

STC Intramural Sports - Flag Football Rules

Current NIRSA Flag Football Rules will be followed with the exception of the following supplemental rules and modifications.

ELIGIBILITY

1. All players must be registered STC students, faculty, or staff with a valid STC ID card.
2. NO ID, NO PLAY!!
3. Members of college varsity football teams and any student regularly practicing with the intercollegiate football teams are ineligible. Any student who has previously played on his/her varsity team must sit out one year before becoming eligible to participate (including red shirt athletes).

IDENTIFICATION

1. All participants are required to present valid identification in order to enter or participate in any and all STC Intramural events. No exceptions can be made for lost or forgotten ID's.
2. All ID's must have a picture that can clearly be identified as the holder.
3. All ID's must have a legible name and student identification number.
4. The STC ID Card is the only acceptable form of identification.
5. Misuse of IDs is considered fraud and the Intramural Staff will confiscate misused, expired, or invalid IDs and will result in loss of privileges for all parties involved.

GENERAL

1. All participants must sign Intramural Waiver Forms to participate.
2. Designated captain will be responsible for discussions with flag football officials, as well as the behavior of their players and fans.
3. The Flag Football season length (league, single elimination tournament, double elimination tournament, etc.) will be determined by the number of entries received.

EQUIPMENT

1. Intramurals will provide each team with flag belt.
 - a. The flag belt is of one-piece construction, and will fall completely off when pulled. The belt must be clipped with the clip in front and a flag down each hip and in the back.
2. It is illegal to tie or tamper with the belt.
3. The Intramural Department will provide game balls, but team may play with their own footballs. The only restriction for leagues is that Men will be required to use a regulation size football.
4. Shirts/Jerseys must be of similar color. Players do not necessarily need numbers, but it is encouraged.
5. The following equipment shall be considered Illegal:
 - a. Headgear containing any hard, unyielding, or stiff material, including billed hats.
 - b. Jewelry of any kind including earrings, finger rings, wedding rings, necklaces, watches, etc.
 - c. Pads or braces worn above the waist.
 - d. Shoes with metal, ceramic, screw-in or detachable cleats. Exception: Screw – in cleats are allowed if the screw is part of the cleat (not shoe).

- e. Shirts or jerseys, which do not remain, tucked in. Any hood on a coat, sweatshirt, or shirt, which does not remain tucked in.
- f. Pants or shorts with any BELT(s) , Belt Loop(s) , pocket(s) or exposed drawstrings. Shorts must also be a different color from the flags being worn.
- g. Hard leg and knee braces which are not covered.

ROSTERS

1. 15 player limit for all teams.
2. Players may play for ONLY ONE single sex team. Players may play for ONE Co–Rec team.
3. Players are not officially on a team until they have checked in and signed a waiver. Once a player has played for a team that is the team he or she shall be on for the remainder of the season.
4. To be eligible for the playoffs, a player must play in at least one regular season game.
5. In the playoffs, rosters shall be frozen to include only those players who played in at least one regular season game. No additions shall be made during the playoffs.
6. Teams may add players through the final game of the regular season or until their team limit has been reached whichever comes first. Once the roster limit is reached the roster is frozen.
7. A player is considered officially on a team when he/she has signed a waiver and checked into a game.

PLAYERS

1. Women's and Men's Teams
 - a. The maximum number of players on the field at one time is 7.
 - b. A team must have 5 players to start a game.
 - c. Once started, the game may continue with less than five players as long as the team has a chance to win.
2. Co–Rec Teams
 - a. The game will be played between 2 teams of 8 players, 4 men and 4 women.
 - b. Teams with 7 players shall be 4 men and 3 women or 4 women and 3 men.
 - c. Six players are required to start a game.
 - d. Teams with six players shall be 3 men and 3 women or 4 women and 2 men or 4 men and 2 women.
 - e. Once started, the game may continue with less than six players as long as the team has a chance to win.

TIMING

1. The 10–Minute Rule is in effect. After 10 minutes elapses, the game is forfeit.
2. The game shall consist of two 20–minute halves, with a 3–minute intermission.
3. Each half shall be separated into two 10–minute quarters. Between quarters, teams will switch ends of the field. The period of movement from one end of the field to the other is not a time–out. An official time–out will be called, the ball will be moved and play will resume.
4. During the first and third quarters, the clock will run continuously.
5. During the second and fourth quarters, the clock will run continuously until the final two minutes of each when it will stop for dead ball situations.
6. The clock shall run during extra points except within the final two minutes of the half.

