

# *2018 Honor Flight*

## *7 v7 Flag Football Tournament Rules*

### **Rules**

Rules of the Tournament will be approved & posted within one week of the tournament.

Additions, deletions, and/or clarifications to these rules may be added right up to and throughout the Tournament in the best interest of the tournament. Anything added, deleted, and/or clarified will be posted immediately and communicated to all the Game Officials and players alike.

The Game Official has the authority to rule on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. His/her decision is final, unless ruled otherwise by one of the Tournament Director(s). The Game Official(s) should consult with the Tournament Director(s) for interpretation or clarification of rules if needed. Tournament Directors (Brett Lea & Sean Conlin).

### **The Tournament**

The Tournament format will be Pool Play consisting of 2- four Team pools. Each team will play 3 games within their pool. A final round will consist of the first Seeds playing for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> and the second Seeds playing for 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **The Field**

The total field dimensions are 40 yards wide by 100 yards long. 80 yards between goal lines with 10 yard end zones. The playing area is divided into 20 yard sections (1<sup>st</sup> down lines), with hash marks at the 5 & 10 yard line for extra points. Team players, coaches & spectators must stay between the 20 yard lines.

### **Team Roster/Players**

Each team is allowed 20 players (male or female) on the team roster. The game will be played with a maximum of 7 players on the field with a minimum of 6 players to avoid a forfeit. Since this is not a sanctioned PSO tournament, teams may have non-PSO's to help field their team, but we ask that no more than 2 are on the field at anytime (exceptions for injuries to apply). In addition, if your team is short players due to unexpected situations or injuries, you may also pick up no more than 2 players from another team to give you a **maximum** of 8 players for the game. For pool play, these players have to come from another pool. For Final's game, the players would have to come from a team that seeded 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>. Added players during the tournament have to be approved by the Tournament Directors and possibly the opposing team in order to remain fair.

### **Sportsmanship**

One of the major goals of this Tournament is to provide a safe, fair and enjoyable playing environment for all participants. This tournament is more of a fun tournament so that we can help out some of the newer players and/or teams, as well as to work on improving our existing teams. Unsportsmanlike behavior or actions will not be tolerated. If the Tournament Director, Field Monitor or Official witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any similar unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player can be ejected from the game. Fighting of any kind will result in immediate ejection from the game, and suspension from the tournament for those responsible (and a good possibility of a letter to the agency chief).

Profanity, as well as trash talking that is offensive or aggressive towards an official, opposing team, or spectators is not allowed. Officials or Tournament Director(s) will eject player(s) from the game if the offending person's behavior continues. This could also result in the player(s) and team(s) being disqualified from the tournament.

Penalties, forfeitures, disqualifications and suspensions can be assessed to a team for the behavior and actions of their respective spectators as well.

### **Equipment & Uniform**

#### **Flagbelts**

Players can use their own flags, but must be approved by the Tournament Director and/or the Officials. Every player on the field must have a legally secured flagbelt at the start of the play. Flag belts cannot be **altered** in any way, such as adding tape, shortening flags, tying knots, etc. Altered flags will result in an Unsportsmanlike penalty from the 1<sup>st</sup> flag pull attempt (if any) and ejection from the game. A flagbelt inspection may be called for before every game.

The flagbelt must be worn only about the waist, with the flags hanging down each side and one in the back. The flags must sharply contrast the color of the shorts, and the entire belt must be visible at all times. No part of the belt may be obstructed, concealed or covered by any part of the player's uniform.

## Football

Teams are responsible to supply their own ball.

## Uniforms

Teams must wear matching colored T-shirts/jerseys during the games. All teams should have two uniforms, as opposing teams must have contrasting jerseys. If both teams have the same color and no 2<sup>nd</sup> jersey, one of them will have to play with no shirt which will be determined by the highest seed or coin toss.

Shirts must be tucked in under the shorts. Half-shirts cannot go below the navel. A Player whose jersey repeatedly comes out over the flagbelt during routine play must correct the problem or an unsportsmanlike penalty will be assessed. No penalty will be assessed to a defender that grabs, holds and/or rips a jersey that covers the flagbelt.

