

## Whitworth Intramurals: Flag Football Rules

### Flag Football Rules

**TEAMS:** Players must sign up through FusionIM and be registered and paid to be eligible to participate. No exceptions.

**THIS LEAGUE REQUIRES A MINIMUM OF 4 TEAMS. IF THIS REQUIREMENT IS NOT MET, THE LEAGUE WILL FOLD. SPEAK WITH AN IM COORDINATOR FOR MORE DETAILS.**

**GAME TIME:** Both teams must have a minimum of one representative on the court/field at game time. Teams must meet the minimum roster requirements by 5 minutes after the scheduled game time!

**Minimum Roster Requirement:** 5 players

**Maximum Roster Requirement:** 15 players

#### **Coed League rules: (Maximum 7 players on the field)**

- If BOTH teams are coed, max 6 male players and minimum 1 female player at all times
- If BOTH teams are NOT coed, max 7 male or female players
- If ONE team is coed and the other is not, the coed team must play with a female player, and the team that is unintegrated must play a player down ( $7 - 1 = 6$ ) every time a female participant is on the field.

#### **Game Structure:**

Two 20-minute running clock halves with a 5-minute halftime. Under 1 minute in the half is considered “stop clock” where the clock will stop on:

- Running with the ball out of bounds
- Incomplete passes
- First downs
- Touchdowns
- Penalties

#### **Field Specs:**

60 yds x 40 yds with two 10-yard end zones at either end of the field. First down marker at midfield.

#### **Equipment:**

Flags and footballs will be provided. Only IM provided flags are allowed for use. Players are allowed to use any football as long as it is NFHS rated or above. No open toed shoes. Cleats are allowed and recommended; however metal spikes are prohibited. Flags are to be worn over all clothing, with the two flags on either hip. Referees are not required to warn players. If there is a warning, it goes for BOTH teams. The penalty for improper flag placement is an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty and will result in a loss of 10 yards.

#### **Scheduling:**

All games will be scheduled on Fusion IM for games on Omache. Please see “Section 7” of the IM policy regarding rescheduling, defaults, forfeits and no-shows. Be sure to update your team time preferences prior to the start of the season.

### Game Play

#### **Start of the game:**

1. Referees will have the field and equipment at the field 10 minutes prior to game time, but teams are allowed to show up as early as desired to warm up.
2. The referee, prior to the start of the game, will make sure that all players are eligible and checked in via Fusion IM.

3. Based upon the schedule, the away team captain always calls the coin toss. The winner will then elect to receive, defend or differ. The loser of the toss then chooses what side to defend, or if the winners deferred their option, either receive or defend.

#### General:

1. A minimum of 5 players must be on the field for the game to start.
2. Scoring is based on number of touchdowns. No extra points will be awarded.
3. Teams start on the "touchback line" (10 yards from the back of the end zone).
4. Each team has 4 attempts (downs) to COMPLETE A PASS (forward or lateral) and cross midfield, where they earn another 4 downs to score in the opponent's end zone.
  - a. The ball can only be advanced by a completed pass or penalty. No rushing plays.
  - b. Every player is eligible to receive a pass from the quarterback.
5. What is considered a catch:
  - a. Receivers only need 1 foot in bounds to make a legal catch.
  - b. Players must have complete control of the ball through contact with the ground.
    - i. Any ball that rolls away due to contact with the ground will not be considered a catch.
  - c. General rule: If it looks like a catch, it's a catch. This is up to referee interpretation.
6. The line of scrimmage serves as the boundary line before the start of each play.
  - o No offensive player may be across the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped. The center is the only exception to the rule.
  - o Offensive players may line up as close to the line as possible.
  - o Defensive player must stay out of the "neutral zone" – the space created by the center.
7. The ball carrier is down when his/her flag falls or is legally removed from their body.
  - a. **RECEIVER W/ NO FLAG:** if a flag falls off an offensive player before the ball has been thrown or caught, the receiver is down at the spot of the catch.
  - b. Play will resume at the spot where the flag was removed.
  - c. **Proper Flag Positioning:** 1 flag on each hip.
8. **Legal Flag pull:** Players **MUST** make an **OBVIOUS** attempt to go for the flag. Incidental contact will be allowed and will not be penalized. Try to keep it clean out there.
9. **NO Flag guarding:**
  - a. Offensive player may not touch their own flags in a way that prohibits the defender from grabbing them.
    - i. EX: Slapping/hitting/pushing aside their own flag.
10. The "quarterback" may not cross the line of scrimmage *UNLESS* the line of scrimmage has been crossed by a defender in pursuit.
11. A center is not needed. The quarterback may either start the play from the line of scrimmage ("under center") or in shotgun (maximum 5 yards from the line of scrimmage). In both cases, the quarterback must hold the ball out in front to imitate receiving the ball from the center.
12. **NO TACKLING.** Players who tackle other players to the ground will be flagged for unnecessary roughness or potentially unsportsmanlike conduct. Player will be removed from the game for one play for a first offense. If you want to hit people, try out for the varsity squad.

#### Touchbacks:

1. A touchback occurs when the ball is fumbled across the goal-line by the offense.
2. A touchback can also occur when the ball is legally recovered by the defense in the end zone (ex: int.), and the recovering player is downed legally.
  - a. The defense can attempt to advance the ball from the end zone at their own risk. (In this instance, the ball will be placed where the defender, who carried the ball out of the end zone is downed.)

