

ACFL Flag Football 8-ON-8 Immediate Rush League Rules

(Revised Aug. 25 , 2011)

2 Referees per game = \$55 per team, per game.

1. HEAD COACH: The head coach is responsible for making every player aware of every rule prior to any participation in any game or any portion of a game or activity.

2. PLAYER: Every player must sign both the pre-season insurance waivers/registration forms and the on-field insurance waiver/game registration form prior to participating *or receiving a forfeit win* in any ACFL game or activity. The pre-season waiver must be presented to the league at the league address (ACFL, 48 Bi-State Plaza, #136, Old Tappan, NJ 07675) or in person to a league official prior to the start of season. The league provides no medical insurance of any form. If you do not have personal medical insurance, the league recommends that you do not play or participate. If you choose to play or participate you do so at your own risk with the understanding that the league does not provide medical insurance.

3. GAME DAY WAIVER: Every participant must *legibly print* and sign *their name on the* game-day waiver prior to participation. *This includes a team receiving a forfeit win . Should a player play without signing the game day waiver, the team will be assessed a 15 yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.* The waiver, provided to all coaches, must be signed by the entire team and turned in to the referee before the start of the game. For players arriving late, the team has the option of using a time-out to allow that team member(s) to sign the waiver and join the game OR wait until halftime to sign the player in. Of course, if the team chooses to wait until half-time, that player(s) can not play until they sign in. If there are no time-outs remaining, the team may opt to take a Delay of Game penalty to allow the player to sign in. **4. ROSTERS and PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY :** Rosters will be limited to a maximum of 18 players. ***AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE 5TH GAME OF THE REGULAR SEASON, ALL TEAM ROSTERS ARE FROZEN. NO TEAM MAY ADD A NEW PLAYER TO THEIR ROSTER NOR MAY ANY NON ROSTERED PLAYER PLAY IN ANY GAMES.***

Keep in mind, whenever adding players, that the new player must sign an individual insurance waiver/registration form and submit it to the league prior to participation. A player must play in at least half of the team's regular season games to be considered eligible for the playoffs. That player's name and signature must appear on half of the game day sign in forms to be eligible. However, in the case where a player is injured and is unable to play for the half of the regular season games but can come back in time for post season, there is an exception. Injured players can receive attendance credit by being present at the game and printing and signing name on waiver and writing "IR" next to it (signature must match that which was submitted on the Preseason Waiver). If the injured player signs his name on half of the Gameday Waivers, he will be eligible come playoff time. In the event that it is not physically possible for a player to attend half the games to sign in for eligibility, special circumstances may be reviewed by the league.

Any player on a team that forfeits a game will NOT receive credit for a game played (to determine playoff eligibility). All players on the team that receives a forfeit win will receive credit for a game played

(Head coaches must call Jeff Thomas at 914-629-4865 prior to eligibility expiration.)

4a. Each " B" Flag league team roster may contain a maximum of **two (2)** active "A" flag league team players .. A player who quarterbacks (QBs) in the "A" flag league may not throw a forward pass in any "B" flag league game.

VIOLATION OF RULE 4a WILL RESULT IN THE GAME BEING FORFEITED

5. LEAGUE: The league reserves the right to allow whomever it chooses and to refuse whomever it chooses.

5a. Home Field Scheduling:

ACFL will do everything possible to schedule teams at their "home field" during the regular season. The ACFL reserves the right to schedule all post season/ play-off games in accordance with the weekly match-ups.

" Home field" will be taken into consideration when scheduling post season match-ups but cannot be guaranteed.

5a. Inclement Weather

If you have any doubt about a game in inclement weather, call the appropriate Weather Phone number, currently (201) 767-6054 starting at 6:30am on Sunday morning. If the field is extremely wet and there is a real chance that the field will be destroyed by use, league officials could cancel a game sight unseen due to extreme wet conditions. (We need to keep our fields.) Every attempt will be made to reschedule games postponed due to weather conditions.

6. DIMENSIONS: The dimensions of the eight-on-eight flag league will be 80 yards long (plus 10-yard end zones) and 40 yards wide. First downs will be at the 20, 40, and 20 yard lines.

