

**Acreage Flags For the Cure
Annual Flag Football Tournament
General Rules & Information Book**

2021



Flags for the Cure Coed Rules

Female touchdowns scored and TD passes thrown will be worth 8 points.

A minimum of three females must always be in the game.

A 5 yard and loss of down penalty will be called if the offensive team fails to use a female as an operative player within 4 consecutive plays. After such penalty, a female must be the operative player on the next play or in additional penalty will be called.

An operative player is defined as a player who:

- a) is the intended receiver in the eyes of the official**
- b) runs the ball as the primary runner (does not have to cross the line of scrimmage.)**
- c) receives the snap as the QB and throws the ball forward towards the line of scrimmage. (Ball does not have to cross the line of scrimmage.)**
- d) receives the snap and immediately spikes the ball at her feet in order to stop the clock in the last two minutes**
- e) a pass deflected by a male and caught by a female, is a female play**
- f) a pass intended for a female in the eyes of the referee, that is deflected by a female and caught by a male, counts as a female play**
- g) if a female pitches the ball to a male behind the line of scrimmage and then he throws it to a female, it will count as a female play**

An operative player is NOT defined as a player who:

- a) hands off the football**
- b) snaps the ball into play**
- c) receives a handoff only to give it back to a male before crossing the line of scrimmage**
- d) a pass thrown by a male, caught by a male, immediately pitched to a female (the hook and ladder) does not constitute a female play - no matter how far the female advances with the ball after the pitch**
- e) if a female pitches the ball to a male behind the line of scrimmage, this does not result in a female play**

Acreage Flags for the Cure

Flag Football Tournament General Rules

AGE DIVISIONS

- A player's tournament age is their age on the first day of the tournament. Anybody born on first day of the tournament is considered to have had their birthday
- 10 and under coed
- 13 and under boys
- 13 and under girls
- 13 and under coed
- 15 and under boys
- 15 and under girls
- 18 and under boys
- 18 and under girls
- Open Men
- Open Women
- Open Coed
- 30 and over Women

IMPORTANT REGISTRATION INFORMATION

- In order to be assured of a place in the tournament and an event tee shirt for every player, your team's roster and full payment must be received by Monday 12/7/20
- Absolute final registration deadline is Sunday 12/27/20.
- Any team that withdraws after 12/7/20 will not receive a refund
- Refund exceptions will be granted for teams registered in a division that has less than 3 teams. At their request, these teams will be refunded less \$12 for every shirt purchased.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

- Every 18 under, 15 under, 13 under and 10 under team is required to have a coach who is at least 18 years old
- Every coach who has any player less than 18 years old on their roster must complete a tournament recognized background check
- If an open men's team has a 17 year old on their roster, the coach must be background checked.

ROSTER RULES

- Team Rosters may include up to 14 players with a minimum of 7 players
- See coed rules section for coed roster rules
- We encourage teams to register 9 or more players to account for injuries or other circumstances where your team might not be able to field a full 7 player team
- Every 18 under, 15 under, 13 under and 10 under team must have a minimum of 1 coach who is at least 18 years or older and who has completed a tournament recognized background check
- Every coach who has a player less than 18 years old on their roster must complete a tournament recognized background check. (If an open men's team has a 17 year old on their roster, the coach must be background checked.)
- Every adult division team must have 1 designated coach for every game
- The youth or designated adult coach is the only team representative permitted to act as the team representative
- Changes are permitted to a roster up to the start of each team's first game
- Absolutely no roster changes will be permitted after the start of your team's first game. This includes no changes due to injuries, ejections or for any other reason.
- A player can register and play for more than one team.
- Only males can play in the boys and men's divisions. Only females may play in the girls and women's divisions.
- A player's tournament age is their age as of the scheduled day of the tournament. Anybody born on the first scheduled day is considered to have had their birthday
- Should a coach have any player on their roster who does qualify for your team according to the rules, but who cannot meet the identity and age proof requirements, you must bring this to the board's attention for special dispensation consideration when you register your team. No special considerations will be granted by the board after the start of your first game
- A team may start a game with as few as 6 players. If for any reason a team cannot produce 6 players for the start of a game, the team must forfeit that game.
- If during a game a player is lost due to injury the game will be allowed to continue with 5 players. If a team, during a game, is only able to field 4 players the game is forfeiture.

IMPORTANT - PROOF OF IDENTITY AND AGE – YOUR TEAM CAN BE PENALIZED HEAVILY!!!

- Want to protect your team from the protest of another team? Be smart! Be prepared!
- Coaches are encouraged to collect copies of proof of identity and age of all players prior to the start of the tournament to be kept on hand at the field sideline
- Every player must be able to prove their identity and age within 10 minutes of such a request from a board member

- There are two acceptable ways to prove your identity and age
 1. A copy of a birth certificate **and** a school photo ID
 2. A driver's license or other government issued ID carrying your birth date
- Should a coach have any player on their roster who does qualify for your team according to the rules, but who cannot meet the proof requirements, you **MUST** bring this to the board's attention for special dispensation consideration when you register your team. No special considerations will be granted by the board after the start of your first game.
- After the start of a game, If any players proof of age is not made available upon request they will be ejected and disqualified from participating. Any team whom cannot produce this acceptable proof of age will forfeit the game being played
- Before the start of a game, if any players proof of age is not made available upon request, they will be disqualified from participating in subsequent games until such a time that they are able to produce proof of age
- A registered youth team coach or the designated adult contact is the only team representative permitted to take protest action as the team representative
- Coaches are encouraged to collect copies of proof of identity and age of all players prior to the start of the tournament to be on hand at the field sideline upon request of a board member
- The tournament age of a player and the inclusion of a player on a team roster of the team you are scheduled to play next may be protested by the coach before the game or before the end of the first half of the game. Exception: If the player in question did not play in the first half of the game protest of that player can be made at any time.
- If a coach wishes to protest the age of a player and/or and the inclusion of a player on a team roster, the coach shall be granted an official's time out and a board member will be brought to the field
- The board will conduct a complete roster audit of BOTH teams for compliance with both age rules and the inclusion of a player on a team roster
- Every player on BOTH teams must be able to prove their age within 10 minutes of such a request from a board member
- Acceptable proof of identity and age includes a copy of a birth certificate **and** a school photo ID or a government issued ID such as a driver's license or military ID
- Any forfeit or disqualification of a team/player will be overseen and ultimately the FFTC Board will have the final decision.

UNIFORMS

- Tournament supplied Tshirt color choices are "first come, first served."
- Teams are not required to wear their tournament supplied uniforms
- If the color of Tshirts for two opponents are judged too similar, the board will require the team without tournament supplied Tshirts to change shirts or wear pinnies.
- Any cut Tshirts must adhere to tournament rules. (See separate handout)

- No jewelry may be worn during play
- No pockets at all. Taping closed pockets is not acceptable.
- Tshirts must be kept tucked inside a player's shorts

PRACTICE SPACE

- The tournament does not sanction any practices
- The tournament has no fields reserved for practice
- The tournament does not provide practice space
- In the month of November & December, AAL baseball teams have permits to use the Community Park baseball fields
- The tournament does not have permits to use the baseball fields
- If your team goes to Community Park and wants to use the outfield of a baseball field to practice, you must get the permission of any baseball team using the field
- If the baseball coach asks you to leave the field, you must do so immediately!

TOURNAMENT FORMAT

- Lottery selection will determine your opponents in your two pool play games
- Results of your pool play games will determine your seeding as follows;
 - 1) Number of games won
 - 2) Number of games tied
 - 3) Number of games lost
 Tie breakers will be;
 - 1) Total points your team gave up in pool play
 - 2) Total points your team scored in pool play
 - 3) Coin flip (2 teams) or random drawing (3 or more teams)
- The FFTC Board reserves the right to modify the lottery format or seeding as needed
- After pool play and seeding are completed, teams are placed into single elimination tournament brackets accordingly
- For seeding purposes, in the case of a forfeit in pool play, the score of the game will be 21 – 0 or the score of the game at the time of forfeit, whichever is more advantageous to the winning team.

