

# Flag Football

**\*\*ALL PLAYERS MUST PRESENT THEIR RED UMBC ID CARDS TO BE ELIGIBLE TO PLAY IN THE GAME. \*\***

**Notes:** There will be a ten minute grace period given to teams with at least one player present but less than the minimum number required to begin play. Two forfeits and your team will not be able to compete in the postseason, but will be allowed to finish out the season. First forfeit = loss of ½ of deposit. Second forfeit = loss of entire deposit.

## **Zone Markings**

The field shall be a rectangle area 80 yards long and 40 yards wide with 2 -10 yard end zones. However, in case of facility limitations, distances of field length and width can be modified. The length of the field should be lined at 20 yard intervals from the goal line to goal line. These zone markings may be changed according to field dimensions. There shall be one inbound hash mark dividing the field into halves. The hash mark shall run parallel with each sideline. The three (3), ten (10) and twenty (20) yard try-for-point lines shall be one (1) yard wide and fourteen (14) yard.

## **Timing**

- Games will consist of two twenty minutes halves with running time. Stop timing will be used during the last two minutes of the second half, at which time the clock will stop on all whistles other than deflagging. Teams will be notified at the two-minute warning of the second half.
- The clock will stop for team and official's timeouts throughout the entire game.
- The clock will run during P.A.T attempts (except during last two minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half).
- Half time will be two minutes in duration.
- Each team gets one 60-second timeout per half (unused timeouts do not carry carry-over).

## **Overtime**

- In the regular season a tie will stand. There is no overtime.
- During the playoffs a coin toss will be conducted at midfield with the following options: offense/defense, or goal (both teams will use the same goal on offense).
- Each team is allowed a series of four downs in which to score from the 20-yard line. If the score remains tied, each team will have another four down series with the opposite team having first option of offense/defense. This type of play will continue until a winner is determined.
- Teams will receive one time-out in an overtime situation.

## **Players**

- Seven players per team are allowed on the field at a time. A minimum of five players is necessary to begin and continue play.

- Offensive players are responsible for helping retrieve the ball after a down has ended.
- Any number of substitutions may be made during a game when stoppage in play has occurred.

### **Equipment**

- Each player must wear pants or shorts with NO belts, belt loops, pockets, or exposed drawstrings.
- NO METAL CLEATS OR SPIKES. NO HELMETS.
- **Pants/shorts must be a different color than the flags.**
- Shirts must be worn, with either tails tucked inside pants or short enough to be a minimum of four inches above the belt. Jerseys that have been altered in any manner that produces a knot-like protrusion or creates a tear-away jersey are illegal.
- All players are required to wear flags belts the entire game. Belts must be one piece without any knots. Belts must have three flags and are to be secured around the waistline, with one flag positioned on each player's side and one directly in the center of the back. The belt may not be wrapped around itself.

### **Snap**

- All players must originate with a snap from the center. This snap must be received at least two yards behind the offensive scrimmage line. The snap can be made between the legs of the snapper or on the side but must originate from the ground.
- Anytime on or after the ball is marked ready for play, each offensive player must start within 15 yards of the ball before the snap.
- The offense must have at least four players on the offensive line of scrimmage.
- Only one offensive player may be in motion when the ball is snapped. This motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage (no motion toward the line).
- No defensive player may be closer than one yard to the line of scrimmage during all scrimmage downs. Defensive players may not break the neutral zone until the ball is snapped. The neutral zone will be marked by two disc.

### **First Downs**

- A first down is awarded to a team whenever they advance the ball across the next 20-yard marker.
- Four downs will be allowed to complete the task.
- Only one first down per series of possession can be obtained at each 20-yard marker. A team may have anywhere from one inch to 20 yards to get to reach a first down.

### **Carrying the Ball**

- A ball carrier may not deliberately guard their flags. Actions such as slapping with the hand or stiff-arming are examples of flag-guarding. Spinning or jumping to avoid being deflagged is legal.
- A ball carrier may not hurdle a player to avoid deflagging. Hurdling is interpreted as an attempt by a runner to jump over another player.

- If a player inadvertently loses their flags or it is pulled by the opposition before gaining possession of the ball, the play will continue and the player must be downed by a two hand touch, between the shoulder and knees, including the hand and arm.
- A player will be ruled “down” when any part of the body other than the hand or foot touches the ground.
- The defender may not hold or tackle the runner while deflagging the ball carrier. It is illegal to attempt to steal a ball in player possession. The object of the game is to deflag a ball carrier, not steal the ball.
- A fumbled or muffed ball is dead when it strikes the ground.
- Forward progress is determined by where the ball is at the time the runner is deflagged.

### **Blocking & Rushing & Blizting**

- No part of the body except the feet shall be in contact with the ground and the feet must remain on the ground for the duration of the block.
- Blocking will be by SCREEN BLOCKING ONLY. That is, a blocker must hinder a defender’s movement through positioning rather than body contact.
- During a block, the body must remain upright with elbows and hands touching the body at the side or in front or behind the back.
- While incidental contact may occur, blocking/rushing penalties will be called against the player who initiated contact. The defense may not be use hands, arms, or legs as a wedge to gain an advantage over a blocker.
- NO SWIM MOVES WILL BE ALLOWED
- **Teams are now allowed 2 Blitzes’ for every 4 downs attempts. You may rush at anytime within the 4 down attempts. Rushing is considered after a 5 second count.**

### **Passing**

- A forward pass may be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage.
- All incomplete backward passes shall be marked down at the point of ground contact.
- Only one forward pass may be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage on a given play.
- An illegal forward pass is:
  1. It is thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage.
  2. It is intentionally grounded.
  3. It is thrown after a change of possession.
  4. The passer catches his/her untouched forward/backward pass.
  5. It is the second forward pass during a play.
- All players except the passer are eligible to receive a pass.
- A player must have a complete possession of the ball and land with the first part of their body inbound (normally one foot) to be a legal reception.
- Backward passes are legal but as soon as the ball touches the ground then the play is dead.
- A pass intercepted in the end zone may be advanced.
- If the passer is deflagged prior to releasing the ball, the ball is dead at that spot and the down has ended.