7. During the final 2 minutes of each half the clock will stop for the following:
 - a. Incomplete Pass Starts on Snap
 - b. Out of Bounds Starts on Snap
 - c. Team Time Out Starts on Snap
 - d. Touchback Starts on Snap
 - e. Touchdowns Starts on Snap (after PAT)
 - f. First Down Starts on Ready for Play Whistle
 - g. Penalty Depends on previous play
 - h. Change of Possession Starts on Snap
 - i. Referee's Time Out Referee's Discretion
 - j. Team attempting to conserve time illegally Starts on Ready
 - k. Teams attempting to consume time illegally Starts on Ready

MERCY RULE

1. If a team is 19 or more points ahead at the 2-minute warning the game shall be over.
2. If at any time during the last 2 minutes the point differential reaches 19 points, the game shall end at that point.
3. Co-Rec only: If a team is 25 or more points ahead at the 2-minute warning the game shall be over.
4. Co-Rec only: If at any time during the last 2 minutes the point differential reaches 25 points, the game shall end at that point.
5. The ball must be snapped within 25 seconds of the ball being marked ready for play.
6. No half shall end until the ball is dead and all penalties are resolved.

TIME OUTS

1. Each team has 2 time-outs per half. (No Carry Over)
2. Time-outs will not exceed one minute.
3. Each team has one time-out in overtime.
4. Coaches and spectators are not permitted on the field during time-outs.

THE GAME

1. Flag football is a game of minimal contact. Contact must be avoided as much as possible, but remember that contact will occur and not all of it will be illegal.
2. Beginning a Game
3. Each game shall begin with a captain's meeting and a coin toss.
4. The head referee shall determine the captain to call the toss.
5. c. The winner of the coin toss shall receive the option of:
6. d. Becoming the offense
 - a. Becoming the defense (Team most likely will not receive ball to start either half)
 - b. Choosing the end of the field to defend (At the 10 minute mark of each half, the teams shall switch ends as if between quarters)
 - c. Deferring the choice until the second half of play
7. The first possession of the game shall begin on the appropriate 14 yard line. There are no kick-offs.
8. Half-Time

9. The team deferring their choice to the second half shall select from the following:
 - a. Becoming the offense
 - b. Becoming the defense
 - c. Choosing an end of the field to defend
10. Overtime Tie Breaker
 - a. Coin Toss – A coin will be flipped by the referee to determine the options.
 - b. The team that DID NOT call the toss prior to the game shall call the toss.
 - c. There will only be one coin flip during overtime. If additional overtime periods are played, the field captains shall alternate choices.
 - d. The winner of the toss shall be given options of offense, defense or direction. The loser of the toss shall make a choice from the remaining options.
 - e. All overtime periods are played toward the same goal line once it is chosen.
 - f. Procedure
 - g. Each team will be given 4 downs from the same 10–yard line.
 - h. The objective will be to score a touchdown.
 - i. If the first team scores they will choose a point after option, and the second team will be given 4 plays to score.
 - j. If the defense intercepts the ball and returns it for a touchdown the ball game will be over. If they do not score a touchdown the ball will be placed on the 10–yard line for the intercepting team, and overtime shall continue.
 - k. Each team is entitled to one time–out per overtime period.
 - l. Overtime will continue until a winner is determined.
11. Penalties
 - a. Administered similar to the regular game.
 - b. Team A shall be awarded a new series of downs when the penalty calls for an automatic first down.
 - c. Dead ball fouls following a touchdown are penalized on the try.
 - d. Live ball fouls committed by either team after the defense gains possession during a try or overtime shall be enforced at the succeeding spot.
 - e. Dead ball fouls following a successful try will be penalized from the succeeding spot, the 10–yard line, if accepted.

