

WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY – HESKETT CENTER

Intramural Flag Football Rules – 2009-2010

Wichita State University Intramural Flag Football will follow National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association Flag and Touch Football Rules. The following is a listing of the more common rules applying to Intramural play along with Intramural Recreational Sports Modifications. The complete NIRSA rulebook is available for viewing in the Intramural Recreational Sports Office.

1. The Game, Field, and Equipment

The Game:

- i. The game shall be played between two teams of seven players each. Five players are required to begin a game.
- b. Team Captains:
 - i. Each team shall designate a captain, who will be responsible for all communication with game officials.

2. The Field:

- a. The field will measure 80 yards in length and 30 yards in width.
- b. The field will be divided into three sections measuring 20 yards in length with two 10 yard end zones on each end.
- c. Hash marks will be placed on each three and ten yard lines.
- d. Cones will be placed at the intersections of the goal lines and sidelines, and at the intersections of end lines and sidelines.
- e. The field will be lined with an X at the 14 yard line. This will serve as the start point for all halves, after touchdowns and safeties.

3. Game Equipment:

- a. **Football:**
 - i. Men will use a regular sized football.
 - ii. Women may use either regular, intermediate, or youth sized footballs.
 - iii. Game balls will be provided, but teams may use their own balls as long as both captains agree.
- b. **Ball Spotters:**
 - i. Two soft, pliable ball spotters will be used. One will mark the defensive scrimmage line and one will mark the offensive scrimmage line.

4. Player Equipment – Required:

- a. **Jerseys:**
 - i. Each player must wear a shirt that can be tucked in or that hangs a minimum of four inches above the player's waistline.
- b. **Pants/Shorts:**
 - i. Each player must wear pants or shorts without pockets, belts, belt loops, or exposed drawstrings. Pants or Shorts must be a different color than flags.
- c. **Flag Belt:**
 - i. Each player must wear the provided flag belt in a manner that two of the flags hang on the side and the other hangs on the back.
- d. **Shoes:**
 - i. Players may wear sneakers or cleats, provided that the cleats are not metal.

5. Player Equipment – Optional:

- a. Players are strongly encouraged to wear mouth guards
- b. Players may wear gloves which are soft and pliable
- c. Players may wear head bands or knit caps, provided that the cap has no bill.
- d. Players may wear pliable, non rigid sunglasses.
- e. Players may wear soft pads on their legs

6. Player Equipment – Illegal:

- a. Players may not wear any hats that may be hard or contain a bill or exposed knots.
- b. Players may not wear jewelry.
 - i. Players may wear Medical Alert Bracelets, as long as they are taped so they do not hang from the skin.
- c. Players may not wear pads or braces above the waist.
- d. Players may not wear towels attached at the waist.
- e. Players may not wear leg and knee braces, unless all rigid edges are covered with at least ½ inch of rubber wrap.

7. Definitions of Playing Terms

8. Ball – Live, Dead, Loose, Possession:

- a. **Live Ball:**
 - i. A live ball is a ball that is in play, while a dead ball is not in play
- b. **Loose Ball:**
 - i. A loose ball is live and not in player possession.
- c. **In Possession:**
 - i. A player is in possession when he/she is controlling the ball.
 - ii. A team is in possession when:
 1. One of its players is in possession
 2. While a punt is being attempted
 3. While a forward pass thrown by one of its players is in flight.
- d. **Ready for Play:**
 - i. A dead ball is ready for play when the Referee sounds the whistle

9. Bat:

- a. Batting is intentionally slapping or striking the ball with the hand or arm.

10. Catch, Interception, Simultaneous Catch, Touching:

- a. **Catch:**
 - i. One foot in bounds and possession of the ball is required for a catch.
- b. **Interception:**
 - i. The catch of an opponent's fumble or pass.
- c. **Simultaneous Catch:**
 - i. A catch where there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are in bounds
- d. **Touching:**
 - i. Any contact with the ball.

11. Encroachment:

- a. A player of either team being in the neutral zone.

12. Fighting:

- a. Any attempt to strike or engage an opponent in a combative manner.

13. Handing the Ball:

- a. Transferring player possession without throwing the ball

14. Huddle:

- a. Two or more players grouped together after the ball is ready for play but before assuming scrimmage formation.

15. Hurdling:

- a. An attempt by a player to jump over an opponent who is not touching the ground with any part of their body except one foot or both feet.

16. Neutral Zone:

- a. The area between the forward point of the football to the defense's scrimmage line. It is established when the ball is ready for play.

17. Passer:

- a. Any player who has thrown a legal forward pass.

18. Passes:

a. Passing:

- i. Throwing the ball so that it travels in flight.

b. Forward and Backward Pass:

- i. A forward pass is thrown so that its initial direction is towards the opponent's end line. A backward pass is thrown so that its initial direction is parallel with or toward the passer's end line. A pass is a pass until it hits the ground or is caught. A backward pass or fumble is dead at the spot where it hits the ground.

19. Removing the Flag Belt (Tackling)

a. Flag Belt Removal:

- i. When the flag belt is removed from the runner in possession of the ball, the ball is declared dead and the down is over. If a flag belt inadvertently falls to the ground, a one hand tag constitutes capture. A player may leave his/her feet to remove a flag belt.

b. Contact:

- i. In an attempt to remove the flag belt, an opponent may contact the body and shoulder, but not any part of the head. An opponent may not hold, push, or knock the runner down in an attempt to remove the flag belt.

