4v4 Flag Football Rules

Mission Statement:
Campus Recreation collaborates with the university community to offer exemplary facilities, programs and services that inspire participation and engagement.

Rule 1: Eligibility

1. All participants are subject to the Eligibility guidelines, which are listed in the current Intramural Sports Participant Handbook.
2. Participation is limited to currently enrolled U of A fee paying students and U of A Faculty/Staff that have a current Department of Campus Recreation membership.
3. All players must sign in with the Supervisor at site prior to game time with a current Catcard.
4. No ID, no play, no exceptions.

Rule 2: The Game, Field, Players and Equipment

1. Games shall be played between two teams of 4 players each. Teams must start and end with a minimum of 3 players. There is a maximum of 20 players per team.
2. A game will consist of two 18 minute halves. The clock will run continuously each half. The clock will run during P.A.T. (point after touchdown).
3. The field of play is 40 yards x 30 yards. There are two 20 yard zones and two 7 yard end zones that mark the field of play. Teams in possession of the ball are given four downs to reach midfield, followed by another 4 downs to reach the end zone. Failing to cross into the next advancing zone results in loss of possession.
4. Players of opposing teams must wear contrasting colored jerseys/shirts, numbered on the front or rear. The numbers must be permanent. Taped or pinned on numbers are not allowed. The home team has the choice of color if there is any conflict. Jerseys must be long enough so they remain tucked in during the entire down or short enough so there is a minimum of 4” from the bottom of the jersey to the player’s waistline.
5. In an effort to maintain the safest environment possible please abide by the following:
   a. All rings, necklaces, studs, watches, bracelets etc. must be removed prior to playing.
   b. All braces with metal/hard plastic must be wrapped or removed
   c. Individuals wearing casts are not allowed to play.
   d. All body piercings must be removed or covered prior to playing.
   e. Players are prohibited from wearing hats (stocking caps or bandannas are acceptable)
6. The Supervisor reserves the right to prohibit any apparel that is deemed unsafe or not within the spirit of the game.
7. Each team shall designate to the Supervisor a captain. The captain shall address the Supervisor on matters of interpretation or to obtain essential information.
8. Game balls will be provided, but warm up balls must be supplied by participants. The Supervisor does not have any equipment available for check out.
9. Each player must wear a one piece flag belt without knots around the waistline with three flags permanently attached. There should be one flag on each side and one in the center of the back. The flags must be of a contrasting color to the color of their shorts.
10. Each player must wear pants or shorts without belt loops, with no pockets, exposed drawstrings, or exposed snaps of any type.
11. All players must wear athletic type shoes. Among the items which do not meet these requirements are gymnastic slippers, loafers, tennis shoes cut so protection is reduced, ski and logger boots, and other apparel
not intended for football use. Cleats are limited to studs or projections which do not exceed ½ inch in length (the screw must be a part of the cleat) and are made with nonabrasive rubber or rubber type synthetic material which does not chip or develop a cutting edge.

12. Tackle football type equipment is prohibited.
13. All substitutes, spectators, etc., must remain at least 5 yards behind the restraining line on each field at all times.
14. A player wearing illegal equipment shall not be permitted to play. This applies to any equipment which, in the opinion of the Supervisor, is dangerous or confusing.

**Rule 3: Periods, Time Factors and Substitutions**

1. In order to put the ball in play, the ball shall be placed at the team’s 10 yard line to begin each half of a game and following a try, touchback, or safety, unless moved by penalty. There are no kickoffs or punts.
2. A coin toss will determine choice. The team winning the toss shall choose one of the following options: (1) receiving the ball or (2) which goal to defend. At the start of the second half, the team losing the coin toss shall choose between the same options. Teams winning the toss in the first half cannot defer their choice to the second half.
3. Each team is allowed 2 one minute timeouts per game. Half time will consist of no more than 2 minutes.
4. A team may substitute any number players at a time, but no more than four players may be on the field.
5. No substitute shall enter the game while a down is in progress.

**Rule 4: Dead Ball and Out of Bounds**

1. The ball is dead whenever:
   a. A live ball touches the ground (other than a kicked ball).
   b. Any part of the ball carrier’s body, except hand or foot, touches the ground.
   c. The ball carrier steps on or over a boundary line.
   d. A forward pass, backward pass or fumble strikes the ground.
   e. A ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
2. Whenever the football is fumbled, batted or muffed, the ball is spotted where the ball first touched the ground. Exception: The ball is spotted where possession was lost if the team gains an advantage by fumbling the ball.
3. An offensive player who goes out of bounds under his/hers own impetus during a down may not participate in the remainder of the down.