SCORING

1. Touchdown = 6 points
2. Safety = 2 Points
3. Try for point after:
 - a. 1 point from the 3 yard line
 - b. 2 points from the 10 yard line
 - c. 3 points from the 20 yard line.
 - d. 3 points for any try returned by the defense.
 - i. Co–Rec (A more complete list of Co–Rec rules appears at the end of the rules sheet)
 - ii. If a female player scores a touchdown or throws a legal forward pass for a touchdown, the point value is 9.

- iii. Try for point after: same as above

DOWN AND LINE TO GAIN

1. In a series of 4 downs, it is necessary that the ball be advanced into the next zone line ahead of the zone where the ball was when the new series of downs began.
2. The line to gain is always the boundary of a zone and crossing this line constitutes a first down.

PUNTING

1. The offensive team must declare punts – NO QUICK KICKS.
2. After a team has announced they will punt, they must punt.
3. Exception:
 - a. If either team calls a time-out
 - b. A penalty occurs anytime during this down (live ball) which results in the kicking team having the right to repeat the down.
4. No player from either side may cross the line of scrimmage until the kick.
 - a. Penalty – Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from previous spot.
5. The kicker must kick the ball immediately.
 - a. Penalty – Delay of Game, 5 yards.
6. The punter cannot kick the ball to himself/herself or to any other member of their team.
 - a. Penalty – Illegal Kicking, 10 yards From the previous spot.
7. No player from the kicking team may touch the kicked ball until it has been touched by a receiving team player.
 - a. Penalty – Dead ball, receiving team has the option of taking the ball where it was touched, or having the down replayed with a 10 yd. Penalty.
8. A kicking team player may gain possession but not advance a muffed punt that has not touched the ground.
9. No player from the kicking team may interfere with a receiving team player attempting to catch the kick.
 - a. Penalty – 10 yards from the previous spot and replay the down or accept an awarded catch at the spot of the foul.

OFFENSIVE PLAY

1. At the beginning of each half and after scores, the offensive possession will begin on the 14 yard line unless moved due to penalty.
 - a. All players are eligible to receive a forward pass.
 - b. There must be at least 4 players on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap for the offensive team only. 5 players are required for Co-Rec.
2. All players must begin play with a flag belt.
 - a. Penalty – 5 yards from previous spot.
 - b. When a player unintentionally loses a flag belt, he or she is considered down when touched with one hand between the shoulder and knee by a defender.
3. The ball carrier must make an attempt to avoid the defensive player.
4. Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag Guarding Includes:

- a. Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging.
 - b. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt to prevent opponent from de-flagging.
 - c. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner, which places the arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging.
5. Ball carriers may hand the ball forward at any time without penalty.
 6. All players must be set before one offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion toward the opponent's goal line. If such player starts from their backfield, that player may not be in motion toward the opponent's goal line when the ball is snapped. Other offensive players must be stationary in their positions without movement of the feet, body, head or arms.
 - a. Penalty – Illegal motion, 5 yards from the previous spot.
 7. The offensive team must have at least 4 players on their line of scrimmage before the snap.
 - a. Penalty – Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot.
 8. Offensive players are responsible for retrieving the ball after a scrimmage down. The snapper will bring it from the huddle to the Team A Scrimmage line. A towel may be placed under the ball. Failure to retrieve the ball will result in a Delay of Game penalty, 5 yards.
 9. The offensive line of scrimmage will be marked by an orange ball spotter.

DEFENSIVE PLAY

1. The line of scrimmage for the defense will start 1 yard from the ball, and will be marked by a yellow ball spotter.
2. Contact will not be allowed anywhere. Interpretations are similar to the block and charge in basketball. Rough tactics will be penalized as illegal contact, 10 yards from the spot of the foul. In extreme or repeated cases the player will be ejected.
3. Blocking
 - a. The offensive screen block shall take place without contact.
 - b. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back.
 - c. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs or body to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal.
 - d. A blocker may use his/her hands or arms to break a fall or to retain his/her balance.
 - e. A player must be on his/her feet before, during and after screen blocking.
 1. Penalty – Illegal Contact, 10 yards from the spot of the foul.
4. Use of hands by the Defense. Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent. The application of this rule depends entirely on the judgment of the official. A blocker may use his/her arms or hands to break a fall or maintain his/her balance.
 - a. Penalty - Illegal Contact, 10 yards from the spot of the foul.

