



OFFICIAL RULES GOVERNING YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL  
RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
702 S. CHADBOURNE ST., SAN ANGELO, TEXAS 76903  
657-4450 OR 659-1015 (Fax)



### Supervision and Administration

1. The head of the league shall be the Recreation Program Supervisor.
2. In all matters not covered by TAAF Rules, or City League Rules, the Recreation Program Supervisor shall have jurisdiction.

### 1. Field

- 1.1 80 yards from goal line to goal line with two end zones of 10 yards each.
- 1.2 Field should be divided into 4 zones of 20 yards each.
- 1.3 Field shall be a minimum of 40 yards wide and a maximum of 53 1/3 yards wide.

### 2. Equipment

#### 2.1 Ball

- 2.1.1 Pee Wee K-2 Wilson (or its equal) Recommended for 8 & Under Mixed, 6 & Under Mixed, and Pee Wee.
- 2.1.2 Junior Size (or its equal) Recommended for 10 & Under
- 2.1.3 Youth Size (or its equal) Recommended for 12 & Under
- 2.1.4 An infraction of using too small of a football will be an automatic penalty of reversing possession of the football at the place of the last snap prior to discovery of the illegal ball, if the ball was used for one play. If the illegal ball is discovered prior to snap, there will be a **10 yard penalty**, no reversal of possession and removal of ball. (S-19)
- 2.1.5 Each team is responsible for their own ball as to retrieving it after an incomplete pass and keeping it dry during adverse weather conditions. The center may carry the ball to the huddle.

#### 2.2 Uniforms

- 2.2.1 Shall be each team's choice as long as it does not include any hard or unyielding surface. All members of the same team must wear the same color jersey with at least a 6-inch number on the back with non-duplicating numbers. The number on the front is recommended but not mandatory. Jerseys must be tucked in. The midriff shirt is legal, if in the judgment of the referee, it does not hinder the defense from pulling the flag. No article of clothing may cover any portion of a player's flag. Officials should warn violators of this between plays. If a shirt/jersey becomes untucked during a play, it must be re-tucked before the next play.
- 2.2.2 The lower uniforms may be shorts, warm-ups, pants, or any other type of athletic wear. Any shorts or pants worn during flag football league play must not have pockets located where flags would normally hang from the flag belt. If discovered during a game or a pocket becomes ripped during a play (an attempt at deflagging a player), if successful, player will be ruled down as if he were legally deflagged from a flag belt. Any shorts or pants that have striping, piping or a design that camouflages a player's flags or flag belt will not be allowed.
- 2.2.3 No jewelry of any kind may be worn by players. No headwear with an extended bill may be worn. (Ex: caps, visors, etc.).
- 2.2.4 Shoes: Any flat soled or completely molded cleat shoes are acceptable. Removable cleats, baseball or track spikes or any shoes that have steel or metal tips are prohibited. All players must wear shoes.

#### 2.3 Protective Equipment

- 2.3.1 Helmets, shoulder pads, and thigh pads are prohibited. Any questions as to legality of player's equipment shall be decided by the referee of that game. The use of unyielding hard substances cannot be used to protect an injury, no matter how well covered or padded. Therapeutic or prevention knee braces can be used if covered from direct external exposure.
- 2.3.2 Mouth pieces are **REQUIRED** for 8U, 10U, 12U, and 14U players.
- 2.3.3 Mouth pieces are **RECOMMENDED** for Pee Wee and 6U players.
- 2.3.4 Soft shell headgear is **RECOMMENDED** for all age groups.

## 2.4 Flags

- 2.4.1 Each player on the field (8 offensive and 8 defensive) will wear 2 flags at the waist; one on each side. Flags must be attached to a belt and the belt will be worn snug around the waist to eliminate being turned partially during an attempted deflagging.
- 2.4.2 Illegal alteration, securing, or substitution of flags or belts will result in removal of player or players from the game and a 10 yard penalty from line of scrimmage (L.O. S.) last snap if offense and defense from point of infraction. (P.O.I.)(S-19)
- 2.4.3 Any player with less than two (2) flags in the proper position at the snap shall be ruled deflagged immediately at the point where he gains possession of the football.