FOOTBALL RULES

- Acreage Flags for the Cure (AFFTC) Tournament Rules and Acreage Girls Flag Football(AGFF) rules apply, see website www.flagsforthecure.com for links to complete rules
- Where AFFTC rules and AGFF rules conflict, AFFTC rules shall apply

- All decisions by referees are final
- Triple Threat flags will be used for the games
- If flags fall off the ball carrier, the player can be downed by 1 hand touch between the shoulders and knees
- Each team is allotted 2 time outs per half during regulation play
- Extra point turnovers in regulation play may be returned for 3 points
- Extra point turnovers in overtime are dead balls
- Extra point scoring
 - 1 point from the 5 yard line
 - 2 points from the 10 yard line
 - 3 points from the 20 yard line
 - All new possessions after a score will start at the 14 yard line

FOOTBALL RULE DIFFERENCES – 18 UNDER AND 15 UNDER GIRLS ONLY

- 18 and 15 under girls play high school rules
- Extra point scoring
 - 1 point from the 3 yard line
 - 2 points from the 10 yard line
 - 3 points from the 20 yard line

OVERTIME RULES - POOL PLAY

- Games may end in a tie
- 1 play for each team
- Coin flip winner gets choice of going first or second
- If first team scores, second team must go for the win by trying a longer extra point
- 1 point from the 5 yard line
- 2 points from the 10 yard line
- 3 points from the 20 yard line

OVERTIME RULES - ELIMINATION PLAY

- Whichever team had possession of the ball last will call at the coin toss
- 4 downs from the 10 yard line
- Can play for a tie, but ultimately will play until there is a winner
- Only one time out per an entire overtime play (no matter how many possessions)

EJECTIONS

- Any player or coach ejected from a game is not eligible to play in the follow game
- Any player or coach will be ejected from the entire tournament for fighting

- Fighting is any attempt by a player or non-players to strike or engage an opponent in a combative manner unrelated to flag football. Such acts include, but not limited to strike any other person at the park with the arm, hand, leg or foot, whether or not there is contact
- Any player or coach may be ejected for the use of profanity or hate speech
- Any player or coach ejected from a game can be required to leave the park at the discretion of a board member

OTHER RULES

- The tournament does not determine a home team. Coaches may flip a coin for sides of the fields if they like.
- Any player with visible signs of blood on themselves or their uniform, regardless if it is theirs or not, will be removed from the field and not allow to return until the source of the blood is covered and or cleaned off
- If a team is ahead in a game by 17 or more points with 2 minutes left, the game will be ended
- Prior to the start of each game, each team will line up for the referee's to check for proper safety equipment/violations and uniform.
- Ball rules are as follows:
 1. Teams shall supply their own football for game play
 2. 10 under divisions - Wilson K2 or an equivalent approved football
 3. 13 under divisions - Wilson TDJ or an equivalent approved football
 4. 15 under and 18 under divisions - Wilson TDY or an equivalent approved football
 5. Open divisions – TDJ or larger
 6. 30 over women's division – TDJ or larger
- Except for time outs and the last 2 minutes of a game, the clock will run continuously
- The final 2 minutes of the fourth quarter the clock will stop on incomplete forward passes, scoring plays, penalty enforcement, out-of-bounds, once a punt has been announced and time outs.

Acreage Flags For the Cure Flag Football

Rules of Play

Rule 1 The Game, Field, Players and Equipment

SECTION 1: THE GAME

ART.1.....It is the object of the game for one team to carry or pass the ball across the opponent's goal line.

ART.2.....The game of flag football is played with an inflated ball by two teams on a rectangular field 80 yards by 40 yards (60 yards by 30 yards in the 10U Division). While the ball is live, an interval called a down is in progress and the team in possession attempts to advance the ball by carrying, kicking, or passing it. If a foul occurs, the penalty loss, if not declined, is enforced during the interval between downs. The team in possession has a series of four downs numbered 1,2,3, and 4 to advance the ball to the line-to gain. Points are scored by touchdown, successful try, safety, or defensive return of a try.

ART.3.....Each team must begin the game with at least 6 players, but each team normally plays with 7 players.

ART.4.....The game is administered by officials whose duties are stated in Rule 8. The use of two officials is recommended, but the game shall never be officiated with less than one official.

ART.5.....The referee has authority to rule promptly, and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. The referee's decisions are final in all matters pertaining to the game.

ART.6.....Protests are not recognized by the AFFTC Board.

SECTION 2: THE FIELD AND MARKINGS

ART.1.....The field shall be a rectangular area with dimensions, lines, zones, goals and markers.

ART.2.....Yard line markers, constructed of soft, pliable materials, are placed on the sideline by the game officials. One official is to mark the line of scrimmage, and the other official is to mark the closest point the defense may line up opposite the ball.

ART.3.....Lines and other markings

- a. Lines shall be marked with a non-caustic material. Neither lime, hydrated lime, or other chemical derivatives of lime, nor caustic material of any kind may be used.
- b. End lines and sidelines should be at least 4 inches wide. All other field dimensions lines should be marked 4 inches in width.
- c. Team boxes shall be marked on each side of the field between the 20 yard lines. All players and team representatives shall remain in this area during the game.

ART.4.....Measurements shall be from the inside edges of the boundary marks, such marks being out-of-bounds.

ART.5.....Each goal line mark shall be entirely in its end zone so the edge toward the field of play and its vertical plane is the actual goal line.

ART.6.....A soft, flexible pylon, which shall not constitute a safety hazard, 4 inches square and 18 inches high, orange or red in color, is recommended to be placed at the inside corner of each of the intersections of the sidelines with the goal lines and the end lines, as well as with each intersection of the inbounds lines extended and the end lines. When properly placed, the goal line pylon is out-of-bounds at the intersection of the sideline and the goal line extended. A soft, flexible cone orange or red in color may be used as a replacement for the above mentioned pylon.

SECTION 3: GAME EQUIPMENT

ART.1.....The ball shall meet the following specifications:

- a. 10U, Wilson K2 or an equivalent approved football
- b. 13U, Wilson TDJ or an equivalent approved football
- c. 18U, Wilson TDY or an equivalent approved football
- d. All other Divisions, TDJ or LARGER football.
- e. Inflated to a pressure recommended on the ball.

ART.2..... Each individual team will supply their own game ball.

ART.3.....The referee shall decide whether the ball meets specifications. .

ART.4.....Yard line markers will be used to mark the offensive line of scrimmage or the line to gain.

ART.5.....A timing device refereed to as “the game clock” shall be scoreboard clock. The clock operator will be a game official designated by the referee.

SECTION 4: PLAYER EQUIPMENT

ATR.1.....Flagbelts:

- a. The player's flagbelts must be the "triple threat" flagbelts. This flagbelt may never be altered or secured other than according to the manufacturer's design or instructions. Any alterations to or improper securing of the flagbelt is prohibited.
- b. The flagbelt must be worn only on the waist. The flags must hang loosely below the waist on each side of the player.
- c. The flags must sharply contrast with the color of the player's shorts or pants.
- d. The entire flagbelt assembly must be completely visible at all times. No part of the flagbelt may be obscured or camouflaged.

ART.2.....TSHIRTS, and top coverings:

- a. Team players shall wear the TSHIRT provided to them by the AFFTC
- b. The TSHIRT must be kept tucked inside a player's shorts or pants
- c. Teams may wear their own team uniforms (not AFFTC provided) IF APPROVED BY AFFTC but MUST wear the AFFTC TSHIRT if playing a team of similar color to the non-AFFTC TSHIRT.

ART.3.....Shorts and pants:

- a. Players must wear shorts or long pants and that not have any other items that could cause injury to a player attempting to pull an opponent's flag.
- b. No pockets, zippers or belt loops. Taping closed pockets is not acceptable.

ART.4.....Shoes:

- a. A player must wear either molded bottom cleats or soft bottom sneakers or jogging shoes, and the shoes may have cleats that screw into a receded hole in the bottom of the sole area.
- b. Any shoe that has steel tipped cleats or steel reinforced toe or heel, or a squared toe is prohibited.
- c. No player may participate barefooted or sock footed.

ART.5.....Towels:

- a. The offensive team may have a full sized towel in the huddle between downs. During plays, the towel may remain on the field only if kept at least 5 yards behind the furthest offensive player.

- b. The defensive team may have a full sized towel in the huddle between downs. Leaving the towel on the field during a play is prohibited.

ART.6.....Caps and hats:

- a. Not allowed at anytime.

ART.7.....Tape, gloves, bandages, braces, and padding:

- a. Tape and any type of bandage worn on the hand or a finger may only be worn to protect an existing injury.
- b. Gloves are permitted.
- c. Ace bandages, “wet suit” rubber wraps, and similar materials are permitted.
- d. Knee braces or knee supports are permitted provided all exposed metal is covered by some type of cloth material.
- e. Soft padding is permitted.
- f. Hard plastic surfaced or hard plastic reinforced pads or equipment are prohibited. No helmets, shoulder pads, thigh or forearm pads, or other devices permitted.
- g. Any type of hard cast that covers any part of a player’s arm, wrist, or hand is not permitted.
- h. No player may wear any pad, brace, support, splint, or any type of device that has exposed metal.

ART.8.....All jewelry other than medical are prohibited. No Taping over of jewelry.

ART.9.....Each player shall properly wear the mandatory equipment outlined above while the ball is live.

PENALTY: Illegal Equipment (Art.1 through 7) – 5 yards. First offense – Delay of game penalty (Art.8) – 5 yards. Second offense – Offending player is removed for the remainder of the game and 15 yards.

Rule 2 Definitions of Playing Terms

SECTION 1: BALL – DEAD, LIVE, LOOSE

ART.1.....Dead ball is a term used to indicate it is a period between downs.

ART.2.....Live ball, or ball in play, is a term which indicates that the ball has been legally snapped and that a down is in progress. A live ball is always in possession of a team.

ART.3.....A loose ball is a pass, fumble or a kick. The terms “pass,” “fumble,” and “kick,” are sometimes used as abbreviations when the ball is loose following that acts of passing, fumbling or kicking the ball. A loose ball is one in which it has not yet touched the ground and is in flight.

