

# OMEGA LEAGUE - HIGH SCHOOL FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

*Revised – September 10, 2024*

## Section 16.4 Flag Football – 7 players

- 1) . *League administrative items removed.*
- 2) . *League administrative items removed.*
- 3) . *League administrative items removed.*

### 4) Field

#### a. Regulation dimensions shall be one of the following:

- 70 yards long with 10-yard end zones
- Each “zone” to be 17.5 yards long
- 80 yards long with 10-yard end zones
- Each “zone” to be 20 yards long

### 5) A first down is granted only when the ball, in legal play, is moved from one zone to another

### 6) Equipment:

#### a. Each team must provide their own flags.

- “3 flag” belts are required.
- Schools have the option to wear belts that come off entirely or “popper belts”.
- Flags should be on each hip and on the back of the waist.
- Flags must contrast in color from the color of the uniform jersey.

#### b. No player shall wear football pads. “Soft flag” helmets are optional

#### c. Mouthguards are *optional*.

#### d. Players shall not wear shoes with screw-in type cleats.

#### e. Any equipment deemed illegal by high school football rules will be illegal for this league.

#### f. Jerseys must be tucked completely in during play

### 7) Coin Toss/No Kickoffs:

#### a. During the pre-game meeting, the official will flip a coin with the visiting team calling heads or tails.

#### b. The team winning the toss may choose to start on offense from the 25-yard line or defend a certain goal, or defer choice to the second half.

#### c. The start of each half or after a touchdown and PAT attempt, will begin with the offensive team starting their set of downs at their own 25-yard line. Teams will switch directions at the half.

### 8) Scoring

#### a. A touchdown is scored when the runner’s hips cross the goal line with possession of the ball or catches the ball in the end zone.

#### b. Each touchdown counts for 6 points.

#### c. Point after tries (PAT) will be scored as follows:

- 2 points ---- conversion from 10 yards out
- 1 point---- conversion from 3 yards out

#### d. The PAT must be replayed if a foul occurs on the offense and the penalty does not have a loss of down. If the foul is on the defense, the offense may choose to replay the attempt or keep the points scored.

## 9) Overtime:

- a. If there is overtime at the end of regulation play, the team that wins the coin toss can choose to go first or second and start at the 20 yard line. Each team will have an opportunity to score. If a touchdown occurs, the offense team can elect to go for (1 or 2) extra points. An interception ends that team's possession. In each subsequent overtime where neither team wins, the team that goes first will be alternated until there is a winner.

## 10) Timing:

- a. There will be two 20-minute halves.
  - During the first 18 minutes of each half, the clock will stop for touchdowns and timeouts.
    1. The clock remains stopped during the PAT and will not start until the ball is legally snapped after the change of possession.
  - At the 2-minute mark remaining in each half, there shall be a 30-second timeout.
    1. After the two-minute warning, Stop Clock rules go into effect: The clock will stop for timeouts, an incomplete forward pass, a live ball that is run out of bounds, penalty enforcement, a score, and during a point after attempt.
    2. The clock restarts with the next snap of the ball ONLY on incomplete passes, ball-out-of-bounds, touchbacks, and following timeouts. All others start when the official starts the play clock.
- b. **Play Clock**
  - After the official has given the ready-for-play signal, the offensive team has 30 seconds in which to snap the ball.

## 11) Time Outs

- a. Each team is given 2 timeouts per half.
- b. They do not carry over from the first half.
- c. A team cannot use consecutive timeouts.

## 12) Game Play:

- a. The offensive team has 4 downs in which to move the ball into the next 17.5 or 20-yard zone.
  - b. There must be at least 3 players set within 1 yard of the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball.
  - c. All players are eligible receivers
  - d. Players in motion are considered backfield players. Only one player may be in motion at the snap of the ball.
  - e. All players must be within 10 yards of the ball after the ball is declared ready for play.
  - f. Players may shift all the way to the sideline if desired.
  - g. All players must be set for one second after a shift.
  - h. Offsides, (offensive or defensive), and false starts are the only two penalties in which the play is immediately whistled dead. The penalties are automatic.
  - i. The ball is spotted where the hips are when the flag is pulled, not the ball.
- 13) There are NO FUMBLES or MUFFS. A fumble is an automatic dead ball. If a player fumbles the ball, the ball shall be marked at the player's hips. A player cannot gain yardage by fumbling the ball forward. The ball is placed where it hits the ground.
- 14) A snapped ball that is muffed and hits the ground after touching a player will be spotted where the player muffed it.
- 15) A snapped ball that hits the ground without being touched can be picked up by the offense and played.
- 16) If the defense touches a snap that was untouched by the offense, the ball is dead where it is touched.

- 17) A defender may not strip the ball from the ball carrier.
- 18) The snapper may not receive a hand-off unless he has turned 180 degrees to face his own end zone. The snap must be to a backfield player.
- 19) At least one ball exchange must occur before the ball can be run across the line of scrimmage. (No direct snap runs by QB).
- 20) Any player may make a backward pass to any other player.
- 21) A backward pass that strikes the ground is dead at the spot where it lands.
- 22) Illegal forward passes include intentional grounding, pass thrown from beyond the line of scrimmage, and more than one forward pass.