20. Screen Blocking:

- a. Legally obstructing an opponent without initiating body contact.

21. Scrimmage:

a. Scrimmage Line:

- i. The yard line and its vertical plane that passes through the forward point of the ball.

22. Shift:

- a. On or more offensive who, after taking set positions, move to a new set position.

23. Tagging:

- a. Placing one hand anywhere on the opponent with the ball. A player may leave his/her feet in attempt to tag an opponent. Violent contact is not permitted during a tag.

24. Team and Player Designations:

a. Line Player and Backfield Player:

- i. A line player is any person on their scrimmage line when the ball is snapped. A backfield player is one who is behind the line of scrimmage at the snap.

b. Offense & Defense:

- i. The offensive team is in possession of the ball, while the defensive team is the opposing team.

c. Runner:

- i. A player in possession of a live ball.

25. Periods, Time Factors, Substitutions

26. The Start of Each Half:

a. Coin Toss/Paper Rock Scissors

- i. A coin toss or PRS will be held prior to the game. The winner of that coin toss will have the following options:
 - 1. To choose to play offense or defense.

- 2. To choose which goal to defend.
- 3. To defer options to the second half.
- ii. The captain not having the first choice of options shall exercise the second choice.
- iii. The loser of the toss will have first choice of options in the second half.
- b. **Forfeit Time:**
 - i. Game time is forfeit time.
- c. **Start Each Half:**
 - i. Unless moved by penalty, the ball shall be snapped on the 14 yard line to start each half.

27. Game Time:

- a. **Playing Time and Intermissions:**
 - i. Playing time shall be 40 minutes, divided into two halves of 20 minutes each. The intermission between halves shall be three minutes.
- b. **Unusual Situations:**
 - i. A period may be shortened by mutual agreement of both captains and the referee.
- c. **Extension of Periods:**
 - i. A period must be extended for an untimed down, except for unsportsmanlike or non player fouls, if during the last timed down, one of the following occurred:
 - 1. There was an accepted penalty.
 - 2. There was a double foul.
 - 3. There was an inadvertent whistle.
 - 4. If a touchdown was scored, the try must be attempted unless it will have no affect on the outcome of the game.
- d. **First 20 Minutes:**
 - i. The clock will start on the first snap. It will run continuously for the first 20 minutes unless stopped for a :
 - 1. Team timeout – starts on the snap.
 - 2. Official’s timeout – starts on the ready for play.
- e. **Two Minute Warning:**
 - i. Approximately two minutes before the end of the second half the referee shall stop the clock and inform both captains of the playing time remaining. The clock will start again on the snap. The timer will announce the time remaining and the status of the clock after every play during the final two minutes of the half.
- f. **Last Two Minutes:**
 - i. During the final two minutes of the game, the clock will stop for a(n):
 - 1. Incomplete forward pass – starts on the snap.
 - 2. Out of Bounds – starts on the snap.
 - 3. Score – starts on the snap.
 - 4. Team timeout – starts on the snap.
 - 5. First Down – dependent on the previous play.
 - 6. Penalty and Administration – dependent on the previous play, except for delay of game, when the clock will start on the snap.
 - 7. Official’s timeout – starts on the ready for play.
 - 8. Touchback – starts on the snap.
 - 9. Turnover – starts on the snap.
 - 10. Team attempts to conserve/consume time illegally – starts on the snap.
 - 11. Inadvertent Whistle – starts on the ready for play.

28. Tie Game

- a. **Mandatory Meeting:**

- i. If a game ends in a tie, all players involved must meet with the officials at the center of the field to discuss the tiebreaking procedures. After this meeting, the captains will stay for the coin toss.
- b. **Coin Toss or PRS:**
 - i. A coin toss or PRS will determine the options, just like at the start of the game. The winner shall be given the option of offense, defense, or direction. The loser shall make the choice from the remaining options. The results of this process will alternate for all further overtime periods. All overtime periods are played toward the same goal.
- c. **Tie Breaker:**
 - i. Unless moved by penalty, each team will start first and goal from the defense's 10 yard line. Each team will have four downs, unless extended by penalty, to score. If the first team scores, the opponent will always get a chance to tie or win. If the first team does not score and the second team does, then the game is over. If the defense intercepts a pass or fumble, then the defense will begin its possession on the ten yard line. If the defense returns an interception for a touchdown, then the game is over. Each time is entitled to one timeout for the entire overtime. Unused timeouts do not carry over.
- d. **Fouls and Penalties:**
 - i. All penalties will be administered as they would in regulation.

29. Timeouts

- a. Each team is entitled to 3 charged team timeouts for the game.
- b. Charged timeouts shall be one minute in length and may be shortened if both teams are ready.
- c. If an injury timeout is called for a player, then that player must be replaced for at least one down.
- d. The referee shall notify both captains and other officials of the number of timeouts each team has remaining after every charged timeout.

30. Delays:

- a. **Delay of Game:**
 - i. The ball must be put into play promptly and legally. Delay of game includes:
 1. Failure to snap within 25 seconds of the ready for play whistle.
 2. Putting the ball in play before the ready for play whistle is blown.
 3. The penalty for delay of game is a dead ball foul and five yards from the succeeding spot.
- b. **Illegally Conserving/Consuming Time:**
 - i. The referee may start or stop the game clock whenever he/she feels that a team is trying to conserve or consume playing time. *Penalty:* Delay of Game, 5 yards.