## 3. Length of Games and Time Outs

### 3.1 Periods

- 3.1.1 The game shall be played in 2 halves of 18 minutes in length. In all games, the clock will be running continuous.
- 3.1.2 At the end of 18 minutes in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> half, the seven (7) play period will begin.
- 3.1.3 Clock regulations- (1) Clock will start each half when the official puts the ball in play. (2) After a Team time-out, the clock will start at the snap of the ball. (3) Because the clock is a continuous clock, it does not stop during P.A.T. attempts. (4) Clock will stop for team time-outs, officials' time-outs, at the discretion of the official to retrieve a long incomplete passes. Play clock is 25 seconds and starts once the official marks the ball ready for play. **(Delay of Game penalty if exceed 25 seconds)**

### 3.2 Half Time

- 3.2.1 A minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 10 minutes.

### 3.3 Time Outs

- 3.3.1 Each team shall have 2 time outs per half. Each team will be allowed only one time out during tiebreaker. Time outs will be one (1) minute in length. Time outs may be called by any player that participated in the last play and is on the field of play. [Except for 8 & Under Mixed. Coaches can then call the time out.]
- 3.3.2 Additional Time Outs may be called by an official at their discretion.
- 3.3.3 If a team exceeds its time out limit in either half, Delay of Game **5 yard Penalty**.
- 3.3.4 During a team charged time out, a team representative may confer with their team either on the field or sideline.
- 3.3.5 A team may use a time out to change their option during the PAT.
- 3.3.6 A team **MAY** use a time out to change any 4<sup>th</sup> down option (Punt or Play).
- 3.3.7 Tiebreaker – in the event of a tie game at the end of the second half the following method will be used:
  - 3.3.7.1 After an official's time out of two (2) minutes, during which time officials and team captains will have a coin toss, the winner will have choice of playing

- offense or defense first. Both teams will go in the direction of the wind or if no wind in the direction chosen by the loser of the toss.
- 3.3.7.2 Ball will be placed on the 40 yard line and each team will have 4 consecutive plays unless terminated by an interception, in which to score the most points or gain the most yards. If no team scores, the team with the most additional positive yardage shall be the winner. Positive yardage is defined as yardage gained while on offense only and must be in advance of the 40 yard line. If after 4 consecutive downs each, the two teams remain tied in all of the above combinations, additional downs will be played, one down at a time, alternating, until a winner is decided.
  - 3.3.7.3 If a team scores a touchdown, it will be allowed to use its remaining downs, beginning again at the 40 yard line. A free down will be granted for P.A.T. attempts after each touchdown.
  - 3.3.7.4 During Tiebreaker, teams will be allowed one time out each.
  - 3.3.7.5 An interception terminates the offensive team chances. The offensive team loses all positive yardage gained but retains any points scored. The defense may not advance the interception. Play stops.
  - 3.3.7.6 Winner of the Tiebreaker shall be given one point.

#### 4. Scoring

- 4.1 Touchdown- 6 points (S-4) (Flags in which flags are attached must be on or in advance of the goal line before any points can be awarded.)
- 4.2 Point After Touchdown-1 point – run or pass from 3 yard line, 2 points – run or pass from 10 yard line.
- 4.3 Safety- 2 points (punt ball from from 20-yard line, Rule VI-R applies.)(S-5) (This is a guaranteed punt. The ball must be put in play by a snap.)
- 4.4 Forfeited game-Score is 7-0.
- 4.5 Winner of Tiebreaker- 1 point.
- 4.6 “17 Point Rule”-If either team is ahead by 17 points at the 7 play warning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, the game is over.

#### 5. Players and Substitutions

##### 5.1 Players

- 6.1.1. Youth Flag Football is 8 participants with everyone eligible. A team may field no less than 6 players at any time.

##### 5.2 Substitutions

- 5.2.1 There will be free substitutions as long as players being substituted for are off the field prior to the next snap or are out of the area of play and are departing the field of play.
- 5.2.2 Sleepers on substitutions will not be allowed on any play. No player may line up closer than 5 yards from the sideline unless he/she came out of the huddle or unless he/she was on the field of play during the previous play and did not leave the field of play. (S-18)(5 yards)

##### 5.3 Players Behavior

- 6.3.1. Any verbal badgering of officials or derogatory language between opposing players after officials have asked once for the team captain’s control can result in player or coaches players involved in action being disqualified.