Shorts or pants cannot have any belt loops, pockets, or exterior drawstrings.

All jewelry must be covered or taped for player safety

Shoes are required and should be molded rubber cleats, sneakers, running shoes....No metal cleats.

## Towels

The offensive towel must be thrown behind the QB far enough so that it doesn't interfere with the defense. The defensive towel must be removed from the field. If the towel is tucked into the uniform, it can be pulled similar to the flags.

## Headwear

Ball caps, low profile hats and/or headbands made of cloth are allowed. Hat bills do not need to be turned backwards.

## The Game Basics

The games consist of two 20-minute halves, with 5 minutes between halves. Each team will have 2 times out per half

This is a no-contact Tournament: no blocking, picks, tackling, etc. allowed

A coin toss determines first possession. The coin will be tossed in the air and **allowed to hit the ground**. The highest ranked/seeded team (or the farthest team if equal or unknown rank/seed) will call the toss prior to, or while the coin is in the air. Winner of the toss may choose offense, defense or defer their choice to 2<sup>nd</sup> half.

There are **no** Kick-offs. The offensive team takes possession of the ball on their **20-yard line** at the start of each half, and after a touchdown, safety or touchback.

The Offensive team is responsible to retrieve their ball after the play.

Except for the first schedule game of the tournament, Game time is forfeit time. Time outs may be used if needed. There is a 10 minute grace period for the first scheduled game of the Tournament. **Games may start up to 10 minutes earlier than scheduled in order to keep the tournament on time, so teams should be ready to play 10 minutes prior to game time.**

## Scoring

TD = 6 points

Extra Point Conversion: 5 yards out = 1 point      10 yards out = 2 points

Extra Point Conversion Interception return: 2 Points

Safety = 2 points

Forfeits: are scored 14 – 0

## 17 Point Rule

When a team is ahead by 17 points or more at or anytime after the 2-minute warning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, the game ends immediately and that team automatically wins.

## Game Clock

The game is played with a running clock (Game clock) **except** for time outs, halftime, significant injuries and the last 2 minutes of either half. The Game clock will start on the snap of the ball.

The play clock starts when the line of scrimmage (LOS) is marked by the Game Official (indicated by the official's whistle). The offense has **30 seconds** to snap the ball from this point.

In the last two minutes of each half, the Game clock will stop on a 1<sup>st</sup> down, scoring play, time out, a penalty, incomplete pass, out-of-bounds play, punt, change of possession or a significant injury. For 1<sup>st</sup> downs, penalties & injuries the Game clock will resume once the ball is marked (indicated w/ whistle); for everything else the clock will restart on the snap. For punts (including free-kicks), the clock will start upon the catch of the ball if a fair catch is not called.

The game official may stop the clock at his/her discretion for significant situations that may affect the game such as weather, injury, rule interpretation, deliberate delay of game actions, etc.

Each team will be allowed two 1-minute timeouts per half. The Official will stop the game clock at the 2-minute mark of each half to notify each team. **Play will resume immediately after notification.**

### **Offense Players**

All Offensive players are eligible receivers and must be within 20 yards of the ball by the ready-to-play whistle.

The Offense may have any number of players on the Line of scrimmage (LOS) when the ball is snapped. Any number of players may move, shift or go in motion prior to the snap as long as they are set for at least one second prior to the snap. Only one player is allowed to be in motion, parallel with or away from the LOS, when the ball is snapped.

Offensive players cannot move in any direction that impedes, interferes with or cuts off the rusher's direct path to the ball.

An Offensive player who voluntarily or accidentally steps out of bounds cannot participate in the remainder of the play, unless a change of possession occurs. If the offensive player, catches the ball after stepping out of bounds it will be ruled a no catch, if this person receives a pitch, the ball is considered dead and returned to the point of the pitch.

### **Center/Snaps**

The center must snap the ball between the legs to start play.

The center may receive a hand-off if the center is at least one yard behind the LOS when the hand-off is made.