31. Substitutions:

- a. **Eligible Substitutions:**
 - i. No substitute may enter during a down
 - ii. Between downs, there is no limitation to the number of substitutions a team can make. Substitutes must enter the field from their team area. Replaced players must leave the field at the sideline nearest their team area. *Penalty:* Substitution Infraction, five yards, either live or dead ball.
- b. **Legal Substitutions:**
 - i. During the same dead ball interval, no substitute shall become a player and withdraw and no player shall become a substitute and reenter unless a penalty is accepted, a dead ball foul occurs, there is a charged timeout, or a period ends. *Penalty:* Substitution Infraction, five yards from previous spot.

32. Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out of Bounds

33. Ball in Play – Dead Ball

- a. A dead ball becomes live when it is legally snapped
- b. **Ball Declared Dead:**
 - i. A live ball becomes dead when :
 1. It goes out of bounds.
 2. When any part of the runner other than the hand (a ball in possession is considered to be part of the hand) or feet touches the ground.
 3. When a score is made.
 4. When the ball strikes the ground following first touching by the punting team.
 5. When a forward or backward pass strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players. A snap that hits the ground before reaching its intended receiver is dead at the spot where it hits the ground.
 6. When a forward pass is completed in the end zone.
 7. When a runner has a flag belt legally removed by an opponent. A flag belt is removed when the clip is detached from the belt.
 8. When a runner whose flag has inadvertently fallen off is legally tagged with one hand by an opponent.
 9. When a muffed punt strikes the ground.
 10. When an official inadvertently sounds his/her whistle during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, when:
 - a. The ball is in player possession – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where declared dead or replay the down.
 - b. The ball is loose from a fumble or backward pass – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.
 - c. During a legal forward pass or punt – the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down is replayed.
 - i. If a foul occurs during any of the above downs, an accepted penalty shall nullify the inadvertent whistle.

34. Out of Bounds:

- a. **Player Out of Bounds:**
 - i. A player is out of bounds when any part of his/her body touches anything, other than another player or official, which is on or outside the sideline or end line.
- b. **Player in Possession Out of Bounds:**
 - i. A ball in player possession is out of bounds when the runner or the ball touches anything, other than another player or official, which is on or outside the sideline or end line.
- c. **Loose Ball Out of Bounds:**
 - i. A loose ball is out of bounds when it touches anything which is out of bounds.

35. Series of Downs, Number of Down, and Team Possession After Penalty

36. A Series – How Started, How Broken, Renewed

- a. **A Down is a Unit:**
 - i. A down is a unit of a game which starts with a legal snap and ends when the ball next becomes dead.
- b. **Series of Downs:**

- i. A team shall have four consecutive downs to advance to the next zone. Any down may be repeated or lost if provided by the rules.
- c. **Zone Line to Gain:**
 - i. The zone line to gain shall be the next line in advance of the ball at the beginning of a series of downs.
- d. **Awarding a New Series:**
 - i. A new series shall be awarded when:
 1. A team moves the ball into the next zone.
 2. A penalty moves the ball into the next zone.
 3. A penalty results in an automatic first down.
 4. A new team obtains possession of the ball.

37. Down and Possession After Penalty:

- a. **Penalty Resulting In a First Down:**
 - i. If a penalty stipulates a first down, the down and distance established by that penalty shall be first down with the next zone line to gain.
- b. **Penalty Before Change of Team Possession:**
 - i. Following a down and distance penalty between the goal lines which occurs during a down and before any change of team possession during that down, the ball belongs to the offense. The down shall be repeated unless the penalty also involves a loss of down or leaves the ball on or beyond the zone line to gain. If the penalty involves loss of down, the down shall count as one of the four in that series.
- c. **Penalty After Change of Team Possession:**
 - i. Following a distance penalty for a foul committed after team possession has changed during that down, the ball belongs to the team in possession when the foul occurred. The down and distance established by that penalty shall be first down with zone line to gain.
- d. **Penalty Declined:**
 - i. If a penalty is declined the number of the next down shall be whatever it would have been had the foul not occurred.
- e. **Rule Decision Final:**
 - i. No rule decision may be changed after the ball is next legally snapped.

38. Kicking the Ball

39. Punt:

- a. **Punt:**
 - i. Prior to marking the ball ready for play on fourth down, the referee must ask the offensive team captain if he/she wishes to punt. The referee will communicate this decision to the defensive captain and the other officials. The offense may declare a punt on any down. After a decision is made, it is final, unless a timeout is called or a penalty occurs which allows the offense the right to repeat the down.
- b. **Formation and Snap:**
 - i. Neither team may advance across their scrimmage line until the ball is punted. *Penalty:* Live Ball, Illegal Procedure, five yards from the previous spot. All scrimmage line rules apply to the punt.
- c. **Punting the Ball:**
 - i. After receiving the snap, the punter must punt the ball immediately and in a continuous motion. *Penalty:* Live Ball, Illegal Procedure, five yards from the previous spot.
- d. **After Being Punted:**