- If an offensive player goes out of bounds on their own volition and returns inbounds, it is an illegal participation foul if they participate in any way with the play.
- Roughing the Passer: defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear the ball has been thrown. No defensive player shall contact the passer who is standing still or fading back as he/she is considered out of the play after the pass. The ball is part of the passer while he/she has the ball in his/her hand.

### **Kicking**

- There are no kickoffs to start the game or after a touchdown. The ball will start on the 14 yard line in both instances.
- On fourth down, the offense must announce when the ball is marked ready-for-play whether or not they will punt. Once the decision is made, it can only be changed if a timeout is taken. If a punt is to be made, the following procedures must be followed.
  1. The offense must have a minimum of four players on their line scrimmage.
  2. The kicker must receive the ball two yards behind the center.
  3. The punt must be made immediately and in a continuous motion upon receiving the snap.
  4. Players of both teams may not be advance beyond their respective scrimmage lines until the ball is kicked.
- Blocking Kicks: Once the ball is punted, any defensive player may block the kick. If a blocked punt hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to the receiving team.
- Returning Kicks
  1. When a punt which has crossed the scrimmage line, touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to the receiving team.
  2. If the ball is caught in the air, or after the ball has hit the ground, it can be advanced by any player on the receiving team.
  3. If the ball hits a player on the receiving team and then is caught in the air by anyone on the kicking team, the ball is dead and belongs to the kicking team.

### **Scoring**

- Point values will be as follows:
  1. Touchdown: 6 points for males/ 9 points for females
  2. P.A.T.'s: 3-yard line = 1 point; 10-yard line = 2 points; 20- yard line = 3 points
  3. Safety: 2 Points
  4. Defensive player returning intercepted pass on a PAT for a score: 3 Points

### **Mercy Rule**

- If a team is ahead by 25 points or more with two minutes remaining, the game will be stopped and leading team will be declared the winner.  
If a team is ahead by 36 points or more at any point during the second half, the game will be stopped and the leading team will be declared the winner.

## **Penalties**

- When both teams commit an infraction during the same live ball period, regardless of the severity, the down is automatically replayed, provided there is no charge of possession. If an ejection is warranted, this may occur even though no yardage is assessed.
- When a live ball and dead ball penalty occurs, each is handled on its own merit, regardless whether the penalties are on the same or opposing teams.
- Any player from either team who comes on to the field during any kind of altercation will be disqualified and a 10-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will be enforced from the succeeding spot.
- The second unsportsmanlike conduct penalty by the same player or non-player results in disqualification.
- Delay of Game: the offense has 25 seconds from the time the ball is marked ready to play to snap the ball.
- When an inadvertent whistle occurs, the offensive team will have the option of taking the play with the ball spotted at its location when the whistle blew or replay the down. If the ball is loose following a backward pass or fumble, the team will have the option of taking the ball at the spot where possession was lost or replay the down. During a legal forward pass or any kick, if an inadvertent whistle occurs, the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down replayed.

## **Loss of 5 Yards**

- A. Delay of game (two plays in a row, there is a ten-yard penalty for the second infraction and the clock is stopped)
- B. False start: Play is blown dead (from the line of scrimmage) (down is repeated).
- C. Offensive and Defensive Offside: Play is blown dead (from the line of scrimmage) (down is repeated).
- D. Illegal Motion or Procedure: (from the line of scrimmage) (down is repeated).
- E. Illegal formation: too few players on the line (from the line of scrimmage) (down is repeated).
- F. Illegal forward pass or forward lateral: (point of infraction) (loss of down).
- G. Diving/jumping/running into a defender (point of infraction) (down is repeated).
- H. Illegal Equipment - shirt of a player that is directly involved in the play is un-tucked (automatic first down) (from the line of scrimmage).

## **Loss of 10 Yards**

- A. Fair Catch Interference: must leave a 2 yard cushion (point of infraction).

- B. Offensive Pass Interference: (from line of scrimmage) (loss of down).
- C. Defensive Pass Interference (from line of scrimmage) (automatic first down)
- D. Offensive Holding: (point of infraction) (down is repeated).
- E. Intentional grounding: (point of infraction) (loss of down).
- F. Flag Guarding: (from line of scrimmage) (down is repeated).
- G. Defensive Holding (point of infraction) (down NOT repeated)

Any penalty that would take the ball within the five yard line will be marked off at half the distance to the goal line

\*Fouls committed by both teams during the same play result in off-setting penalties.

\*When two or more fouls are committed by the same team (multiple fouls) the offended team may only choose one of the penalties.

### **Ejections for Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

Referees have been instructed to eject players IMMEDIATELY who persist in rough and dangerous play or who leave the sidelines during any on-field altercation. **When a player is ejected, the player must leave the activity site immediately (within one minute). After speaking with the intramural director to discuss the reinstatement procedure. At this time, the player who was ejected will be ineligible to compete in his/her next scheduled intramural contest and will not be permitted to play in any intramural activity until he/she has completed the reinstatement procedure.**