7. DELAYED STARTS/FORFEIT: Games will consist of 8 on 8 players. A team can play with a minimum of five players , any less is a forfeit . If one team has 8 players , it has the option to start the game at the scheduled time with the option of playing 8 on 7, 7 on 6, or 6 on 5. There is no requirement to wait for additional players to arrive . The player formations in these situations will be as follows: 8 on 7: Three linemen. 7 on 6 a 6 on 5 and 5 on 5 : Two linemen . The referees will wait fifteen minutes after game time for late arriving players. The time spent waiting to start the game will be deducted from the first half. The "on-time" team wins the toss and a 15-yard penalty is assessed on the kickoff. If after waiting 15 minutes, one team has less than eight players, the other team has the option of taking a forfeit win or playing 8 on 7, 7 on 6, or 6 on 5. If both teams are short they can play 5 on 5. The player formations in these situations will be as follows: 8 on 7: Three linemen. 7 on 6 a 6 on 5 and 5 on 5 : Two linemen . Anything less than 5 is a forfeit. The team that forfeits is required to pay for both referees (\$110) before they will be allowed to play again. After two forfeits the league holds the right to drop the team from the league and all league fees paid will be forfeited. The team that wins by forfeit will receive a 28-10 victory. There are no non-roster players or players from other ACFL teams permitted to play on any other ACFL team, at any time for any reason. All players must have a signed registration form in ACFL possession by the Friday prior to a game. Again, rosters freeze after the midway point.

The ACFL is not responsible for forfeits and NO refunds will be given to any team after the kickoff of your first game.

7a. Procedure to Avoid Forfeit Fee

Any team that forfeits must send in the entire referee fee for the
>forfeited game (\$110) to the League Office (48 Bi-State Plaza, #136, Old
>Tappan, NJ 07675) and ensure that the payment arrives no later than the Friday following the missed
game.

> If a team realizes that they will not be able to field a team for a game,
>they can avoid paying the forfeit fee by notifying the League Office
> by calling the following number, 201-767-6054, no later than the Friday(before the game) prior to
7PM and leaving a message stating that you are forfeiting that Sunday's game.

>If these two calls are made in time then you (forfeiting team) will not be
>responsible for the \$110 forfeit fee. Keep in mind that if you forfeit
>twice during the season the league reserves the right to expel you from the
>league. If a team forfeits their last game of the season they must pay the
>forfeit fee before playing the following year. The head coach will be
>responsible so if the team disbands and comes back scattered the following
>year the team that the head coach goes to will not be allowed to play until
>satisfying the forfeit fee requirement.

8. COUNT: Immediate rush.

9. BLITZ: Not Applicable .

9a. Bullrushing is allowed. This is when a defensive player attempts to push back the offensive blocker in pursuit of the quarterback *or during any kicking play including a punt , field goal attempt or extra point try*. The rusher is not limited to merely running around or evading the blocker. HOWEVER, the rusher cannot get a running start at the stationary offensive player. And as always, there can be no lowering the shoulder or use of forearms. Even on a bullrush the hands must be open and away from the body . *Penalty is administered from LOS (if it occurs behind the LOS) or spot of foul and results in an automatic first down.*

10. BLOCKING: Blocking must be openhanded and thrust outward from chest, with open hands, and not "loaded up" from the side. There is no blocking below the waist or above the shoulders. There will be no chop-blocks. You cannot leave your feet to block.

11. There are no fumbles. A ball is considered "dead" when it hits the ground (including a fumbled exchange between the center and quarterback). The same is true if a receiver touches -- but does not catch -- a kick or punt (this is considered a muff). The ball will be spotted where it hits the ground or is touched , which ever spot is furthest from initial spot of touching. In addition, a ball is considered dead at the spot it "touches" the ground even while in the possession of the runner. *A fumble or a muff can be intercepted (caught in the air) and advanced by either team.*

NOTE: If a kick or punt hits the ground and touches a receiver, that player is the only one who can catch the muff and advance. If subsequent to the muff the ball hits the ground or is caught by any other player the ball is dead and is placed at the furthest spot from the LOS , either spot of initial muff or final dead ball spot.