SECTION 2: BATTING is intentionally slapping or striking the ball with the arm or hand.

SECTION 3: CATCH

ART.1.....A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball in flight. If a player attempts a catch, interception, or recovery while in the air, she must contact the ground inbounds with the ball in her possession prior to touching out-of-bounds, unless an opponent’s contact causes her to first touch out-of-bounds. Catching is always preceded by touching the ball; thus, if touching causes the ball to become dead, securing possession of the ball has no significance.

ART.2.....A simultaneous catch is a catch in where there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are inbounds.

SECTION 4: DEFENSIVE CHARGING occurs when a defensive player runs into the offensive player and makes either no attempt to dislodge the flag if the offensive player is in possession of the ball, or the defensive player makes no attempt to avoid a teammate of an opponent who has the ball.

SECTION 5: DOWN – LOSS OF DOWN

ART.1..... A down is action which starts with a legal snap (beginning a scrimmage down). A down ends when the ball next becomes dead.

ART.2.....Loss of a down is the loss of the right to replay a down.

SECTION 6: ENCROACHMENT is a term to indicate a player is illegally in the neutral zone during the time interval starting when the ball yard markers are placed in the proper position by the referees and before that ball is snapped. For the purposes of enforcing encroachment restrictions, an entering substitute is not considered to be a player until she is on her team’s side of the neutral zone.

SECTION 7: EXTENDING THE BALL is the legal act by the ball carrier to elongate the forward progress of the ball carrier.

SECTION 8: FAIR CATCH

ART.1.....A fair catch is a catch by a receiver of a punt in the field of play, after a valid signal, under conditions in which the receiver forfeits their right to advance the ball in return for the clock to be stopped until the snap if the game time is under 2 minutes in the second half.

ART.2.....A valid fair catch signal is the extending and lateral waving of one arm, at full arm’s length above the head, by any member of the receiving team fielding the ball

ART.3.....An invalid fair catch is any signal by a receiver before the kick is caught or recovered:

- a. That does not meet the requirements of a valid signal.
- b. After the kick has touched a receiver.

SECTION 9: FIELD AREAS

ART.1.....The end zones are 10-yards in depth and are located one at each end of the field between the goal line and the end line. The goal lines are in the end zone and a team's end zone is the one it is defending.

ART.2.....The field of play is the area within the boundary lines other than the end zones.

SECTION 10: FIGHTING is any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage an opponent in a combative manner unrelated to flag football. Such acts include, but not limited to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact. Any player charges with fighting will be ejected from the Tournament

SECTION 11: FORMATIONS

ART.1.....A scrimmage formation requires a minimum of six team members on or behind the line of scrimmage at the snap. **NOTE: If only 6 players are actively participating,** only 5 players are required to be behind the line of scrimmage.

ART.2.....All offensive players must be within 15 yards of the ball at the snap.

ART.3.....A team may run a “no huddle” offense without informing game officials or opponents prior to the snap.

ART.4.....A minimum of four players are required to be on the line of scrimmage at the snap.

SECTION 12: FORWARD PROGRESS

ART.1.....Forward progress is the end of advancement of a runner toward the opponent's goal and determines the dead ball spot.

ART.2.....When an airborne player makes a catch, forward progress is the furthest point of advancement after she possesses the ball if contacted by a defender.

SECTION 13: FOULS

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

ART.2.....Types of fouls are:

- a. Dead ball – a foul which occurs in the time interval after a down has ended and before the ball is next snapped.

- b. Double – one or more live ball fouls (other than unsportsmanlike) committed by each team at such a time that the penalties offset.
- c. Live ball – a foul which occurs during a down.
- d. Multiple – two or more live ball fouls (other than unsportsmanlike) committed by same team at such a time that the offended team is permitted a choice of penalties.
- e. Non-player or unsportsmanlike – a noncontact foul while the ball is dead or during the down which is not illegal participation and does not influence the play in progress.
- f. Player – a foul (other than unsportsmanlike) by a player in the game hereafter referred to as a foul.
- g. Simultaneous with the snap – an act which becomes a foul when the ball is snapped.

ART.3.....No foul causes loss of the ball.

ART.4.....No live ball foul causes the ball to become dead.

ART.5.....Game situations which procedure results somewhat similar to penalties, but which are not classed as fouls are: disqualification of a player, first touching of a kick by the kicking team, incompleteness of a forward pass, and forfeiture of a game.

SECTION 14: A FUMBLE is any loss of player possession other than by legal kick, passing or handing.

SECTION 15: HANDING

ART.1.....Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one player to a teammate in such a way that the ball is still in contact with the first player when it is touched by the teammate. Handing the ball is not a pass.

ART.2.....Forward handing is when the runner releases the ball when the entire ball is beyond the yard line where the runner is positioned.

ART.3.....Backward handing is when a runner releases the ball when any part of the ball is on or behind the yard line where the runner is positioned.

SECTION 16: HUDDLE is two or more players of the same team grouped together before a snap.

SECTION 17: HURDLING is an attempt by a player to jump with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent WITHOUT CONTACT who is contacting the ground with no part of her body except one or both feet.

SECTION 18: AN INTERCEPTION is the catch of an opponent's fumble or pass.

SECTION 19: KICKS

ART.1.....A kick is the intentional striking of the ball with the knee, lower leg, or foot.

ART.2.....A kick ends when a player gains possession or when the ball becomes dead.

ART.3.....A punt is a legal kick by a player who drops the ball and kicks it before it has touched the ground.

SECTION 20: LINE OF SCRIMMAGE

ART.1.....The line of scrimmage for each team is a vertical plane of the yard marker nearest the team's goal line. It is determined when the yard markers are set on the sidelines by the game officials.

ART.2.....An offensive player is on her line of scrimmage when she faces her opponent's goal line with the line of her shoulders approximately parallel thereto and with her head or foot breaking the plane of an imaginary line drawn parallel to the line of scrimmage through the waist of the snapper.

ART.3.....A defensive player is on her line of scrimmage when she is within 1 yard of her scrimmage line at the snap.

SECTION 21: LINES

ART.1.....The boundary lines are the end lines and sidelines and are out-of-bounds.

ART.2.....The end line is the outer limit of each end zone.

ART.3.....A goal line is the vertical plane which separates the field of play from the end zone. When related to a live ball in a runner's possession (touching inbounds) while the ball is over the out-of-bounds area, the goal line includes the extension beyond the sidelines. A team's own goal line is the one it is defending.

ART.4....The line-to-gain is the yard line (20, 40 or goal line) that is closest to the offensive team's direction of advancement.

ART.5.....The sideline is the lateral limit of the field of play and the end zones. It extends from one end, line to the other.

ART.6.....A yard line is any line and its vertical plan parallel to the end lines. The yard lines, marked or unmarked, in the field of play are numbered in yards from a team's own goal line to the middle of the field.

SECTION 22: A MUFF is the touching of a loose ball by a player in an unsuccessful attempt to secure possession. An accidental kick is a muff.

SECTION 23: NEUTRAL ZONE is the space between the two scrimmage lines during a scrimmage down. The neutral zone is 5 yards or less (one yard in the 18U girls division) for a scrimmage down and is established by the game officials.

SECTION 24: OUT-OF-BOUNDS

ART.1.....A player or other person is out-of-bounds when any part of her is touching anything on or outside the sideline or end line.

ART.2.....A ball in player possession is out-of-bounds when the runner or the ball touches anything outside a sideline or end line.

ART.3.....A loose ball is out-of-bounds when it touches anything, including a player or game official, who is out-of-bounds.

SECTION 25: PASSING

ART.1.....Passing the ball is throwing it. In a pass, the ball travels in flight. The initial direction determines whether a pass is forward or backward.

ART.2.....A forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction toward the opponent's end line.

NOTE: Prior to releasing the ball on a pass, if the potential passer is contacted, and the ball is released, it is a forward pass if her arm was moving forward on contact.

ART.3.....A forward pass has gone beyond the neutral zone if at any time during the pass, the entire ball is beyond the neutral zone.

ART.4.....A forward pass ends when it is caught, touches the ground or is out-of-bounds.

ART.5.....A backward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the runner's end line.

ART.6.....A backward pass end when it is caught, touches the ground, or is out-of-bounds.

SECTION 26: PLAYER DESIGNATIONS

ART.1.....A player is one of the 14 team members who is designated to start either half of the game or who replaces another player. A player continues to be a player until a substitute enters the field and indicates to the player that she is replaced, or when the substitute becomes a player.

ART.2.....A player of Team A is A1 and teammates are A2 and A3. Other abbreviations are B1 for a player of Team B, K1 for a player of the kickers and R1 for one of the receivers,

ART.3.....A back is any Team A player, except for the player under the snapper, who has no part of his body breaking the plane of an imaginary line drawn parallel to the line of scrimmage through the waist of the nearest teammate who is legally on the line.

ART.4.....A captain of a team is a player designated to represent her team during:

- a. The pregame toss ceremony.
- b. Penalty decisions following a foul.

ART.5.....A disqualified player is a player barred from further participation in a game.

ART.6.....A kicker is any player who legally punts. She continues to be the kicker until she has had reasonable opportunity to regain her balance.