- i. Once the ball is punted, any defensive player may block the kick. If the blocked punt hits the ground, it is dead. If a member of the kicking team catches a blocked punt behind the offensive scrimmage line, he/she may advance it. The kicking team may punt the ball only once per down. *Penalty:* Live Ball, Illegal Kicking, 10 yards.

e. Punt Crosses The Kicking Team's Scrimmage Line:

- i. When a punt that has crossed the kicking team's scrimmage line, touches a player from either team and hits the ground, the ball becomes dead. If the ball hits a player and is caught in the air by the receiving team, the receiving team can advance. In the same situation, if the ball is caught by a member of the kicking team, the ball is dead, it belongs to the kicking team, and a new series of downs is awarded.

f. First Touching:

- i. When a member of the kicking team touches the ball after it has been punted across the offensive scrimmage line and before it is touched by a member of the receiving team, it is referred to as first touching. The receiving team may take the ball at the spot of the touch or may choose to have the ball put in play as determined by the actions following the touch. If the receiving team commits a penalty that is accepted, it loses its right to take the ball where it was first touched.

g. Punt Out of Bounds Between the Goal Lines:

- i. If the punt goes out of bounds between the goal lines or the ball comes to rest inbounds untouched and no player attempts to secure it, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team at that spot.

h. Punt Beyond the Goal Line:

- i. A punt can be returned from the end zone. If the punt goes out of bounds in the end zone or is downed in the end zone, then it is a touchback.

40. Kick Catch Interference:

- a. The receiving team may not be interfered with in any way while attempting to catch a punt from the air. *Penalty:* Kick Catch Interference, either 10 yards from the previous spot and replay the down or the receiving team may take the result of the play.

41. Signals:

- a. Players and officials shall ignore any signals given by the kickers or receivers. The ball will remain live and there is no foul.

42. Snapping, Handing, and Passing the Ball

43. The Scrimmage:

- a. **The Start:**
 - i. All plays must be started by a legal snap
- b. **Ball Responsibility:**
 - i. The offensive team is responsible for keeping up with the ball.

44. Prior to the Snap:

- a. **Encroachment:**
 - i. Following the ready play whistle and until the snap, no defensive player may advance across the defensive line of scrimmage. After the snapper has placed his/her hands on the ball, it is encroachment for any offensive player to break the line of scrimmage. *Penalty:* Dead Ball, 5 yards from the succeeding spot. If, during the same dead ball interval, two or more consecutive encroachment fouls are committed by the defensive team, then the penalty will be ten yards for each subsequent encroachment.
- b. **False Start:**

- i. No offensive player shall simulate the start of a play. *Penalty:* Dead Ball, Illegal Procedure, five yards from the succeeding spot.
 - c. **Snap:**
 - i. The snapper, after assuming a position for the snap, may neither move nor change the position of the ball. The snapper shall take a position over the ball with his/her feet behind the line of scrimmage. The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position on the ground with a quick and continuous motion of the hand. *Penalty:* Dead Ball, Illegal Procedure, five yards from the succeeding spot.
45. **Position and Action During the Snap:**
- a. **Legal Position:**
 - i. Anytime at or after the ball is ready for play, each offensive player must be momentarily within 15 yards of the ball.
 - b. **Minimum Line Players:**
 - i. The offensive team must have at least 3 players on their scrimmage line at the snap. The remaining players may be on or behind the scrimmage line. A player in motion is not counted as on the scrimmage line. *Penalty:* Live Ball, Illegal Procedure, five yards.
 - c. **Motion:**
 - i. An offensive player may be in motion, but not toward the opponent's goal line. Other players must be stationary. *Penalty:* Live Ball, Illegal Motion, five yards.
 - d. **Direct Snap:**
 - i. The player receiving the snap shall be at least two yards behind the offensive scrimmage line. *Penalty:* Live Ball, Illegal Procedure, five yards.
 - e. **Shift:**
 - i. All offensive players must come to a complete stop for at least one full second before the ball is snapped. *Penalty:* Live Ball, Illegal Shift, five yards.
46. **Handing the Ball:**
- a. Any player may hand the ball forward or backward at any time.
47. **Backward Pass and Fumble:**
- a. **Anytime:**
 - i. A runner may pass the ball backward or laterally at any time, except if intentionally throwing the ball out of bounds to conserve time. *Penalty:* Illegal Pass, five yards from the spot of the pass, Loss of Down, Clock Starts on the Ready for Play Whistle.
 - b. **Caught or Intercepted:**
 - i. Any backward pass may be caught or intercepted and advanced by a player who is inbounds.
 - c. **Simultaneous Catch By Opposing Players:**
 - i. If a backward pass or fumble in flight is caught by members of opposing teams who are inbounds, then the ball is dead at the spot and is awarded to the offensive team.
 - d. **Out of Bounds:**
 - i. A backward pass or fumble that goes out of bounds between the goal lines, then the ball becomes dead at the out of bounds spot. If it goes out of bounds in the end zone, it is a touchback or safety.
 - e. **Ball Dead When It Hits the Ground:**
 - i. A backward pass or fumble is dead where it hits the ground and belongs to the offensive team, unless lost on downs.
48. **Legal and Illegal Forward Pass:**
- a. **Legal Forward Pass:**

