snap after a touchback, fair catch, or change in team possession, or to the offensive team to start the first and third period and overtime.

b. A new series shall be awarded to Team A if it is in legal possession of the ball on or beyond its zone line to gain when the ball is declared dead.

c. A new series shall be awarded to Team B if, after fourth down, Team A has failed to earn a first down.

d. A new series shall be awarded to Team B if Team A's punt goes out-of-bounds or comes to rest and no player attempts to secure it.

e. A new series shall be awarded to the team in legal possession when the ball is declared dead:

1. If a change of possession occurs during the down.
2. If a punt crosses the neutral zone.
3. If an accepted penalty awards the ball to the offended team.
4. If an accepted penalty mandates a first down.

f. A new series shall be awarded to Team B whenever Team B, after a punt, elects to take the ball at a spot of illegal touching.

Line to Gain

ARTICLE 2. a. The line to gain in any series shall be the zone in advance of the ball, unless distance has been lost due to penalty or failure to gain. In such case, the original zone in advance of the ball at the beginning of the series of downs is the zone line to gain.

b. The line to gain is established when the ball is made ready for play before the first down of the new series.

Forward Progress

ARTICLE 3. a. The most forward point of the ball when declared dead between the end lines shall be the determining point for if the zone line to gain has been reached.

b. There are no measurements. The ball is either across the line to gain or has failed to reach the line to gain.

Continuity of Downs Broken

ARTICLE 4. The continuity of a series of downs is broken when:

a. Team possession of the ball changes during a down.
b. A punt crosses the neutral zone, goes out-of-bounds, or comes to rest and no player attempts
to secure it.
c. At the end of a down, Team A has earned a first down.
d. After fourth down, Team A has failed to earn a first down.
e. An accepted penalty mandates a first down.
f. There is a score.
g. A touchback is awarded to either team.
h. The second or fourth period ends.

SECTION 2. DOWN AND POSSESSION AFTER A PENALTY

Penalty Resulting in a New Series
ARTICLE 1. Once a penalty is applied, should the yardage place the ball beyond the original zone line to gain, or awards an automatic first down by rule, the next down will be a first down for the possessing team.

Foul Before Change of Team Possession
ARTICLE 2. a. If a penalty is accepted for a foul that occurs between the goal lines before a change of team possession during a down, the ball belongs to Team A. The down shall be repeated unless the penalty also involves loss of a down, mandates a first down, or leaves the ball on or beyond the zone line to gain.
b. If the penalty involves loss of a down, the down shall count as one of the four in the series.

Foul After Change of Team Possession
ARTICLE 3. If a penalty is accepted for a foul that occurs during a down after a change of team possession, the ball belongs to the team in possession when the foul occurred. The down and distance established by any such penalty shall be first down with a new zone line to gain.

Penalty is Declined
ARTICLE 4. If a penalty is declined, the number of the next down shall be whatever it would have been if the foul had not occurred.

Foul Between Downs
ARTICLE 5. a. After a distance penalty incurred between downs, the number of the next down shall be the same as that established before the foul occurred, unless enforcement for a foul by Team B leaves the ball on or beyond the zone line to gain or a penalty mandates a first down.
b. The penalty for any dead-ball foul that occurs after the ball is ready for play shall be completed after the zone line to gain is established.

Foul Between Series
ARTICLE 6. a. The penalty for any dead-ball foul (including live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls) that occurs after a series end and before the ball is ready for play shall be completed before the line to gain is established.
b. The penalty for any dead-ball foul that occurs after the ball is ready for play shall be completed after the line to gain is established.

Fouls by Both Teams
ARTICLE 7. If offsetting fouls occur during a down, that down shall be repeated.

Rule Decisions are Final
ARTICLE 8. No rule decisions may be changed after the ball is next legally snapped or the second of fourth periods have ended. (***Exception***: The number of a down may be corrected any time within that series of downs or before the ball is legally next put in play after that series.)

SECTION 3. ONSIDE CONVERSION

Onside Conversion is defined as a specialty play from scrimmage. The attempting team will line up on the 20-yard line and attempt to move the ball across the 40 yard line in one play.

When Allowed
ARTICLE 1. A team that is behind in score may elect to attempt an onside conversion at any time during the last two minutes of the game following the Try after Touchdown.

Team's Choice
ARTICLE 2. The team must inform the Referee of their choice to perform an onside play immediately following the Try. Once declared, a team may
not change their decision. Teams A may place the ball anywhere on or between the hashes at their own 20 yard line.

Onside Conversion Begins and Ends
ARTICLE 3. The conversion consists of one play that must result in Team A's possession of the ball beyond the 40 yard line. The onside conversion begins when the ball is marked ready for play. The onside conversion ends when the onside conversion is successful, Team B secures possession, or the ball becomes dead by rule. Neither team can score during the onside conversion.

Next Play
ARTICLE 4. After a successful onside conversion, possession will be retained by Team A at the 40, unless moved by penalty. After an unsuccessful onside conversion, the ball shall be snapped by Team B at the 40 yard line, unless moved by penalty.

RULE 6
Kicks

Section 1. KICKOFF

Kickoffs
ARTICLE 1. There are no kickoffs. Play starts at the Team A 14-yard line, unless moved by penalty.

Section 2. PUNTS

Legal Punt
ARTICLE 1. A legal punt is a kick made in accordance with the Rules. Quick punts, punts taken before the defense is set to receive the ball, are illegal.

Declared Punt
ARTICLE 2. On fourth down a team shall declare their intention to punt. The captain/head coach shall notify the Referee of the team's intent to punt. Once declared, the kicking team shall legally snap the ball prior to the play clock expiring. The selecting team may change their decision after a foul or after a timeout.

Punt Formation
ARTICLE 3. After the ball has been made ready for play, all players on the punting team must be behind their restraining line.

Crossing the Neutral Zone
ARTICLE 4. Neither Team A nor Team B may enter the neutral zone until the ball is kicked.
PENALTY – Live-ball foul. If by Team A, five yards from the previous spot; if by Team B, five yard post scrimmage kick enforcement.

Punting the Ball
ARTICLE 5. a. After receiving the snap, the kicker must punt the ball within four seconds in a continuous motion. The kicker is permitted to move forward in the process of kicking the ball.
b. A punt made when the kicker's entire body is beyond the line of scrimmage is an illegal kick, a live-ball foul that causes the ball to become dead.
PENALTY – For an illegal kick beyond the neutral zone (live-ball foul): Five yards from the previous spot and loss of down.

Behind the Neutral Zone
ARTICLE 6. a. A punt that fails to cross the neutral zone continues in play. All players may catch or

recover the ball behind the neutral zone and advance it.

b. The blocking of a punt by an opponent of the kicking team who is not more than three yards beyond the neutral zone is considered to have occurred within or behind that zone. If the blocked punt hits the ground, it is dead at that spot.

c. Team A shall not punt the ball to themself or any other A player. Team A may punt the ball only once per down.

Beyond the Neutral Zone

ARTICLE 7. a. No inbounds player of the kicking team shall touch a punt that has crossed the neutral zone before it touches an opponent. This is illegal touching, a violation that, when the ball becomes dead, gives the receiving team the privilege of taking the ball at the spot of the violation.

b. This privilege is canceled if there is an accepted penalty for a live-ball foul by either team.

c. The privilege is canceled if there are offsetting fouls.

d. Illegal touching in Team A's endzone is ignored.

All Become Eligible

ARTICLE 8. When a punt that has crossed the neutral zone touches a player of the receiving team who is inbounds, any player may catch the ball in flight.

Forced Touching Disregarded

ARTICLE 9. a. A player blocked by an opponent into a punt that has crossed the neutral zone shall not, while inbounds, be deemed to have touched the punt.

b. An inbounds player touched by a ball either batted or illegally kicked by an opponent is not deemed to have touched the ball.

Catch or Recovery by Receiving Team

ARTICLE 10. If a player of the receiving team catches or recovers a punt, the ball continues in play.

Catch or Recovery by Kicking Team

ARTICLE 11. a. If a player of the kicking team catches or recovers a punt that has crossed the neutral zone, the ball becomes dead. The ball belongs to the receiving team at the dead-ball spot, unless the kicking team is in legal possession when the ball is declared dead. In the latter case, the ball belongs to the kicking team.

b. If opposing players who are each eligible to touch the ball simultaneously catch a punt, the simultaneous possession makes the ball dead. A punt declared dead in joint possession of opposing players is awarded to the receiving team.

Out-of-bounds Between the Goal Lines or at Rest Inbounds

ARTICLE 12. If a punt goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines or comes to rest inbounds untouched and no player attempts to secure it, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team at that spot.

Out-of-bounds Behind the Goal Line

ARTICLE 13. If a punt goes out-of-bounds behind a goal line, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the team defending that goal line.

Touching Ground On or Behind the Goal Line

ARTICLE 14. If a punt untouched by Team B beyond the neutral zone touches the ground on or behind Team B's goal line, the ball becomes dead belonging to Team B.

Loose Behind the Goal Line

ARTICLE 15. If a punt untouched by Team B after crossing the neutral zone is batted in Team B's end zone by a player of Team A, it is a violation for illegal touching. The spot of the violation is Team B's 14-yard line. This is a special case of batting in the end zone and is not a foul.

Out-of-Bounds Player

ARTICLE 16. No Team A player who goes out-of-bounds during a punt may return inbounds during the down (Exception: This does not apply to a Team A player who is illegally forced out-of-bounds and attempts to return inbounds immediately).

PENALTY–Live-ball foul. Five yards from the previous spot or if the punt crosses the neutral zone, Five yards from the spot where the subsequent dead-ball belongs to Team B.

Fouls by Kicking Team

ARTICLE 16. Penalties for all fouls by the kicking team other than kick-catch interference during a punt play in which the ball crosses the neutral zone may be enforced either at the previous spot with the down repeated (Exception: Penalty option is a safety for fouls in Team A's end zone) or at the spot where the subsequent dead-ball belongs to Team B, at the option of Team B.

SECTION 3. FIELD GOALS

Field Goals

ARTICLE 1. There are no field goal attempts in this game. Team A must attempt to score by a run or pass play from scrimmage as outlined in Rule 8-3.

SECTION 4. KICK CATCHING INTERFERENCE

Interference with Opportunity

ARTICLE 1. a. If an inbounds player of the receiving team is located where they could catch a punt that has crossed the neutral zone, and if the player is attempting to do so, they must be given an unimpeded opportunity to catch the kick.

b. It is an interference foul if, before the receiver touches the ball, a Team A player enters the area defined by the width of the receiver's shoulders and extends one yard in front of them; the potential returner's flag is pulled. When in question it is a foul.

c. This protection ends when the kick touches the ground or when any player of Team B muffs or touches a punt beyond the neutral zone.

d. If interference with a potential receiver is the result of a player being contacted by an opponent, it is not a foul.

SECTION 5. FAIR CATCH

Dead Where Caught or Grounded

ARTICLE 1. a. If a Team B player makes a fair catch, the ball becomes dead where caught and belongs to Team B at that spot.

b. If a Team B player makes a valid fair catch signal, the unimpeded opportunity to catch a punt continues if this player muffs the kick and still has the opportunity to complete the catch. If that player (or another Team B player) subsequently catches the kick, the ball is placed

where the player making the signal first touched it. This protection terminates when the kick touches the ground.

c. Rules pertaining to a fair catch apply only when a punt crosses the neutral zone.
d. The purpose of the fair catch provision is to protect the receiver who, using the fair catch signal, agrees they or a teammate will not advance after the catch.
e. The ball shall be put in play by a snap by the receiving team at the spot of the catch if the ball is caught between the hashmarks.

No Advance

ARTICLE 2. No Team B player shall intentionally advance or carry a caught or recovered ball in any direction after any Team B player gives a valid or invalid fair catch signal.
PENALTY - Dead-ball foul, delay of game. Five yards from the succeeding spot.

Invalid Signals: Catch or Recovery

ARTICLE 3. a. A catch after an invalid signal is not a fair catch, and the ball is dead where caught or recovered.

b. If the signal follows a catch or recovery, the ball is dead when the signal is first given.
c. Invalid signals beyond the neutral zone apply only to Team B.
d. An invalid signal beyond the neutral zone is possible only when the ball has crossed the neutral zone.

RULE 7
Snapping, Passing, and Running

SECTION 1. THE SCRIMMAGE

Starting with a Snap

ARTICLE 1. a. The ball shall be put in play by a legal snap.

b. No player shall put the ball in play before it is ready for play.

PENALTY—[a-b] Dead-ball foul: Five yards from the succeeding spot.

c. The ball may not be snapped in a side zone. If the starting point for any scrimmage down is in a side zone, the ball shall be transferred to the hash mark.

Shift and False Start

ARTICLE 2. a. *Shift*. After a huddle or shift and before the snap, all Team A players must come to an absolute stop and remain stationary in their positions without movement of the feet, body, head or arms for at least one full second before the ball is snapped.

b. *False Start*. Each of the following is a false start by Team A if it occurs prior to the snap after the ball is ready for play and all players are in scrimmage formation:

1. Any movement by one or more players that simulates the start of a play.
2. The snapper moving to another position.
3. An offensive player making any quick, jerky movement before the snap, including but not limited to:
   (a) The snapper shifting or moving the ball, moving their thumb or fingers, flexing their elbows, jerking their head, or dipping their shoulders or buttocks.
   (b) The quarterback making any quick, jerky movement that simulates the beginning of a play.
   (c) A back simulating receiving the ball by making any quick, jerky movement that simulates the beginning of a play.
4. The offensive team never coming to a one-second stop prior to the snap after the ball is ready for play. This is an illegal shift that converts to a false start.