ART.7.....A lineman is any Team A player legally on her line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

ART.8.....A non-player is a coach, trainer, or other attendant, or a substitute who does not participate by touching the ball, hindering an opponent, or influencing the play.

ART.9.....A passer is a player who throws a forward pass. She continues to be a passer until the pass ends or until she moves to participate in the play.

ART.10....A replaced player is one who has been notified by a substitute that she is to leave the field. A player is also replaced when the entering substitute becomes a player.

ART.11....A runner is a player who is in possession of a live ball or is simulating possession of a live ball.

ART.12....A snapper is the player who snaps the ball.

ART.13....A substitute is a team member who may replace a player. A substitute becomes a player when she enters the field and communicates with a teammate or an official, enters the huddle, is positioned in a formation, or participates in the play. An entering substitute is not considered to be a player for encroachment restrictions until she is on his team's side of the neutral zone.

SECTION 27: PLAYS- FOR PENALTY ENFORCEMENT

ART.1.....A loose ball play is action during.

- a. A legal forward pass.
- b. A backward pass (including the snap) or fumble made by Team A from in or behind the neutral zone prior to touching the ground.
- c. The run or runs which precede such legal forward pass, legal kick or fumble.

ART.2.....A running play is any action not included in Article 1.

SECTION 28: POSSESSION

ART.1.....A ball in player possession is a live ball held or controlled by a player after it has been handed or snapped to her, or after she has caught or recovered it.

ART.2.....A ball in team possession is a live ball which is in player possession or one which is loose following loss of such player possession.

SECTION 29: READY-FOR-PLAY is a term which signifies the referee has signaled the ball may be put in play by a snap or free kick.

SECTION 30: RESTRAINING LINE

ART.1.....The defensive restraining line is 5 yards closest to the goal line of team “B” except:

- a. If the line to gain is less than 5 yards, the defense’s restraining line is the next line-to-gain.
- b. On a 1 point try, the goal line is the defense’s restraining line.
- c. On a 2 point try, the 5 yard line is the defense’s restraining line.
- d. In the 18U Girls Division the restraining line is 1 yard

SECTION 31: A RULE is one of the groups of regulations which govern the game. A rule sometimes states what a player may do, but if there is no such statement for a given act, it is assumed that she may do what is not prohibited. In like manner, a rule sometimes states or implies that the ball is dead or that a foul is involved. If it does not, it is assumed that the ball is live and that no foul has occurred to affect the given situation. If a foul is mentioned, it is assumed that it is not part of a double or multiple foul unless so stated or implied.

SECTION 32: SCRIMMAGE is the action of the two teams during a down which begins with a snap.

SECTION 33: SHIFT is the action of one or more offensive players who, after a huddle or after taking set positions, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap.

SECTION 34: SNAP

ART.1.....A snap is the legal act of passing or handing the ball backward from its position on the ground.

ART.2.....The snap begins when the snapper first moves the ball legally other than in adjustment. In a snap, the movement must be quick and continuous backward motion of the ball during which the ball immediately leaves the hand(s) of the snapper and touches a back or the ground before it touches a Team A lineman.

ART.3.....The snap ends when the ball touches the ground or any player.

SECTION 35: SPOTS

ART.1.....The basic spot is a point of reference for penalty enforcement. It is the previous spot for a loose ball play and the end of the run for a running play.

ART.2.....The dead ball spot is the spot under the foremost point of the ball when it becomes dead by rule.

ART.3.....The inbounds spot is the intersection of the inbounds line and the yard line:

- a. Through the foremost point of the ball when the ball becomes dead in a side zone.
- b. Through the foremost point of the ball on the sideline between the goal lines when a loose ball goes out-of-bounds.
- c. Through the spot under the foremost point of the ball in possession of a runner when she crosses the plane of the sideline and goes out-of-bounds.

NOTE: If a penalty measurement leaves the ball in a side zone, the new inbounds spot is fixed by the yard line through the spot of the ball after measurement.

ART.4.....The out-of-bounds spot is where the ball becomes dead because of going out-of-bounds.

ART.5.....The spot of foul is where the foul occurs. If a foul occurs out-of-bounds, the spot of the foul is at the intersection of the inbounds line and the yard line extended on which the foul occurs.

ART.6.....The previous spot is where the ball was last snapped or free kicked.

ART.7.....The spot where the run ends is where the runner loses player possession or where the ball becomes dead in her possession.

ART.8.....The succeeding spot is where the ball would next be snapped or free kicked if a foul had not occurred.

SECTION 36: TACKLING is the detaching of the ball-carrier's flag by a defensive player.

SECTION 37: TEAM DESIGNATIONS

ART.1....The offense is the team which is in possession of the ball, the opponent is the defense.

ART.2.....Team A is the team which puts the ball in play, the opponent is Team B.

ART.3.....Team K is the team which legally kicks the ball during the down, the opponent is Team R.

SECTION 38: TOUCHING refers to any contact with the ball: i.e., either by touching or being touched by it.

SECTION 39: TRIPPING is the illegal contact of the lower leg or foot by a player to obstruct an opponent below the knee who is either a runner or teammate of a runner.

Rule 3 Periods, Time Factors and Substitutions

SECTION 1 : LENGTH OF HALVES

ART.1.....The clock running time for a game shall be 40 minutes with quarters, halves and intermissions as indicated. **If, at the end of the second half, the teams have identical scores, an attempt to resolve the tie will be utilized.** The overtime is considered part of the second half.

ART.2.....The playing time for each quarter will be as follows:

- a. The first, second and third quarter of the game the clock will continuously run and the first 8 minutes of the fourth quarter. The only times the clock will be stopped during this time is for team time outs, also for injuries that keep a player from being removed immediately, and for any other unusual situations that may occur. The 2 minute warning will then be issued to both teams by the referee at the end of the second and fourth quarter. However, once the teams have been notified, the 25 second ready for play clock will start.
- b. The final 2 minutes of the fourth quarter the clock will stop on incomplete forward passes, scoring plays, penalty enforcement's, out-of-bounds situations, once a punt has been announced, time outs (official or team), and first downs achieved. In this circumstance, the clock will begin on the referee's ready for play signal.
- c. The teams will switch directions at the start of the second and fourth quarters.

ART.3.....Halftime intermission will be 5 minutes. At 4 minutes, the referee will blow his whistle to inform both teams that they need to be on the field, ready to play in 1 minute.

ART.4.....Charged time outs shall be 45 seconds in length.

ART.5.....The game officials shall assume authority for the contest, including penalizing unsportsmanlike acts, 10 minutes prior to the scheduled game time, or as soon thereafter as they are able to be present and carry over for 10 minutes after the game.

ART.6.....A period or periods may be shortened by any emergency by agreement of the AGFFT Board and the referee, any remaining period may be shortened at any time or the game terminated.

ART.7.....Games interrupted because of events beyond the control of the AFFC shall be continued if possible but solely left up to the AFFC discretion.

ART.8.....When weather conditions are construed to be hazardous to life or limb of the participants, the crew of officials or AFFC is authorized to delay, suspend or end the game.

ART.9.....The referee shall have authority to correct **obvious errors in timing** if discovery is prior to the second live ball following the error unless the period has officially ended.

SECTION 2: STARTING EACH HALF

ART.1.....Each half of the game shall be started by placing the ball on the 14 yard line (10 yard line for the 10U Division). Before the scheduled game starting time the referee, in the presence of the field captains, shall toss a coin which the visiting captain shall call. If the coin toss is held on the playing field, it shall be held 3 minutes prior to the scheduled game starting time.

ART.2.....Not more than two captains from each team may be present at the coin toss and only one from each team shall be designated as its spokesman. All team personnel on the playing field, other than the captains involved in the coin toss ceremony, shall be restricted to their respective team box areas or well away from the vicinity of the toss.

ART.3.....The winner of the toss shall have first choice of options for the first half or to defer and have first choice in the second half. **The loser** shall have the first choice of options for the half the winner of the toss did not select. **The options** for each half shall be:

- a. To choose whether her team will start on offense or defense.
- b. To choose the goal her team will defend.

The captain not having the first choice for a half shall exercise the remaining option.

SECTION 3: ENDING A HALF

ART.1.....Approximately 2 minutes before the end of each half, the referee shall notify the field captains of the time remaining. If time is not out, the referee shall order the clock stopped while he does this.

ART.2.....If time for any period expires during a down, play shall continue until the down ends.

ART.3.....A period must be extended by an untimed down, except for unsportsmanlike or non-player fouls, if during the last timed down, one of the following occurred:

- a. There was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted.
- b. There was a double foul.
- c. There was an inadvertent whistle and the down is to be replayed at the spot of where the play was blown dead.
- d. If a touchdown was scored, the try is attempted unless the touchdown is scored during the last down of the 2nd half and the point(s) would not affect the outcome of the game or play-off qualifying.

If (a, b, c or d) occurs during the untimed down, the procedure is repeated.

ART.4.....If a dead ball occurs after time expires for any period, the penalty shall be measured from the succeeding spot.

SECTION 4: STARTING AND STOPPING THE CLOCK

ART.1.....The clock shall start for a half:

- a. When the ball is legally snapped.

