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Terms and Definitions:

**Down:** A down is one of the three attempts that the offence has to gain 10 yards.

**Line of Scrimmage:** The line at which the ball is placed at the start of a play and where play begins.

**Touchdown:** A touchdown occurs when a player advances the ball into the opponent’s endzone, resulting in 7 points.

**Safety:** A safety occurs when the defensive team flags an offensive player in the offence’s endzone. This results in a score of two (2) points to the defence. The team who was previously on offence must then punt from their own 20 yard line.

**Dead Ball:** A dead ball occurs when the referee blows the play dead or over; in between the end of one play and the beginning of the next; when the ball is carried out of bounds; when an incomplete pass hits the ground; or when a player possessing the ball is flagged.

**Live Ball:** A live ball occurs during anytime of active play, including when a pass is tipped or batted in the air.

**Flagging:** Flagging occurs when a player purposefully removes the flag of an opposing play that possesses the ball.

**Possession:** A team has possession of the ball when they are on offence and do so until a turnover occurs.

**Turnover:** A turnover occurs when the defensive team either intercepts the ball or when the offence fails to gain sufficient yardage on third down.

**Forward Pass:** A forward pass occurs when a team possessing the ball throws or passes the ball forward in a non-lateral or backwards trajectory.

**Lateral/Backwards Pass:** A lateral or backwards pass occurs when a team possessing the ball passes or throws the ball is a lateral (flat) or backwards trajectory.

**Rushing:** Rushing is when a defensive player(s) rushes the quarterback from or behind the designated 5 yard rush line.
**Sack:** A sack occurs when a defensive player flags the quarterback behind the line of scrimmage resulting in a loss of yards.

**Tackle for a loss:** A tackle for a loss occurs when a defensive player flags an opposing player behind the line of scrimmage resulting in a loss of yards.

**Incomplete/Complete Pass:** An incomplete pass occurs when the offensive team throws the ball and is not caught by a player and either hits the ground or goes out of bounds. A complete pass occurs when the offensive receiver catches the pass thrown by the offensive team.

**Interception:** An interception occurs when a defensive player catches or intercepts a pass from the opposing offensive team.

**Fumble:** A fumble occurs when a player possessing the ball drops, or loses possession of the ball, and the ball hits the ground.

**Blocking:** Blocking occurs when a player makes a direct effort to change the direction of the opposing player.

**Screening or Pick Play:** Screening or a pick play occurs when a player purposefully stands or interferes with a opposing players line of travel towards the play.

**Tackling:** Tackling occurs when a player makes an attempt to physically bring another player to the ground through a wrapping or pulling motion.

**Punting:** Punting occurs when an offence decides to kick the ball away (typically on third down) when they do not believe they can gain sufficient yardage for a first down.
Penalties:

All penalties are 5 yards unless otherwise stated. The down will be repeated unless otherwise noted, and the penalty assessed from the line of scrimmage.

- All penalties may be declined except for False Start and Offside penalties, and dead ball fouls.
- Officials determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless it is declined by the offence.
- Penalties committed after an interception shall be assessed after the return and/or the play are blown dead.

Defensive Penalties:
- **Offside**: Player crosses line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped, or when a rusher crosses the marker and does not return behind it before advancing (cannot be declined).
- **Substitution fouls**: Sideline player enters field before ball is blown dead, or in order to taunt/disturb play
- **Pass interference**: Automatic first down from the spot of the foul. Any illegal contact made impedes fair chance at catching the live ball pass.
- **Illegal contact**: 5 yards and automatic first down. Holding, blocking or screening.
- **Illegal flag pull**: 5 yards and automatic first down from the spot of the foul. Flagging before receiver has ball.

Offensive Penalties
- **Flag guarding**: Impeding the defense’s attempt to pull the flag.
- **Delay of game**: Not snapping the ball before the designated 40 second play clock.
- **Substitution fouls**: Sideline player enters field before ball is blown dead, or in order to taunt/disturb play.
- **False start**: When an offensive player moves before the snap of the ball or when the ball is snapped before team is ready (cannot be declined).
- **Illegal contact**: 5 yards and automatic first down. Holding, blocking, screening, or rusher interference.
- **Diving/Jumping/Spinning**: Any attempt to dive, jump, or spin.
- **Illegal touching**: When player goes out of bounds on his own and makes an attempt to join the play i.e. catch, flag or down a punt.
- **Illegal forward pass**: Loss of down and spotted at point of infraction. When a second forward pass attempt is made.
- **Offensive pass interference**: 5 yards and loss of down. Any illegal contact that impedes fair chance at defending the live ball pass.
- **Illegal run play**: Loss of down. Running more than 1 in 3 or inside the red zone.
- **Illegal motion**: When receivers move un-signalled and in a forward or advantageous direction.
**Ejections:**

All ejections will be made at the discretion of the officials and will operate at a **1 PENALTY** warning system. Any player who has a double offence on the penalties listed below, will be removed from the game and will be on suspension notice until determined by a meeting with the league manager and intramural programmer.

**Penalties that may lead to ejection:**

- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** ANY act of swearing, taunting, disruption of play, deliberate act to delay play or ANY act of disrespect towards officials. 15 yards from line of scrimmage on first offence.

- **Unnecessary Roughness:** ANY act of extreme physical aggression or deliberate attempts to injure or harm any player or official. 15 yards from line of scrimmage on first offence.

**ANY USE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL WILL RESULT IN AUTOMATIC EJECTION FROM THE GAME AND LEAGUE SUSPENSION!**
Assembly of a Team:

- In order to participate as a team, the team **MUST** be registered and have paid the registration fees.

- A team’s roster may carry as many as twelve (12) players and a minimum of six (6) players.