12. CHUCKING: Chucking is allowed off the line of scrimmage. Multiple chucks are allowed, but they must occur no more than five yards from line of scrimmage.

13. D-LINEMEN:

A League: *During all plays from scrimmage ,the three defensive linemen may line up either head-to-head or on either shoulder of the offensive player directly in front of them. . After the offense raises their hand to advise line official of violation , the defense will be verbally notified to adhere to the above rule.*

B LEAGUE : *During all plays from scrimmage ,the defensive linemen must line up head-to-head. After the offense raises their hand to advise line official of violation , the defense will be verbally notified to adhere to the head-to-head rule.*

Should violations persists , the officials can take the following actions :

Pre-snap (dead ball foul) : Line official to issue penalty for delay of game { 5 yards } for first offense and any subsequent dead ball violations, issue an unsportsmanlike conduct{ 15 yards} penalty

Or , at the snap (live ball) penalty : Downfield official to issue penalty for illegal formation { 5 yards } . For live ball foul, the offense can take the results of the play or 5 yards and replay the down.

14. O-LINEMEN: The offensive line must be balanced (tackle, center, tackle), not more than one foot apart, and the ball must be snapped between the center's legs. At the snap, the tackles may be upright or in a three-point stance. Offensive linemen cannot catch or touch *untipped forward* passes .If this action occurs it is illegal touching. If the action occurs behind the LOS, the penalty is enforced (spot of the foul) from where the ball is touched . If the action occurs beyond the LOS, the penalty is enforced from the LOS . Offensive lineman may bat a tipped pass down to prevent an interception.

14a . Offensive Line Blocking Restrictions during Forward Pass Play :

- *During a play that results in a forward pass ,offensive linemen cannot go beyond neutral zone extended (2 yards from line of scrimmage) until the forward pass has been thrown (this includes screen passes).*
 - *If any ineligible O-lineman is beyond neutral zone extended (2 yards from line of scrimmage) before a forward pass is thrown and is not making contact with a defensive player, or is making contact with a defensive player and the forward pass does not go beyond LOS(screen pass), the penalty is ineligible receiver downfield.*
 - *If any ineligible O-lineman is beyond neutral zone extended (2 yards from line of scrimmage) before a forward pass is thrown and is making contact with a defensive player , and the pass goes beyond the LOS, the penalty is offensive pass interference.*

Definition:

After becoming set, it is a **false start** (dead ball) penalty if an O-lineman moves before the *snap or any offensive player makes any movement that simulates action at the snap*

15. OFFENSIVE ALIGNMENT: At the snap the offense must line up in a balanced line (both offensive tackles covered by an eligible receiver) with a minimum of five players on the line of scrimmage. The tackle, center, and tackle are ineligible. To be a legal participant *in a play from scrimmage* , a player must have been in the previous play , be in the huddle or *report in as a substitute within 5 yards of the spot of the ball*. No players can "sneak" into the play from the sideline. Non compliance is considered illegal participation.

Definitions:

- It is an illegal motion (live ball) penalty if a player is moving toward the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap or if two players are in motion at the time of the snap.
- It is an illegal shift penalty (live ball) if after a huddle or shift all offensive players do not come to a complete stop for at least one (1) second before the snap.

15 a. It is illegal participation when :

- 1). A player goes out of bounds, returns to the field and touches the ball. This is a 10-yard penalty assessed from the line of scrimmage. If bumped out, a player may come back in and participate in the play, providing he does so immediately.
- 2). *A player who participates in a play from scrimmage who was not in the previous play , not in the huddle or did not report in as a substitute within **5 yards** of the spot of the ball.*

NOTE: For all scrimmage plays , the ball should be spotted on the yard line in proximity to the middle of the field, which is 20 yards from either sideline.

15 b. It is also illegal if a team has too many men on the field.

- 1). *In the huddle before the snap, dead ball foul , 5 yard penalty(**Illegal substitution**)*
- 2). *After the snap , live ball foul, 10 yard penalty if accepted.(**Illegal participation**)*

16. TACKLE-ELIGIBLE: The tackle (ONLY ONE) can become eligible during a play IF the referee is made aware AND a running back or tight-end fills the same space vacated by the tackle (you still must end up with three ineligible linemen). The defense **DOES NOT** have to be made aware of a tackle-eligible play.

