

# Morven Park Flag Football League – 6v6 Rules

## I. Game Procedures

1. All spectators, coaches and players must settle at least 3 feet behind the field's sideline.
2. Each team and their spectators should take a side of the field.
3. At the start of each game, captains from both teams shall meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball. The visiting team shall call the toss during the regular season, the higher seed will call the toss during tournament play.
4. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Teams may not choose to defer to the second half.
5. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 20-yard line and has **four (4)** plays to cross every 20 yard segment of the field. Once each 20 yard mark is crossed, they have **four (4)** plays to advance to the next 20 yard mark.
6. If the offense fails to score or cross the nearest 20 yard mark, the ball changes possession and the opposition starts its drive on its own 20-yard line.
7. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 20-yard line. After an interception the offensive team begins their possession where the interception return ended or at their 20-yard line, whichever is the more advanced position.
8. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.
9. Teams must field a minimum of four players at all times. A maximum of two "pick-up" players will be permitted only when a team does not have enough of its own players present to field a team. Teams that are not able to field enough players may play a "legal" game with the consent of the opposing captain.

## II. Game Cancellations/Make-Ups

1. All game cancellations and make-ups will be determined by the league.
2. The primary method of communication in situations of inclement weather will be the league website and, if possible, an email sent by the league to players and coaches.
3. As a secondary method, game cancellation updates may also be published by the league via social media outlets.
4. If games are cancelled, make-ups games will be made up at the same time schedule on a different day determined by the league.

## III. League Rules & Procedures

1. All players must agree to the waiver form before participating.
2. Rules and penalties that are not listed here are defaulted to NFL rules.
3. During games, what the officials rule on the field is final.
4. Protests: There is no protest and all game scores reported are final. However, coaches may bring any issue to the league commissioner's attention so that it can be addressed and where applicable corrected prior to the following week's games.

## IV. Equipment

1. Play requires that each player wear a league approved Sonic Boom Flag Belt with 2 flags. Teams may use a football they have provided that has been approved by the officials or may use the football provided by the league.
2. Players must wear shoes. Football cleats are encouraged; however cleats with exposed metal are not

allowed and must be removed.

3. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
4. Players must remove all watches, earrings and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
5. Uniform jerseys must be worn during play with required minimum 6" numbers on the back.
6. Players' jerseys must be tucked into the pants if they hang below the belt line.
7. Pants or shorts with belt loops or pockets must be taped.
8. Protective mouthpieces are encouraged, but not required.
9. Short colors may vary, but need to be different than your team flag color.
10. Inspections of all players are made by referees prior to the start of each game.

## V. Field

1. The field dimensions are 40 yards by 100 yards including two 10-yard end zones, lines-to-gain every 20 yards, and a midfield line-to-gain at the 40. No-Run Zones precede each end zone by 5 yards.
2. No-Run Zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the No-Run Zones, teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
3. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.

## VI. Rosters

1. Teams must consist of at least six players, with a maximum of 18 players.
2. All players that are participating must be on the roster by the third game of the season.
3. In order to participate in an end-of-season tournament players must be on the team roster and have participated in a minimum of 2 regular season games.

## VII. Timing and Overtime

1. Games are played on a 40 minute continuous clock with two twenty minute halves. The clock stops for timeouts **and NFL Clock Rules are used in the final minute of each half.**
2. Halftime is **three** minutes long.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has **25 seconds** to snap the ball. **No warnings given.**
4. Each team has **two 30-second timeouts per half.**
5. Officials may stop the clock at their discretion for injuries, etc.
6. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game should be determined a tie.
7. In tournament or playoff situations, an overtime (OT) Period will be used to determine a winner.
8. **OT format is as follows: a. College rules apply. Each team has four plays to score from twenty. i. First possession choice goes to the winner of overtime coin toss. ii. Each team gets a minimum of one possession. b. All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect. c. There are no time-outs. i. First OT period – shown above: Scoring teams can go for 1 or 2 point PAT. ii. Second OT Period: First possession goes to loser of overtime coin toss and scoring teams must go for 2 point PAT.**
9. If one team is winning by 17 points or more in the 2nd half, the final minute of the 2nd half will be played with a running clock. The clock will only stop on a timeout.
10. If visibility may be threatened by darkness due to sunset the following modifications may be added by the officials prior to the game for the game in question.
  - a. Timeouts per half will be cut from 2 to 1.
  - b. A timeout stops the game clock, but play clock begins immediately to start the next play.
  - c. 1<sup>st</sup> half one min. warning may be removed or reduced to 30 sec. warning with NFL clock rules.
  - d. Halftime may be reduced to 1 minute or teams may be required to switch sides and begin play immediately.