Offensive Team Requirements—Prior to the Snap

ARTICLE 3. Each of the following (a-d) is a dead-ball foul. Officials should blow the whistle and not allow the play to continue. After the ball is ready for play and before it is snapped:

a. *Snapper*. The snapper:

1. May not move to a different position nor have any part of their body beyond the neutral

zone;
2. May not lift the ball, move it beyond the neutral zone or simulate the start of a play;
3. May take their hand(s) off the ball, but only if this does not simulate the start of a play.

b. *5-Yard Marks*. A substitute player must establish themselves inside the 5 yard marks
c. *Encroachment*. Once the snap is imminent, no other Team A player may be in or beyond the neutral zone. (***Exception***: Substitutes and departing players).
d. *False Start*. No Team A player may commit a false start or contact an opponent.

PENALTY—[a-d] Dead-ball foul: Five yards from the succeeding spot.

Offensive Team Requirements—At the Snap

ARTICLE 4. Violation of each of the following (a-c) is a live-ball foul; the play is allowed to continue.

a. *Formation*. At the snap Team A must be in a formation that meets these requirements:
   1. All players must be inbounds.
   2. The snap must be received at least 2 yards behind the offensive scrimmage line.
   3. The only player required to be on the offensive scrimmage line is the snapper.
b. *Player in Motion*.
   1. One back may be in motion, but that back may not be moving toward their opponent's goal line.
   2. A player in motion at the snap must have satisfied the one-second rule—i.e., that player not start their motion before any shift has ended.
c. *Illegal Shift*. At the snap, Team A may not execute an illegal shift (Rule 7-1-2-a).

PENALTY [a-c]—Live-ball foul: Five yards from the previous spot. For live-ball fouls occurring when or after the snap starts during punt plays: Five yards from the previous spot or if the punt crosses the neutral zone, Five yards from the spot where the subsequent dead-ball belongs to Team B.

Defensive Team Requirements

ARTICLE 5. The defensive team requirements are as follows:

a. Each of the following (1-5) is a dead-ball foul. Officials should blow the whistle and not allow the play to continue. After the ball is ready for play and before the ball is snapped:
   1. No player may touch the ball except when moved illegally, nor may any player contact an opponent or in any other way interfere with them.
   2. No player may enter the neutral zone causing an offensive player to react immediately or commit any other dead-ball offside foul.
   3. No player may cross the neutral zone and without making contact continue their charge toward any player in the offensive backfield.

PENALTY [1-3]—Dead-ball foul, offside. Five yards from the succeeding spot.

   4. Player(s) aligned in a stationary position one yard from the line of scrimmage may not make quick, abrupt or exaggerated actions that are not part of normal defensive player movement.
   5. No player shall use words or signals that disconcert opponents when they are preparing to put the ball in play. No player may call defensive signals that simulate the sound or cadence of, or otherwise interfere with, offensive starting signals.

PENALTY [4-5]—Dead-ball foul, delay of game. Five yards from the succeeding spot.

b. When the snap starts:
   1. No player may be in or beyond the neutral zone at the snap.
   2. All players must be inbounds.

PENALTY—Live-ball foul. Five yards from the previous spot.

SECTION 2. RUNNING

Flag Guarding

ARTICLE 1. A runner shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to cause contact between the runner and an opponent that denies the opponent the opportunity to pull or remove the flag belt. Examples of flag guarding include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Placing or swinging the hand or arm over a flag.
b. Placing the ball in possession over a flag.
c. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner that places the arm over the flag belt.
d. Contacting an opponent with an extended hand or arm.

PENALTY—Live-ball foul. Five yards from the spot of the foul; also loss of down by Team A before team possession changes during a scrimmage down.

Helping the Ball Carrier or Passer

ARTICLE 2. a. The ball carrier shall not grasp a teammate; and no other player of their team shall grasp, pull, or lift them to assist their forward progress.

b. Teammates of the ball carrier or passer shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner while contacting an opponent.

PENALTY—Live-ball foul. Five yards from the succeeding spot.

Holding the Runner

ARTICLE 3. An opponent shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag belt.

PENALTY—Live-ball foul. Five yards.

SECTION 3. BACKWARD PASS AND FUMBLE

During Live-ball

ARTICLE 1. A ball carrier may hand or pass the ball backward at any time, except to throw the ball intentionally out-of-bounds to conserve time.

PENALTY—Five yards from the spot of the foul; also loss of down if by Team A before team possession changes during a scrimmage down.

Caught

ARTICLE 2. a. When a backward pass or fumble is caught by any inbounds player, the ball continues in play.

b. When a backward pass or fumble is caught simultaneously by opposing players, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the team last in possession.

Out-of-bounds or Grounded

ARTICLE 3. a. Backward Pass. When a backward pass goes out-of-bounds or is grounded between the goal lines, the ball belongs to the passing team at the spot.

b. Fumble. When a fumble goes out-of-bounds or is grounded between the goal lines:
    1. In advance of the spot of the fumble, the ball belongs to the fumbling team at the spot of the fumble.
    2. Behind the spot of the fumble, the ball belongs to the fumbling team at the spot.

c. Behind or Beyond the Goal Line. When a fumble or backward pass goes out-of-bounds or is grounded behind or beyond a goal line, it is a safety or touchback depending on impetus and responsibility.

SECTION 4. Forward Pass

Legal Forward Pass
ARTICLE 1. Team A may make one forward pass during each scrimmage down before team possession changes, provided the pass is thrown from a point in or behind the neutral zone.

Illegal Forward Pass
ARTICLE 2. A forward pass is illegal if:
a. It is thrown by a Team A player whose entire body is beyond the offensive scrimmage line when the ball is released.
b. It is thrown by a Team B player.
c. It is thrown after team possession has changed during the down.
d. It is the second forward pass during the same down.
e. It is thrown from in or behind the offensive scrimmage line after a ball carrier's entire body and the ball have been beyond the offensive scrimmage line.
f. If a passer catches their untouched forward pass.
PENALTY [a-f]—Five yards from the spot of the foul; also loss of down if by Team A before team possession changes during a scrimmage down.
g. The passer to conserve time throws the ball forward into an area where there is no eligible Team A receiver.
h. The passer to conserve yardage throws the ball forward into an area where there is no eligible Team A receiver.
PENALTY [g-i]—Loss of down at the spot of the foul.

Eligibility To Touch Legal Forward Pass
ARTICLE 3. a. Eligibility rules apply during a down when a legal forward pass is thrown.
b. All Team B players are eligible to touch or catch a pass.
c. All Team A players are eligible to touch or catch a pass (Exception: Team A player who threw the pass).
d. A team A eligible player loses their eligibility when the player goes out-of-bounds.

Eligibility Lost by Going Out-of-bounds
ARTICLE 4. No offensive receiver who goes out-of-bounds and returns inbounds during a down shall touch a legal forward pass while in the field of play or end zones or while airborne until it has been touched by an opponent or official. (**Exception**: This does not apply to an originally eligible offensive player who immediately returns inbounds after going out-of-bounds due to contact by an opponent). If the player touches the pass before returning inbounds, it is an incomplete pass and not a foul for illegal touching.
PENALTY—Loss of down at the previous spot.

Eligibility Gained or Regained
ARTICLE 5. When a Team B player or an official touches a legal forward pass, all players become eligible.

Complete Pass

ARTICLE 6. Any forward pass is complete when caught by a player of the passing team who is inbounds, and the ball continues in play unless completed in the opponent's end zone or the pass has been caught simultaneously by opposing players. If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by opposing players inbounds, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team.

Incomplete Pass

ARTICLE 7. a. Any forward pass is incomplete if the ball is out-of-bounds by rule or if it touches the ground when not firmly controlled by a player. It also is incomplete when a player leaves their feet and receives the pass but first lands on or outside a boundary line.

b. When a legal forward pass is incomplete, the ball belongs to the passing team at the previous spot.

c. When an illegal forward pass is incomplete, the ball belongs to the passing team at the spot of the pass (**Exception**: If Team B declines the penalty for an illegal pass thrown from the end zone, the ball shall next be put in play at the previous spot).

Illegal Contact and Pass Interference

ARTICLE 8. a. During a down in which a legal forward pass crosses the neutral zone, illegal contact by Team A and Team B players is prohibited from the time the ball is snapped until it is touched by any player or an official.

b. Offensive pass interference is contact by a Team A player beyond the neutral zone that interferes with a Team B player during a legal forward pass play in which the forward pass crosses the neutral zone. It is the responsibility of the offensive player to avoid the opponents. It is not offensive pass interference:

1. When two or more eligible players are making a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch or bat the pass. Players of either team have equal rights to the ball.
2. When the pass is in flight and two or more players are in the area where they might receive or intercept the pass and an offensive player in that area impedes an opponent, and the pass is not catchable.

PENALTY—Ten yards from the previous spot.

c. Defensive pass interference is contact beyond the neutral zone by a Team B player whose intent to impede an eligible opponent is obvious and could prevent the opponent the opportunity of receiving a catchable forward pass. When in question, a legal forward pass is catchable. Defensive pass interference occurs only after a legal forward pass is thrown.

It is not defensive pass interference:

1. When two or more eligible players are making a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch or bat the pass. Eligible players of either team have equal rights to the ball.
2. When a Team B player legally contacts an opponent before the pass is thrown.

PENALTY—Team A's ball at the spot of the foul, automatic first down, if the foul occurs fewer than 10 yards beyond the previous spot. If the foul occurs 10 or more yards beyond the previous spot, Team A's ball, automatic first down, Ten yards from the previous spot. (Note: illegal contact by the defense prior to a legal forward pass is thrown is illegal contact—see 9-4-2.)

When the ball is snapped on or inside the Team B 13-yard line and outside the Team B three-yard line, and the spot of the foul is on or inside the three-yard line, the penalty from the previous spot shall place the ball at the three-yard line, automatic first down. No penalty enforced from outside the three-yard line may

place the ball inside the three-yard line (Exception: On the Try when the snap is on or inside the three-yard line).
If the previous spot was on or inside the three-yard line, first down halfway between the previous spot and the goal line.

Pass Interference: Summary

ARTICLE 9. a. Pass interference rules apply only during a down in which a legal forward pass crosses the neutral zone.

b. Contact by Team B with an eligible receiver involving a personal foul that interferes with the reception of a catchable pass may be ruled either as pass interference or as a personal foul with the 10-yard penalty enforced from the previous spot. Rule 7-4-8 is specific about contact during a pass. However, if the interference involves an act that ordinarily would result in ejection, the fouling player is ejected from the game.
c. Physical contact is required to establish interference.
d. Each player has territorial rights, and incidental contact is ruled under "attempt to reach…the pass'' in Rule 7-4-8. If opponents who are beyond the line collide while moving toward the pass, a foul by one or both players occurs only if intent to impede the opponent is obvious. It is pass interference only if a catchable forward pass is involved.
e. Pass interference rules do not apply after the pass has been touched anywhere inbounds by an inbounds player or has touched an official. If an opponent is fouled, the penalty is for the foul and not pass interference.

RULE 8
Scoring

SECTION 1. VALUE OF SCORES

Scoring Plays

ARTICLE 1. The point value of scoring plays shall be:

Touchdown – 6 points
Safety (points awarded to opponent) – 2 points
Successful try by Team A:
Touchdown from the 3-yard line — 1 Point
Touchdown from the 10-yard line — 2 Points
Safety — 1 Point
Touchdown during a try after a change of possession – 2 points

Forfeited Games

ARTICLE 2. The score of a forfeited game, or a suspended game that later results in a forfeit, shall be: Offended Team – 1, Opponent – 0. However, if the offended team is ahead at the time of the forfeit, the score stands.

SECTION 2. TOUCHDOWN

How Scored

ARTICLE 1. A touchdown shall be scored when:

a. A ball carrier advancing from the field of play has possession of a live-ball when it penetrates the vertical plane of the opponent's goal line. This plane extends beyond the pylons only for a player who touches the ground in the end zone or a pylon.
b. A player catches a forward pass in the opponent's end zone.
c. A fumble or backwards pass is caught, intercepted, or awarded in the opponent's end zone.
d. The referee awards a touchdown under the provisions of Rule 9-4-4 (Unfair Acts).

SECTION 3. TRY DOWN

Referee's Responsibility and Team's Choice

ARTICLE 1. The referee must ask the coach or captain whether the try shall be from the 3- or 10-yard line for 1 or 2 points respectively. Once this decision is made, it can only be changed after a charged team timeout. The value of the try may not be changed if a Team A dead-ball foul occurs after the ready for play signal, or if a live-ball foul occurs during the try. Enforcement of penalties does not change the value of the try.