ART.2.....The clock shall run continuously for the first three quarters and 8 minutes of the fourth quarter except for the following situations:

- a. For an official's time out.
- b. For a team's time out.
- c. Because of an inadvertent whistle that cause an unusual delay in the game.
- d. An injury that causes a player not to be immediately removed.

ART.3.....The clock shall be stopped and shall not start until the snap, providing the time remaining for the second half is under 2 minutes because:

- a. The ball goes out of bounds.
- b. A fair catch is made.
- c. The ball becomes dead behind the goal line.
- d. A forward pass is incomplete.
- e. Once a punt has been announced.
- f. A request for a charged time out is granted.
- g. The penalty for a delay of game foul is accepted.

SECTION 5: CHARGED AND OFFICIAL'S TIME OUTS-INTERMISSIONS

ART.1.....Two (2) time outs only may be charged to a team during each half of a regulation game. Unused 1st half time outs may not be utilized in the 2nd half. One (1) time is permitted during overtime games during the regular season, and one (1) time out is permitted for each additional overtime period during the playoffs.

ART.2.....A charged time out occurs when the ball is dead and a player's request is legally granted.

ART.3.....A single charge time out shall not exceed 45 seconds in length. Charged time outs shall be reduced only if both teams are ready to play prior to the 25 second ready for play signal by the referee.

ART.4.....Successive charged time outs may be granted during the same dead ball period. When a team's permissible charged time outs during a half have been used, its captain should be notified.

ART.5.....After a team has used its permissible charged time outs in a half, any subsequent request shall be denied.

ART.6.....An official's time out occurs during a dead ball without a time out being charged to either team:

- a. When captains are notified of 2 minutes left in each half.
- b. For a player who appears to be injured, bleeding, has an open wound, or has an excessive amount of blood on her uniform.
- c. A water break for unusual heat or humidity which may cause a health risk to the players and/or officials.

SECTION 6: BALL READY FOR PLAY AND DELAY

ART.1.....The ball is ready for play when the whistle is blown by the referee signaling the end of the previous play, or when the referee gives the ready for play signal after:

- a. An official's time out.
- b. Penalty enforcement.
- c. An inadvertent whistle.
- d. A charged time out to either team.

ART.2.....The ball shall be put in play within 40 seconds from the time the last play has ended. If the referee gives a ready for play signal, then the time to put the ball in play is reduced to 25 seconds.

ART.3.....Failure of a team to play within 2 minutes after being ordered to do so by the referee shall result in forfeiture.

SECTION 7: SUBSTITUTIONS

ART.1.....No substitute shall enter during a down.

ART.2.....Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players. Replaced players shall leave the field immediately.

ART.3.....A replaced player, or a substitute who has been unable to complete the substitution, is required to leave the field at the side on which his team box is located and go directly to her team box.

PENALTY: Illegal substitution – 5 yards.

SECTION 8: OVERTIME PROCEDURES

ART.1.....During pool play only one (1) extra point try will be permitted by the referee by each team. The team going first may choose to try for one of two points. If the team going first scores the team going second must go for two points. If the score remains tied at the end of the overtime period, the game will end in a tie. **During elimination play** the team will play a series of 4 downs from the 10 yard line each. If the score remains tied after the first overtime series the teams will play a second overtime series or more until there is a winner. There shall be a 1 minute break between the last play of the second half until the opposing captains are required to be present during the subsequent coin toss to begin the overtime. No additional breaks between overtimes are permitted unless a team is granted a time out.

ART.2.....The team in possession of the ball at the end of the last play during the second half shall call the coin toss.

ART.3.....The winner of the toss shall have first choice of options for the overtime. **The loser** shall have first choice of options for the overtime the winner of the toss did not select. If any additional overtimes are played, the loser of the toss during the first overtime will the choice. **The options** for each overtime shall be:

- a. To choose whether his team shall be on offense or defense first.
- b. To choose which end zone the overtime will be played in. Both teams will attempt to score in the same end zone.

ART.4.....The ball shall be placed at the opponents 10 yard line for team “A” to attempt to score a touchdown. If, at the end of the possession, the team fails to score, they lose possession and team “B” acquires possession. The ball is then returned to the 20 yard line for their attempt to score a touchdown. If team “B” then fails to score, the process shall be repeated.

ART.5.....If the opposing team intercepts the ball or turnover during an attempt to score a touchdown, the play is automatically over. No runbacks are permitted. Once possession has been lost, the series is over.

ART.6.....If a team scores a touchdown during overtime, a try for point is permitted providing the try has a direct influence on the outcome of the game.

ART.7.....After a touchdown is scored, a team may select to go for 3 points, 2 points, or for 1 point on a try. If the team selects a try for 3 points the ball will be placed on the 20 yard line; for 2 points, the ball will be placed on the 10 yard line; a try for 1 point, the ball will be place on the 5 yard line. If the team possesses the ball in the end zone after the play is completed, the points are awarded.

ART.8.....If the opponents intercept the ball during a try for point, the try for point is concluded.

ART.9.....Each team receives 1 time out during each overtime series.

Rule 4 Ball in play, Dead Ball and Out Of Bounds

SECTION 1: PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY

ART.1.....To start each half the ball shall be places at the 14 yard line (10 yard line in the 10U Division). After a score the ball will be put in play at the offense's team's 14 yard line(10 yard line in the 10U Division).

ART.2.....A snap shall put the ball in play.

ART.3.....A snap shall be started between the inbounds lines.

ART.4.....After being put in play, the ball remains live until the down ends.

ART.5.....The ball remains dead and a down is not begun if there is an illegal snap or other snap infraction.

SECTION 2: DEAD BALL AND END OF THE DOWN

ART.1.....An official shall indicate the ball remains dead by sounding his whistle immediately when a foul occurs before a snap or free kick.

ART.2.....The ball becomes dead and the down is ended:

- a. When a runner goes out-of-bounds, or her flag becomes unattached from her body by a defensive players grasping her flags, or allows any part of her person other than hand or foot to touch the ground.
- b. When a live ball goes out of bounds.
- c. When any forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete or is simultaneously caught by opposing players.
- d. When any legal kick (punt) touches anything while the kicked ball is on or behind R's goal line (plane) or is muffed by the receiving team.
- e. When any loose ball:
 1. Is simultaneously caught or recovered by opposing players.
 2. Is on the ground motionless and no player attempts to secure possession.
 3. Touches, or is touched by, anything inbounds other than a player, substitute, replaced player, an official, the ground, or authorized equipment. In this case the ball will be put in play in accordance with the procedure for an inadvertent whistle as in 4-2-3b.

- f. When the kickers are first (i.e. before any touching by the receivers) to touch a punt after it has come to rest beyond the neutral zone and between the goal lines.
- g. Following a valid or invalid fair catch signal given by any member of the receiving team when a punt is caught or recovered by any member of the receiving team beyond, in, or behind the neutral zone.
- h. When a touchdown occurs.
- i. When an official sounds his whistle inadvertently.

ART.3.....Inadvertent Whistle. During a down, or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, if an inadvertent whistle occurs while:

- a. A legal forward pass or snap is in flight, or during a legal kick, the down shall be replayed.
- b. The ball is loose following a backward pass, fumble, illegal pass, or illegal kick, the team last in possession may choose to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.
- c. The ball is in player possession, that team may choose to accept the play at that spot or replay the down.

SECTION 3: OUT-OF BOUNDS AND INBOUNDS SPOT

ART.1.....When a loose ball goes out-of-bounds, the out-of-bounds spot is fixed by the yard line where the flag became legally detached by a defensive player. When the ball becomes dead in the field of play because of touching a person who is out-of-bounds, the out-of-bounds spot is fixed by the yard line through the belt line of the player in possession of the ball.

ART.2.....When the out-of-bounds spot is between the goal lines, the ball shall be put in play at the inbounds spot unless a forward pass is involved. **If the out-of-bounds spot is behind a goal line,** it is a safety, or touchback. If the ball touches a pylon, it is out-of-bounds behind the goal line.

ART.3.....When a runner goes out-of-bounds, the inbounds spot is fixed by the yard line through the belt line of the player in possession of the ball at the time the runner crosses the plane of the sideline.

ART.4.....When the ball becomes dead between the inbounds lines, play is resumed at the dead ball spot, unless it is a legal forward pass incompleteness in which case the ball is returned to the previous spot.

ART.5.....When the ball becomes dead in the side zone or is awarded to a team there or is left there by a penalty, play is resumed at the inbounds spot. This does not apply to:

- a. A legal forward pass incompleteness.

- b. A replay due to inadvertent whistle.
- c. A replayed try.
- d. A snap which follows a fair catch or awarded fair catch in a side zone.

ART.6.....Before the ready-for-play signal. Team “A” may designate the spot from which the ball is put in play anywhere between the inbounds lines:

- a. Following a safety.
- b. Following a fair catch.
- c. Following an awarded fair catch.
- d. Following a touchback.
- e. For the start of each series using the 20 yard line overtime procedure.