- i. All players are eligible to catch a pass. During a scrimmage down and before team possession changes, a forward pass may be thrown provided that the passer's feet are behind the line of scrimmage when the ball leaves his/her. A team can run the ball across the scrimmage line and return behind the scrimmage line and still legally throw a forward pass. Only one forward pass may be thrown per down.
 - b. **Illegal Forward Pass:**
 - i. A forward pass is illegal if:
 1. The passer's foot is beyond the scrimmage line at the time of release.
 2. Thrown after team possession has changed during the down.
 3. Intentionally thrown to the ground or out of bounds to save loss of yardage.
 4. A passer catches his/her own untouched forward pass.
 5. There is more than one forward pass per down.
 6. *Penalty:* Illegal Pass, five yards from the spot of the foul, Loss of Down.
 - c. **After Illegal Forward Pass:**
 - i. If an illegal forward pass touches the ground or goes out of bounds, then the ball is dead and belongs to the passing team. If the loss of down penalty results in a turnover, then the ball belongs to the opposing team. An illegal forward pass may be advanced if caught in flight.
49. **Completed or Intercepted Passes:**
- a. **Pass Caught or Intercepted:**
 - i. A pass is counted as a completion or an interception as long as the first part of the person to make contact with the ground after the catch, usually one foot, touches inbounds.
 - b. **Simultaneous Catch By Opposing Players:**
 - i. If a ball is caught simultaneously by opposing players who are inbounds, the ball is dead at the spot and belongs to the offense.
50. **Incomplete Passes:**
- a. When a forward pass touches the ground or anything out of bounds, it becomes dead.
51. **Forward Pass Interference:**
- a. **Contact:**
 - i. All players have the right to catch a ball in flight. Incidental contact is legal. A player may not gain an advantage by contacting a player who is in position to catch a ball. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged prior to touching the ball on a forward pass.
 - b. **Offensive Pass Interference:**
 - i. Offensive pass interference restrictions apply at the time the ball is snapped. *Penalty:* Offensive Pass Interference, 10 yards from the previous spot, Loss of Down.
 - c. **Defensive Pass Interference:**
 - i. Defensive pass interference restrictions apply once the ball is in flight. *Penalty:* Defensive Pass Interference, 10 yards from the previous spot, Automatic First Down.
52. **Scoring Plays and Touchback**
53. **Mercy Rule:**
- a. If at any point at or inside the two minute warning a team is ahead by 19 or more points, the game shall be over. In Corec score must be 25 or more.

54. Touchdown

a. Touchdown Value:

- i. All touchdowns shall be worth six points. Corec touchdowns involving a female count at nine points.

b. How scored:

- i. A touchdown is scored when a runner advances so that the forward point of the football breaks the vertical plane of the opponent's goal line, or when a loose ball is caught by a player when the ball is in the end zone.

c. Player Responsibility:

- i. The player who scores must raise his/her arms so that the nearest official can deflag the player. If the official determines that the flag has been illegally secured, a penalty shall be called and the offender shall be disqualified from the game. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards from the previous spot. If the penalty is on the offense, then a loss of down will incur. If the penalty is on the defense, then an automatic first down will be awarded.

55. Try = 1, 2, or 3 Points:

a. 1, 2, or 3 Points:

- i. Teams may elect the value of their attempt from the following options:
 1. One point from the three yard line.
 2. Two points from the 10 yard line.
 3. Three points from the 18 yard line.
- ii. Teams may run or pass.
- iii. Before the try, the official will ask the captain whether he/she chooses to go for 1, 2 or 3. The official will announce the decision to the defensive captain and the other officials. This decision cannot be changed unless a timeout is charged.
- iv. If the defense intercepts the ball and returns it into their opponent's end zone, it shall be awarded three points.
- v. A try continues until the ball becomes dead.

b. Fouls During a Try Before Change of Possession:

- i. If a double foul occurs, then the try will be replayed. When a distance penalty occurs and is accepted, the basic spot of enforcement shall be the previous spot. If the offense commits a penalty which carries a loss of down that is accepted, the try is over.

c. Next Possession:

- i. The next possession by the opponent of the scoring team shall begin on the 10 yard line, unless moved by penalty.

56. Force and Responsibility:

a. Responsibility:

- i. The team responsible for the ball being on, above, or behind the goal line is the team whose player:
 1. Carries the ball to or across the goal line.
 2. Imparts to the ball an impetus which forces it to or across that line.
 3. Incurs a penalty which leaves the ball on or behind the line.

b. Force:

- i. The force imparted by a player who punts, passes, snaps, or fumbles a ball shall be considered responsible for the ball's progress in any direction, even though it may be deflected or reversed.

57. Momentum, Safety, and Touchback:

a. Safety:

- i. It is a safety when:

1. A runner carries a ball from the field of play to or across his/her own goal line, and it becomes dead there.
 - a. Exception: If a player intercepts a pass, fumble, or catches a punt between his/her own five yard line and the goal line and his/her original momentum carries him/her into the end zone where the ball is declared dead, then the ball belongs to that team at the spot where possession was gained. This is known as the momentum rule.
 2. A player punts, passes, fumbles, snaps, muffs, or bats a loose ball from the field of play to or across his/her own goal line and the ball subsequently becomes dead there.
 3. A player on offense commits a penalty which is enforced from within the end zone.
 4. To avoid a safety, the entire ball must be out of the end zone.
 5. Following a safety, the possession of the scoring team shall begin at its own 10 yard line, unless moved by penalty.
- b. **Touchback:**
- i. It is a touchback when:
 1. A punt is downed within the end zone.
 2. The ball is out of bounds behind a goal line, when the ball becomes dead in possession of a player in the end zone, or when the ball becomes dead no in possession and the attacking team is responsible.
 3. After a touchback, the ball shall be snapped from the 10 yard line, unless moved by penalty.