Opportunity to Score

ARTICLE 2. A try is the opportunity for either team to score one or two points while the game clock is stopped after a touchdown. It is a special interval in the game which, for purposes of penalty enforcement only, includes both a down and the "ready" period that precedes it.

a. The ball shall be put in play by the team that scored a six-point touchdown. If a touchdown is scored during a down in which time in the fourth period expires or in extra periods, the try is not attempted unless it will affect the outcome of the game. (**Exception**: If the scoring team is ahead by one or two points, they have the option to forgo the try).
b. The snap will be midway between the hash marks at or from any other point on or behind the yardage declared by the team that scored the six-point touchdown before the play clock reaches 30 seconds or before any subsequent ready-for-play signal. The ball may be relocated after a Team B foul or a charged timeout to either team, unless the timeout is preceded by a Team A foul or offsetting fouls.
c. A try ends when:
    1. Either team scores.
    2. The ball is dead by rule.
    3. An accepted penalty results in a score.
    4. A Team A loss-of-down penalty is accepted.

Fouls During a Try Before a Change of Team Possession

ARTICLE 3. a. Offsetting fouls: If both teams foul during the down and Team B fouls before the change of possession, the fouls offset and the down is repeated even if additional fouls occur after the change of possession. Any repeat of the down after offsetting fouls must be from the previous spot.

b. Fouls by Team B on a try*:*
    1. When the try is successful Team A may accept the score with penalties for personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls enforced from the succeeding spot.
    2. A repeat of the down after a penalty against Team B may be from any point on or between the hash marks on or behind the yard line where the penalty leaves the ball.
c. Fouls by Team A on a Try*:*

    3. After a foul by Team A on a successful try, the ball shall be put into play at the spot where the penalty leaves it.

    4. If Team A commits a foul for which the penalty carries a loss of down, then the try is over and the score is cancelled, and no yardage is assessed on the succeeding spot.

    5. If before a change of team possession Team A commits a foul that is not offset, and during the down there is neither another change of team possession nor a score, the penalty is declined by rule.
d. Dead-Ball Enforcement:

    1. Penalties for fouls occurring after the ball is ready for play but before the snap are enforced before the next snap.

    2. Penalties for live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls occurring during the try are enforced on the succeeding spot. If the try is replayed, those penalties are enforced on the replay.

Fouls During a Try After a Change of Team Possession

ARTICLE 4. a. Penalties against either team are declined by rule. (***Exception***: Penalties for flagrant personal fouls, dead-ball unsportsmanlike conduct, dead-ball personal fouls, and live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls are enforced from the succeeding spot).

b. A score by a team committing a foul during the down is canceled. (***Exception***: Live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls).
c. If both teams foul during the down and Team B had not fouled before the change of possession, the fouls cancel, the down is not repeated, and the try is over. (***Exception***: Penalties for flagrant personal fouls, dead-ball unsportsmanlike conduct, dead-ball personal fouls, and live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls are enforced on the succeeding spot).

Fouls After a Try
ARTICLE 5. Penalties for fouls occurring after a try are enforced from the succeeding spot. However, if the try is repeated, these penalties are enforced before the repeat.

Next Play
ARTICLE 6. After a try the ball shall be snapped by the opponent of the scoring team at their own 14-yard line, unless moved by penalty, to begin overtime, or if a team has elected to attempt an onside conversion (Rule 5-3).

SECTION 4. SAFETY

How Scored
ARTICLE 1. It is a safety when:
a. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across their own goal line, and it becomes dead there in their team's possession. This includes when a player's backwards pass or fumble from inside their own end zone lands or goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines.
   Exception:
   It is not a safety if a player between their own team's five-yard line and goal line:
   (a) intercepts a pass or fumble; or catches a kick; and
   (b) the player's original momentum carries that player into their own end zone; and
   (c) the ball remains behind that team's goal line and is declared dead in the team's possession there. This includes a fumble that goes from the end zone into the field of play and out-of-bounds.
   If conditions (a)-(c) are satisfied above, the ball belongs to this player's team, at the spot where that player gained possession
b. An accepted penalty for a foul leaves the ball on or behind the offending team's goal line.

Next Play
ARTICLE 2. After a safety is scored, the ball belongs to the defending team and shall be snapped at their own 14-yard line, unless moved by penalty.

SECTION 5. TOUCHBACK

When Declared
ARTICLE 1. It is a touchback when:
a. The ball is out-of-bounds behind a goal line, except from an incomplete forward pass, or becomes dead in the possession of a player on, above, or behind the players own goal line or when the ball becomes dead not in possession on, above, or behind a team's own goal line and the attacking team is responsible for the ball being there.
b. Team A's punt breaks the plane of Team B's goal line and Team A is responsible for the ball being there.

Snap After a Touchback
ARTICLE 2. After a touchback is declared, the ball belongs to the defending team at their own 14-yard line, unless moved by penalty. The snap shall be midway between the hash marks, unless a different position on or between the hash marks is selected by the team designated to put the ball in play before the play clock is at 30 seconds or before any subsequent ready-for-play signal. After the ready-for-play signal, the ball may be relocated after a charged team timeout, unless preceded by a Team A foul or offsetting foul.

SECTION 6. RESPONSIBILITY AND IMPETUS

Responsibility
ARTICLE 1. The team responsible for the ball being out-of-bounds behind a goal line or being dead in the possession of a player on, above, or behind the goal line is the team whose player carries the ball or imparts an impetus to it that forces it on, above, or across the goal line, or is responsible for a loose ball being on, above, or behind the goal line, or incurs a penalty that leaves the ball on or behind the goal line.

Initial Impetus
ARTICLE 2. a. The impetus imparted by a player who kicks, passes, snaps or fumbles the ball shall be considered responsible for the ball's progress in any direction even though its course is deflected or reversed after striking the ground or after touching an official or a player of either team.

b. Initial impetus is considered expended and the responsibility for the ball's progress is charged to a player;
    1. If that player kicks a ball not in player possession.
    2. If the ball comes to rest and that player gives it new impetus by any contact with it, other than through forced touching.

c. A loose ball retains its original status when there is new impetus.

RULE 9
Conduct of Players and Others Subject to the Rules

SECTION 1. PERSONAL FOULS

All fouls in this section (unless noted) and any other acts of unnecessary roughness are personal fouls. Except as otherwise noted, the penalties for all personal fouls are as follows:

PENALTY—Personal foul. Ten yards. Flagrant offenders shall be ejected. For dead-ball fouls, Ten yards from the succeeding spot. Penalties for Team A live-ball personal fouls behind the neutral zone are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the Team A live-ball foul occurs behind Team A's goal line.

Flagrant Fouls

ARTICLE 1.

a. Before the game, during the game and between periods, all flagrant fouls require ejection. Automatic first down for Team B flagrant personal fouls if not in conflict with other rules.
b. Examples of flagrant fouls include but are not limited to:
   1. Fighting. (Rule 2-28)
   2. Tackling the runner similar to tackle football in which it is obvious that there is no attempt to pull the flag.
   3. Any action that fits the definition of Rule 2-7-3.

Stripping

ARTICLE 2. No player shall strip or attempt to strip the ball from a runner by punching, striking, or grabbing the ball.

Striking

ARTICLE 3. No player shall make contact with an opponent that is deemed unnecessary, including using knees, fists, locked hands, elbows, or any part of the forearm or hand.

Throwing a Runner

ARTICLE 4. No player shall throw or push the runner to the ground.

Tripping

ARTICLE 5. No player shall trip an opponent. Tripping is intentionally using the lower leg or foot

to obstruct an opponent below the knee.

Charging and Illegal Contact Offense
ARTICLE 6. a. No player shall initiate contact with an opponent by charging, driving through, running into an opponent, nor by leading with a shoulder or extended elbow.
b. A runner shall not charge into nor contact an opponent in their path nor attempt to run between two opponents or between an opponent and a sideline. The runner must avoid contact by changing direction.
PENALTY - Personal Foul, Illegal Contact. Ten yards

Roughing the Passer
ARTICLE 7.
a. No defensive player shall unnecessarily rough a passer, when it is obvious the ball has been thrown forward legally.
b. Examples of roughing the passer include but are not limited to:
1. Contacting the passer's throwing hand or arm.
2. Contacting the passer's head or neck area.
3. Any action that is a personal foul as described elsewhere in this section.
PENALTY—Ten yards and automatic first down. The foul is added to the end of the last run when it ends beyond the neutral zone and there is no change of team possession during the down.
c. It is not roughing the passer if the contact is initiated by the passer (e.g., passer contacts the head or body of an opponent during the follow through of a pass where the opponent is making a legal attempt to pull the flags at waist level)

Hurdling
ARTICLE 8. There shall be no hurdling. (***Exception***: The ball carrier may hurdle an opponent who is not on their feet as defined in 2.12.1.b).

SECTION 2. SCREENING

The penalty for all screening fouls in this section are as follows:
PENALTY—Live-ball foul. Five yards.

Screen Blocking
ARTICLE 1. The offensive screen block shall take place without initiating contact. The screen blocker shall have their hands and arms at their side, behind their back, or against their chest when screen blocking. A player must be on their feet before, during, and after screen blocking. A blocker may use their hand or arm to break a fall or retain their balance.

Screen Blocking Fundamentals
ARTICLE 2. A player who screen blocks shall not do any of the following:
a. Take a position closer than a normal step when behind a stationary opponent.
b. Make contact when assuming a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent.
c. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that their opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where

the screener may take their stationary position. This position will vary and may be 1 to 2 normal steps or strides from the opponent.

d. After assuming their legal screening position, move to maintain it, unless they move in the same direction and path as their opponent.

Illegal Screen Blocking

ARTICLE 3. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. It is a foul if the blocker creates contact by violating any of the screen blocking fundamentals in Rule 9-2-2.

Blocking and Interlocked Interference

ARTICLE 4. Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for them by screen blocking but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner.

SECTION 3. USE OF HANDS OR ARMS AND ILLEGAL CONTACT

Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense

ARTICLE 1. Opponents must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used to displace the opponent. A blocker may use their hand or arm to break a fall or retain their balance.

PENALTY—Live ball foul. Five yards

Illegal Contact by the Defense

ARTICLE 2. During: 1) a running play; 2) prior to a legal or illegal forward pass being thrown; or 3) during a kick play while the ball is in flight – defensive players may not use hands or arms to restrict, hold, displace, or otherwise illegally obstruct an opponent.

PENALTY—Live-ball foul. Five yards from the previous spot, automatic first down. (Note: illegal contact by the defense after a legal forward pass is thrown is pass interference—see 7-4-8-c.)

SECTION 4. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Except as otherwise noted, the penalties for all unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are as follows: **PENALTY—Ten yards. Flagrant offenders shall be ejected. For dead-ball fouls, or for live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls, Ten yards from the succeeding spot.**

Unsportsmanlike Acts

ARTICLE 1. There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct or any act that interferes with orderly game administration on the part of players, substitutes, coaches, authorized attendants or any other persons subject to the rules, before the game, during the game, or between periods.

a. Specifically prohibited acts and conduct include:
    1. Using abusive, threatening or obscene language or gestures, or engaging in such acts that provoke ill will or are demeaning to an opponent, to game officials, or to the image of the game, including but not limited to:
        (a) Pointing the finger(s), hand(s), arm(s) or ball at an opponent, or imitating the slashing of the throat.
        (b) Taunting, baiting or ridiculing an opponent verbally.
        (c) Inciting an opponent or spectators in any other way, such as simulating the firing or brandishing of a weapon or placing a hand by the ear to request recognition.

(d) Any delayed, excessive, prolonged or choreographed act by which a player (or players) attempts to focus attention upon themself (or themselves).
(e) An unopposed ball carrier obviously altering stride when approaching the opponent's goal line or diving into the endzone.
(f) Punching one's own chest or crossing one's arms in front of the chest while standing over a prone player.
(g) Going into the stands to interact with spectators, or bowing at the waist after a good play.
(h) Dead-ball contact fouls such as pushing, shoving, striking, etc. that occur clearly after the ball is dead and that are not part of the game action.
(i) Being on the field illegally.
(j) No ejected person shall be in view of the field of play.

2. After a score or any other play, no player shall:
(b) Intentionally kick or spin the ball.
(c) Spike the ball into the ground.
(d) Throw the ball high into the air.
(e) Any other unsportsmanlike act or actions that delay the game.

Flag Removal
ARTICLE 2. No player shall intentionally remove a flag from an opposing player other than the ball carrier. Can also be kick catch interference on punt plays.

Deceptive Substitutions
ARTICLE 3. No simulated replacements or substitutions may be used to confuse opponents. No tactic associated with substitutes or the substitution process may be used to confuse opponents.

Unfair Acts
ARTICLE 4. The following are unfair acts:
a. A team refuses to play within two minutes after being ordered to do so by the referee.
b. A team repeatedly commits fouls for which penalties can be enforced only by halving the distance to its goalline.
c. An obviously unfair act not specifically covered by the rules occurs during the game. This includes substitutes, coaches or any other persons subject to the rules, other than a player or official, interfering in any way with the ball or a player while the ball is in play.

PENALTY—Unsportsmanlike conduct. The referee may take any action they consider equitable, which includes assessing a Ten yard penalty from the succeeding spot and automatic first down, directing the down to be repeated, awarding a score, or suspending or forfeiting the game.

Contacting an Official
ARTICLE 5. Persons subject to the rules shall not intentionally contact a game official forcibly during the game.