Rule 5 Series of Downs, Number of Down, and Team Possession After Penalty

SECTION 1 : SERIES OF DOWNS

ART.1.....The team which puts the ball in play from scrimmage following a start of half, touchdown, touchback or fair catch is awarded a series of four consecutively numbered downs in which to advance the ball to the line-to-gain. Each awarded 1st down starts a new series of four downs.

ART.2.....When a scrimmage down ends with the ball in the field of play or out-of-bounds between the goal lines, a new series is awarded to:

- a. Team “A”, if the ball belongs to “A” on or beyond the line-to-gain.
- b. Team “B”, if the ball belongs to “B” at the end of any down.
- c. Team “B”, at the end of the 4th down, the ball belongs to “A” behind the line-to-gain.
- d. The team is possession at the end of the down, if there is a change of team possession during the down, unless the penalty is accepted for a foul which occurred before the change of possession.
- e. Team “R”, if “K” legally kicks during any scrimmage down and the ball is recovered by “R” , is in joint possession of opponents, or goes out-of-bounds, or becomes dead with no player in possession.
- f. The team in possession at the end of the down, if “R” is the first to touch a punt while it is beyond the expanded neutral zone, unless the penalty is accepted for a foul which occurred before the kick ended.

The loss of down aspect of a penalty has no significance following a change of possession of in the line-to-gain is reached after enforcement.

ART.3.....When a punt ends with the ball in the field of play or out-of-bounds between the goal lines, a new series is awarded to:

- a. Team “R” at the inbounds spot if “R” is the last to touch the kicked ball before it goes out-of bounds.
- b. The team in possession of the ball when the down ends, if the ball is recovered beyond “R” ’s scrimmage line with no first touching by “K”.
- c. Team “R” at the spot of recovery if “K” recovers the kicked ball before a player of team “R” gains possession.
- d. Team “R” if there is joint possession by “R” and “K” of a recovered kick.

ART.4.....If the kickers recover a punt in or beyond the neutral zone and the ball had not been in player possession of team “R”, the ball remains live and belongs to “R” and the down counts at the spot of first touching by “K”.

SECTION 2: DOWN AND POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY

ART.1.....When a penalty is declined, the number of the next down is the same as if the foul had not occurred. **If a double foul occurs** during a down, the number of the next down is the same as that of the down in which the foul occurred. **After a distance penalty**, the ball belongs to the team in possession at the time of the foul. Team possession may then change if a new series is awarded.

ART.2.....When a foul occurs during a scrimmage down and before any change of team possession, and before a receiver is first to touch a punt while it is beyond the neutral zone, the ball belongs to “A” after enforcement. The number of the next down is the same as that of the down during which the foul occurred unless penalty acceptance includes a 1st down or loss of down, or the enforcement of the advance results in a 1st down.

ART.3.....When a foul occurs prior to a scrimmage down, or simultaneously with the snap, the number of the next down after enforcement is the same as the number established before the foul occurred unless enforcement for a foul by “B” results in a 1st down.

ART.4.....Following a foul, a series of downs ends when:

- a. The acceptance of the penalty includes the award of a 1st down.
- b. Acceptance of declination of any penalty leaves “A” in possession beyond the line-to-gain.
- c. Declination of any penalty leaves “A” in possession behind the line-to-gain after 4th down.
- d. Declination of any penalty leaves “B” in possession.
- e. There is acceptance or declination of the penalty for any foul which occurs after team possession changes during the down, or after “R” is first to touch a punt while it is beyond the neutral zone, unless the foul occurs before the kick ends and the penalty is accepted.
- f. Acceptance of a penalty on 4th down which carries a loss of down leaves “A” in possession behind the line-to-gain.

After a series of down ends, a new series with 1st and the next line-to-gain (either Team “A” ’s 20 yard line, or the 40 yard line, Team “B” ’s 20 yard line) is awarded unless one of the following is involved: a try; or awarded fair catch. The 1st down is awarded to the team in possession when the foul occurs unless, declining the penalty leaves the other team in

possession, or as in [c] and [f], accepting or declining the penalty leave the other team in possession after 4th down.

SECTION 3: THE LINE-TO-GAIN AND MEASUREMENTS

ART.1.....The line-to-gain is Team “A” ‘s 20 yard line, the 40 yard line (midfield), and team “B” ‘s 20 yard line when a new series of downs is awarded. The line to gain is established at the end of the down in which a new series is awarded and after considering the effect of any act which occurs during that down other than a non-player or unsportsmanlike foul. The line-to-gain than remains fixed until the series ends and a new line-to-gain is established.

ART.2.....To start a new series of downs, the “tackle” by the defensive team must be on or ahead of the line-to-gain. **To start a new series of downs after:**

- a. A change of team possession, which does not involve a 4th down incomplete forward pass, a safety or touchback, the foremost point of the ball at the time it became dead becomes the rear point when the direction of the offense is changed.
- b. A 4th down incomplete forward pass, the ball is placed as it was at the start of the down so the rear point becomes the foremost point.
- c. A safety or touchback, the foremost point of the ball is placed on the 14 yard line.

ART.3.....A ball touching the goal line plane, when it becomes dead is in the end zone, even though it is moving away from the nearer end line and has its foremost point in the field of play. When any kick is touched near “R” ‘s goal line, the ball becomes dead only if it is in behind the goal line plane at the time it is touched except as in 4-2-2d. In doubtful cases, the ball should be considered behind the goal line.

Rule 6 Kicking the Ball and Fair Catch

SECTION 1: PUNTS

ART.1.....The offensive team must announce their intention to kick the ball at least 20 seconds prior to any punt.

ART.2.....Team “A” may punt from in or behind the neutral zone before team possession has changed.

ART.3.....No offensive player may go downfield until the ball is kicked by the punter.

ART.4.....Any receiver may catch or recover a punt in the field of play and advance unless any member of the receiving team has given a valid or invalid fair catch signal. “R” may catch or recover a punt in “K” ‘s end zone.

ART.5.....When any scrimmage kick is out-of-bounds between the goal lines or becomes dead inbounds between the goal lines while no player is in possession, or inbounds anywhere

while opponents are in joint possession, the ball is awarded to “R”. Following an out-of-bounds, the ball is put in play at the inbounds spot unless “R” chooses a spot of first touching.

ART.6.....The front 3 defensive players may not leave the defensive line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked, or rush the punter.

ART.7.....The center, after snapping the ball may move away from the punter to avoid being accidentally contacted by the punter or the ball.

PENALTY: Delay of game (ARTS. 1,4) – 5 Yards; Encroachment (ART. 2,3) – 5 Yards; Illegal procedure (ART.6) – 5 Yards

SECTION 2: TOUCHBACK

ART.1.....If any punt touches anything while the kicked ball is on or behind “R” ‘s goal line or goal line plane, it becomes dead and is a touchback.

ART.2.....If any punt becomes dead in the kicker’s end zone while no player has possession, it is a safety or touchback, as in 8-5-2 and 3.

SECTION 3: FAIR CATCH

ART.1.....Any receiver may signal for a fair catch while any legal kick is in flight.

ART.2.....It is a fair catch and the ball is dead if any receiver gives a valid fair catch signal, as is Art. 1, and she catches a punt beyond the neutral zone and between the goal lines.

ART.3.....When a fair catch is made, the captain may choose to snap anywhere between the inbounds line through the spot of the catch. This choice remains if a dead ball foul occurs prior to the down, or a foul or an inadvertent whistle occurs during the down and the down is replayed.

ART.4.....No receiver may advance the ball after a valid or invalid fair catch signal has been given by any member or the receiving team.

ART.5.....No receiver shall give an invalid fair catch signal.

PENALTY: Delay of game (Art.4,5) – 5 Yards

Rule 7 Snapping, Handing and Passing the Ball

SECTION 1: BEFORE THE SNAP

ART.1.....No player shall encroach on the neutral zone after the ball is ready-for-play by touching the ball or an opponent or by being in the neutral zone to give defensive signals.

ART.2.....Following the ready-for-play or after the snapper has placed her hand(s) on the ball, encroachment occurs if any player, other than the snapper breaks the plane of the neutral zone.

ART.3.....The snapper may be over the ball but her feet must be behind the neutral zone and no part of this person other than a hand(s) on the ball may be beyond the foremost point of the ball.

ART.4.....The snapper may lift the ball for later rotation but may not rotate end-for-end or move the location or fail to keep the long axis of the ball at right angles to the line of scrimmage.

ART.5.....Following the ready-for-play or after touching the ball, the snapper shall not:

- a. Remove both hands.
- b. Make any movement that simulates a snap.
- c. Fail to clearly pause before the snap.
- d. Following adjustment, lift or move the ball other than in a legal snap.

An illegal snap or other snap infraction causes the ball to remain dead.

ART.6.....After the ball is ready-for-play or before the snap, no false start shall be made by any “A” player. **It is a false start if:**

- a. A shift or feigned charge simulates action at the snap.
- b. Any act is clearly intended to cause “B” to encroach.

If the false start causes “B” to encroach, only the false start is penalized.