#### Blitzing:

1. Defenses must adhere to a "5 second rush clock" – ref timed.
2. Defenses get 1 untimed blitz per every 4 downs.

### Fumbles:

1. Fumbles that hit the ground are dead on contact with the ground and play ceases.
2. Fumbles that do not contact the ground are considered live and playable by the defense.
3. The offense cannot advance a ball they have fumbled.

### Penalties:

1. **Offside:** When a player on the offensive team is across the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. OR the QB crosses the line of scrimmage before a defender does.
  - a. *Penalty enforced or declined after the play. (5-yard penalty, replay down)*
2. **Flag Guarding:** When an offensive player uses their hands to protect their flag or preventing a defender from removing their flag.
  - a. *Penalty enforced after the play (5-yard loss)*
3. **Coverage Sack:** When the offensive team's quarterback (player who received the snap) is still holding the ball after 20 seconds. Timer is referee stop watch.
  - a. *Whistle stops play. (5-yard loss assessed to offense)*
4. **Offensive Pass Interference:** Obvious, egregious physical contact before the ball has reached the receiver that seriously limits the defender's ability to defend the play.
  - a. *Penalty enforced after the play. (10-yard loss).*
5. **Defensive Pass Interference:** Obvious, egregious physical contact before the ball has reached the receiver that seriously limits the receiver's ability to receive the pass.
  - a. *Penalty enforced after the play. (10-yard loss)*
6. **Holding/Illegal Blocking:** When any player grabs clothing of an opponent. When a player has their hands on an opponent's shoulders or back.
  - a. *Penalty enforced after the play. 10-yard penalty)*
7. **Personal Foul:** When a player uses unnecessary roughness at any point during the game. This is a judgement call made by referees for personal safety.
  - a. *Penalty enforced at the end of the play. (10-yard penalty)*
8. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Failure to adhere to warnings given by referees, vulgar language directed at opponents, referees, other patrons. (All dead ball penalties will be assessed as unsportsmanlike conduct penalties.)
  - a. *Penalty can be enforced at any time. (10-yard loss)*
  - b. *Can be cause for ejection/suspension.*
9. **Illegal Blitz:** When a team does not adhere to the 5-second rush clock and has already utilized their 1 blitz for every 4 downs.
  - a. *Penalty is assessed after play, (5-yard gain) replay down.*

### Clarification:

1. **Blocking:** Blocking is legal if the defender is in legal blocking position. Blocking must be done with an open palm, and inside of the "target area" (the shoulders to the hips.) The blocker cannot contact the side or back of the player being blocked.
2. **Goal-line tries:** The ball shall be placed where the ball was when the flag was pulled. If the offensive players body is in play while he/she extends their arms and the ball into the end zone, the try is good and points are awarded. If the offensive player is in the air at the time of the pull, it is up to the judgement of the referees to place the ball or award the points if the offensive player steps out of bounds in an attempt to reach the goal-line, the ball is dead at the spot the player stepped out, regardless of where the ball is.

### Timeouts:

1. Each team is allowed one timeout per half. Teams will not be charged a timeout for an injured player.

### Overtime:

1. Overtime will only be played as time allows for regular season games. All playoff games will have overtime until a winning team is determined

2. A maximum of 3 overtime periods will be played.
  - a. Periods will be 5 minutes long, with “stop clock” period starting at the 2-minute mark.
  - b. Teams are each given 1 timeout.
3. If a winning team is not determined by three 5-minute periods are played, the game will enter NCAA regulation overtime rules.
  - a. Teams start at midfield, a coin is tossed to determine defense and offense,
  - b. Each team is given 4 downs to score a touchdown. The first team to prevent the other team from scoring a touchdown and is able to score a touchdown is the winning team.
    - i. There is no sudden death. Both teams will have the opportunity to score a touchdown.

**Nomad Rule:**

Nomads are defined as IM participants who have paid and are eligible to play on a team during the current season and have been requested to participate with another team so that a game can be completed. Teams automatically accept the use of nomads and accept the outcomes that come from using nomads. Teams can use up to two nomads to complete a roster, but teams are not allowed to play a nomad if they will have a bench. Captains are responsible for the actions of their nomad, including sportsmanship. **Nomads are not allowed to be used during playoffs!!**

**Blood Rule:**

Any player who is bleeding must be substituted for until the bleeding stops. An intramural staff member has the authority to remove the player. Any blood on the court must be removed using proper methods, and bloodied clothing must be changed. AN INTRAMURAL STAFF MEMBER MUST APPROVE THE PLAYER TO REENTER AND HAS THE AUTHORITY TO PREVENT REENTRY. Players who refuse to leave the game due to bleeding could potentially face suspension.

**Protest Policy:**

Teams have the option of protesting any application or misinterpretation of a rule. No protest of a judgment call will be considered. When a team requests a protest, they must call a timeout and the game must be stopped and no further game action should continue. The concern must be brought to the attention of the referees, who will check the ruling, have deliberation and then make a decision. If the call is overturned, the team is not charged with a time-out. If the initial official's ruling is upheld, the team is charged with a timeout. Game play will then continue as normal. If the team determines to continue challenging the call, a formal request can be made by filling out the Protest Form and submitting to the IM Coordinator *within 24 hours of the game*. See the Participant Manual posted on the Whitworth Intramurals website or by speaking to an IM staff member.