- 5.3.1.1 First derogatory action or language should be penalized 10 yards and captain warned. (S-33)
- 5.3.1.2 Second derogatory action or language will cause players to be disqualified plus 10 yards. (S-32 & 33)
- 5.3.1.3 Sideline players are subject to the same disqualification for abusive, obscene or badgering language to either opposing players or officials. If the captain or coach of the penalized team **cannot** control the actions of his players, game **can** be forfeited.

#### 5.3.2 Begging a Call

- 5.3.2.1 During a play, if possible infraction occurs and players or coaches from either on the field or on the sideline begin yelling out or begging a call a penalty of 5 yards can be tacked on the end of the play. This penalty will not be considered an extension of the play for purposes of determining the next “line-to-gain”(the next “line-to-gain” will be determined, by the end of the play, then the BEGGING penalty will be marked off as a dead ball foul even if occurred while play was in progress. (S-33)

#### 5.3.3 Fans

- 6.3.3.1. It is the coach’s responsibility to control their fans. Officials will warn the first time. Second time will be a 5-yard penalty. Third will be a forfeit.

### 6. Game Rules

#### 6.1 Coin Toss

- 7.1.1. At the beginning of the first half, a coin toss will be held. The winner of the coin toss will have the following options: (1) offense, (2) defense, or (3) choice of goal to defend or (4) defer option to the second half. The loser of the opening toss will have choice of the remaining options for the first half. The captain, not having the first choice of options for the second half, shall exercise one of the remaining options.

#### 6.2 Ball in Play

- 7.2.1. The ball shall be put in play at the beginning of the game, beginning of the second half, after a touchback, and after a score by placing the ball on the 20 yard line of the offensive team with 1<sup>st</sup> down and “line-to gain.”

#### 6.3 Huddle

- 6.3.1 After the official marks the ball “ready-for-play”, offense will have 25 seconds to put the ball in play or else be penalized 5 yards for a delay of game. It is not necessary to huddle after the play if a team wishes to use predetermined plays or audibles.

#### 6.4 Shift

- 6.4.1 Two or more offensive players may be shifting their position at the same time prior to the snap. Their movement may be in any direction but they must become set for one full count before the ball is snapped or before another player can go in motion prior to the snap. (S-16)(5 Yards)

#### 6.5 Encroachment/Off Sides

- 7.5.1. Shall be called if either the offense or the defense passes *over the* plane of their L.O.S. before the ball is snapped. A false movement of the football by the center

shall constitute offensive **encroachment**. These are dead ball fouls and the play shall be **immediately** whistled dead **before** play begins and **5 yards automatically marked off** against the encroaching team. (S-14) (**Exception:** Defensive encroachment resulting in an offensive first down will become an offensive captain's choice penalty.) If a player on either side lines up **off sides**, the official will point toward that player's team side. If that player does not get back on-sides before the ball is snapped, he will be considered as having been off sides at the moment of snap. If an official has not "**off sides warned**" a team for lining up off-sides, by pointing at them, he should not call off-sides on them at the snap of the ball. Play continues in this instance and following the play, this becomes a captain's choice penalty. This is a **5-yard penalty** from L.O.S. (S-14)

## 6.6 1<sup>st</sup> Down

- 7.6.1. A team is allowed four downs to advance the ball from one zone to the next. (A zone is to be 20 yards.) The zone shall be considered reached when the forward part of the ball, in its position when declared dead on the field of play, touches or is in advance of the line marking the next zone or in this case, "the line to gain."
- 7.6.2. In four consecutive downs, a team has failed to advance the ball into the next zone; possession shall go to the defense at that spot.

## 7.7. Stances

- 7.7.1. Any stance is permitted

## 7.8. Line Play

- 7.8.1. Any number of players may be on the offensive or defensive L.O.S. at the snap.
- 7.8.2. Defensive line must be one (1) yard off the ball at the snap.
  - 7.8.2.1. **No** defensive player may be within 4 yards of the ball if lined up directly in front of the center or within one yard of the ball if lined up to the side of the center at the snap. (S-19) (5 Yards)