**Rule 5: Punting the Ball**

1. There is no punting in Passing League Flag Football.

**Rule 6: Scrimmage**

1. The scrimmage line is determined by the position of the ball.
2. No player shall be offside prior to, or at the snap of the ball.
3. The ball may be snapped between the legs or from the side. The ball must remain on the ground until it is snapped.
4. The player receiving the snap must be a minimum of 3 yards behind the scrimmage line.
5. All offensive players must momentarily line up at least 5 yards from the sideline.
6. The offensive team is required to have a minimum of 2 players on the line of scrimmage.
7. Offensive players must be motionless at the snap of the ball, but one player may be in motion parallel to or away from the line of scrimmage.
8. No player shall take a 3 or 4 point stance.

**Rule 7: Handing the Ball**

1. There are no handoffs in 4v4 passing league.
2. Only one forward pass can be thrown per down. The initial direction of a pass determines whether the pass is forward or backward. Example: If a passer throws a forward pass that is BEHIND the line of scrimmage, this is considered a forward pass.
3. The quarterback has 7 seconds to pass the ball. If the ball is not thrown, the play is dead, resulting in a loss of down. The ball returns to the line of scrimmage.
4. Any player may make a backward pass to any other player at any time.
5. An incomplete backward pass or fumble is a dead ball at the spot where it strikes the ground. The team last in possession retains possession at that spot. The same thing occurs if the offense fumbles the snap.
6. A fumble may not be recovered by the defense.
7. A forward pass caught simultaneously by opposing players is dead and belongs to the offensive team at that spot. If either player lands out of bounds, the pass is incomplete.
8. A receiver must have 1 foot inbound for a pass to be ruled complete. (If that foot lands out of bounds simultaneously with, or before, the inbound foot lands, the pass is incomplete).
9. Illegal forward passes include forward passes released beyond the scrimmage line.
10. Whether a pass is catchable or uncatchable has no bearing in whether pass interference has occurred.
11. Defensive players may not contact offensive receivers. This is a no contact sport.

**Rule 8: Offensive Team Regulations**

1. There is no blocking in 4v4 passing league.
2. The ball carrier must avoid contact with defensive players attempting to pull his/hers flags. He/she may not intentionally run into defensive players or lower head and/or shoulder to gain an advantage.
3. The ball carrier may not flag guard or stiff arm.
4. Teammates may not physically assist (push, pull, etc.) the ball carrier to gain an advantage.
5. If a ball carrier inadvertently loses his/her flag, a one hand tag between the shoulders and the knees constitutes the end of the play.
6. A ball carrier may leave his/her feet in order to gain a certain yardage, but may not go over, through or initiate contact with an opposing player.
7. The quarterback can never cross the line of scrimmage with the ball.

**Rule 9: Defensive Team Regulations**

1. The defense may only rush the quarterback once every new set of downs.
2. Stripping the ball is not allowed (5 yard penalty).
3. Regardless of the situation the neutral zone is always 1 yard.
4. Players may leap into the air in an attempt to deflect a thrown ball provided that there is no physical contact (in midair or upon landing) with an opponent.
5. Players may not contact a thrower’s arm when attempting to block a pass and must allow the thrower a full follow through motion.
6. Players may not illegally obstruct the ball carrier while attempting to de-flag him/her.
7. De-flagging the ball carrier is the only legal way to stop his/her progress. Pushing the ball carrier out of bounds is an illegal act. Penalty: Unsportsmanlike conduct.

**Rule 10: Game Scoring**

1. A touchdown is worth 6 points. It is scored when the ball penetrates the vertical plane of the opponent’s goal line.
2. The try (PAT): An opportunity to score 1 point from the 3 yard line, 2 points from the 10 yard line, or 3 points from the 20 yard line by passing the ball only shall be granted the team scoring the touchdown. The offensive team must declare their option immediately following their touchdown.
3. Any intercepted passes during a PAT will be declared dead on the spot and the defense will start the next possession on offense.
4. If a ball carrier is downed (de-flagged) behind his/her goal line, either a safety or a touchback is the result. If force exerted by the team whose goal line is involved is responsible for the ball being there, it is a safety. If by their opponents, it is a touchback.
5. A safety is worth 2 points for the defense and brings the ball to the 10 yard line and the defense gains possession.
6. A touchback brings the ball to the 10 yard line with a first down.
7. A fumble, backward pass or snap that goes out of bounds behind the goal line or would be spotted behind the line is a safety.
8. A foul by the offensive team behind their own goal line is a safety.
9. If a pass is intercepted and their momentum carries the ball carrier into their own end zone a touchback results.
10. The mercy rule will be put in effect if either team is up by 19 points at the two minute mark of the second half. Or if they extend their lead to 19 points at any time beyond the two minute mark, the game is over.

