

U7 & U9 Tri Valley Little Ballers Flag Football

In the fundamental stage of learning which covers ages 5 to 9. To allow kids to have fun playing flag football with their friends, in an organized fashion, with safety as a main element of consideration. The skills set developed will include passing, receiving, blocking, offensive and defensive position play, and an overall athletic development in flag football. Other modifications adapted to the ability of the players are as follows:

Purpose

- To allow participants to have fun in a safe environment
- To allow all participants the opportunity to participate
- To teach basic skills and fundamentals of not only soccer but team work and sportsmanship
- To provide participants the opportunity to learn the fundamentals in a recreational atmosphere
- To provide participants with a chance to develop social, motor, and movement skills

Rules and Regulations

A. Equipment

- All players must provide their own mouth piece.
- Aluminum or metal cleats are not allowed and must be removed. Only rubber or plastic cleats will be deemed acceptable for play. Tennis shoes are acceptable footwear.
- Flag belts will have two flags and will be provided by each participating recreation agency
- Jersey's will be provided by the sponsoring recreation agency and be tucked into the players pants
- Players must remove all watches, earrings, and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous

B. Duration of Practice – Up to 2 one hour practices a week

C. Code Of Conduct

- If the game supervisor witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the game supervisors' discretion and no appeals will be considered. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
- Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Game Supervisors have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the game supervisor will give one warning. If it continues, the player/players/coach/spectator will be ejected from the game.
- Spectators must also adhere to good sportsmanship, as well.
 - o Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
 - o Keep comments clean and profanity-free.

- o Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.
- Spectators are required to keep fields safe and kid friendly.
 - o Keep younger children and equipment (i.e., coolers, mats, chairs, etc.) a minimum of 10 yards off the side of the field.
 - o Stay in the "fan zone" area- opposite side of the field as the teams.
 - o No one is allowed behind the end zones for safety reasons.

D. Inclement Weather

All activities will be cancelled if any one of the following weather occurrences exist:

- Thunder/Lightning: We will delay or cancel activities when lightning is determined to be within 6 miles. This will be determined by using the WeatherBug App.
- Rain or Snow: Any time there is constant rain or snow that affects the visibility and/or safety of the field, the game will be cancelled.
- Light: No light is present due to loss of sunlight and facility does not have adequate light to provide a safe environment.
- Playing Field: Activities will be cancelled if the playing environment is determined unsafe due to condition.
 - o Standing water on activity surface.
 - o Footing is unsure and slippery.
 - o Temperature is lower than 36 degrees Fahrenheit.
 - o Sustained wind speeds exceeding 25 mph or wind gusts of 50 mph. Any time there is wind that makes visibility of the playing field poor.

E. Measurements

- Game Ball Size: Pee Wee
- Field Dimension: 30Wx70L, two 10-yard end zones and a midfield line to gain, 5 yard no rush zones on either side of mid field, 5 yard no rush zones out from goal line

F. Playing Rules

1. Game

- 5 players are allowed on the field. Teams must have at least 4 players to play.
- To start the game, captains from both teams shall meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has 4 plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has 4 plays to score a touchdown.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield or score, possession of the ball changes, and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.

- Interceptions may be returned, and possession will start where the intercepting player is ruled down.

2. Live Ball/Dead Ball

- The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
- The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals, by trying to confuse the offensive players. This will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.
- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - the ball hits the ground.
 - the ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - the ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - a touchdown or safety is scored.
 - the ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
 - the ball carrier's flag falls out.
 - the receiver catches the ball while in possession of no flags.
 - Inadvertent whistle.
 - In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options: take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed, or replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

3. Running the Ball

- The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player's front foot.
- The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball; it must be handed off first. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs.
- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball as long as they are behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball.
- No blocking or screening is allowed at any time.

4. Passing

- All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward, and received beyond the line of scrimmage.

5. Receiving

- All players are eligible to receive passes.

- Players must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
- Only one player is allowed in motion at a time and all motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception.
- All interceptions are returnable.

6. Rushing the Passer

- All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
- A legal rush is:
 - o Any rush from a point 7 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
 - o A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.
 - o If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7-yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset, and then legally rush the quarterback.
 - o If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before they cross the line of scrimmage, they may legally rush the quarterback.
- Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then contacting the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.

7. Flag Pulling

- A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball, and the defensive player pulls the flags.
- It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession.
- Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping of head, hand, arm, or shoulder, or intentionally covering flags with football or jersey.
- Each team will be given one warning, and then the ball will be spotted where the flag guarding happened.
- Flag Obstruction: All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

8. Coaches

- 9U - One Coach for each team is permitted on the field pre-snap to help their players, but **MUST** be off the field prior to the snap of the ball
- 7U - One Coach for each team is permitted on the field pre and post snap to help their players, but post snap at a safe distance to plays completion.

G. Playing Time

- A game will begin with a coin toss to determine which team will start with the ball. Games are two 20-minute halves. The clock only stops for injuries, half -time and timeouts (each team has one 60 second timeout per half).
- There will be a two-minute half time

H. Penalties

1. 15 Yards
 - a. Unnecessary roughness
 - b. Unsportsmanlike behavior
 - c. Roughing the passer (which includes any contact with the quarterback's arm)
2. 10 Yards
 - a. Illegal blocking
 - b. Pass interference
 - c. Illegal pass rush
 - d. Unintentional fouls
3. 5 Yards:
 - a. Delay of game
 - b. Offsides
 - c. Illegal forward pass
 - d. Too many players on the field
4. Flag Guarding: the team will receive a warning on the first infraction. Thereafter, the ball is spotted at the point of infraction.