PENALTY—Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct. Administer as a dead-ball foul. Ten yards from the succeeding spot and automatic ejection. Automatic first down for fouls by Team B if not in conflict with other rules.

Game Administration and Sideline Interference
ARTICLE 6. While the ball is live and during the continuing action after the ball has been declared dead:

a. Coaches, substitutes and authorized attendants in the team area must remain in the team box.

PENALTY—Administer as a dead-ball foul. First infraction: Warning for sideline interference. No yardage penalty. Second infraction: Delay of game for sideline interference. Five yards from the succeeding spot. Third and subsequent infractions: Team unsportsmanlike conduct for sideline interference. Ten yards from the succeeding spot.

b. Physical interference with an official is a foul charged to the team for unsportsmanlike conduct.

PENALTY—Team unsportsmanlike conduct unless the individual can be readily identified. Administer as a dead-ball foul. Ten yards from the succeeding spot. Automatic first down for fouls by Team B if not in conflict with other rules.

Ejected Players and Coaches

ARTICLE 7. Any coach, player or identified squad member in uniform who commits two unsportsmanlike conduct fouls in the same game shall be ejected. A player or coach ejected from the game must leave the playing enclosure within a reasonable amount of time after their ejection and must remain out of view of the field for the remainder of the game. A head coach ejected from the game may designate a new head coach.

SECTION 5. BATTING AND KICKING

The penalties for all illegal batting and illegal kicking fouls are as follows:
PENALTY—Live ball. Five yards. Loss of Down

Batting a Loose Ball

ARTICLE 1. Players shall not bat a loose ball other than a pass or fumble in flight. (***Exception***: Team A may bat a grounded or an airborne punt beyond A's scrimmage line toward their own goal).

Batting a Backward Pass in Flight

ARTICLE 2. A backward pass in flight shall not be batted or thrown forward by the passing team.

Batting Ball in Possession

ARTICLE 3. A ball in player possession shall not be batted forward by a player of that team.

Illegal Kicking

ARTICLE 4. No player shall intentionally kick a ball other than a punt.

RULE 10
Penalty Enforcement

SECTION 1. PENALTIES COMPLETED

How and When Completed

ARTICLE 1. a. A penalty is completed when it is accepted, declined, offset, or canceled according to rule, or when the choice is obvious to the referee.

b. Any penalty may be declined. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined.

c. An ejected player must leave the game whether the penalty is accepted, declined, offset or canceled.

d. When a foul is committed, the penalty shall be completed before the ball is declared ready for play for any ensuing down.

Types of Fouls

ARTICLE 2. a. Dead-ball: A foul that occurs prior to a legal snap or after the ball has become dead by rule. This includes live-ball fouls that are treated as dead-ball fouls.

b. Live-ball: A foul that occurs during a down.

c. Simultaneous With Snap: A foul that occurs as the ball is snapped. These are live-ball fouls considered as occurring during that down.

Live-Ball Fouls by the Same Team

ARTICLE 3. When two or more live-ball fouls are committed by the same team during the same down, the offended team may elect only one of these penalties. The other fouls are declined by rule.

Offsetting Fouls

ARTICLE 4. When live-ball fouls are committed by both teams during the same down, the fouls offset and the down is repeated. Live-ball fouls do not offset dead-ball fouls.

Exceptions:

1. When there is a change of possession during a down, and the team last gaining possession did not foul before last gaining possession, it may refuse offsetting fouls and thereby retain possession after completion of the penalty for its foul.
2. When all Team B fouls that occur before possession changes are governed by postpunt rules, Team B may refuse offsetting fouls and accept postpunt enforcement.
3. During a Try or extra period, Team B fouls committed after it obtained possession.

Dead-ball Fouls

ARTICLE 5. Penalties for dead-ball fouls are administered separately and in order of occurrence. (***Exception***: When dead-ball unsportsmanlike or dead-ball personal fouls are committed by both teams during the same dead-ball period, and none of the penalties have been completed, the

yardage penalties cancel and the number or type of down established before the fouls occurred is unaffected).

Live-Ball—Dead-Ball Fouls

ARTICLE 6. a. Live-ball fouls do not offset dead-ball fouls.

b. When a live-ball foul by one team is followed by one or more dead-ball fouls (including live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls) by an opponent or by the same team, the penalties are administered separately and in the order of occurrence.

Interval Fouls

ARTICLE 7. Penalties for fouls that occur between the end of the fourth period and the start of the extra period for overtime, between possession series during an extra period, and between extra periods are enforced from the spot of the next possession series.

SECTION 2. ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

Establishing the Line to Gain

ARTICLE 1. a. Live-ball Fouls.

1. Enforce the penalty then establish the line to gain.

b. Dead-ball Fouls.

1. If the foul occurs prior to the ready for play signal, enforce the penalty then establish the line to gain. (***Exception***: If Team A commits a delay of game foul for snapping the ball prior to the ready for play whistle, the line to gain will be what it would have been had this foul not occurred.)

2. If the foul occurs after the ready for play signal, the line to gain will remain the same as what it was when the ready for play signal was blown.

Three-and-One Principle

ARTICLE 2. a. For many fouls, the enforcement spot is specified in the statement of the penalty. When the enforcement spot is not specified in the statement of the penalty, the enforcement spot is determined by the Three-and-One Principle.

Possible enforcement spots are: the previous spot, the spot of the foul, the succeeding spot, the end of the run, and the post scrimmage kick spot.

b. When the team in possession commits a foul behind the basic spot, the penalty is enforced at the spot of the foul.

c. When the team in possession commits a foul beyond the basic spot, the penalty is enforced at the basic spot.

d. When the team not in possession commits a foul either behind or beyond the basic spot, the penalty is enforced at the basic spot.

Determining the Spot of Enforcement and the Basic Spot

ARTICLE 3. a. For many fouls, the enforcement spot is specified in the statement of the penalty. When the enforcement spot is not specified in the statement of the penalty, the enforcement spot is determined by the Three-and-One Principle (Rule 2-29).

b. Personal fouls and screen blocking fouls by the offense committed behind the neutral zone are enforced from the previous spot.

c. The basic spot of enforcement for live-ball fouls are as follows:

1. Running plays prior to a change of team possession.

(a) Previous spot, when the related run ends behind the neutral zone.
(b) End of the related run, when the related run ends beyond the neutral zone.
(c) End of the related run, on running plays that have no neutral zone.

2. Running plays following a change of team possession.
(a) End of the related run, when the run does not end in the end zone.
(b) Succeeding spot, when a foul occurs after a change of team possession in the end zone and the result of the play is a touchback.
(c) Goal line, when a foul occurs after a change of team possession in the field of play and the related run ends in the end zone.
(d) Goal line, when a foul occurs after a change of team possession in the end zone, the related run ends in the end zone, and the result of the play is not a touchback.
3. Loose ball plays: Previous spot.
4. Punt plays.
(a) Previous spot, unless the foul is governed by postpunt rules.
(b) Postpunt spot, if the foul is governed by postpunt rules.
(c) Fouls by Team A during a punt play (except for Kick Catch Interference) are enforced at either the previous spot, or at the spot where the subsequent dead-ball belongs to Team B, at the option of Team B.
5. Simultaneous with snap fouls: Previous spot.

Post Scrimmage Kick Enforcement

ARTICLE 4. a. Under post scrimmage kick enforcement rules, fouls by Team B that satisfy the following conditions are treated as if Team B had been in possession at the time the foul was committed, even though by rule team possession had not yet changed.

b. Post scrimmage kick enforcement applies only to Team B fouls during a punt under the following conditions:

1. The ball crosses the neutral zone.
2. The foul occurs before the end of the kick.
3. Team B will next put the ball in play.

If these conditions are all met, the penalty is enforced according to the Three-And-One Principle. Team B is taken as the team in possession with the post scrimmage kick spot as the basic spot. The post scrimmage kick spot is the 14-yard line if the kick ends in Team B's end zone.

Fouls During or After a Touchdown or Try

ARTICLE 5. a. If there is a live-ball foul by the scoring team during a down that results in a touchdown, the acceptance of the penalty nullifies the score.

b. Fouls by the non-scoring team during a down that ends in a touchdown, and there was not a change of team possession during the down:
1. Ten yard penalties are enforced on the try, the succeeding spot after the try, or from the succeeding spot in extra periods at the option of the scoring team.
2. Five yard penalties are not enforced and are declined by rule.

c. Fouls by the non-scoring team during a down that ends in a touchdown, and there was a change of team possession during the down:
1. Ten yard penalties committed following the change of team possession are enforced on the try, the succeeding spot after the try, or from the succeeding spot in extra periods at the option of the scoring team.
2. Five yard penalties are not enforced and are declined by rule.

d. When a foul occurs after a touchdown but before the ball is ready for play on the try, or there was a live-ball foul treated as a dead-ball foul on the touchdown play, enforcement is on the try, the succeeding spot after the try, or from the succeeding spot in extra periods at the option of the scoring team.

Onside Conversion Fouls

ARTICLE 6. Fouls during this special play are governed by Try enforcement rules.

Half-Distance Enforcement Procedures

ARTICLE 7. No distance penalty, including on the try, shall exceed half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. (***Exceptions***: (1) Defensive pass interference during scrimmage downs, other than a try; and (2) on the try, defensive pass interference when the ball is snapped from outside the 3-yard line).

RULE 11
The Officials: Jurisdiction and Duties

SECTION 1. JURISDICTION

ARTICLE 1. The officials' jurisdiction begins 30 minutes before the scheduled start and ends when the referee declares the score final. It is expected that all officials will be on the field 30 minutes prior to the game start time.
ARTICLE 2. At 30 minutes before the start of the game, the playing field will be divided in half, with a buffer zone of 10-yards between the 35 yard-lines in which no player shall enter.

SECTION 2. RESPONSIBILITIES

ARTICLE 1. a. The game shall be played under supervision of three, four, or five game officials.
b. Officiating crews, including the use of an Instant Replay Official, will be assigned from the same officiating organization (effective by January 2028).
ARTICLE 2. Officiating responsibilities and mechanics are specified in the current mechanics set forth by Collegiate Flag Football Officiating, LLC (CFFO) . Officials are responsible for knowing and applying the materials.

RULE 12
Instant Replay

SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

Purpose

ARTICLE 1. Instant replay is a process whereby video review is used to uphold or overturn certain on-field decisions made by game officials.

Philosophy

ARTICLE 2. The instant replay process operates under the fundamental assumption that the ruling on the field is correct. The replay official may overturn a ruling if and only if the video evidence convinces the replay official beyond all doubt that the ruling was incorrect. Without such clear and obvious video evidence, the replay official must uphold the ruling on the field.

SECTION 2. IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing Replay

ARTICLE 1. The collegiate governing body will establish eligibility guidelines for collegiate flag football contests by the 2027 rulebook editing cycle.

Appendix A
Game-Official Guidelines for Serious On-Field Player Injuries

1. Players and coaches must go to and remain in the bench area. Direct players and coaches accordingly. Always ensure adequate lines of vision between the medical staff and available emergency personnel.
2. Attempt to keep players a significant distance away from the seriously injured player or players.
3. Do not allow a player to roll an injured player over.
4. Do not allow players to assist a teammate who is lying on the field; i.e., removing head gear, or attempting to assist breathing by elevating the waist.
5. Do not allow players to pull an injured teammate or opponent from off the ground.
6. Once the medical staff begins to assist an injured player, all members of the officiating crew should control the total playing field environment and team personnel, and allow the medical staff to perform services without interruption or interference.
7. Players and coaches should be appropriately controlled to avoid dictating medical services to the athletics trainers or team physicians, or taking up their time to perform such service.

Note: Officials should have a reasonable knowledge of the location of emergency personnel equipment at all stadiums.

(The Collegiate Women's Flag Football Rules Focus Group expresses its appreciation to the NCAA tackle Football Rules Committee and National Football League for documenting and developing these guidelines.)

Appendix B
Lightning Policy

Although the NCAA doesn't govern this rulebook at present, it provides detailed guidance on lightning (and other environmental hazards) in the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook. The Collegiate Women's Flag Football Focus Group highly suggests that institutions consult the latest version of this handbook when considering action to take relative to lightening during competitions, which is available at www.ncaa.org.

Appendix C
Concussions

Sport-related concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct blow to the head, neck or body resulting in an impulsive force being transmitted to the brain that occurs in sports and exercise-related activities. Signs and symptoms may present immediately or evolve over minutes or hours.

Game officials are often in the best position to observe student-athletes after they have had a blow to the head or body, and may be the first to notice the behaviors that indicate a concussion may be present. An official may observe the following behaviors by a student-athlete with a suspected concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned.
- Appears confused or incoherent.
- Shakes head.
- Stumbles; has to be physically supported by teammates.
- Moves clumsily or awkwardly.
- Shows behavior or personality changes.

Student-athletes with a suspected concussion must be removed from competition so that a medical examination can be conducted by the primary athletics healthcare provider (i.e., athletic trainer or team physician).

Importantly, a game official is not expected to evaluate a student-athlete. Instead, if an official notices any behavior that suggests a concussion, the official should stop play immediately and call an injury timeout so that an appropriate medical examination can be conducted. A simple guide to the official's role is: "When in doubt, call an injury timeout."