FOULS AND PENALTIES

1. Penalty Enforcement
 - a. If a foul occurs during a running play, the penalty is marked off where the runs end. (Exception: offensive penalty behind the end of the run, then it is from the spot of the foul).
 - b. If a foul occurs during a loose ball play, the penalty is marked off from the previous spot.

- c. Loose ball plays are when the ball is in flight or loose during a legal forward pass. iii. All fouls are administered by rules 1 and 2 except when the offense commits the foul behind the line of scrimmage, and then it is marked off from the spot of the foul. Note: A safety will result from a spot foul occurring in the offensive end zone.
- d. When the official stops the clock for a penalty, he/she shall restart the clock when the ready for play signal is given, or when the ball is snapped, depending on the result of the previous play.

2. Five Yard Penalties:

- a. Illegal Equipment
- b. Delay of Game DEAD BALL
- c. Substitution Infractions
- d. Unfair Tactics
- e. Infractions of Protected Scrimmage Kick Formation
- f. Encroachment Dead Ball
- g. Leaving the field to the wrong sideline or end line.
- h. False Start Dead Ball
- i. Illegal Snap Dead Ball
- j. Offensive Player Not Within 15 yards of Ball
- k. Illegal Formation
- l. Illegal Motion
- m. Player Out-of-Bounds When Ball is Snapped
- n. Player Receiving Snap Within 2 yards of the Scrimmage Line
- o. Illegal Shift
- p. Intentionally Throwing Backward Pass or Fumbling Out of Bounds (Loss of Down)
- q. Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of Down)
- r. Advancement through the Neutral Zone by a Male Runner (Co-Rec. Only)
- s. Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down)
- t. Illegal Forward Pass-2 Consecutive Male to Male Forward Pass Completions (Loss of Down) (Co-Rec Only)
- u. Illegal Forward Pass-Male Catches Pass and Runs Beyond Scrimmage Line (Loss of Down) (Co-Rec Only)
- v. Helping the Runner

3. Ten-Yard Penalties

- a. Quick Kick
- b. Kick Catch Interference
- c. Offensive Pass Interference (Loss of Down)
- d. Defensive Pass Interference (Automatic First Down)
- e. Illegally Secured Flag Belt (Loss of Down if by Offense) (Automatic First Down if by Defense)
- f. Unsportsmanlike Conduct
- g. Stripping or Striking the Ball in an Attempt to Steal the Ball.
- h. Tripping
- i. Holding
- j. Hurdling
- k. Illegal Contact

- l. Tackling (Disqualification)
- m. Roughing the Passer (Automatic First Down)
- n. Defensive Use of Hands
- o. Illegal Screen Block
- p. Flag Guarding
- q. Illegal Participation
- r. Note: Certain penalties may also carry disqualification, depending on the severity. In Article 3K the offender will be disqualified.
- s. Note: When measurement spot of a 10 yard or 5 yard penalty is inside the offending teams 20 or 10 yard lines respectively, the measurement will be half the distance to the goal.
- t. The following fouls carry a loss of down:
 - 1. Illegal forward pass.
 - 2. Offensive pass interference.
 - 3. Intentional grounding.
 - 4. Illegal Backward pass.
 - 5. Illegally secured flag belt (offense).
- u. The following fouls result in an automatic first down:
 - 1. Defensive pass interference.
 - 2. Roughing the passer.
 - 3. Illegally secured flag belt (defense).
- v. Double and Multiple Fouls
 - 1. On multiple live ball fouls against one team, only one penalty may be enforced at the offended team's choice.
 - 2. A double foul is when both teams have committed a foul during the same live ball period, and team possession has not changed, the down is replayed.
- w. Unsportsmanlike Conduct
 - 1. A player, coach, or spectator using abusive or insulting language, disrupting, or arguing a call is display of unsportsmanlike conduct. Unsportsmanlike violations by a spectator will be charged to the team captain. If the unsportsmanlike conduct is flagrant in nature then the offender will be disqualified.
 - 2. Two unsportsmanlike conduct penalties against one player constitute an automatic ejection.
 - 3. 3 unsportsmanlike conduct penalties of any kind against a team will forfeit the contest.
 - 4. 5 unsportsmanlike conduct penalties against a team will forfeit the team's remaining schedule and any chances of advancing to the playoffs.