58. Conduct of Players and Others

59. Unsportsmanlike Conduct: The penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct is 10 yards, and if flagrant, may warrant disqualification.

- a. **Non Contact Player Acts:**
 - i. No player shall commit non contact acts during a period or intermission.
- b. **Dead Ball Player Fouls:**
 - i. When the ball becomes dead in possession of a player, he/she shall not:
 1. Intentionally kick the ball.
 2. Spike the ball.
 3. Throw the ball high into the air.
- c. **Prohibited Acts:**
 - i. There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct by participants subject to the rules. Examples include:
 1. Disrespectfully addressing an official.
 2. Objecting to an official's decision.
 3. Taunting
 4. Using vulgar language.
 5. Fighting.
 6. Intentionally contacting an official physically during the game.
- d. **Second Unsportsmanlike Foul:**
 - i. The second unsportsmanlike foul by a participant shall result in disqualification.
- e. **Player Ejection:**
 - i. If a participant is ejected from the game, he/she must leave the premises, out of sight and out of sound. The ejected party is suspended from all further intramural play until he/she arranges to meet with the Intramural Recreational Sports Director to discuss reinstatement.
- f. **Third Unsportsmanlike Foul:**

- i. The third unsportsmanlike foul by the same team shall result in forfeiture of the game.

60. Unfair Acts:

a. Unfair Acts:

- i. No participant shall use words or phrases or commit any act not in accordance with the spirit of fair play for the purpose of confusing an opponent.

61. Personal Fouls:

a. Player Restrictions:

- i. Any act prohibited hereunder or any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. No player shall:
 1. Strip or attempt to strip the ball from the runner.
 2. Contact an opponent who is on the ground.
 3. Throw the runner to the ground.
 4. Hurdle any other player.
 5. Make contact of any nature with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary.
 6. Deliberately drive or run into a defensive player.
 7. Taking an opponent toward the ground as in tackle football.
- ii. *Penalty:* 10 yards, and if flagrant, disqualification. In article 7, the offender will be disqualified.

b. Roughing the Passer:

- i. Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after the ball is in flight. *Penalty:* Roughing the Passer, 10 yards, Automatic First Down.

62. Blocking: The Penalty for Illegal Blocking is Personal Foul, 10 yards.

a. Offensive Screen Blocking:

- i. The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The blocker's arms and legs must be within the frame of his/her shoulders. Any use of the arms, legs, or body to initiate contact is illegal.

b. Screen Blocking Fundamentals:

- i. A player who screens shall not:
 1. Take a position closer than a normal step when behind a stationary opponent.
 2. Make contact when assuming a position at the side or in front of an opponent.
 3. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his/her opponent cannot avoid contact by changing direction.

c. Blocking and Interlocked Interference:

- i. Teams may not block by using interlocked interference by grasping or encircling on another in any manner.

d. Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense:

- i. Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. Defenders cannot use their hands or arms as wedges to contact their opponent.

63. Runner:

a. Guarding the Flag Belt:

- i. Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for a defender to remove the flag belt. Examples include:
 1. Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt.
 2. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt.
 3. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt.
- ii. *Penalty:* Flag Guarding, 10 yards.

b. Stiff Arm & Charging:

- i. The runner shall not contact the opponent with an extended hand or arm. The runner shall neither charge into nor contact an opponent. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards.
 - c. **Helping the Runner:**
 - i. The runner shall not grasp a teammate or be grasped, pulled, or pushed by a teammate. *Penalty:* Helping the Runner, five yards.
 - d. **Obstructing the Runner:**
 - i. An opponent shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag belt. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards.
64. **Batting and Kicking:**
- a. **Batting a Free Ball:**
 - i. Players shall not bat a loose ball other than a pass or fumble in flight. A backward pass in flight shall not be batter forward by the passing team. Exception: The punting team may bat a punt out of their end zone back toward the field of play. *Penalty:* Illegal Batting, 10 yards.
 - b. **Illegal Kicking:**
 - i. No player shall intentionally kick a ball other than a punt. An illegal lick shall be treated like a fumble. *Penalty:* Illegal Kicking, 10 yards.
65. **Illegal Participation:**
- a. **It Is Illegal Participation:**
 - i. To have seven or more players participating at the snap.
 - ii. If an injured player is not replaced for at least one down, unless the intermission occurs.
 - iii. To pretend substitution to deceive an opponent.
 - iv. For a disqualified player to reenter the game.
 - v. If a player intentionally goes out of bounds and returns inbounds during a down.
 - vi. *Penalty:* Illegal Participation, 10 yards.
66. **Flag Belt Removal:**
- a. **Basic Tenets:**
 - i. Players must have possession of the ball before they can be deflagged by an opponent.
 - ii. When a runner loses a flag without it being pulled, the play continues and deflagging reverts to one hand tag.
 - iii. In circumstances where a flag belt is removed illegally, play shall continue with the option of the penalty or the play. *Penalty:* Personal Foul, 10 yards.
 - iv. Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage is illegal. *Penalty:* *Personal Foul*, 10 yards from the previous spot, and player disqualification. If by the offensive team, Loss of Down. If by defensive team, Automatic First Down.
67. **Enforcement of Penalties**
68. **Procedure After a Foul:**
- a. **Definitions:**
 - i. A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed. Types of fouls are:
 1. Dead Ball – A foul which occurs in the time interval after the down is ended and before the ball is next snapped.
 2. Live Ball – A foul which occurs during a down.
 3. Simultaneously with the Snap – An act which becomes a foul when the ball is snapped.
 - b. **Captains Choice:**
 - i. When a foul occurs during a live ball, the referee shall, at the end of the down, notify both captains. He/She shall inform the captain of the offended team

regarding their rights of penalty acceptance or declination. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined. A captain's choice of options may not be revoked.

- c. **Dead Ball Foul:**
 - i. When a foul occurs during a dead ball, the officials shall not permit the ball to become live. The penalty for any dead ball foul is enforced from the succeeding spot.
- d. **Live Ball/Dead Ball:**
 - i. When a live ball foul is followed by a dead ball foul by the opponent, the penalties are administered separately and in order of occurrence. When the same team commits a live ball foul followed by one or more dead ball fouls, all fouls may be penalized.
- e. **Establishing the Zone Line to Gain:**
 - i. On a live ball foul mark off the penalty yardage first then establish the zone line to gain.
 - ii. Penalties for fouls with succeeding spot enforcement which occur prior to the ready for play signal shall be administered before setting the zone line to gain for a new series.
 - iii. Penalties for fouls with succeeding spot enforcement which occur after the ready for play signal shall be administered after setting the zone line to gain for a new series.

69. Types of Play and Basic Enforcement Spots:

- a. **Live Ball Fouls:**
 - i. Any live ball foul is penalized according to the All-But-One Enforcement Principle except:
 - 1. A foul which occurs simultaneously with the snap is penalized from the previous spot.
 - 2. A non player foul, unsportsmanlike foul, or dead ball foul is penalized from the succeeding spot.
- b. **All-But-One Enforcement Principle:**
 - i. Enforcement philosophy is based on the fact that a team is given the advantage of the distance which is gained without assistance of a foul. It is assumed that the only foul which would give this aid is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot. **Therefore, all fouls but this one, that is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot, are penalized from the basic spot. This one foul is penalized from the spot of the foul.**
- c. **Two Types of Plays:**
 - i. Whenever the ball is live, one of two types of plays is in progress. The type of play only has significance when a foul occurs. If a foul does occur, the official must know whether it was during a loose ball play or during a running play. This determines the basic spot of enforcement.
- d. **Loose Ball Play:**
 - i. A loose ball play is action during:
 - 1. A punt.
 - 2. A legal forward pass.
 - 3. A backward pass, snap, or fumble made by the offense behind the line of scrimmage.
 - 4. The run which precedes a legal pass, punt, or fumble.
 - ii. If a foul occurs during a loose ball play, the basic enforcement spot is the previous spot (the spot of the snap)
 - iii. Exception 1: The penalty for roughing the passer on a completed forward pass will be enforced from the end of the run where the run ends beyond the neutral zone and no change of possession has occurred.

- iv. Exception 2: A post punt foul is a foul by the receiving team (R) that occurs on R's side of the neutral zone prior to the end of the kick during a punt that ends beyond the neutral zone and the kicking team (K) does not have possession of the ball when the kick ends. The enforcement spot is the spot where the kick ends. R retains possession of the ball after penalty enforcement. R fouls behind the enforcement spot are spot fouls. If the kick ends in the end zone, then the enforcement spot is the 10 yard line.
- e. **Running Play:**
 - i. A running play is any action that is not a loose ball play.
 - 1. **Behind the line it includes:**
 - a. A run which is not followed by a loose ball behind the line.
 - b. A run which is followed by an illegal pass from behind the line.
 - 2. **Beyond the line it includes any run.**
 - ii. **If a foul occurs during a running play, the basic enforcement spot is the spot where the related run ends:**
 - 1. Where the ball becomes dead if the runner does not lose possession.
 - 2. Where the player loses possession if his/her run is followed by his/her fumble or pass.
 - 3. At the spot of the catch where the momentum rule is in effect.

70. Special Enforcements:

- a. **Half the distance:**
 - i. A measurement cannot take the ball more than half the distance toward the offending team's goal line. If the penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway between the enforcement spot and the goal line.
- b. **Safety/Goal Line:**
 - i. If the offensive team commits a foul for which the penalty is accepted and the measurement is from within the end zone, it is a safety.
- c. **Disqualification:**
 - i. A disqualified player must be removed.
- d. **Forfeiture of Game:**
 - i. A referee's decision to forfeit a game is final.
- e. **Kick Catch Interference:**
 - i. R may choose a 10 yard penalty from the previous spot and replay the down, or may accept the awarded catch at the spot of the foul.
- f. **Foul on a Score:**
 - i. If there is a foul by the offensive team, other than unsportsmanlike or non player, during a down which results in a successful touchdown or try, the acceptance of a penalty nullifies the score.
- g. **Foul Prior to a Try:**
 - i. When a foul occurs after a touchdown and before the ball is ready for play on the try, the enforcement is at the succeeding spot where the ball will next be snapped from.
- h. **Fouls During a Try or Overtime After Team B Possession:**
 - i. Live ball fouls committed by either Team A (offense) or Team B (defense) after Team B gains possession during a try or an overtime shall be enforced at the succeeding spot. If there are offsetting fouls, whether one or both occur after Team B possession, the down is not replayed. The fouls offset at the succeeding spot. Any scores are cancelled.
- i. **Fouls During a Try or Overtime Before Team B Possession:**
 - i. Live ball fouls committed by Team B before Team B gains possession during a try or overtime are enforced using the All-But-One Enforcement Principle, Double Foul, and Multiple Foul Rules.
- j. **Double Foul:**

- i. It is a double foul if both teams commit fouls, other than unsportsmanlike or non player, during the same live ball period in which:
 - 1. There is no change of team possession.
 - 2. There is a change of team possession, and the team in possession at the end of the down fouls prior to the final change of possession.
 - 3. There is a change of possession and the team in final possession accepts the penalty for its opponent's foul.
 - ii. In 1, 2, and 3 above the penalties cancel and the down is replayed.
 - iii. Exception: If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of possession, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball provided that its foul is not prior t the change of possession and it declined the penalty for its opponent's foul. This is commonly referred to as the "clean hands" principle. This rule does not apply during a try or overtime.
 - k. **Multiple Live Ball Fouls:**
 - i. When two or more live ball fouls are committed by the same team, only one penalty may be chosen to be enforced, except for unsportsmanlike and non player fouls. In such cases, the penalty/penalties for the unsportsmanlike conduct or non player fouls are administered from the succeeding spot as a dead ball foul.
 - l. **Multiple Dead Ball Fouls:**
 - i. Penalties for dead ball fouls are administered separately and in order of occurrence.
 - m. **Loss of Down Fouls:**
 - i. Fouls by Team A which include loss of down are:
 - 1. Illegal Pass (forward or backward).
 - 2. Forward Pass Interference.
 - 3. Illegally Secured Flag Belt.
 - n. **Automatic First Down Fouls:**
 - i. Fouls by Team B which give Team A an automatic first down are:
 - 1. Forward Pass Interference.
 - 2. Roughing the Passer.
 - 3. Illegally Secure Flag Belt.

71. Summary of Fouls and Penalties:

72. Loss of five yards:

- a. Required Equipment Worn Illegally.
- b. Delay of Game (Dead Ball).
- c. Illegally Conserving/Consuming Time.
- d. Substitution Infraction.
- e. Infraction of Punt Formation.
- f. Encroachment (Dead Ball).
- g. False Start (Dead Ball).
- h. Illegal Snap (Dead Ball).
- i. Offensive Player not Within 15 Yards of the Ball.
- j. Infraction of Scrimmage Formation.
- k. Player Out of Bounds When Ball is Snapped.
- l. Illegal Motion.
- m. Player Receiving the Snap Within Two Yards of the Scrimmage Line.
- n. Illegal Shift.
- o. Intentionally Throwing a Backward Pass or Fumble Out of Bounds (Loss of Down by Team A).
- p. Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of Down by Team A).

- q. Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down).
- r. Helping the Runner.

73. Loss of 10 Yards:

- a. Illegal Player Equipment.
- b. Quick Kick.
- c. Kick Catch Interference.
- d. Two or More Consecutive Encroachments During the Same Dead Ball Interval.
- e. Forward Pass Interference – Defense (Automatic First Down).
- f. Forward Pass Interference – Offense (Loss of Down).
- g. Illegally Secured Flag Belt on a Touchdown (Ejection, Automatic First Down if by Defense, Loss of Down if by Offense).
- h. Unsportsmanlike Conduct.
- i. Spiking, Kicking, or Throwing the Ball During a Dead Ball.
- j. Strip or Attempt to Strip the Ball.
- k. Contact with an Opponent on the Ground.
- l. Throw Runner to the Ground (Ejection).
- m. Hurdle Any Player.
- n. Contact Before or After the Ball is Dead.
- o. Unnecessary Contact.
- p. Drive, Stiff Arm, or charge into a Player.
- q. Tackle the Runner (Ejection).
- r. Roughing the Passer (Automatic First Down).
- s. Illegal Blocking.
- t. Flag Guarding.
- u. Obstructing or Holding the Runner.
- v. Batting a Free Ball.
- w. Illegal Kicking.
- x. Illegal Participation
- y. Illegal Substitute, Pretended or Unfair Substitution.
- z. Illegal Flag Belt Removal.
- aa. Flagrant Acts of Any Nature (Ejection).

74. Protests

75. Protests will be allowed for participant eligibility and for misapplications of rules. Judgment calls may never be protested.
- a. Participant Eligibility: When a person is believed to be ineligible to participate in an intramural contest, the protesting team's captain or manager must notify the game officials of the eligibility question at the start of the game or when the player in question arrives at the game site. Protests made after these deadlines will not be heard.
 - b. Misapplication of Rules: When a participant believes that a game official has misapplied or misinterpreted a published playing rule, the respective team's captain or manager must notify the game officials of the protest before the next legal snap. If the decision in question happens to be the final play of the game, the protesting team must file a protest with the event supervisor before leaving the facility. Protests made after these deadlines will not be heard.