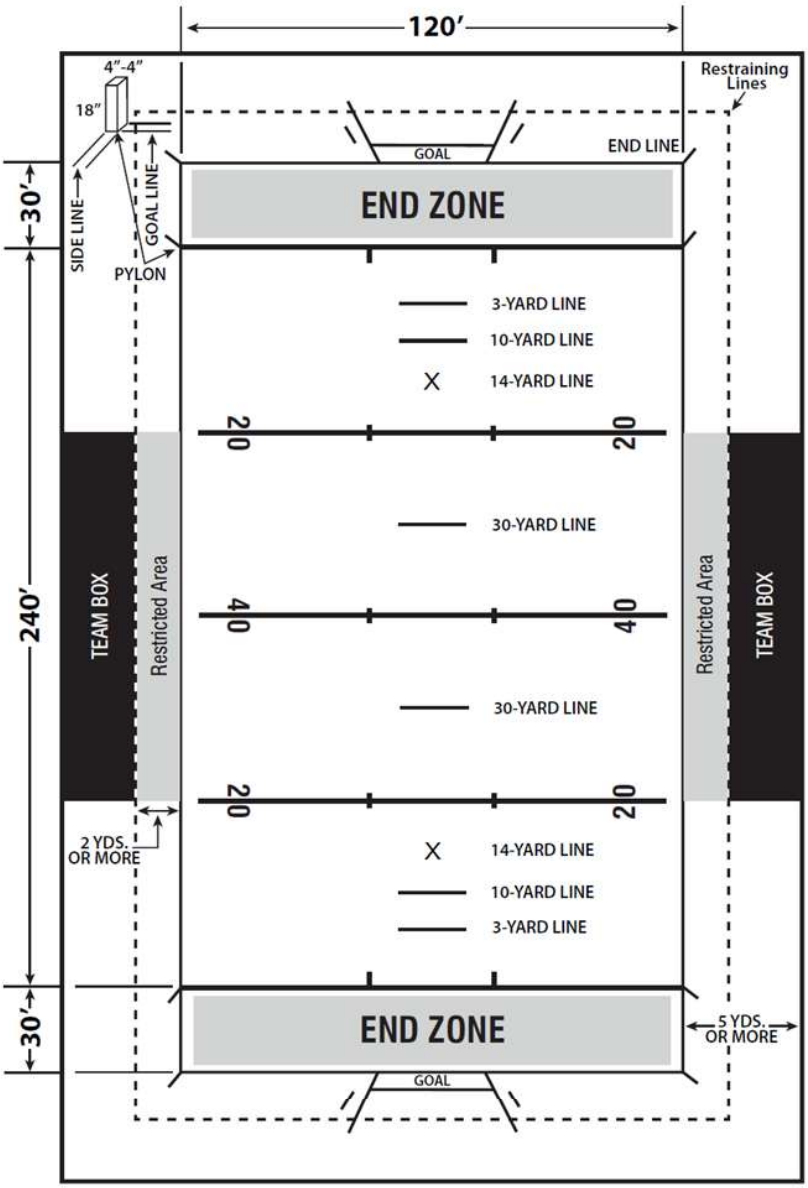
A student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, must be removed from practice or competition and may not return to sport activity on that day. The athlete must undergo medical evaluation and follow a return-to-learn/return-to-sport protocol under the supervision of the team physician, and may not return to sport until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. Sports have injury timeouts and player substitutions so that student-athletes can receive appropriate medical evaluation.

IF A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED:

1. Remove the student-athlete from play. Look for the signs and symptoms of concussion if the student-athlete has experienced a blow to the head. Do not allow the student-athlete to just "shake it off." Each student-athlete will respond to concussions differently.
2. Ensure that the student-athlete is evaluated immediately by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury. Call an injury timeout to ensure that the student-athlete is evaluated by one of the primary athletics healthcare providers.

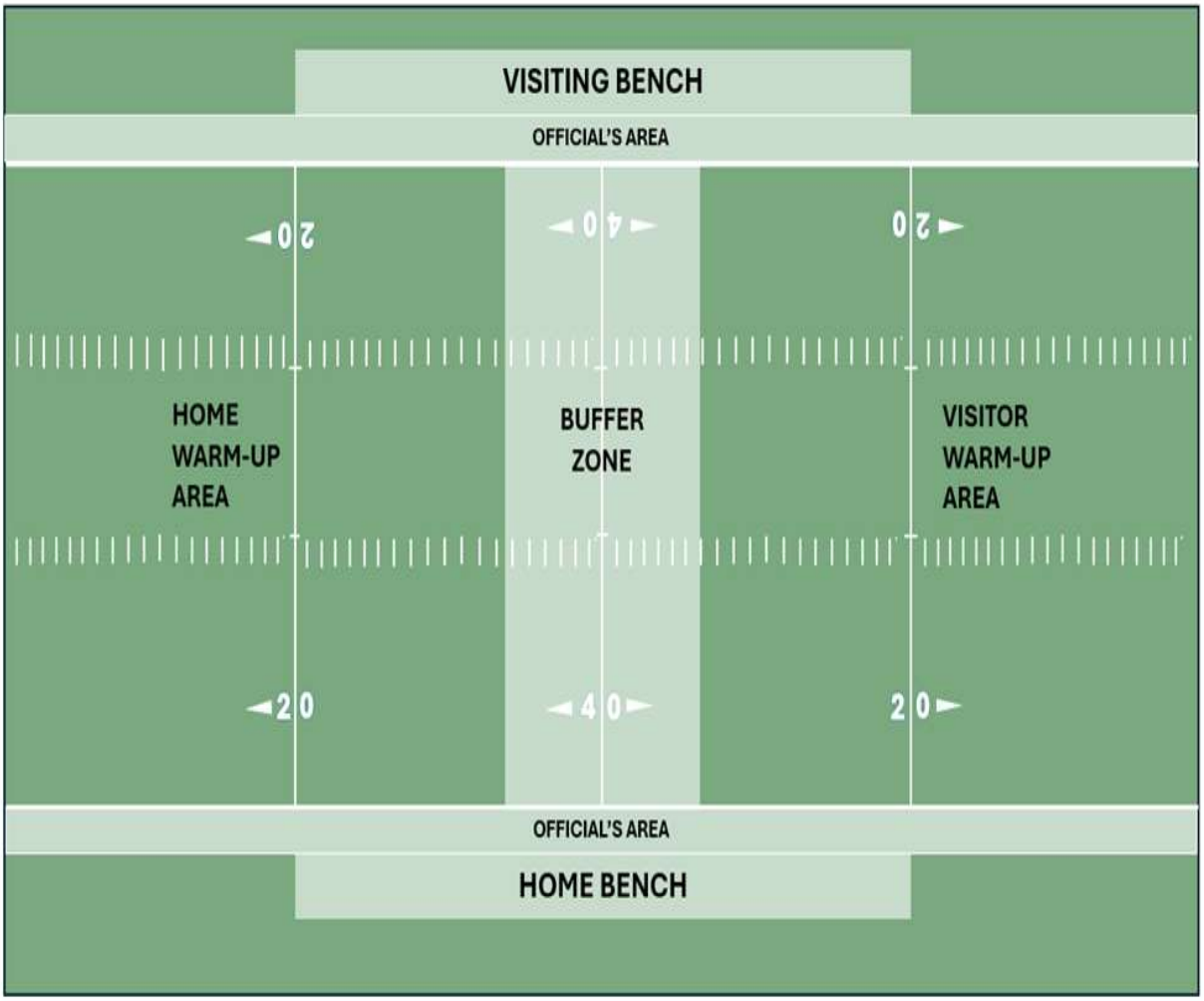
3. Allow the student-athlete to return to play only if the primary athletics healthcare provider has determined that the student-athlete did not suffer a concussion. Allow athletics medical staff to rely on their clinical skills and protocols in evaluating the student-athlete to establish the appropriate management.

Appendix D
Field Diagrams

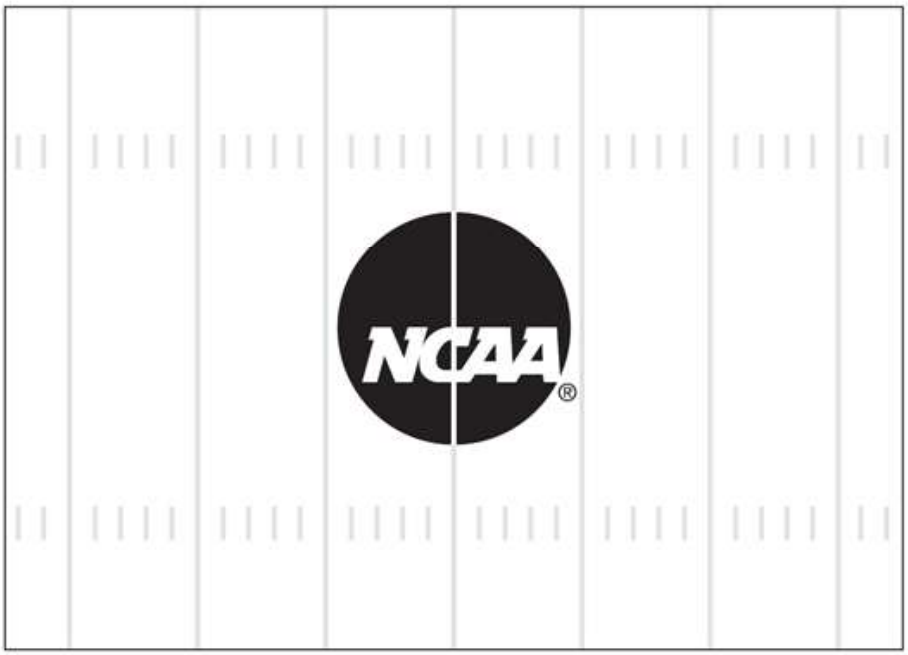


Pregame Procedures:

Buffer Zone Configuration



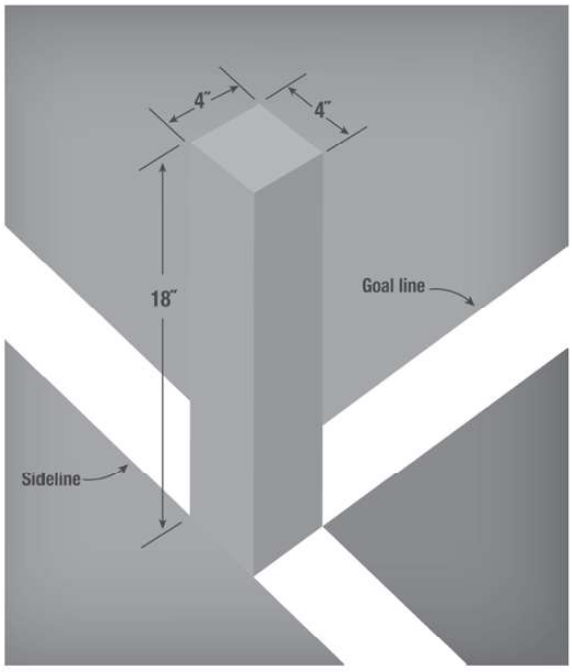
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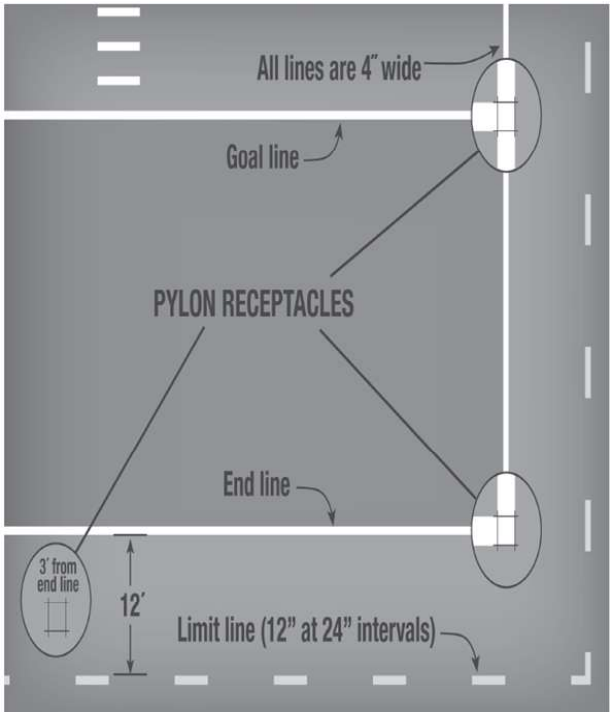
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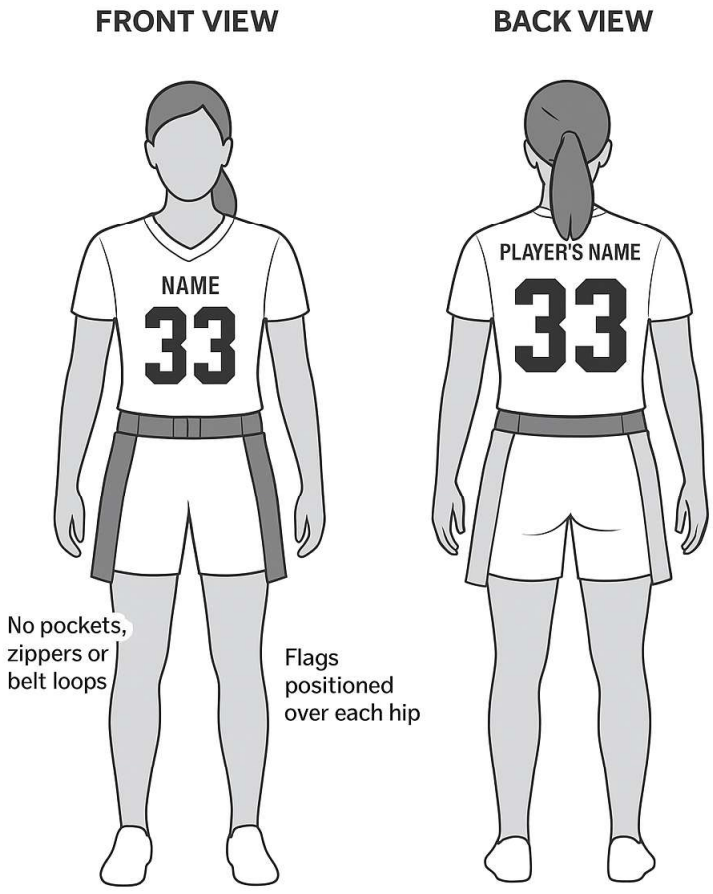
PYLON DETAIL