**Rule 11: Overtime**

1. In the event the game ends in a tie, both teams shall have four attempts to score from the 10 yard line. The team that scores the most points will be declared the winner. If the game is still tied after both teams have attempted two series, then the ball will be moved to the 5 yard line. If still tied after two more series, then the ball will be moved to the 3 yard line. If still tied, the ball will remain at the 3 yard line until a winner is determined.
2. A coin toss will determine the first offensive possession in the overtime.
3. The same end of the field will be used for both teams’ attempts.
4. No extra points are attempted during overtime periods.
5. The four downs will be treated as a regular offensive series. If a team gains one yard on its first down then it shall be second and goal to go. However, if a team scores a touchdown on the first play they then still have three more downs in the series. So, a team could potentially score 24 points during a four play series.
6. If the defense intercepts a pass then the defense takes possession of the ball to begin their offensive series. Interceptions cannot be returned and are dead on the spot.

**Rule 12: Conduct of Players, Coaches, and Others**

1. A sportsmanship rating system has been implemented to instill a positive atmosphere of fun and fair play. It is in place to provide an opportunity for meaningful participant interaction and to encourage teams to be more responsible for the behavior of their players/spectators. Please refer to the section on Conduct of Participants and Spectators in the Intramural Sports Participant Handbook for specific sportsmanship guidelines.
2. No spectators shall stand beyond the sideline marker of the 20 yard line or behind or near the end zone before and during the game.

3. Any act will be considered unsportsmanlike if in the opinion of the Supervisor it promotes ill will or detracts from the game. This includes, but is not limited to:
   a. unnecessary roughness
   b. abusive or insulting language
   c. indicating objections to the Supervisor’s call
   d. Intentionally pulling the flag of a player not in possession of the ball

4. Unsportsmanlike conduct: Any participant receiving 2 unsportsmanlike conduct penalties during a game shall be removed (ejected) from the game immediately and must leave the playing facilities. Ejected players must meet with the Department Judicial Board before they will be allowed to resume play. Any player receiving 3 unsportsmanlike conduct penalties for the season will be disqualified for the remainder of the season. 3 unsportsmanlike conduct penalties on one team shall end (forfeit) the game immediately. Any team receiving 4 unsportsmanlike conduct penalties for the season will be disqualified for the remainder of the season.

5. Any team that leaves the bench or sideline area to participate in an on field altercation (for whatever reason) shall receive an automatic loss for their next scheduled league or playoff game.
SUMMARY OF PENALTIES:

Loss of 5 yards

- Required equipment worn illegally
- Delay of game
- Offensive player less than 5 yards from the sideline
- Helping the runner
- Less than 2 players on the offensive line of scrimmage
- Illegal substitution
- Encroachment
- Infraction of scrimmage formation
- Intentional grounding (also loss of down)

- Player out of bounds at the snap
- Offensive player illegally in motion
- Player receiving snap less than 3 yards behind the scrimmage line
- Illegal shift
- Illegally handing the ball forward (also loss of down)
- Illegal forward pass (also loss of down)
- False start
- Illegal snap

Loss of 10 yards

- Forward pass interference-Offensive (loss of down)
- Forward pass interference-Defensive (automatic 1st down)
- Illegally secured flag belt on touchdown (loss of down)
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct player, team, spectator
- Spiking, kicking, throwing, not returning ball to the official
- Steal, strike, or attempt to steal the ball
- Trip an opponent
- Contact with opponent on the ground
- Throw runner to the ground
- Hurdle any player
- Obstruction of runner
- Illegal participation
- Illegal flag belt removal

- Contact before or after ball is dead
- Unnecessary contact of any nature
- Drive or run into player
- Clipping
- Position upon shoulder or body of player to gain advantage
- Tackle runner
- Roughing the passer (automatic 1st down)
- Illegal offensive screen blocking
- Interlocked interference
- Defensive Use of hands
- Guarding the flag belt (Flag Guarding)
- Stiff arm
- Illegal Kicking
- Reentry of disqualified player

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON RULES CAN BE FOUND IN OUR CURRENT INTRAMURAL SPORTS PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK.