



# Intramural Sports Flag Football Rules



## Intramural Sports Participant Manual

- All participants are required to adhere to the policies of Intramural Sports. This information is located online at <http://intramurals.athletics.cornell.edu/IMWeb/Intramurals>.
- In the Intramural Sports Participant Manual, you will find important information regarding:

Team Information	Participant Information
• Registration	• Eligibility
• Divisions	• Participation
• Playoffs	• Participant Conduct
• Sportsmanship	• Safety
• Forfeits and Cancellations	• Alcohol and Drug Policy
• Protests	
• Champions	

## Fields

- All games will be played on the Jessup Field Complex located at the intersection of Jessup Road and Triphammer Road. **These fields are only available for scheduled Intramural Sports activities.**
- Open recreation is available on North Campus behind Appel Commons.
- All participants should park in A-Lot.

## Timing

- Games will consist of two twenty-minute halves with running time. Stop timing will be used during the last two minutes the second half, at which time the clock will stop on all whistles other than deflagging. Teams will be notified at the two-minute warning of the second half.
- The clock will stop for team and official's timeouts throughout the entire game.
- The clock will run during P.A.T. attempts (except during stop-timing).
- Half time will be three minutes in duration.
- Each team gets one 30-second timeout per half (unused timeouts do not carry-over).

## Overtime

- In the regular season a tie will stand. There is no overtime.
- During the playoffs a coin toss will be conducted at midfield with the following options: offense/defense, or goal (both teams will use the same goal on offense).
- Each team is allowed a series of four downs in which to score from the 20-yard line. If the score remains tied, each team will have another four down series with the opposite team having first option of offense/defense. This type of play will continue until a winner is determined.
- Teams will receive one time-out in an overtime situation.

## Players

- Seven players per team are allowed on the field at a time. A minimum of five players is necessary to begin and continue play.
- Offensive players are responsible for helping retrieve the ball after a down has ended.

- All players not in the game and spectators must remain between the 20-yard lines and two yards off the sideline.
- Any number of substitutions may be made during a game when a stoppage in play has occurred.

### **Start of Play**

- Games will begin with a coin flip at midfield.
- The team winning the coin toss will have to choose from one of three options: receive the ball, choose the goal they would like to defend, or defer their choice to the second half.
- Once decided, play will begin with the ball being spotted at the appropriate 14-yard line.

### **Equipment**

- Each player must wear pants or shorts with **NO belts, belt loops, pockets, or exposed drawstrings**.
- Pants/shorts must be a different color than the flags.
- Shirts must be worn, with either tails tucked inside pants or short enough to be a minimum of four inches above the belt. Jerseys that have been altered in any manner that produces a knot-like protrusion or creates a tear-away jersey are illegal.
- All players are required to wear flag belts the entire game. Belts must be one piece without any knots. Belts must have three flags and are to be secured around the waistline, with one flag positioned on each player's side and one directly in the center of the back. The belt may not be wrapped around itself.

### **CoRec Modifications**

- Eight players per team are allowed on the field at a time. A minimum of six players is necessary to begin and continue play.
- Neither gender may outnumber the opposite gender by more than one player on the field.
- On offense, males may not run the ball past the line of scrimmage; they may only catch a pass from beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Women running, catching or throwing a touchdown will be awarded 9 points. P.A.T.'s remain the same.
- Open/Closed Rule: During the offensive team's possession there may not be two consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards. Penalties do not affect whether a play is open or closed.

### **Snap**

- All plays must originate with a snap from the center. This snap must be received at least two yards behind the offensive scrimmage line. The snap can be made between the legs of the snapper or on the side but must originate from the ground.
- Anytime on or after the ball is marked ready for play, each offensive player must start within 15 yards of the ball before the snap.
- The offense must have at least four players on the offensive line of scrimmage.
- Only one offensive player may be in motion when the ball is snapped. This motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage (no motion toward the line).
- No defensive player may be closer than one yard to the line of scrimmage during all scrimmage downs. Defensive players may not break the neutral zone until the ball is snapped.

## **First Downs**

- A first down is awarded to a team whenever they advance the ball across the next 20-yard marker.
- Four downs will be allowed to complete the task.
- Only one first down per series of possession can be obtained at each 20-yard marker. A team may have anywhere from one inch to 20 yards to get to reach a first down.

## **Carrying the Ball**

- A ball carrier may not deliberately guard their flags. Actions such as slapping with the hand or stiff-arming are examples of flag-guarding. Spinning or jumping to avoid being deflagged is legal.
- A ball carrier may not hurdle a player to avoid deflagging. Hurdling is interpreted as an attempt by a runner to jump over another player.
- If a player inadvertently loses their flags or it is pulled by the opposition before gaining possession of the ball, the play will continue and the player must be downed by a one hand touch, between the shoulder and knees, including the hand and arm. Any player who pushes instead of touches will be called for a penalty.
- A player will be ruled "down" when any part of the body other than the hand or foot touches the ground.
- The defender may not hold or tackle the runner while deflagging the ball carrier. It is illegal to attempt to steal a ball in player possession. The object of the game is to deflag a ball carrier, not steal the ball.
- A fumbled or muffed ball is dead when it strikes the ground.
- Forward progress is determined by where the ball is at the time the runner is deflagged.

## **Blocking & Rushing**

- No part of the body except the feet shall be in contact with the ground and the feet must remain on the ground for the duration of the block.
- Blocking will be by SCREEN BLOCKING ONLY. That is, a blocker must hinder a defender's movement through positioning rather than body contact.
- During a block, the body must remain upright with elbows and hands touching the body at the side or behind the back.
- While incidental contact may occur, blocking/rushing penalties will be called against the player who initiates contact. The defense may not use hands, arms, or legs as a wedge to gain an advantage over a blocker.
- NO SWIM MOVES WILL BE ALLOWED

## **Passing**

- A forward pass may be thrown from any point behind the line of scrimmage.
- All incomplete backward passes shall be marked down at the point of ground contact.
- Only one forward pass may be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage on a given play.
- A forward pass is illegal if:
  1. It is thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage.
  2. It is intentional grounding.
  3. It is thrown after a change of possession.
  4. The passer catches his/her untouched forward/backward pass.
  5. It is the second forward pass during a play.
- All players except the passer are eligible to receive a pass.
- A player must have complete possession of the ball and land with the first part of their body inbound (normally one foot) to be a legal reception.

- A pass intercepted in the end zone may be advanced.
- If the passer is de-flagged prior to releasing the ball, the ball is dead at that spot and the down has ended.
- If an offensive player goes out-of-bounds on their own volition and returns inbounds, it is an illegal participation foul if they participate in any way with the play.
- Roughing the Passer: defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear the ball has been thrown. No defensive player shall contact the passer who is standing still or fading back as he/she is considered out of the play after the pass. The ball is part of the passer while he/she has the ball in his/her hand.

## **Kicking**

- There are no kickoffs to start the game or after a touchdown. The ball will start on the 14-yard line in both instances.
- On fourth down, the offense must announce when the ball is marked ready-for-play whether or not they will punt. Once the decision is made, it can only be changed if a timeout is taken. If a punt is to be made, the following procedures must be followed.
  - The offense must have a minimum of four players on their line of scrimmage.
  - The kicker must receive the ball two yards behind the center.
  - The punt must be made immediately and in a continuous motion upon receiving the snap.
  - Players of both teams may not advance beyond their respective scrimmage lines until the ball is kicked.
- Blocking Kicks: Once the ball is punted, any defensive player may block the kick. If a blocked punt hits the ground, it is dead at the spot. If the punt is blocked and then caught by an offensive player behind the scrimmage line it may be advanced. Any player on the defensive team may advance the kick anywhere in the field of play or end zone.
- Returning Kicks
  - When a punt which has crossed the scrimmage line, touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to the receiving team.
  - If the ball is caught in the air, or after the ball has hit the ground, it can be advanced by any player on the receiving team.
  - If the ball hits a player on the receiving team and then is caught in the air by anyone on the kicking team, the ball is dead and belongs to the kicking team.

## **Scoring**

- Point values will be as follows:
  1. Touchdown: 6 points
  2. P.A.T.'s: 3-yard line = 1 Point; 10-yard line = 2 Points; 20-yard line = 3 Points
  3. Safety: 2 points
  4. Defensive player returning intercepted pass on a PAT for a score: 3 points
- Touchdown Verification: The player scoring the touchdown must raise his/her arms so the nearest official can de-flag the player. If the player is not de-flagged with one pull or the official determines the flag belt has been secured illegally, the touchdown is disallowed, the player is disqualified and an unsportsmanlike conduct foul will be assessed.
- If a men's or women's team is ahead by 19 points or more with two minutes remaining, the game will be stopped and the team that is ahead will be declared the winner.
- If a CoRec team is ahead by 25 points or more with two minutes remaining, the game will be stopped and the team that is ahead will be declared the winner.
- If a team is ahead by 40 points or more at any point during the second half, the game will be stopped and the team that is ahead will be declared the winner.

## **Penalties**

- When both teams commit an infraction during the same live ball period, regardless of the severity, the down is automatically replayed, provided there is no change of possession. If an ejection is warranted, this may occur even though no yardage is assessed.
- When a live ball and dead ball penalty occurs, each is handled on its own merit, regardless whether the penalties are on the same or opposing teams.
- All unsportsmanlike conduct penalties are penalized as a dead ball foul.
- Any player from either team who comes on to the field during any kind of altercation will be disqualified and a 10-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will be enforced from the succeeding spot.
- The second unsportsmanlike conduct penalty by the same player or non-player results in disqualification.
- Live ball fouls committed by either team after a turnover during a try or overtime shall be enforced at the succeeding spot (where the ball will next be snapped or free kicked).
- Delay of Game: the offense has 25 seconds from the time the ball is marked ready to play to snap the ball.
- When an inadvertent whistle occurs, the offensive team will have the option of taking the play with the ball spotted at its location when the whistle blew or replay the down. If the ball is loose following a backward pass or fumble, the team will have the option of taking the ball at the spot where possession was lost or replay the down. During a legal forward pass or any kick, if an inadvertent whistle occurs, the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down replayed.

*All rules not specifically covered in this document will be enforced as NIRSA Flag Football Rules.  
All rules are subject to change by the Intramural Sports professional staff.*