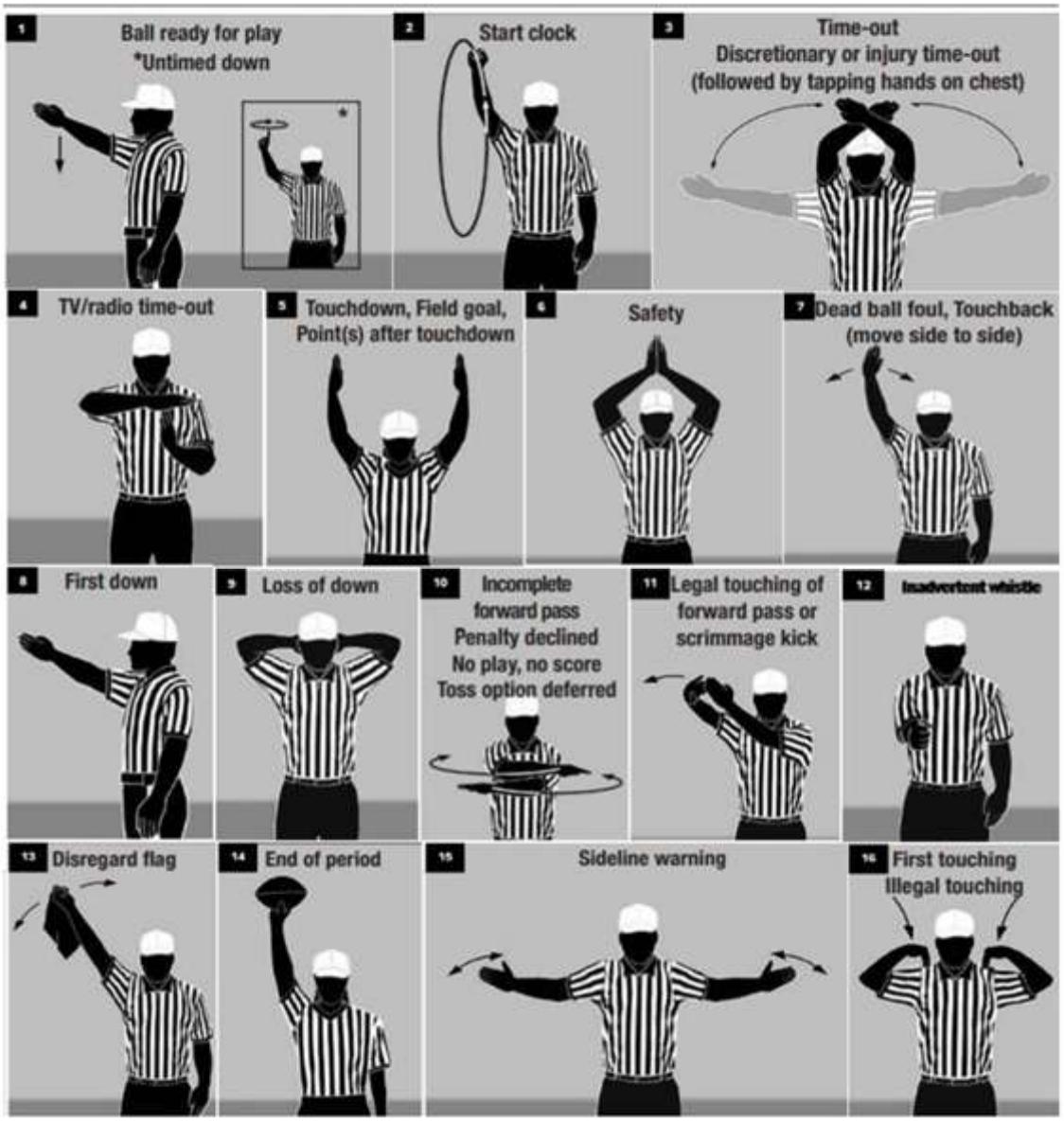
END ZONE DETAIL

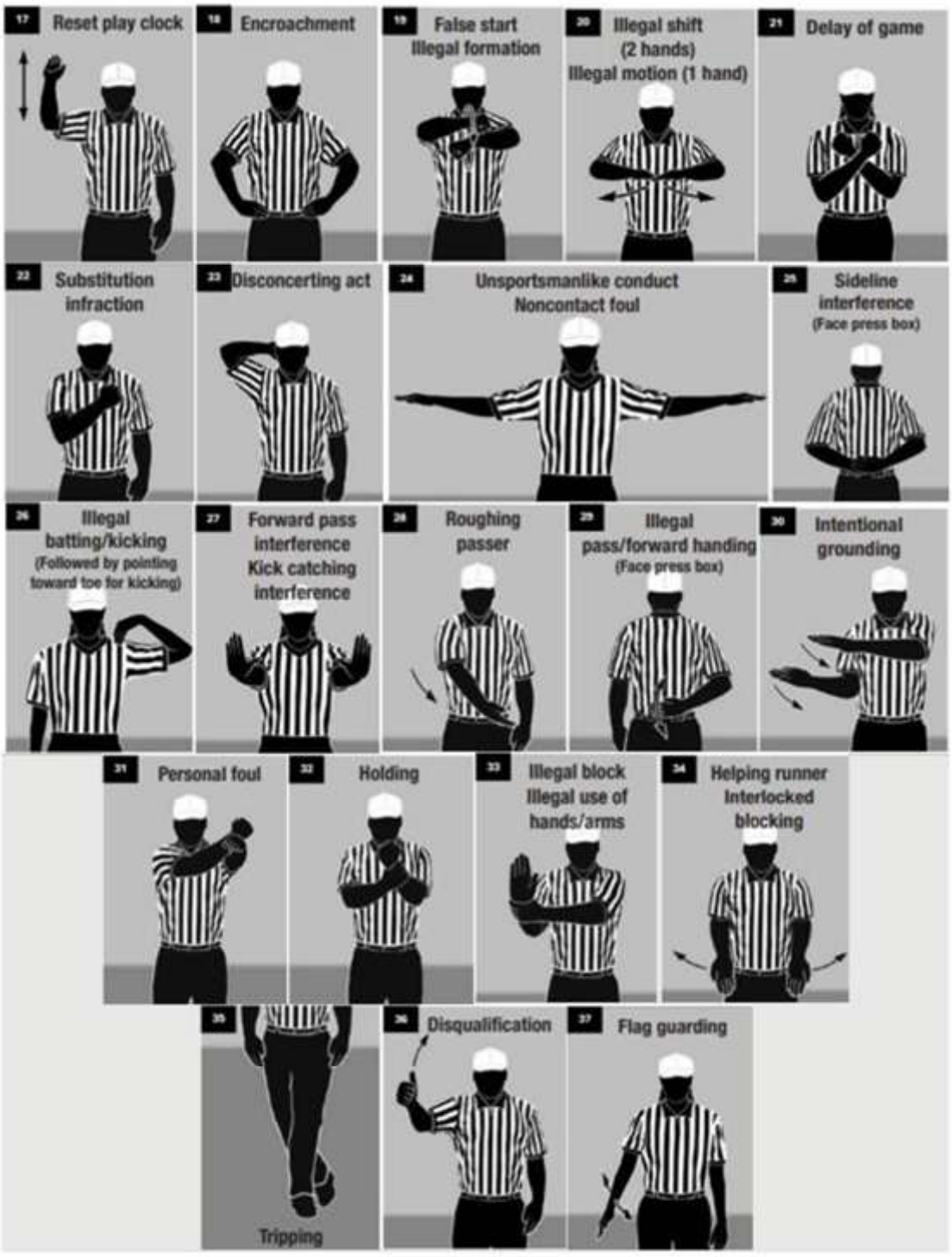


Appendix E
Equipment and Uniform Details



Appendix F
Official Flag Football Signals





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Appendix G
Summary of Penalties

LEGEND: "O" refers to the official signal number for the penalty (see Appendix F). "R" is the rule number, "S" is the section number, "A" is the article number.

Foul Type	O	R	S	A
LOSS OF DOWN (LOD)				
Illegal forward pass (also a loss of five yards)	29	7	3	2
Illegal forward handing beyond the LOS (also loss of five yards)	29	7	3	2
Flag guarding (also loss of five yards)	37	7	2	1
Illegal kicking (also loss of five yards)	26	9	5	4
Illegal batting (also loss of five yards)	26	9	5	1
LOSS OF FIVE YARDS				
Illegal substitution	22	3	7	2
More than 7 players - Team A/Team B	22	3	7	3
Delay of game Offense (DOG)	21	3	5	2
Delay of game Defense (DOD)	21	7	1	5
Offsides defense (DOF)	18	7	1	5
Illegal snap	19	4	1	4
Illegal kicking (also LOD)	26	9	5	4
Illegal shift (ILS)	20	7	1	4
Illegal motion (ILM)	20	7	1	4
False start (FST)	19	7	1	3
Encroachment – Offense (ENC)	18	7	1	3
Illegal screen/block	33	9	2	3
Illegal batting (also LOD)	26	9	5	1
Flag guarding (also LOD)	37	7	2	1
Illegal contact (also auto 1st) (ICT)	33	7	4	8
Holding the runner (DH)	32	7	2	3
Player illegally out of bounds on punt - Team A	19	6	2	16
LOSS OF TEN YARDS				
Marking the football	24	1	3	3

Delay of Half	21	3	5	1
Illegal Uniform	24	1	4	1
Illegal Player Equipment (also UNS)	24	1	4	12
Illegal Flag Removal	24	9	4	2
Kick catch interference	24			
Offensive pass interference (OPI)	27	7	4	8
Defensive pass interference (DPI)	27	7	4	8
Charging/Illegal Contact (ICO/ICD)	31	9	1	6
Unsportsmanlike conduct (UNS)	24	9	4	-
Sideline interference (3rd+)	25	9	4	6
Unfair acts	24	9	4	4
Roughing the Passer (RPS)	28	9	1	7
Tripping (TRP)	31&35	9	1	5
Stripping (STR)	31	9	1	2
VIOLATION				
Illegal touching of a scrimmage kick	11	6	2	7
EJECTION				
Contacting an official	36	9	4	5
Two unsportsmanlike fouls	36	9	4	7
Fighting	36	9	1	1
Flagrant personal foul	36	9	1	1
Illegal Cleats	36	9	1	1

Appendix H Accommodations for Student-Athletes with Disabilities

Collegiate administration encourages participation by student-athletes with disabilities (physical or mental) in intercollegiate athletics and physical activities to the full extent of their interests and abilities. A conference member institution will have the right to seek, on behalf of any student-athlete with a disability participating on the member's team, a reasonable modification or accommodation of a playing rule, provided that the modification or accommodation would not:

1. Compromise the safety of, or increase the risk of injury to, the student athlete with a disability or any other student-athlete;
2. Change an essential element that would fundamentally alter the nature of the game; or
3. Provide the student-athlete an unfair advantage over the other competitors.

To request any such modification or accommodation, the member's director of athletics, or their designee, must submit a rule waiver request, in writing, to the secretary-rules editor. Such written request should describe:

a. The playing rule from which relief is sought;
b. The nature of the proposed modification or accommodation;
c. The nature of the student-athlete's disability and basis for modification or accommodation; and
d. The proposed duration of the requested modification or accommodation.

Additionally, each request should be accompanied by documentation evidencing the student-athlete's disability (e.g., a medical professional's letter). Upon receipt of a complete waiver request, the secretary-rules editor will consult with conference staff, the applicable sport/rules committee, other sport governing bodies, and/ or outside experts, to conduct an individual inquiry as to whether the requested modification or accommodation can be made. In making this assessment, the governing body may request additional information from the member institution. The secretary-rules editor will communicate the decision in writing (which may be via email) to the requesting member institution. If the request is granted, the member institution should be prepared to provide the written decision to the officiating staff, opposing coach(es), and tournament director (if applicable) for each competition in which the student athlete will participate. NCAA member institutions should consult their conference's medical

handbook for further considerations regarding participation by student-athletes with impairment.