## **VIII. Scoring**

1. Touchdown: 6 points
2. Point After Touchdown: 1 point from 5-yard line (pass only) or 2 points from 12-yard line (pass or run)
  - a. A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt. conversion (from the 12-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged time out. Decision cannot be changed after a penalty. Interceptions on conversions cannot be returned.
3. Safety: 2 points
  - a. A Safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the end zone.

## **IX. Coaches**

1. Coaches must remain on the sidelines at all times.
2. Coaches are expected to adhere to MPPFL philosophies, rules and codes of conduct.

## **X. Live Ball/Dead Ball**

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone.
3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play
4. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
5. Any official can whistle the play dead.
6. Play is ruled "dead" when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground (there are no fumbles, ball is spotted where it hit the ground).
  - b. The ball carrier's flag is pulled.
  - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - d. A TD, PAT or safety is scored.
  - e. The ball carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
  - f. The ball carrier's flag falls out.
  - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
  - h. Inadvertent whistle.
7. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
  - a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew and the down is consumed.
  - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
8. A team is allowed to use a time out to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team will be charged a time out. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.
9. Referees will whistle play dead when a flag falls off. A team may call a timeout to protest and ask that a touchdown be awarded due to the fact the ball carrier was going to score unless an act of God, Space Wombats, or a sniper interfered with the ball carriers run to the end zone. Referees will confer and if in their judgment, the protesting team's belief is correct. A touchdown will be awarded and the timeout will be given back to them. If the protest goes against them the timeout is lost.

## **XI. Running**

### **1. The ball is spotted based on where the football is when the flag is pulled.**

### **2. The quarterback can directly run with the ball.**

3. 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.
  - a. "Center Sneak" play – The ball must completely leave the center's hands on the snap and he/she must step backwards off the line of scrimmage in order to receive a direct handoff from the QB before advancing the ball.

4. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
5. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding. Spinning is allowed.
6. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
- 7. Similar to 8v8 rules. Open hand blocking between waist and shoulders allowed behind line and within 5 yards of line of scrimmage. Screens may be set down field past 5 yards as long as the defender is given 3 steps to avoid contact.**
- 8. Players may run with the ball carrier, but must stop and set a screen before a defensive player gets within 3 steps.**
9. 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.

## **XII. Passing**

1. All passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage **and be thrown forward. A forward pass may be caught behind the line of scrimmage.**
2. **Shovel passes are allowed.**

## **XIII. Receiving**

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time, parallel to the line of scrimmage.
3. A player must have a least one foot inbounds when making a reception.
4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
5. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not always start on the 20-yard line. After an interception the offensive team begins their possession where the interception return ended or at their 20-yard line, whichever is the more advanced position.
6. Interceptions are returnable, but not on conversions after touchdowns.

## **XIV. Rushing the Passer/Defensive Back Play**

- 1. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.**
- 2. Rushers can line up at any distance. No restrictions.**
3. 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 making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.
4. A sack occurs if the quarterback's flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. a. A safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team's end zone.
- 5. A defensive back may chuck receiver once within 5 yards of line of scrimmage. Defensive back cannot ride the receiver after initial contact. Contact must be between waist and shoulders with open hands only.**

## **XV. Flag Pulling**

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.
2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier.
3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.

4. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends.
5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the jersey.

#### **XVI. Formations**

1. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to five players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage. a. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage. b. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.