ART.7.....A team may not use more than the allotted time between plays

PENALTY: Encroachment (ARTS. 1,2,3) – 5 Yards; Snap infraction (ARTS. 4,5) - 5 Yards; False start (ART. 6) – 5 Yards; Delay of Game (ART.7)

SECTION 2: POSITION AND ACTION AT THE SNAP

ART.1.....No later than 10 seconds prior to the snap, each player of team “A” must have been, momentarily, within 15 yards of the ball.

ART.2.....Team “A” players may stand, crouch, or kneel.

ART.3.....A snap shall be such that the ball immediately leaves the hand or hands of the snapper and touches backfield player or the ground. A scrimmage down must start with a legal snap. **An illegal snap** causes the ball to remain dead.

ART.4.....After a huddle or shift all seven players of team “A”, except the player in motion shall come to an absolute stop and shall remain stationary simultaneously without movement of hands, feet, head, or body for **at least one second** before the snap.

ART.5.....Not more than one team “A” player may be in motion at the snap and then only if such motion is not towards her opponent’s goal line. Except for the player “under the snapper”, the player in motion shall be at least 1 yard behind his line of scrimmage at the snap if she started from any position not clearly behind the line and did not establish herself as a back by stopping for at least one full second while no part of her body is breaking the vertical plane through the waistline of her nearest teammate who is on the line of scrimmage.

PENALTY: Illegal procedure or illegal formation (ART. 1); Illegal snap (ART. 3); Illegal shift (ART. 4); Illegal Motion (ART. 5)

SECTION 3: HANDING THE BALL

ART.1.....Any player may hand the ball backward at any time.

ART.2.....No player may hand the ball forward except during a scrimmage down before a change in possession, provided both players are in or behind the neutral zone and it is to a teammate who was not the snapper, unless the snapper steps back 1 yard off of the line of scrimmage after the snap.

Exception: this rule does not apply in the 18U Division.

PENALTY: Illegal handing: (ARTS. 2,3) – 5 Yards – and loss of down. The loss of down penalty does not apply when there has been a change in team possession.

SECTION 4: FUMBLE AND BACKWARD PASS

ART.1.....During any down, any player in possession may make a backward pass or may lose player possession through a fumble.

ART.2.....If a fumble or backward pass is caught by a player, she may advance.

ART.3.....If a fumble or backward pass goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines or becomes dead while no player is in possession or while opponents are in joint possession, the ball belongs to the passing or fumbling team unless lost after 4th down.

ART.4.....If a fumble or backward pass is out-of-bounds behind a goal line, the ball belongs to the team defending that goal and the result is either a touchback or a safety.

SECTION 5: FORWARD PASS CLARIFICATION

ART.1.....It is a legal forward pass, if during a scrimmage down and before team possession has changes, a player of Team “A” throws the ball with both feet of the passer in or behind the

neutral zone when the ball is released. **More than one forward pass may be thrown during the down, except in the 18U Division.**

ART.2.....An illegal forward pass is a foul. The illegal forward passes are:

- a. A pass after team possession have changed during the down.
 - b. A pass from beyond the neutral zone.
 - c. A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an offensive player.
 - d. A pass intentionally thrown incomplete to save loss of yardage or to conserve time.
- EXCEPTION: It is legal to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving a direct hand-to-hand snap.

ART.3.....If the penalty for an illegal forward pass is accepted, measurement is from the spot of such forward pass. If the offended team declines the distance penalty, it has the choice of having the down counted at the spot of illegal incomplete forward pass or (if the illegal forward pass is caught or intercepted) of having the ball put in play determined by the action which followed the catch.

ART.4.....A forward pass, legal or illegal, is complete and the ball may be advanced when caught by any player of “A” or “B”. If a forward pass is **caught simultaneously** by two opponents then the ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team.

ART.5.....A forward pass, legal or illegal is incomplete and the ball becomes dead when the pass touches the ground or goes out-of-bounds. It is also incomplete when a player in the air possesses the pass and alights so that her first contact with the ground or with anything other than a player or game official is on or outside a boundary. **When an incompleteness occurs** the down counts unless the pass is after a change in possession. If the pass is legal the passing team next snaps the ball, unless lost after 4th down, at the spot of the previous snap.

ART.6.....All players are eligible to receive a pass.

ART.7.....Pass interference restrictions only apply beyond the neutral zone and only if the legal forward pass crosses the neutral zone.

ART.8.....Pass interference restrictions end when a “B” player touched the pass, or last pass if more than one.

ART.9.....It is forward pass interference if any player of “A” or “B” who is beyond the neutral zone interferes with an eligible opponent’s opportunity to move forward, catch or bat the pass.

ART.10....It is not forward pass interference if unavoidable contact occurs when two or more eligible players are making a simultaneous, bona fide attempt to move toward, catch or bat the pass.

PENALTY: Illegal forward pass (ARTS. 2a, b) – Intentional grounding (ARTS. 2c, d) – 5 Yards plus loss of down for (ARTS. 2b,c,d); Pass interference (ART.9) – 10 Yards plus loss

of down if by “A” and if the ball is caught, a 10 yard penalty from the successive spot – If by “B”, it is a first down for “A”. If the pass interference by either play is intentional, his shall be penalized an additional 15 yards

RULE 8 SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACK

SECTION 1: THE GAME IS WON by the team which accumulates the most points. Points are scored as follows for:

TOUCHDOWN.....6 Points
SAFETY – points awarded to the opponent.....2 Points

SUCCESSFUL TRY FOR POINT (TRY)

- a. Touchdown from the 20 yard line.....3 Points
- b. Touchdown from the 10 yard line.....2 Points
- c. Touchdown from the 5 yard line.....1 Point

DEFENSIVE RETURN OF A TRY FOR POINT.....3 Points

FORFEITED GAME

Game score is: Offended Team.....1; Opponent.....0

But if offended team is ahead, the score stands.

SECTION 2: TOUCHDOWN

ART.1.....It is a touchdown when a runner advances from the field of play across the goal line in possession of the football with both flags attached.

ART.2.....It is a touchdown when a loose ball is caught or recovered by a player while the ball is on or behinds her opponent’s goal line.

ART.3.....If a foul by the opponents of the scoring team occurs during a touchdown, the penalty is automatically declined and no penalty is assessed on the try.

SECTION 3: TRY

ART.1.....After a touchdown, the scoring team shall attempt a try during which the ball is snapped from a spot designated by Team “A” anywhere between the inbounds lines. This involves a scrimmage down which is neither numbered nor timed. The ball shall be placed on the:

- a. The 20 yard line, if the scoring team elects to score 3 points
- b. The 10 yard line, if the scoring team elects to score 2 points.
- c. The 5 yard line, if the scoring team elects to score 1 point.

EXECPTION: If a touchdown is scored during the last down of the 2nd half, the try shall not be attempted unless the point(s) would affect the outcome of the game or playoff qualifying.

ART.2.....The try begins when the ball is ready-for-play. It ends when:

- a. “B” secures possession.
- b. The try is successful
- c. The ball becomes dead for any other reason

ART.3.....During a try, Team “A” may score 1, 2 or 3 points from what would be a touchdown outlined in 8-1.

ART.4....If during a successful try, a loss of down foul by “A” occurs, there is no score and no replay.

ART.5.....If during an unsuccessful try, a foul by “A” occurs, the penalty is obviously declined, the results of the play stand and there is no replay. **If “B” fouls**, the down is replayed after enforcement.

ART.6.....If a double foul occurs, the down shall be replayed.

ART.7.....When a try down is replayed, the snap may be from any point between the inbounds lines on the yard line through the spot of the ball.

ART.8.....After a try, the opponent of the scoring team shall obtain possession of the ball at their own 14 yard line.

SECTION 4: SAFETY AND TOUCHBACK

ART.1.....It is a safety when:

- a. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across her own goal line, and it becomes dead there in her team’s possession.

EXCEPTION: When a Team “B” player intercepts a forward pass or catches a punt between her 5 yard line and the goal line and her original momentum carries her into

the end zone where the ball is declared dead in her team's possession or it goes out-of-bounds in the end zone, the ball belongs to Team "B" at the spot where the pass was intercepted or the kick was caught.

- b. A player, who is either in the field of play or in her end zone, forces a loose ball from the field of play to or across her goal line by her kick, pass, fumble, snap, or by a new force with her muff or bat or illegal kick, provided the ball becomes dead there in her team's possession (including when the ball is declared dead with no player in possession), or the ball is out-of-bounds when it becomes dead on or behind their goal line. This does not apply to a legal forward pass which becomes incomplete.
- c. A player on offense commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from the spot in her end zone; or throws an illegal forward pass from her end zone and the penalty is declined in a situation which leaves her in possession at the spot of the illegal pass and with the ball having been forced into the end zone by the passing team.

ART.2.....It is a touchback when:

- a. Any punt touches anything while the ball is on or behind "R" 's goal line, unless "R" chooses a spot of first touching by "K".
- b. Any punt becomes dead on or behind "K" 's goal line with the ball in possession of Team "K" (including when the ball is declared dead with no player in possession) and the new force is "R" 's muff or bat of the kick after it has touched the ground.
- c. A forward pass is intercepted in "B" 's end zone and becomes dead there in "B" 's possession.

ART.3.....The team whose goal line is involved shall put the ball in play anywhere between the inbounds lines on its 14 yard line by a snap after a touchback.