Appendix I
Policies and Expectations for Game Management

The collegiate governing body will establish a Coach-to-Player and In-game Video policy for flag football by the 2027 season. Coaches are allowed to utilize tablets on the sideline to review plays with players however may not utilize tablets outside of the team area. If a coach or a team attempts to show a play to an official during a contest, the coach and or team will receive an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

Part II:
Officiating Standards

Officiating standards are to be determined by the College Flag Football Officials LLC (CFFO). Included in this section will be rules-based Officiating Standards that have been traditionally adopted for collegiate tackle games and flag football nuances.

SECTION 1. BALL SPOTTING

1. The ball can be placed on a yardline to begin the next series after a change of possession. (Exception: If the change of possession occurs on a fourth down running or passing play, the ball will be left at the dead-ball spot to begin the next series.) For example, if a punt return ends with the ball between Team B's 33 and 34 yardlines, move the ball forward to Team B's 34 yardline. At all other times, the ball is placed where it became dead.
2. If a punt is downed on the ground inside team B's five yardline, the ball should be left and not moved to the next yardline.

SECTION 2. LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

1. When in question as to whether an action is a false start or illegal motion, it is a false start.
2. When in question regarding player position on movement by the defense into the neutral zone which causes the offense to move, a player is moving toward the offensive player. This protects both that player and the two adjacent offensive players.
3. Any time a defensive player initially aligned tight to the line of scrimmage jumps forward, and there is a question whether they were in the neutral zone and the appropriate offensive player(s) moves, shut down the play and penalize the defense.
4. Any time a defensive player crosses the offensive line of scrimmage, shut the play down to avoid a free lane to the quarterback's flags.
5. When in question, a quick or abrupt movement by the center or quarterback is a false start.
6. The snapper shall not be permitted to move the ball more than ½ yard forward when taking their stance nor allow the ball to be moved over the line to gain or goal line. The play shall be shut down, the ball reset, and the player and his coach warned. A foul for a False Start shall be considered after a warning.

SECTION 3. FUMBLES

1. When in question regarding whether the quarterback passed or fumbled, it will be ruled a fumble.

SECTION 4. DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE

Actions that constitute defensive pass interference include, but are not limited to, the following six categories:

1. Early contact by a defender who is not playing the ball is defensive pass interference provided the other requirements for defensive pass interference have been met, regardless of how deep the pass is thrown to the receiver.
2. Playing through the back of a receiver in an attempt to make a play on the ball.
3. Grabbing and restricting a receiver's arm(s) or body in such a manner that restricts their opportunity to catch a pass.
4. Extending an arm across the body (arm bar) of a receiver thus restricting their ability to catch a pass, regardless of the fact of whether or not the defender is looking for the ball.
5. Cutting off or riding the receiver out of the path to the ball by making contact without playing the ball.
6. Hooking and restricting a receiver in an attempt to get to the ball in such a manner that causes the receiver's body to turn prior to the ball arriving.

SECTION 5. OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE

Actions that constitute offensive pass interference include but are not limited to the following four categories:

1. Initiating contact with a defender by shoving or pushing off thus creating separation in an attempt to catch a pass.
2. Driving through a defender who has established a position on the field.
3. Blocking downfield during a pass that legally crosses the line of scrimmage.
4. Picking off a defender who is attempting to cover a receiver.

SECTION 6. OTHER PASSING SITUATIONS

1. When in question on action against the passer, it is roughing the passer if the defender attempts to punish.
2. The Team A player who originally controls the snap can throw the ball anywhere if they are not under duress, except spiking the ball straight down. The clock is not a factor. Exception: Rule 7-3-2-f allows the passer to spike the ball to stop the clock.
3. An uncatchable pass must be blatantly uncatchable in order to disregard a foul for pass interference however, catchability has no bearing on illegal contact.
4. When the Team A player who originally controls the snap is throwing the ball away to avoid a sack, when in question as to whether the ball is beyond the neutral zone, it is beyond the line. Don't be technical.

SECTION 7. FLAG GUARDING

1. If the ball-carrier's flag is pulled prior to or at the same time as a flag guarding action, there will be no penalty for flag guarding.
2. Dropping of the non-throwing hand by the passer should be noted for possible flag guarding when pressured

3. When in question, it is not a flag guard.

SECTION 8. SCREEN BLOCKING

1. Offensive blockers can move to the side and backward to impede a rusher from getting to the quarterback. They may not move forward and initiate contact. If contact while moving forward is made, it is a foul for illegal screen blocking.
2. Blocking beyond the line of scrimmage is allowed once the ball has crossed the neutral zone. Officials should note screen blocking prior to the pass if beyond the line of scrimmage as this could elevate to pass interference with or without contact

SECTION 9. PUNT PLAYS

1. The line of scrimmage on punt plays should be officiated as a plane. Any player (other than the kicker or holder) breaking the plane before the ball is kicked should be called for offside. When in question, the punting team player has not broken the plane.

SECTION 10. PLAYS AT THE SIDELINE

1. Substitution mechanics will be used in a situation in which a play ends with Team A player(s) going out of bounds into their own team area.
2. When in question as to whether the runner stepped out of bounds, officials should rule the ball-carrier did not step out of bounds.

SECTION 11. SCORING PLAYS

1. When in question, it is not a touchdown.
2. When in question, it is not a safety.

SECTION 12. PERSONAL FOULS

1. If action is deemed to be “fighting,” the player must be ejected.
2. When in question if an act is a flagrant personal foul or fighting, the player is not fighting.
3. Players committing flagrant personal fouls must be ejected.
4. When in question regarding contact away from the ball near the end of the play, consider it a dead-ball rather than live-ball foul.
5. Regarding defenseless players, when in question, a player is defenseless.

SECTION 13. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

1. When in question whether an unsportsmanlike act is a live-ball or deadball foul, it is a dead-ball foul.
2. Do not be overly technical in applying Rule 9-2-1.
3. Allow for brief, spontaneous, emotional reactions at the end of a play.
4. Beyond the brief, spontaneous bursts of energy, officials should flag those acts that are clearly prolonged, self-congratulatory, and that make a mockery of the game.

5. A list of specifically prohibited acts is in Rule 9-4-1-a-1 (a) thru (j). That list is intended to be illustrative and not exhaustive. All agree that when those acts are clearly intended to taunt or demean, they should be penalized.
6. Spitting on an opponent requires ejection.

SECTION 14. GAME CLOCK

1. When in question, a charged team timeout precedes a foul that prevents the snap.
2. Any time loss due to the clock being started erroneously, such as when a dead-ball foul is called, the clock must be adjusted. FO-7 Part II: / Officiating Standards
3. 5/5 axiom: In order to adjust game clock errors, there must be more than a five-second differential if there is more than five minutes remaining in either half.
4. As a guideline, when there is between two and five minutes remaining in a half and the clock is stopped to complete a penalty by the team ahead in the score, or the score is tied, the Referee should consider invoking Rule 3-4-3, and afford the offended team the option of starting the game clock on the snap. If the score of the game is not competitive, the Referee should not invoke Rule 3-4-3 in this situation.
5. When Team A has been flagged for a pre-snap illegal substitution foul, a time-out called at the same time by Team A does not negate the foul.

SECTION 15. MISCELLANEOUS

1. The ankle or wrist is considered part of the foot or hand, respectively, and does not make a runner down.
2. If a team huddles near the sideline, all players and coaches must remain within the 5 yards from the sideline and in front of the team area.

Part III: Interpretations

A flag football rule interpretation, or approved ruling (A.R.), is an official decision on a given statement of facts. It serves to illustrate the spirit and application of the rule.

Table of Contents for Approved Rulings

RULE 1 The Game, Field, Players and Equipment..... 102
RULE 2 Definitions; Live/Dead/Loose/Ready for Play..... 102
RULE 3 Periods, Time Factors, Substitutions..... 103
RULE 4 Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out of Bounds..... 104
RULE 5 Series of Downs, Line to Gain..... 105
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In general, approved rulings for collegiate flag football can be interpreted the same as those for collegiate tackle football. Unique situations for flag football have been highlighted in this section.

RULE 1
The Game, Field, Players and Equipment

A.R. 1-4-12 (Missing/Illegal Equipment — enforcement)

I. If a player is discovered with illegal equipment prior to participating, the official shall prevent the player from participating until the equipment is corrected. On the first occurrence the official will notify the coach (warning); on any subsequent occurrence by a member of the same team, the official shall enforce an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

II. If equipment becomes illegal through play (e.g., flag belt damaged or a pocket-type hole opens in shorts) the player shall be removed as soon as the official detects it; the player need not miss a down if the team immediately takes a charged timeout and corrects the equipment.

RULE 2
Definitions; Live/Dead/Loose/Ready for Play

A.R. 2-3-3 Catch, interception, Recovery

I. B1 attempts to catch a punt (no fair catch signal) that crosses the neutral zone, strikes her shoulder (a muff) and bounces into the air. The ball does not touch the ground. Airborne A1 receives the ball in flight and first returns to the ground out of bounds. **RULING**: Team B's ball at the spot where the ball crossed the sideline. First and line to gain.

II. On 4th down, B1 blocks a Team A scrimmage kick that goes into the air and does not cross the neutral zone. The ball does not touch the ground. A1 jumps and grasps the ball in flight and first returns to the ground out of bounds. **RULING**: Team B's ball at the spot where the ball crossed the sideline. First and line to gain.

III. III. Airborne A3 receives a pass at Team A's 40-yard line. While still airborne, she is contacted by B1 and comes to the ground out of bounds with the ball at Team A's 37-yard line. **RULING**: Incomplete pass. Illegal contact, Team B

A.R. 2-5-1 Flag Falls of After Ball Possession

I. A 2/10 @ A20. A5 is running with the ball up Team B's sideline. As she reaches the B34, her flag falls off without a defender near her attempting a pull. **RULING**: A 1/10 @ B34. Player is down at the spot where the flag fell off.

A.R. 2-14-1 to 3 Fair Catch

I. During Team A's punt from the A20, receiver B44 points at the grounded punt at midfield. As B44 points at the ball, (a) she keeps her hands below her shoulders with no waving motion; (b) she keeps her hands below her shoulders and has a waving motion; (c) she has her

hands just above the shoulders with no waving motion. **RULING**: Rule 2-8-3 states that any waving motion that does not meet the criteria for a valid signal is an invalid signal. Additionally, by interpretation the receiver is allowed to point at a kick as long as her hands remain below the shoulder and there is no waving motion. Both (b) and (c) would be an Invalid Fair Catch Signal. In (a), this would not be considered a signal at all, and Team B would retain the right to recover the ball and advance.

II. During a Team A punt, returner B21 gives the "T signal" as the punt is in flight. B21 catches the punt at the B5 and returns the kick back to the B-35. **RULING**: The "T signal" is considered an invalid fair catch signal and the ball is dead when caught. The crew should shut the play down after B21 gains possession. Team B's ball 1/15 @ B5.

A.R. 2-9-2 Goal Line (Ball plane and touching near the goal line)

I. Team A's untouched scrimmage kick strikes the ground in the field of play and breaks the plane of Team B's goal line. While the ball is in the air over the end zone, A81, who is either on the one-yard line or in the end zone, bats the ball into the field of play. **RULING**: Violation for illegal touching (Rule 6-2-6). Team B may accept the result of the play or next snap the ball at its 14-yard line.

RULE 3
Periods, Time Factors, Substitutions

A.R. 3-2-5 Minimum Time For A Play After Spiking The Ball

I. Late in a quarter Team A, out of timeouts, makes a first down, stopping the clock which reads 0:03. Team A intends to spike the ball and run an additional play. The referee appropriately blows their whistle and signals, which starts the game clock. The quarterback takes the snap and raises the ball high over their head before throwing it directly to the ground. The game clock shows 0:00. **RULING:** Time in the quarter has expired. Although there were 3 seconds on the game clock when the referee signaled it to start, there is no guarantee of enough time to run an additional play other than spiking the ball. The offense must execute the spike in a timely manner.

A.R. 3-3-3 Extension of Periods

I. As time expires in the 1st quarter, A3 scores a touchdown and spikes the ball. B elects to enforce the penalty from B's 14-yard line to start their next series. **RULING**: Following the Try, the 1st quarter ends. The 2nd quarter shall begin following enforcement of A's unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

A.R. 3-3-4 Timing Devices

I. During a pass by A3 with 11:00 remaining in the 3rd quarter, the ball sails out of bounds at the B-30 on the visiting team's sideline. The officials are unable to get a new ball from ball personnel, nor get the ball spotted until the play clock is at 8 seconds. **RULING**: The Referee will stop the game clock, ask that the play clock be set to 10 seconds, inform both teams that

the both clocks will run on their ready for play whistle. This is an exception to the standard 30-second play clock.

A.R. 3-7-3 More Than Seven Players On the Field

I. If Team A breaks the huddle or forms with more than seven players, officials shall stop action and enforce a dead-ball five-yard penalty at the previous spot.

II. Team A has 8 players on the field. A8 realizes this and runs toward their sideline to get off the field. They step over the sideline: (a) prior to the snap; or (b) after the ball is snapped. **RULING**. Illegal substitution. In (a), dead ball foul and (b), live ball foul.