All snaps must occur within 5 yards of the center of the field.

A snap that hits the ground is dead and marked where it first hit.

A bad snap does not stop the clock.

If the quarterback takes a snap without a flag belt (the ball is dead-see penalty section).

### **Passing**

Offensive players may throw an unlimited number of forward passes, forward pitches, and/or forward hand-offs behind the LOS. Once a ball crosses the LOS, it cannot be passed, pitched or handed-off in a forward direction. No player, with or without the ball, may cross the LOS, go back behind the LOS and throw or pitch a forward pass.

### **In-bounds Catch**

Only one foot in-bounds is required for a legal catch, but it must be the first foot to touch. For a diving catch, some part of the body must touch in-bounds for a legal catch.

### **Tipped Catches**

As soon as a player touches the ball, a defender may pull his flag. If the ball is tipped and re-caught by the same person, it is spotted where the initial tip & flag-pull occurred.

### **Ball Carrier**

The ball carrier may not:

- Stiff arm, slap at, push away or duck head into the defender
- Charge into a defender (the ball carrier must attempt to avoid contact)
- Shield flagbelt or flags in any manner
- Extend the ball in any unnatural manner in an attempt to gain additional yardage, i.e. head-first dive.

The ball carrier may spin, hurdle or jump, but will be penalized for charging if they initiate contact with a defender who established position prior to the hurdle/jump.

The ball carrier/receiver is immediately down at the spot where any part of his body, other than a hand or foot touches the ground, when the ball touches the ground while in possession of carrier, or when a ball carrier goes out of bounds.

### **Fumbles**

There are no fumbles. Once the ball touches the ground, the play is dead. If the ball touches the ground in line with, or behind the ball carrier, the ball is marked where it first hit the ground. If fumbled forward, where the ball carrier lost control of the ball.

### **Screen Blocking**

A screen block must be stationary and set at least 4 yards from the opponent (no moving screens). The screener must have both feet in contact with the ground and cannot lean into or extend/stick out a knee, hip, shoulder, leg, etc.

All defenders must go around a legal screen block; the defender cannot charge, push, pull, grab or initiate contact with a legal screen block. This also applies to the center if he/she remains stationary after the snap.

### **Punts**

The Offense must notify the Official of its decision to punt and complete the punt within the 30 second play clock. The Offense can change its decision to not punt, only if it uses a timeout, takes a delay of game penalty or unless there is a defensive foul prior to the punt. Inside the final 2 minutes of either half the clock is stopped immediately when the punt is announced.

After the snap, only the punter can move prior to the punt. The Defense must maintain at least 3 players on its rush line, and cannot rush the punter.

### **Defensive Players**

All Defensive players must be behind the **Rush Line** prior to the snap. The **Rush Line** is 5 yards in front of the ball, except when the ball is less than 5 yards from a designated first down line or the Defense's Goal line. In these situations the **Rush Line** will be marked one half the distance to these lines. Any number of players can rush the QB. The rusher does not have to line up with a clear path to the quarterback; but if he/she does not, then the offensive player is not required to move out of the rusher's lane to the QB.

### **Rusher**

The rusher(s) must follow a direct line to the ball at the time of the snap, and cannot cut diagonally in front of, collide with or interfere with an offensive player. Although, if the QB rolls/runs to a side opposite the rusher immediately after receiving the snap, the rusher may cut in front of the offensive player. The offensive player cannot move until after the Rusher clears.

### **Defenders**

- Cannot run into, knock down, or hit any part of the passer before, during or after the pass attempt.
- Cannot slap, punch, strip or make a play for the ball while clearly in the ball carrier or Passer's hand.
- Cannot push, trip, chuck, bump, tackle, charge into or hold onto the Offensive player in any fashion.

### **Flag-pull (spotting the ball)**

A flag-pull is made when a defender detaches a ball carrier's flagbelt. The ball is dead & spotted where the ball carrier's belt is when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is or where the flag lands. If the flagbelt becomes detached, but doesn't fall off for several yards, the ball is marked at the spot of the initial pull.