CO-REC RULES

- 1. Players
 - a. The game will be played between 2 teams of 8 players, 4 men and 4 women.
 - b. Teams with 7 players shall be 4 men and 3 women or 4 women and 3 men.
 - c. Six players are required to avoid a forfeit.
 - d. Teams with six players shall be 3 men and 3 women or 4 women and 2 men.
 - e. Once started, the game may continue with less than six players as long as the team has a chance to win.

2. Scoring
 - a. If a male scores a touchdown not involving a female passer, the point value is 6.
 - b. If a female player scores a touchdown or throws a legal forward pass and a touchdown is scored by any Team A player, the point value is 9.
3. Try for point after:
 - a. 1 point from the 3 yard line
 - b. 2 points from the 10 yard line
 - c. 3 points from the 20 yard line.
 - d. 3 points for any try returned by the defense.
4. The Game
 - a. A Team A male runner cannot advance the ball through Team A's scrimmage line. This rule includes a female passer completing a legal forward to a male receiver behind their team's scrimmage line. The male receiver cannot advance the ball through the line of scrimmage.
 - b. The offensive team must have at least five players on their scrimmage line at the snap.
 - c. There are no restrictions: during a run by a male runner once the ball is beyond the Team A or K scrimmage line; during a run by a female runner; and after a change of possession.
 - d. A female passer may throw to any receiver on any play whether designated OPEN or CLOSED.
 - e. During an OPEN play, a male passer may throw to any receiver.
 - f. During a CLOSED play, a male passer may complete a legal forward pass only to a female receiver.
 - g. During the offensive team's possession there may not be two consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. This rule applies to the Try.
 - h. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, all offensive plays become CLOSED until OPENED.
 - i. To OPEN a CLOSED play, the next legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards.
 - j. The spot where the ball becomes dead by rule must be legally beyond the Team A scrimmage line (orange ball spotter).
 - k. There are no other restrictions concerning a male passer completing legal forward passes to a female receiver, or female to female, or female to male.
 - l. Three things are necessary to OPEN a CLOSED play:
 1. A legal forward pass.
 2. A female passer or receiver.
 3. Positive yards gained on the play.
 4. All three must be present in the play to OPEN the CLOSED play. If one is missing, the play remains CLOSED.
 - m. Penalties have no bearing on whether the next forward pass completion is open or closed.
 - n. If a team is 25 or more points ahead when the 2-Minute Warning for the second half is announced, the game shall be over.
 - o. If a team scores during the last two minutes of the second half and that score creates a point differential of 25 or more points, the game shall end at that point.

PROTEST

1. There will be no protest involving official's judgment (Spots, Touchdowns, Incomplete Passes, etc.).
2. Protests of rule interpretation must be made before the next snap from scrimmage.
3. To protest, the protesting team must call a timeout at which time the supervisor will be called to handle the situation. If the protest is upheld, the timeout will be returned to the team. If the protest is rejected, the timeout will be lost. The supervisor's decision is final.
4. Protests can be made without team time-outs. A rejected protest in this case will result in an Unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on the team captain.
5. ELIGIBILITY PROTESTS are permitted. They must be filed in writing by noon the following business day. All eligibility protest must be turned into the Student Activities Office at any STC Campus.

CONDUCT

1. It is the desire of the Intramural Sports Department that all participants display good sportsmanship at all times.
2. Any player ejected from a game for any reason shall be suspended from ALL Intramural play until meeting with the Coordinator of Student Activities & Intramurals.
3. It is the responsibility of the player to contact the Student Activities Office at (956) 872-3535 to setup an appointment.
4. If players are found to be participating before being reinstated, they will be suspended from all Intramural Activity for the remainder of the semester.
5. A team for which an ineligible player participated for will forfeit all games in which the ineligible player participated.
6. Fighting will not be tolerated in any form. Teams will be responsible for their players and spectators. Teams and/or individuals may be subjected to expulsion from any further Intramural Sports.
7. Any team criticizing or otherwise ridiculing, or attempting to demean an official shall be liable to expulsion and disciplinary action. In addition, the game may be forfeited at the discretion of the referee, supervisor, or tournament director.
8. The Intramural Sports Department reserves the right to rule on any instances not specifically covered in these rules.