- In order to be allowed to play, a team **MUST** have six (6) players present within ten (10) minutes after the scheduled game time.

- If a team fails to field six (6) players within the ten (10) minutes allowance, the team will forfeit to a score of 6-0.

- A maximum of seven (7) players are allowed on the field with the minimum being six (6)

- If a team refuses to start or continue a game at the request of the officials, the team will be penalized for delay of game. If the team fails to comply by the 3rd request, the team will forfeit. If the forfeiting team is losing at the current time then that will be the assigned score, if they are winning, they will forfeit to a score of 6-0.
Rules and Structure:

Each game will begin with the officials and team captains meeting at center field. Captains will introduce themselves and shake hands. A coin toss decided by the “away” team will determine who chooses possession and who chooses their side to defend.

- A forward pass is when the ball leaves the passer’s hands from a throwing motion up field towards the opponent’s goal line. It is up to the referee to determine if the throw is a pass or a handoff. A handoff would result in a running play.
- There is **NO** kicking throughout the game except for punts.
- The line of scrimmage of the team to possessing the ball after touchdowns, and at the beginning of halves will always be on the 20 yard line.
- The line of scrimmage and first down marker will be marked by a **YELLOW** cone.
- The 5 yard rushing marker will be determined by a **RED** cone.
- The game is played in two halves. Initial possession will switch at half.
- Each half is 25 minutes long. If the game is delayed in any way, the timing will be adjusted to keep the next game on schedule.
- Halftime is allotted three (3) minutes. If teams fail to be ready to play when the official whistles in the time, the team will be penalized for delay of game.
- Each team is given two (2) timeouts per half to be used at their own discretion. Each timeout is one (1) minute long. If the team fails to be ready after the team will be penalized for delay of game.
- There is a forty (40) second-play clock in between plays. If teams fail to be ready after the the team will be penalized for delay of game.
- If a team elects to punt, the punting team is **NOT** allowed to block in any form. If they do, the team will be penalized for illegal contact.
- The punt receiving team must **NOT** make any attempt to block the kick by making contact with the kicker. If a player does, they will be penalized for illegal contact resulting in 5 yards and an automatic first down.
- The receiving team can return a punt **ONLY** if the ball is caught out of the air.
- The kicking team **MUST** give the returner **5 yards** to safely secure the catch
- If a punt hits the ground, a player **MUST** down the ball. That means that a player regardless of team must touch the ball to end the play. Play will commence from where the ball was downed.
- If a punt is kicked out of bounds, then the ball will be placed at the spot of exit.
- There are **NO** fumbles in the game. If the ball is “fumbled” the play will be blown dead and the possessing team will regain possession at the spot of the fumble.
- There are **NO** weather delays unless the official deems the gameplay unsafe due to extreme conditions.
Scoring and Seeding:

Scoring:
- Offence may score by way of a running play or a passing play.
- Defence may score by way of an interception or safety.
- A touchdown will award the scoring team seven (7) points.

There is NO mercy rule in this league. Game officials will make suggestions to the winning team if the score reaches an unsportsmanlike number. The losing team can elect to forfeit only during the second half if they do not wish to continue. If the team elects to forfeit then the final game score will be recorded as 14-0.

Seeding:
- Depending on the amount of teams registered, each team will play as many teams as possible.
- Scoring results will determine the seasonal rankings that will be recorded throughout the season that will determine final seeding for playoffs.
Offensive Play:

- The offence has three (3) downs to gain ten (10) yards.
- The offence can only run the ball **ONCE** in every **THREE** plays.
- The only location on the field where the offence **CANNOT** run the ball is the redzone. The redzone will be marked out by game officials and is considered from the ten (10) yard line to the goal line.
- Forward, lateral, and backwards passes are all allowed.
- NFL style rules apply during the game. This means that there is no pre-play motion allowed unless the quarterback signals the receiver or running back and the motion is not in a forward or advantageous direction.
- The centre **MUST** snap the ball from the ground. The player may either snap it between their legs or stand straddling the line of scrimmage and snap it in a toss like motion.
- The centre **MUST NOT** interfere with the rusher in any way. If the centre does, they will be penalized for illegal contact.
- The quarterback must use a verbal cadence when snapping the ball. The offence is permitted to use a “hardcount” or “multi-count” but they **MUST** inform the official prior to the play.
- If a receiver loses a flag(s) before or during a play, they may receive a pass but the ball will be blown dead at the **SPOT OF THE CATCH**.
- Any catches made by a player requires them to have **TWO** feet in bounds at the moment of controlled possession.
- Handoffs and throws must be clearly identified to the referee. If it is not clear the referee may assume the handoff/throw as a running play and the offences run play is used. This can result in an illegal run play if it has not been two (2) plays in-between the last run.
Defensive Play:

- The player(s) rushing the quarterback must start behind the rushing cone or marker.
- If the rusher(s) is drawn offside, they may either take a knee and not participate in the play, or return back behind the marker before rushing again.
- If the rusher(s) does not follow the above rule they will be penalized for being offside.
- The rusher(s) **CANNOT** block or bat a pass by the quarterback by swinging their arms or jumping. They **MAY** raise their arms above their head and impede the vision of the quarterback.
- Defensive players have unlimited movement capabilities as long as they do not cross the line of scrimmage.
- All defensive formations are legal.
- If a defensive player inadvertently wraps or stops the progress of an offensive player, the play will be blown dead at the spot of contact.
- When a defensive player flags the person with the ball, the ball will be spotted at the location of where the player was flagged.
- Defensive players are responsible for returning the pulled flag(s) to the offensive player. If a defensive player fails to do so, the official will issue them a warning and the second time will result in unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
- If a player loses their flag(s) during a play they may be “flagged” by rule of **ONE HAND TOUCH.**