## 7.9. Screening-Rushing

- 7.9.1. A screener may not leave his feet to screen.
- 7.9.2. Only screen blocking is permitted. Screen Blocking: Shall be defined as obstructing the rusher's path to the quarterback or ball carrier, as long as it is done behind the L.O.S., with any part to the body except the head, hips, and legs. There can be no independent movement of the elbows. The screener must use one of the following methods: 1) Screener must have his thumbs hooked in his pants and holding the flag belt with each hand or 2) Screener must hold his arms behind his back with arms locked together in some manner. A penalty will automatically be called if a screener's hand leaves his pants and flag belt or if arms are separated from behind his back while in the process of screening within 2 yards of the rusher. Although this method of screening cuts down on excessive contact by the screener, it nevertheless places the screener in very vulnerable position; therefore; **THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY OF AVOIDING CONTACT RESTS WITH THE RUSHER.**
- 7.9.3. The rusher may not run over the screener. The rusher may not pull the screener towards him or push the screener away from him. A penalty will automatically be called if the rusher even touches the screener's head as long as the screener is upright.
- 7.9.4. Moving screens behind the L.O.S. for the passer is legal. Once the passer or potential passer crosses the L.O.S., offensive players may maneuver for laterals

behind the ball but in doing so must not be deliberately any defensive players. They must be clearly in the act of positioning for a lateral. Moving screens shall be penalized from the end of the run (E.O.R.) or P.O.I., whichever hurts the offensive team the most. If the illegal screen is judged to have caused excessive contact, it will be penalized **10 yards and loss of down**. (Cannot have loss of down if penalty leaves ball in front of line-to-gain and 1<sup>st</sup> down.)(If not excessive-5 yards.)

7.9.5. Pick Plays

7.9.5.1. By receivers on defensive backs or linebackers are illegal if set by receivers **within 5 yards** of defender (a form of downfield screening).

7.9.6. **IT IS ASKED THAT BOTH THE SCREENER AND THE RUSHER STRIVE FOR NON-CONTACT IN THIS AREA.**

7.9.7. The screener may not step into the rusher.

7.10. Passing

7.10.1. There can be only one forward pass per play. There can be only two (2) exchanges of the football in the air (forward pass or lateral) which is initiated from behind the L.O.S. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> exchange of the football in the air, if completed behind the L.O.S., the football must be run across the L.O.S. A **forward pass** is defined as a live ball thrown toward the opponent's goal line.

7.10.2. Roughing the passer when the pass is incomplete will be marked off 10 yards from the L.O.S. When the pass is complete, the penalty will be 10 yards off the E.O.R.

7.10.3. If the rusher touches the quarterback in the head in his attempt to block the pass a penalty will be called. This will also go for striking the passer's arm when in a forward motion while attempting to block a pass. Roughing the passer will be called when the rusher, if while attempting to deflag the quarterback or block a pass, lets his momentum carry him into the passer. Defensive player may not have any contact with the passer when he is passing. The defense may rush as many players as it wishes.

7.10.4. Any player who in the opinion of the referee fakes excessive contact for the sole purpose of drawing a penalty may be warned once by the officials and then penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct on the next offense. A warning to one player may be applied to a team as a whole if officials so state this warning to the team.

7.10.5. A completed direct handoff, even if bobbled, shall not be considered an exchange of the football in the air.

7.10.6. If the passer is beyond the L.O.S. when the football is released, or if a 3<sup>rd</sup> exchange of the football in the air is initiated from behind the L.O.S., an illegal forward pass has occurred and will result in a **5 yard penalty and loss of down** if accepted. Illegal forward passes will be marked from P.O.I. (S-27 & 8)

7.10.7. Once the ball has crossed the L.O.S., in the air or in possession of a player, it cannot be passed forward, even if the ball is first returned back across the L.O.S. (Illegal Forward Pass)(S-27 & 8)

7.10.8. Intentional grounding shall also constitute an illegal forward pass. (S-28 & 8)

7.10.9. A lateral will be any pass thrown overhand or underhand perpendicular or away from the direction of advancement of team in possession. Forward laterals are treated as an illegal forward pass if beyond the L.O.S.

7.10.10. Push or shovel passes thrown in any direction is legal if initiated behind the L.O.S. Once a player crosses the L.O.S., push or shovel passes are legal if thrown parallel or behind the ball carrier.