**23) Ball Carrier:**

- a. The ball carrier must make an attempt to go around a defender who has established position.
  - Diving and hurdling by the ball carrier are not legal maneuvers.
  - Spinning and jumping are not hurdling.
- b. It is flag guarding if
  - the ball carrier's arms or hands go below the waist and any contact is made between the defender and the ball carrier.
  - The hand or arm is used to push away the defender.
  - The ball is used to hold a defender's hand away.
  - The flags are held or moved by the ball carrier.
  - The flag belts are worn so that the flags do not point outward from the waist.

**24) Blocking:**

- a. There are 2 legal ways to block:
  - Hands are extended
    1. the arms may be used to keep the rusher in front of them; if the arms are brought in to absorb contact, they cannot go back out in a shoving motion.
  - Hands and arms against the body
    1. the hands and arms must remain in contact with the body; elbows must not extend away from the body and cannot be used to block.
- b. You cannot leave your feet when you block.
- c. All contact must occur between the shoulders and the waist.
- d. Clipping is blocking a player from behind. It is not a clip if an opponent intentionally turns his back to avoid a block.

**25) Rushing:**

- a. The rusher must push or pull the blocker to the side using only their hands.
- b. The rusher may not push or pull the blocker to the ground.
- c. The rusher may not use shoulders, forearms, or elbows to make contact with a blocker.
- d. All contact must occur between the shoulders and the waist.
- e. No 3 or 4-point stances on the line of scrimmage.
- f. A rusher cannot touch the ball or any part of the quarterback's arm while attempting a forward pass.
  - The ball can be touched only after it has left the hand of the passer.
- g. No contact is allowed on receivers after the ball is snapped.

**26) Tackling:**

- a. Tackling should be called any time the runner's progress is impeded causing him to break stride or lose momentum.
- b. The following are examples of tackling:
  - Tripping a runner
  - Pushing a runner out of bounds

- Pushing another player into the runner
- Grasping the runner and or his clothing
- Tackling him by knocking or pulling him to the ground
- A runner who has broken into the clear and is tackled from behind in an obvious attempt to keep him from scoring shall be awarded a touchdown. Allowance shall be made for a legitimate attempt to play the flag that accidentally results in a tackle; only a penalty for tackling shall be enforced in such cases.

### **27) Punting:**

- No fake punts allowed.
- When declaring a punt, offensive or defensive players cannot advance until the ball is punted.
- A muffed kick is a live ball.
  - After touching the ground, only the receiving team may field the ball and the kicking team may only down the ball. The kicking team may not touch a kick until it has touched a receiver or the ground.
- The kicking team may not interfere with the receiving team's right to catch the ball.

### **28) Unsporting Conduct:**

- Using sounds that interfere with the quarterback's signals
- Wearing illegal equipment
- Actions by substitutes to confuse the defense
- Disorderly crowd behaving in an uncooperative manner
- Intentionally pulling a flag from a player that does not have the ball
- Spiking the ball or taunting following a touchdown.

### **29) Summary of Penalties:** (The line-to-gain is established after all penalties have been assessed for fouls that have occurred)

- 5 Yards-DOWN OVER FROM LINE OF SCRIMMAGE
  - Illegal substitution
  - Extra Player on the field
  - Blocking punt
  - Simulation action of ball snap
  - Not within 10 yards of the ball prior to the snap
  - Three or four-point stance on the line of scrimmage (offense or defense)
  - Illegal formation (less than 3 players on the line of scrimmage)
  - Illegal motion
  - Offsides (Defense) no play
- 5 Yards- Loss of down from the line of scrimmage
  - No ball exchange before a run
  - Illegal forward pass, intentional grounding, 2 forward passes
- 5 Yards-Loss of down from point of infraction
  - Guarding the flag
  - Illegal forward pass (beyond the line of scrimmage)
  - Illegally handing the ball forward
- 10 Yards-Down over from line of scrimmage
  - Illegal Participation
  - Out-of-bounds player participating
  - Interference of kicking team to let the receiving team field the ball (beyond the line of scrimmage)
  - Illegal block or use of elbows or forearms (behind the line of scrimmage)
  - Defensive holding

- Stealing the ball from the ball carrier
  - Offensive holding
  - Personal fouls on offense
  - Unsportsmanlike conduct
- e. 10 Yards- Loss of down from point of infraction
- Running over the defender
- f. 10 Yards-Repeat the down from point of infraction
- Illegal block (beyond the line of scrimmage)
  - Stealing the ball from the ball carrier (beyond the line of scrimmage)
- g. 10 yards-From line of scrimmage
- Offensive pass interference
- h. 10 Yards- First down from point of infraction
- Tackling (possible TD if last man to the goal line)
- i. 10 Yards-Automatic first down from the line of scrimmage
- Roughing the passer
- j. 10 Yard-Automatic First Down from the line of scrimmage
- Defensive pass interference