**For a 1st down or a score, both the ball & flags must break the plane of the line.**

The Defender cannot detach the flagbelt of any Offensive player who clearly does not have possession of the ball.

Defenders may dive to grab a flag as long as they do not initiate contact that would be considered unsafe, tackling or unnecessary roughness.

The Defender will only need to one-hand touch any part of the ball carrier who is not wearing a flagbelt.

All players must have a legally secured flagbelt prior to the snap. If the quarterback takes a snap without a flag belt, play is stopped with a 5 yard penalty or where the QB took the snap, whichever is further.

### **Twenty Yard Line Rule**

The Defense may choose to place the Offense on the 20 yard line in front of Defender's Goal. Once this option is chosen, it will remain the same for the rest of the half.

### **Tie Game (overtime)**

A Coin toss will determine possession. The team with the last possession will call the toss. The winner has the choice of Offense, Defense or to defend a certain goal. The teams will alternate first Offensive possession on successive series if the game stays tied. The ball is placed on the Defensive 10 yard line and the Offense has 2 downs to score. Touchdowns, PAT's, PAT runbacks, and Safeties count as usual.

Change of possession occurs when the Offense scores a TD and tries a PAT, or turns it over on downs, or throws an interception. Interceptions can be returned for a TD or for 2 points on a PAT attempt.

All other rules & penalties will be enforced as usual. Although there is no Game clock & no time outs, the Play clock is still the same. If the score is tied after both team attempts, then the series is repeated.

### **Divisional Tie Breakers for Pool Play (i.e. Round Robin)**

2 teams tied – whoever won in head-to-head competition.

3 teams tied – head-to-head; total points allowed in head-to-head games; then total points allowed; then Total Differential

If a team forfeits a game and they are in a two or three way tie, they are automatically the lowest seed possible within the tied teams.

### **Play-off Seeding for Finals**

First Seed in each Pool will play for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

Second Seed in each Pool will play for 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Place

### **Inadvertent Quick Whistle**

When a referee blows the whistle before the play has actually ended, the team in possession of the ball at the time of the whistle has the option of either keeping the yardage at the point of the whistle or replaying the down at the previous spot. If the ball is in the air, the play is considered dead and the down is replayed. If the official judges the ball carrier or the receiver would have obviously scored had an inadvertent whistle not been blown, the score will count.

### **Penalties**

Only the team captain may question the Game official about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.

All penalties will be called by the Official and may be declined.

Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

All penalties are assessed from the original line of scrimmage except for fouls against the ball carrier or receiver.

Penalties within 10 yards of goal will be assessed 1/2 distance to the goal.

The Game Officials will determine contact which may result from normal run of play to be incidental or unavoidable

### **Illegal Participation**

When more than 7 players on the field, or playing with no flags at the snap

**Penalty:** Play continues, 5 yards from the LOS (Ball is dead if the snap goes to a person without a flagbelt)

### **Delay of Game**

The Play clock expires, or any action that purposely hinders an opponent from running a play in a timely manner.

**Penalty:** Play stops, 5 yards from the LOS

### **Illegal Motion**

When more than one player is in motion at the snap, or a player is moving forward at the snap

**Penalty:** Play stops, 5 yards from the LOS

### **Simulated Action**

When an Offensive player tries to draw defensive encroachment by simulating action

**Penalty:** Play stops, 5 yards from the LOS

### **Illegal Screen block**

When a player is not stationary, or doesn't allow 4 yards prior to setting block or interferes with rusher, etc.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 5 yards from point of infraction (spot foul)

### **Illegal forward pass, lateral or hand-off**

**Penalty:** Play continues, 5 yards from the point of release (spot foul)

### **Intentional Grounding**

Throwing or tossing a ball where there is clearly no receiver to avoid a sack is not allowed. Spiking the ball to stop the clock is only allowed when the QB receives the snap directly from underneath the center.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 10 yards from point of release (spot foul)

### **Flag Guarding**

A ball carrier cannot shield flags, duck, lower shoulder, stiff arm, dive or any other action that would inhibit a defender from his ability to gain access to the ball carrier's flag.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 10 yards from point of infraction (spot foul)