7.11. Receiving

- 7.11.1. All players of both teams are eligible pass receivers. Each player is eligible, even if he steps out of bounds or out of end zone, as long as he catches the ball in bounds or comes down first in bounds with at least one (1) foot. If a receiver comes down with one foot in bounds and one foot out of bounds, simultaneously, the pass is incomplete. The lines marking the sidelines and the extreme end of the end zone shall be considered out of bounds if stepped on to any degree.
- 7.11.2. Two or more offensive receivers or defensive players may touch a pass in succession, resulting in a completion. After a pass is thrown, it is too much to expect of the officials to keep track of exactly who touched the ball and in what order, if receivers and defenders are battling for possession. Therefore, the only things that will be judged will be (1) did pass interference occur, (2) who caught the ball, and (3) was receiver in bounds with at least one foot at moment of possession.

#### 7.12. Pass Interference

- 7.12.1. Rules shall apply to any pass made from behind the L.O.S., whether it is a forward pass or a lateral pass and applies to both offensive and defensive players. After the pass is in the air, neither the pass receiver nor the defender may touch the other player until one of them touches the ball, or else offensive or defensive pass interference may be called. If contact occurs after one of them touches the ball, then pass interference cannot be called unless one of them catches the ball and the other “strips” or attempts to “strip” the ball from his hands.
- 7.12.2. Receiver stripping is attempting to take the ball from the grasp of a receiver after he has caught the ball, but before he has brought the ball into a possessive position. In which case, Pass Interference will be called: If player established possession of the football, the defender must go for the flag and not the ball.
- 7.12.3. Any contact that occurs after the pass is touched (Excluding Receiver Stripping) and is either complete or incomplete, must be judged by the officials as either Non-intentional contact caused by both players “Playing the Ball” or Intentional contact/Pass Interference which shall be penalized from the point of infraction. **Penalty will be 5 yards** if incomplete or complete, and if judged to be **flagrant**, the penalized **player may be removed** from the game and **penalty will be 10 yards**.
- 7.12.4. All pass interference plays, whether they occur during the “Regulation Play Period”, “7 Play Period”, “Tie Breaker Period”, or the “P.A.T. Try Period” which are **accepted** by the defensive captain shall be marked **5 yard** from L.O.S. **with a loss of down (and loss of play number if during Tie Breaker)**.
- 7.12.5. All offensive pass interference plays, whether they occur during the “Regulation Play Period”, “7-Play Period”, or the “P.A.T. Try Period” which are **accepted** by the defensive captain shall be marked **5 yards from L.O.S. with a loss of down (and loss of play number if during Tie Breaker)**. (S-25 & 8)
- 7.12.6. All defensive pass interference plays, which occur on the playing field, during the “Regulation Play Period”, “7-Play Period”, and the “Tie Breaker Period”, and are **accepted** shall be marked **5 yards from P.O.I., automatic first down (except in Tie Breaker)**, and play number will be run again. (S-25 & 7)
- 7.12.7. **Shielding/Screening** a receiver’s eyes by a defender without playing the football is pass interference and shall be penalized as such.
- 7.12.8. **Bump and Run**, or checking an offensive receiver during a passing play will be a **5-yard penalty** from P.O.I. and captain’s choice.

#### 7.13. Deflagging

- 7.13.1. The ball carrier is down and the ball is dead when either flag detached from his belt or when the ball or either knee touches the ground. A defensive player may leave his feet to pull the offensive player’s flag but may not make contact while doing so. When a defensive player pulls the ball carrier’s flag he/she should stop and hold it

above his head for officials to see. If the act of deflagging a player is simulated or faked, the infraction will be treated as a delay of game penalty.

- 7.13.2. **Illegal deflagging** is prematurely pulling an opponent's flag the intent of making the offensive player ineligible to become a ball carrier. **Penalty 5 yards** from L.O.S. or E.O.R. (S-31)
- 7.13.3. **Runner Stripping** occurs when a defender attempts to strip or take the ball from the grasp of a player in possession. This is a form of Illegal Deflagging. (S-31)
- 7.13.4. The intended receiver of either a pass or lateral may be deflagged **only** after **first touching** the ball-even while fumbling or bobbling the ball and before possession is established. That receiver will be considered downed at the point he/she was deflagged.
- 7.13.5. If the quarterback's arm was in forward motion when his flag was pulled, the pass is allowed. If the passer is legally deflagged as he is passing the football, and later in that play receives the ball back, he shall be downed at that spot. If he is deflagged after he has released the football and he then receives the ball back, illegal deflagging should be called.
- 7.13.6. A defender may not push or knock a ball carrier out of bounds. A form of illegal deflagging, **if excessive contact-10 yards.** (S-31 & 29)