III. Team A has 8 players on the field. A8 realizes this and runs toward their sideline to get off the field. They step over the sideline: (a) prior to the snap; or (b) after the ball is snapped. **RULING**. Illegal substitution. In (a) and (b), live ball foul.

IV. 1/10 @ B-25. Team A snaps the ball with 12 seconds remaining on the game clock in the 4th quarter. QB A12 can find no receiver open, scrambles outside the tackle box and throws the ball away beyond the neutral zone and the play ends with 6 seconds remaining. The defense participated with 8 players on the field. **RULING**: Foul by Team B for a substitution infraction. The 5-yard penalty will be enforced from the previous spot. At the option of Team A, the game clock will be reset to 0:12 and will start on the snap.

V. 1/10 @ B-25. Team A snaps the ball with 12 seconds remaining on the game clock in the 4th quarter. QB A12 can find no receiver open, scrambles outside the tackle box and throws the ball away beyond the neutral zone and the play ends with 6 seconds remaining. The defense had 8 players on the field at the snap but B21 was hustling to get off the field and the ball was snapped just before B21 exited the field. **RULING**: Foul by Team B for a substitution infraction. The 5-yard penalty will be enforced from the previous spot. If B21 had no influence on the play, there would be no clock adjustment.

RULE 4
Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out of Bounds

A.R. 4-1-3e Flag Interference

I. Ball carrier A6 is running with the ball and her shirt comes out of her shorts and covers the flag on her right side. At the B27, defender B15 attempts a flag pull on A6's right side but misses the flag. A6 continues into the end zone for a touchdown. **RULING**: A6 is down at the B15 where the defender attempted the flag pull.

RULE 5
Series of Downs, Line to Gain

A.R. 5-2-1 Penalty Resulting in a New Series

I. Third and 15 @ A25. A2 flag guards at A's 35 and runs to B's 30, where they are deflagged. **RULING**. Fourth and 10 @ A30.

II. Fourth and 5 @ A15. A-1 throws an illegal forward pass beyond A's scrimmage line: (a) at A23 and the ball hits the ground. (b) at A26 and the ball hits the ground. **RULING**. In (a), B's ball on A18, 1st down and goal to go. Since the 5 yard penalty put A 2 yards short of the zone line-to-gain on 4th down, the loss of down awards the ball to B. In (b), A is penalized 5 yards and loss of down, which puts the ball on the A21, 1st down and 19. Even though an illegal forward pass carries a loss of down, since the 5 yard penalty enforcement places the ball beyond the 20 yard line, it is 1st down for A.

A.R. 5-2-3 Penalty After a Change of Team Possession

I. Third and 15 from A's 25. B4 intercepts a pass at the B35 and runs to the A15. During the run, B2 makes illegal contact with A6 at the A25.**RULING**. Penalize B at the spot of illegal contact. B 1/15 @ A35.

RULE 6
Kicks

A.R. 6-1-1 Kickoff

I. Because the flag rules establish no kickoffs (play starts at Team A 14-yard line unless moved by penalty), any attempt to perform a kickoff consistent with tackle kickoff technique is illegal in flag; enforcement is dead-ball unsportsmanlike.

A.R. 6-2-2 Declared Punt

I. Fourth and 22. The Referee asks Team A if they want to "punt or play." Team A delays their decision. **RULING**. The Referee can enforce a delay of game penalty and that the game clock will start on the snap.

A.R. 6-2-5 Punting the Ball

I. On a fourth down play, Team A has notified the officials of their intent to "play". A4 receives the snap and quick kicks the ball down the field. The ball crosses the neutral zone, hits the grounds and rolls out of bounds at the B39. **RULING**: Illegal kicking Team A. Team B's option of enforcing the penalty or taking the ball at the out of bounds spot.

A.R. 6-2-7 Beyond the Neutral Zone

I. A1's punt bounces at the B-15. A2 attempts to down the ball but muffs it at the B19. The ball strikes the ground at the B22. **RULING**. Illegal touching. B may choose to have the ball at either the B19 or B22.

A.R. 6-2-9 Forced touching Team A

I. Punt is kicked by A27 and ball hits the center, ball proceeds past the neutral zone, hits the ground and is advanced by Team B. **RULING:** Legal play, ball is live when it hits a member of Team A behind the neutral zone. As long as it has not contacted a member of Team B prior to hitting the ground, the ball may be fielded and returned.

A.R. 6-2-9 Forced Touching Team B

I. If a punt contacts a kicking team player as a result of natural contact and not because of illegal contact by the opponent, it is illegal touching. If the returning team's contact causes a kicking team player to touch the punt, that touching is forced and is not illegal touching.

A.R. 6-4-1 Kick Catch Interference

I. B1, attempting to catch a punt, touches the ball and the ball is then caught by A1 before striking the ground. **RULING**. Not interference. Protection against kick catching interference ceases when any R player touches the ball. It is dead where caught and belongs to A, 1st down and zone line-to-gain.

II. A punt is in flight and: (a) A3 is in the path of B2's attempt to catch the ball, or (b) A4 deflags B2 before they touch the ball. **RULING**. In (a) and (b), Kick Catching Interference.

RULE 7
Snapping, Passing, and Running

A.R. 7-1-3 Snapper Lifting the Ball

I. Snapper A15 lifts the ball prior to moving it backward to start the snap. **RULING**: Snap Infraction, shut the play down. Dead ball, 5 yards from the previous spot.

A.R. 7-1-5 Defense batting before snap

I. B13 lines up over the snapper and bats the ball before the snapper completes a full snapping motion. **RULING**: Dead-ball, illegal-snap foul by the defense. Penalty- 5 yards from the previous spot. The ball remains in Team A's possession.

A.R. 7-2-1 Flag Guarding

I. Player A8 intentionally tucks part of the flag under the jersey to make it harder to pull. **RULING**: Flag guarding, 5 yards from the previous spot. Second infraction, unsportsmanlike conduct.

A.R. 7-3-2 Snap Muffed and Grounded

I. Two opposing players receive a legal forward pass while both are off the ground, and both players return to the ground inbounds at the same time. **RULING**: Simultaneous catch; the ball is awarded to the passing team (Rule 2-3-4).
II. Two opposing players receive a ball while both are off the ground, and one player returns to the ground inbounds before the other. **RULING**: No simultaneous catch. The legal forward pass is completed or intercepted by the player who first returned to the ground (Rule 2-3-4).

A.R. 7-3-3 Snap Muffed and Grounded

I. QB A4 calls for a snap from the center. The snap is legal but A4 muffs the snap. B8, who is rushing, recovers the ball and advances downfield for a touchdown. **RULING**: The ball is dead as soon as it hits the ground. The ball is placed where the ball hits the ground and the down is consumed. B cannot advance.

A.R. 7-4-2 Illegal Forward Pass

I. 3rd and 10 on Team A's 10 yard line. A1 throws a second forward pass from their endzone. B2 intercepts the ball and their flag is pulled on Team A's 25-yard line. **RULING:** Team B may accept the penalty which results in a safety, or take the result of the play, retaining the ball for first and 5 on Team A's 25-yard line.

RULE 8
Scoring

A.R. 8-2-1 How Scored

I. Ball carrier A1, while attempting to score, strikes the pylon located on the right intersection of the goal line and sideline with her foot. She is carrying the ball in her right arm, which is extended over the sideline. **RULING**: Whether or not a touchdown is scored depends on the forward progress of the ball as related to the goal line when the ball becomes dead by rule.
II. Ball carrier A1, advancing in the field of play, becomes airborne at the two-yard line. Her first contact with the ground is out of bounds three yards beyond the goal line. The ball, in possession of the ball carrier, passes over the pylon. **RULING**: Touchdown.
III. The ball, in possession of airborne ball carrier A21, crosses the sideline above the one-yard line, continues beyond the pylon and is then declared dead out of bounds in possession of A21. **RULING**: Ball is declared out of bounds at the one-yard line.
IV. Ball carrier A22 dives for the goal line at the B-1. The ball in her possession (a) touches the pylon; (b) goes over the top of the pylon; (c) crosses the goal line inside the pylon. A22 then first contacts the ground out of bounds three yards beyond the goal line. **RULING**: (a), (b) and (c) Touchdown in all three. The ball in A22's possession has broken the plane of the goal line in all three scenarios.
V. VIII. Ball carrier A22 heads for the right-hand pylon at the goal line. The ball is in her right hand. Her foot hits the pylon just before the ball crosses (a) the pylon or (b) the extension of the goal line just to the right (outside) of the pylon. **RULING**: (a) and (b) No touchdown in either case. Because the pylon is out of bounds the ball is dead when A22's foot hits it. Thus in both cases the ball is dead before it crosses the goal line.

RULE 9
Conduct of Players and Others Subject to the Rules

A.R. 9-1-3 Striking

I. Defensive Back B7 lines up over wide receiver A6. At the snap of the ball, B7 shoves A5 on their right shoulder in an attempt to throw them off of their route. **RULING**: Personal foul, Striking. Penalty-10 yards. Enforce from the previous spot.

II. Ball carrier A1, strikes defensive player B6 with their extended forearm to the shoulder just before their flag is pulled. **RULING**: Personal foul. Penalty-10 yards. Enforce from the previous spot if foul occurs behind the neutral zone. Ejection if flagrant. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line.

A.R. 9-1-5 Tripping

I. A player on defense sticks out their foot and trips an opponent. (a) The opponent is a wide receiver running a route. (b) The opponent is the ball carrier. **RULING:** (a) and (b) Personal Foul, Tripping. Penalty-10 yards, succeeding spot.

A.R. 9-1-6 Charging

I. A1 is running toward B2, who is attempting to de-flag A1: (a) goes around B2 to avoid being deflagged; (b) deliberately runs through B22 making no attempt to avoid contact; or (c) turns their back into and contacts B2. **RULING**. In (a), Legal play. In (b) and (c), an A personal foul, 10 yards. If B-2 is stationary, A1 must go around. The charge/block principles used in basketball apply.

A.R. 9-1-7 Roughing The Passer

I. B-3 jumps to block a legal forward pass thrown by A-1 behind the scrimmage line and: (a) blocks the ball and, avoiding unnecessary contact, brushes A-1; (b) is unsuccessful in blocking the pass and charges into A-1; (c) blocks the ball and charges into A-1; or (d) contacts passer A-1's hand or arm. RULING. In (a), no foul; in (b), (c), and (d), roughing the passer, 10 yards and an automatic 1st down. If the rusher contacts the passer's hand or arm, whether or not they touch the pass, it is roughing the passer.

A.R. 9-Unsportsmanlike Conduct (Taunting / brandishing a weapon)

I. Third and goal at the B-20. Eligible A18 catches a pass at the B-18 and heads for the goal line. At the B-5 she begins "high stepping" and continues this action across the goal line. **RULING**: Live-ball foul for unsportsmanlike conduct. Ten-yard penalty enforced at the spot of the foul, the B-5, and repeat third down. Third and goal at the B-15.

A.R 9.4.1 Diving

I. A-1, running for a score, dives into the end zone: (a) breaks the plane with the ball without contacting any B player; (b) charges into B-3at B's 1; or (c) charges into B-4 in the end zone after crossing the goal line.RULING. In (a), the score counts. In (b), a 10 yard penalty is assessed againstA from B's 1. In (c), the score counts and A will be assessed a 10 yard deadball penalty on the Try or at the 14.

A.R. 9-4-2 Early Flag Removal

I. Receiver A7 is running a route and cuts inside in front of DB B13. Seeing that she has lost coverage, B13 pulls one of A7's flags prior to a pass being thrown. A7 catches the ball at the B37 and is ruled down by the covering official. **RULING**: Unsportsmanlike Conduct. 10 yards, succeeding spot. Rule 2-5-2.

RULE 10
Penalty Enforcement

A.R. 10 Three-And One

I. When a penalty statement does not specify enforcement spot, use the Three-and-One principle: treat Team B as the team in possession with the post-play spot as the basic spot unless other rule exceptions apply.

A.R. 10-1-1

I. 3rd and 5 at the A35. B27 rushes QB A1. As A1 is in the process of throwing the ball, B27 hits A1's arm in an attempt to block the pass. The pass falls incomplete. **RULING**: Roughing the passer. Team A can elect to take the full penalty (ten yards and automatic first down) - A 1/10 @ B35 - or they can decline the yardage and take the automatic first down - A 1/10 @ A35.

A.R. 10-2-5 Fouls During of After a Touchdown or Try

I. QB A1 scores a touchdown and then spikes the ball. **RULING**. The touchdown counts. The unsportsmanlike foul enforced on either the Try or the succeeding spot. If on the Try, the officials will ask Team B whether they want to go for a 1 or 2 point Try. Once a decision is made, penalize Team A 10 yards.

A.R. 10-2-6 Onside Conversion Fouls

I. Under 2 minutes in the 4th quarter, A6 scores on a Try and spikes the ball. A elects to attempt an onside conversion. **RULING**. The conversion counts. The penalty is enforced on the onside conversion.

II. After the ready-for-play on A's onside conversion attempt, (a) A-1 false starts, or (b) B-2 encroaches. **RULING**. In (a) A's attempt will now be from the A15. In (b) A's attempt will now be from the A25.

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