### **Offsides**

Offensive player is lined up over the LOS when the ball is snapped or moves across the LOS prior to the snap

Defensive player is lined up over the Rush line when the ball is snapped or moves across the Rush Line prior to the snap

**Penalty:** Play stops, 5 yards from the LOS

### **Illegal Contact**

**Offensive:** A non-ball carrier who purposely pushes, pulls, runs into any defender during the play.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 10 yards from LOS

**Defensive:** The Defender initiates non-incidental contact against a receiver without the ball and before the ball is thrown.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 10 yards from LOS, Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down

### **Charging**

**Offensive:** Ball carrier running into the defender; not making an attempt to avoid contact with a defender who has position

**Penalty:** Play continues, 10 yards from point of contact (spot foul)

**Defensive:** A Defender cannot purposely run into the ball carrier, legal screen blocker, or center. The Rusher(s) must go around legal blocks, including a stationary center and cannot initiate contact w/ either. In addition, once the ball is snapped the rusher cannot alter his course from a direct path to the ball to interfere with an offensive player, unless the QB rolls immediately upon receiving the snap.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 10 yards from LOS

### **Pass Interference**

Pass interference occurs only if the ball is in the air and contact is made preventing a catchable ball. (Shielding an opponent's vision without making an attempt to catch or bat the ball away is **not** considered pass interference)

#### **Penalty:**

**Between the Goal Lines**

Offensive: 10 yards from LOS & Loss of down (if 4<sup>th</sup> down, the 10 yd mark off will still apply)

Defensive: Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down from point of infraction (spot foul)

**In the End Zone**

Offensive: 10 yards from LOS & Loss of down (if 4<sup>th</sup> down, the 10 yd mark off will still apply)

Defensive: Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down at 1yd line (offensive team may choose to stay at current LOS instead of 1 yd line)

**In the End Zone during a PAT**

Offensive: No point (The other team will gain the 10 yd mark off on their next possession)

Defensive: Offense has option to replay from 5 yard or 1 yard line, and option to go for either 1 or 2 PAT

### **Illegal Flagpull**

A player cannot purposely detach an opponent's flag who clearly doesn't have the ball.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 10 yards from result of play or Offense may choose to replay down

### **Holding**

A Defender cannot hold or grab any part of the ball carrier in an attempt to pull his flag.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 10 yards from result of play or Offense may choose to replay down

### **Stripping**

A Defender cannot hit, punch, pull or make a play for the ball once a player has clear possession of it.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 10 yards from end of play or Offense may choose to replay down

### **Tackling**

Purposely tackling a ball carrier whether attempting to pull the flags or not

**Penalty:** Play is dead, Automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down, ½ distance to the goal from infraction (Score may be awarded if last man)

### **Roughing the Passer**

A Defender cannot initiate non-incident contact with the passer before, during or after the actual pass attempt.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 10 yards from LOS or result of play, automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down

### **Unnecessary Roughness**

When contact with an opponent that in the Game Official's judgment, is considered too aggressive and/or unsafe.

**Penalty:** Play continues, 15 yards from result of play (in addition to any other penalty), automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down

### **Flagrant Actions**

Infractions/fouls that are considered by the Game Official to be Flagrant, intentional and/or avoidable.

**Penalty:** An Unsportsmanlike Penalty will be assessed as well

### **Unsportsmanlike Action/Behavior**

Unsportsmanlike penalties cover a variety of infractions, which include abusive, aggressive, hostile, profane behavior and/or actions (physical or verbal) from a player and/or spectator towards another player, Tournament or Game Official, or another spectator. It will also include repeated infractions that in the Game Official's judgment are intentional or avoidable.

**Penalty:** Minimum 15 yards from Spot or result of play (in addition to any other penalty), automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down

**Note:** The Game Official may assess multiple Unsportsmanlike penalties, award replay of down, a score, a forfeit, eject player(s), or any combination of these in order to maintain the integrity of the game and/or tournament.

Updated 08/2018