#### 7.14. Tackling Is Prohibited

- 7.14.1. Tackling is grasping or encircling the body of the ball carrier with a hand or arm, thus impeding his progress. Grabbing the ball carrier's clothing, to the point of impeding his progress, shall be penalized as tackling. If the defensive player reaches across the body of a ball carrier to pull his flag and contact is made, the responsibility of the contact lies with the defensive player. Penalty: 15 yards from P.O.I. or L.O.S., and if in the opinion of officials, the ball will be placed on the one (1) yard line, 1<sup>st</sup> down and goal. The offender will be disqualified if the act was flagrant.

#### 7.15. Quick Whistle

- 7.15.1. If the official whistles the play dead prematurely, the offense shall have the choice of: (1) accepting the ball where it was whistled dead or (2) replaying the down.
- 7.15.2. Pretending to pull an opponent's flag (raising empty hand intentionally) resulting in official's "Quick Whistle", defense will be penalized 5 yards and offense's choice of either #1 or #2 from 6.15.1.
- 7.15.3. Offensive fouls, if they were committed before quick whistle, have priority over quick whistle.

#### 7.16. Ball Carrier

- 7.16.1. The responsibility of avoiding contact rests with the ball carrier. He must show the officials he made an effort to avoid contact. The ball carrier will not deliberately run or drive into a defensive player. A ball carrier may spin or jump but realize that while spinning or jumping he is in a "**State of Non-Control**" and should contact occur as a result of his uncontrolled momentum, he will be penalized. The "**Stiff Arm**" is illegal. **Penalty: 10 Yards from P.O.I. and loss of down.**
- 7.16.2. The ball carrier shall not protect his flags by blocking with his hand, arm or head, the opportunity to pull his flags. Flag guarding will be marked **10 yards** from P.O.I./L.O.S. (if behind line) and **loss of down.**
- 7.16.3. If any of the above acts are judged to have caused excessive contact, **10 yards and loss of down.**

#### 7.17. Fumble



- 7.17.1. When a backward pass hits the ground between goal lines or a fumble occurs, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the team last in possession at the spot where the ball hits the ground or at the spot where the ball goes out of bounds (if in the air).
- 7.17.2. If the offensive fumbles forward and crossed or hits the ground beyond the next line-to-gain or goal line, the result will bring the ball back to where the fumble occurred and next down will be played.

#### 7.18. Center Snap

- 7.18.1. A center snap may touch the ground **before** it gets to the quarterback and remain playable if the quarterback fields it cleanly off of a bounce (one or more) or from the ground. However, if quarterback muffs the ball to the ground or the ball goes past the quarterback it is dead where the ball touches the ground.
- 7.18.2. All center snaps must be made between the center's legs. A false movement of the football by the center after he is set shall constitute **encroachment**. No direct snap may be taken at **anytime**. The snap must travel a minimum of 5 yards to be legal (either backwards or sideways.) (S-15) At all times, the ball shall be snapped from the spot marked by the official ball marker.