Rule 9 Conduct of Players and Others

SECTION 1: HELPING THE RUNNER is a foul. An offensive player shall not push, pull, or lift her teammate the runner.

PENALTY: If no contact by either the runner or the other offensive player – 5 yards and loss of down; If there is contact with the defensive player by either the runner or the other offensive player – 10 yards and loss of down.

SECTION 2: ILLEGAL BLOCKING AND GUARDING

ART.1.....An offensive player shall not:

- a. Screen block a defensive player when the offensive player is within 4 yards of the

- player in possession of the ball, except in Pro Division, distance is reduced to 1 yard.
- b. Contact a defensive player who is making a bona fide attempt to dislodge a flagbelt of a player in possession of the ball.
- c. Use hands, arms, or legs to hook, lock, clamp, encircle or hold in an effort to restrain an opponent.
- d. Lean across the restraining line prior to the ball being snapped.

ART.2.....The runner shall not:

- a. Use any flag guard or shielding motion preventing or hindering the defensive team from dislodging their flagbelt.
- b. Jump or hurdle and contact a defensive player. .
- c. Stiff arm an opponent.
- d. Lower the ball to obscure the flags from being dislodged by an opponent.
- e. Intentionally remove their flagbelt.
- f. Illegally fasten their flagbelt to not permit the flags to be dislodged as designed by the manufacturer.
- g. Lower their head into an opponent.
- h. Hide the ball under a jersey.
- i. Charge into an opponent. The player in possession must attempt to avoid contact with an opponent.

NOTE: A player in possession of the ball who touched the ground with any body part other than a hand or foot is considered down at the point of contact.

Spinning 360 degrees is allowed in all age divisions.

ART.3.....A defensive player shall not:

- a. Hold or grab an opponent's jersey.
- b. Grab, push, or hold an opponent.
- c. Physically tackle an opponent.
- d. Attempt to strip the ball once an opponent clearly has possession of the ball.
- e. "Chuck" or contact a receiver illegally.
- f. Remove a flag of a player who does not have possession of the ball.
- g. Contact the passer, except in a clear attempt to remove the passer's flag.
- h. Run through an offensive player who has established a legal position on the field.
- i. Interfere with a receiver's opportunity to catch the ball once the ball is in the air and the ball is catchable.
- j. Lean across the restraining line prior to the ball being snapped.

PENALTY: Illegal screen (ART. 1a,b) – 10 yards and loss of down; Illegal Use of Hands (ART. 1c) – 10 yards and loss of down; Flag guarding (ART. 2a,b,e) – 10 yards and loss of down; Offensive charging (ART. 2c,d,h,j) – 10 yards and loss of down; Unsportsmanlike conduct (ART. 2f,i) – 15 yards and loss of down on 1st offense, 15 yards and loss of down

plus removal from the game on 2nd offense; Encroachment (ART. 1d, 3j) – 5 yards and repeat of down; Defensive holding (ART. 3a,b) – 10 yards and automatic 1st down; Gross Unsportsmanlike conduct (ART. 3c) – 15 yards and automatic 1st down and if flagrant, removal from the game. **NOTE:** If a touchdown would have been scored, a touchdown is awarded; Unsportsmanlike conduct (ART.3d,f) – 10 yards and automatic 1st down; Illegal contact (ART. 3e) – 5 yards and automatic 1st down; Pass Interference (ART. 3i) – Point of infraction and automatic 1st down. If the ball is caught, 10 yards from successive spot and automatic 1st down; Unsportsmanlike conduct (ART. 2g) – 15 yards and next down; Roughing the passer (ART. 3g) – 5 yards and automatic 1st down, if roughness is involved, 10 yards and automatic 1st down plus removal at the discretion of the referee; Defensive charging (ART. 3h) – 10 yards and automatic 1st down.

SECTION 3: ILLEGAL PERSONAL CONTACT

ART.1..... No player or non-player shall fight. Fighting shall result in automatic ejection from the Tournament,

ART.2.....No player shall:

- a. Position herself on the shoulders or body of a teammate or an opponent to gain an advantage.
- b. Make any other contact with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary and which incites roughness.
- c. Strike an opponent with her fist, locked hands, forearm, or elbow, nor kick or knee her.

ART.3.....No player or non-player shall intentionally contact an official.

SECTION 4: NONCONTACT UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT BY PLAYERS

ART.1.....No player shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner during either a half or intermission. Examples are, but not limited to:

- a. Baiting or taunting acts or words or insignia worn which endangers ill will.

NOTE: The AFFTC Board disapproves of any form or taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis or race, religion, gender, or national origin.

- b. Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
- c. Any delayed, excessive or prolonged act by which a player attempts to focus attention upon herself.
- d. Using disconcerting acts or words prior to the snap in attempt to interfere with “A” ‘s signals or movements.

NOTE: Some players will make statements designed to upset or ridicule a team or official(s) such as “Good play. Run that one again” on a play that has failed. These actions along with many others should not be ignored and should be penalized accordingly.

- e. Intentionally kicking at the ball, other than during a legal kick.
- f. Leaving the field between downs to gain an advantage unless replaced or unless with permission of the referee.
- g. Refusing to comply with an official’s directive.
- h. Introducing alcohol or drugs into the game.

ART.2.....When the ball becomes dead in possession of a player, she shall not:

- a. Intentionally kick the ball.
- b. Spike the ball into the ground.
- c. Throw the ball high into the air or from the field of play.
- d. Intentionally delay returning the ball so the next play can continue.

PENALTY: Unsportsmanlike conduct (ARTS. 1,2) – If dead ball, 15 yards. Also, disqualification if flagrant. In ART. 1a, the player must remove the offending item before he is allowed to participate. The second unsportsmanlike foul results in disqualification. The disqualified player must immediately leave the playing area. Any person belongings must be brought to the disqualified player by another player or coach

SECTION 5: ILLEGAL PARTICIPATION

ART.1.....During the down, no player shall intentionally go out-of-bounds and return.

ART.2.....No replaced player or substitute shall hinder an opponent, touch the ball, influence the play, or otherwise participate.

ART.3.....It is illegal participation:

- a. To have eight or more players participating at the snap.
- b. If an injured player is not replaced for at least one down; unless the half-time or overtime intermission occurs.
- c. To use a replaced player or substitute in a substitution or pretended substitution to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap.
- d. For a player to be lying on the ground to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap.
- e. For a disqualified player to reenter the game.

PENALTY: Illegal participation (ARTS. 1,2,3) – 10 yards

SECTION 6: NONCONTACT UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT BY NONPLAYERS

ART.1.....No coach, substitute, trainer or other team attendant shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner either during a half or intermission. Examples are, but not limited to:

- a. **Using profanity**, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.

NOTE: The AFFTC Board disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender, or national origin.

- a. Attempting to influence a decision by an official.
- b. Disrespectfully addressing an official.
- c. Indicating objections to an official's decision.
- d. Using any unauthorized communication equipment.
- e. Holding an unauthorized conference.

NOTE: Between downs, communications between players and coaches near the sidelines are not an unauthorized conference.

- f. The failure of a team to be ready to start either half.
- g. Failure of the head coach or captain to have her player(s) wear legal and/or required equipment.
- h. Being on the field except as a substitute or replace player.
- i. Introducing alcohol or drugs into the game.
- j. Being outside the team box but not on the field.
- k. A substitute who leaves the team box during a fight.

PENALTY: Non-player fouls (ART. 1a thru j) – If dead ball – 10 yards. (ART. 1k) – 1st Offense – 5 yards, 2nd Offense – 10 yards, Thereafter – 10 yards and removal from the game area. (ART. 1i) – 15 yards and removal from the game.

SECTION 7: UNFAIR ACTS

ART.1.....A player or non-player or person not subject to the rules shall not hinder play by an unfair act which has no specific rule coverage.

ART.2.....No team shall repeatedly commit fouls which halve the distance to the goal line.

ART.3.....Neither team shall commit any act which, in the opinion of the referee, tends to make a travesty of the game.

PENALTY: Unfair act – The referee enforces any penalty he considers equitable including the award of a score. Repeated fouls (ART. 2) – The game may be forfeited.

SECTION 8: PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

ART.1.....No player may play for more than one team.

PENALTY: Illegal players – Team forfeits all games won while illegal player(s) were on the team's roster or game when player participated in.

Rule 10 Enforcement of Penalties

SECTION 1: PROCEDURE AFTER A FOUL

ART.1.....When a foul occurs during a live ball, the referee shall, at the end of the down, notify the offended team captain. He may also notify the offending team captain, but it is not mandatory. He shall inform the captain of the offended team regarding the rights of penalty acceptance or declination and shall indicate to her the number of the ensuing down, distance to be gained, and status of the ball for each available choice. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined. If the penalty is declined or if there is a double foul, there is no loss of distance. In case of a double foul, the captains are not consulted since the penalties offset. The captain's choice of options may not be revoked, unless the referee gave incorrect information to the captain. In this case the captain's decision may be changed providing the next play has not taken place. Decisions involving penalties shall be made before any changed time-out is granted either team.