**c. Multiple players may shift, but they must be set for one second before snap.**

2. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.
3. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
4. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

#### **XVII. Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**
2. Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.
3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
4. Ball carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
5. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
6. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship, as well: a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams. b. Keep comments clean and profanity free. c. Smoking and drinking are not allowed at the facility. If these activities are seen and addressed by a league official and persists an unsportsmanlike penalty will be called and the individual(s) in question will be asked to leave.

#### **XVII. Penalties**

1. The referee will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question judgment calls.
5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

### **Defensive Penalties:**

- Off Sides = 5 yards/Replay Down
- Illegal Participation = 5 yards/Line of Scrimmage/Replay Down
- Illegal Rushing = 5 yards/Replay Down
- Pass Interference = Spot foul/First Down
- Roughing the passer = 10 yards/First Down
- Holding = 10 yards/Previous Line of Scrimmage on pass plays/End of the run for run plays/Result of play (once a player catches the pass, it is considered a run play when applying this rule)
  - Replay the down if the penalty occurs on 4<sup>th</sup> down or inside the 10-yard line
- Illegal Flag Pull = 5 yards/Spot of Foul
- Illegal Contact = 10 yards/Replay Down
  - Tripping
  - Any intentional contact by an opposing player (referee discretion)
  - Contact with an opposing player after a ball is tipped
  - Rough play may result in an unsportsmanlike penalty
- Illegal Stripping = 5 yards/Spot Foul
  - It is illegal to bat or strip a ball from a player's hand.
- A game cannot end on a defensive penalty even if time expires. One un-timed down will be required to complete the game.

### **Offensive Penalties:**

- Illegal Participation = 5 yards/Line of Scrimmage/Replay Down
- Illegal Formation = 5 yards/Line of Scrimmage/Replay Down
- Illegal Motion = 5 yards/ Replay Down
- False Start = 5 yards/ Replay Down
  - This is a "dead ball" foul and may not be declined.
- Illegal Pass = 10 yards/Line of Scrimmage/Loss of down
- Offensive Pass Interference = 10 yards/Previous Line of Scrimmage/Replay Down
- Holding = 10 yards/ Line of Scrimmage/Replay Down
- Illegal Contact = 10 yards/Loss of Down
  - Pushing Off
  - Any other intentional contact by an offensive player on a defensive player in the field of play
- Flag Guarding = 10 yards/Spot of Foul/Loss of Down
- Hurdling/Diving = 5 yards/Spot of Foul/ Loss of Down
- Off Sides = 5 yards/Repeat Down
- Blocking = 10 yards/Spot of Foul

### **General Penalties:**

- Unsportsmanlike Conduct
  - Arguing with Officials = 15 yards/Possible Ejection
  - Any unsportsmanlike conduct (towards players, referees, league staff, coaches, sidelines, spectators) = 15 yards/Possible Ejection
  - Excessive Contact/Rough Play
    - 15 yards and loss of down (offensive)/First Down (defensive)
    - If official determines that contact was initiated "with intent to harm", the offending player will be ejected from the game. The player must leave the field of play immediately. If the player does not leave the field his/her team may be

- charged with a forfeit for the game regardless of score or time remaining. Any player ejected from a game may not play in any other games that day.
  - The ejected player may not play in future games without league approval.
  - An official may call a forfeit for unsportsmanlike conduct. Even if the game has ended, an official may call a forfeit.
  - The League has the authority to suspend and/or expel a player or team from the league and/or future game(s) at its discretion with no refund of monies for such acts.
- Fighting
    - Automatic ejection from the game
    - Once ejected, a player must leave the field. If the player does not leave the field his/her team may be charged a “forfeit” for that game, regardless of score or time remaining. Any player ejected from a game may not play in any other games that day.
    - The ejected player may not play in future games without league approval.
    - An official may call a forfeit for unsportsmanlike conduct. Even if the game has ended, an official may call a forfeit.
    - The League has the authority to suspend and/or expel a player or team from the league and/or future game(s) at its discretion with no refund of monies for such acts.

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