#### 7.19. Punt

- 7.19.1. If a punt is to be made, the offense must announce it to the referee before the ball can be declared ready for play. Offense must declare within 10 seconds after asked by referee on 4<sup>th</sup> down play. (**Penalty delay of game**). After offense declares, the referee will mark ball ready for play whereupon the offense will have 15 seconds to punt the ball. (S-17)
- 7.19.2. When the offense declares the punt, it becomes a guaranteed punt, and **only if a defense penalty occurs after the offense declares punt can the offense reconsider**, due to change in field position.
- 7.19.3. The ball will not be dead if it touches the ground before the punt is made even if muffed by the punter. After a punt has been declared, it must be made and neither team may cross the L.O.S. until the ball is kicked. The offense may have any number of players on the L.O.S. The punt returning team must have 5 players within 5 yards of the L.O.S. and they must remain in that zone until the punt returner enters that zone, at which time they may provide stationary screens or maneuver for a lateral. These 5 men may not attempt to screen any member of the punting team as they pass through this 5-yard zone. (**Penalty-5 yards from EOR/POI**)(S-24)
- 7.19.4. If the punt hits a member of the punting team, which has not crossed the L.O.S., it is dead at that spot. Any member of the punting team may down the punt if it is beyond the L.O.S. and has touched the ground prior to being downed. The punt will be declared dead at the spot where it is first touched by the punting team.
- 7.19.5. The punt receiving team must be given an opportunity to field the punt in the air; therefore, there will be a **10-yard penalty** if touched in the air beyond the L.O.S. by the punting team, from the P.O.I. (S-23)
- 7.19.6. The punt returning team may have 3 returners in deep positions. The 2 returners that do not carry the ball may not be moving screens. They may run forward and provide stationary screens or be maneuvering for a lateral. (**Penalty-5 yards from EOR/POI**)(S-24)
- 7.19.7. The punt receiving team may field a punt in the air, off of a bounce (one or more), or directly off of the ground, if fielded clearly. When a punt touches a player on the receiving team who is in bounds and the ball rebounds into the air, all players become eligible to intercept and advance the ball before it touches the ground. This applies even if the punt hits the ground before touching the receiving team's player.

- 7.19.8. On a punt play, there are no line-to-gain lines (1<sup>st</sup> down lines) established. When the punt receiving team is returning a punt, any live ball fouls committed by either team, which are accepted, will result in the penalty being marked off after which the next line will become the line-to-gain for a first down. As soon as the play is blown dead, the line-to-gain is established. Any dead ball fouls that occur will result in the line-to-gain remaining the same (unless the enforced penalty leaves the ball past the line-to-gain.)
- 7.19.9. When a punt is left unattended, it becomes dead where it rolls still.
- 7.19.10. **NO Quick Kicks are allowed. (5-yard penalty and loss of down** from L.O.S.)(S-22 & 8)
- 7.19.11. Punts muffed by the receiving team in the end zone before possession, and ball hits in or out of end zone, it will be a touchback. If the ball is touched in the air or on the ground by the punting team in the zone, it is a touchback. If a punt receiver who gained possession of the punt in the end zone is deflagged prior to crossing the goal line into the field of play, it is a touchback. If punt receiver remains in the end zone 5 seconds after fielding punt, or downs punt by knee or ball touching ground after possession, it is a touchback. **A muffed lateral in the end zone will be a safety.** (S-5)

#### 7.20. Ejection from the Game

- 7.20.1. In the judgment of any game official, the following acts are deliberate or flagrant, the player or players involved shall be ejected from the game.
  - 7.20.1.1. Using fists, kicking, or kneeling (S-29 & 32)
  - 7.20.1.2. Illegal use of hands, forearms, or elbows (S-29, 31, 32)
  - 7.20.1.3. Tackling (S-29, 31, & 32)
  - 7.20.1.4. Any deliberate or flagrant act which could cause injury (S-29 & 32)
  - 7.20.1.5. Any act of unsportsmanlike conduct (S-33 & 32)
  - 7.20.1.6. Abusive, profane, or insulting language (S-33 & 32)
  - 7.20.1.7. Any act of unfair play (S-33 & 32)
  - 7.20.1.8. Harassment of officials or other players (S-33 & 32)

- 7.20.2. A minimum One (1) game suspension for any person ejected from a game for any reason. Local rules and tournament rules may be more severe.

- 7.21. Penalties, which would otherwise be marked off past the goal line, shall be placed on the one-yard line.

#### 7.22. Illegal Advancement

- 7.22.1. Advancement may not occur as a result of the ball being slapped, kicked, pitched, or pushed by either team in the direction of their goal line. The ball will be declared dead at the spot of such illegal advancement of a 5-yard penalty. (S-23)

#### 7.23. Offsetting Penalties

- 7.23.1. If offsetting fouls occur during a down, or while the ball is ready-for-play, that down shall be played over. If offsetting fouls occur between successive downs, the next down shall be the same as if no fouls occurred.
- 7.23.2. If there is a change of team possession during a down, the team's last gaining possession may decline the offsetting fouls and retain possession after the penalty for its own infraction providing that the infraction occurs **after** the change of possession. If offsetting fouls occur prior to change of possession, play shall be repeated.