17. RECEIVER: A receiver must have two feet in bounds to make a reception. A receiver cannot step out of bounds, on his own, and come *back onto the field and touch the ball*. This is considered illegal participation. *The player may return to block or "tackle" the ball carrier.*

" There is no ball-stripping or deflagging a receiver before the ball arrives"

18. FORWARD PASS: There is only one forward pass per play. Ball must be snapped to the QB or another back. Intentional grounding will not be called if the QB is outside the tackles **AND THE FORWARD PASS REACHES THE PROXIMITY OF THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE(LOS)**. During the last two(2) minutes of each half, the QB may spike the ball (from *under center* or shotgun), immediately upon catching the snap, to stop the clock. This is defined as a "quick spike." Ineligible receiver(s) may not proceed down field, beyond two (2) yards from line of scrimmage (neutral zone extended) until the forward pass, including a screen pass, is in flight. The penalty is ineligible receiver down field if the pass is untouched or illegal touching if the pass is touched by the ineligible receiver(s). *You may not lateral back to someone behind the line of scrimmage once you've crossed it and have that person throw a forward pass. Nor can you step over the line of scrimmage and go back behind it and pass.* These are both illegal forward pass penalties.

18a : Definition of QB sack: The QB is considered to be " sacked " when a defender pulls his flag prior to the ball being released, as in a forward or backward pass or hand-off. The position and/or motion of the QB's arm has no bearing on the call.

19. BALL CARRIER: The spot of the ball is always the torso of the ball carrier at the time of flag removal ***OR THE FLAG FALLING TO THE GROUND. Ball is dead at the spot.*** It is illegal for the ball carrier to: 1). Flag shield 2). Run directly at a defender including lowering head and/or shoulders (charging) 3). Crawl 4). Dive, (defined as not landing on your feet). A " stiff arm " may be used (open hand between shoulders and waist of defender). ***Should contact be made above the shoulders , to the neck, face , head, etc , this will be considered an illegal stiff arm and be penalized 15 yards from the spot of the foul and the down counts .*** A ball carrier that falls to the ground may get up and advance unless " one hand touched " while on the ground.

The defense cannot push a ball carrier out of bounds. If a ball carrier loses his flag **for any reason , the ball is dead at the spot**. The defense cannot use contact to break up a pass play, they must truly be "going for the ball ". You cannot hold the jersey to pull the flag or tackle a ball-carrier (if it prevents a TD, the ref can award a TD). You cannot "stand up" the ball carrier to pull a flag.

NOTE 1: If any player either starts a play without one or two flags, or loses one or two flags during the play and subsequently becomes a ball carrier, the play ends and the ball is dead at the spot of possession.

Note 2: Should a defender deflag a receiver before the ball arrives / is touched by receiver(per Rule 17) ,the play is dead at the spot of the one hand touch. A 10 yard penalty will be assessed on the defense from the end of the run and the down will be replayed .

Note 3: Should a defender deflag a receiver after the ball arrives / is touched by a receiver and is subsequently caught/ possessed by a receiver ,the play is dead at the spot of the one hand touch. There is no penalty .

Note 4 :After the deflag ,should the receiver intentionally touch/bobble the ball to avoid immediate possession and subsequently catch /possess the ball, the play is immediately dead and the ball is spotted at the spot of the initial touch/bobble. A 10 yard penalty will be assessed on the offense from that spot and the down counts

19a: INADVERTENT WHISTLE :

During a down ,or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined , if an inadvertent whistle occurs while:

- a). A legal forward pass or snap is in flight, or during a legal kick, the down shall be replayed.*
- b). The ball is loose following a backward pass, fumble, illegal forward pass or illegal kick, the team last in possession may choose to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.*
- c). The ball is in player possession, that team may choose to accept the play at that spot or replay the down.*

If an inadvertent whistle occurs during a down in which a foul occurs prior to the inadvertent whistle, and the penalty is accepted, the inadvertent whistle is ignored.

20. FIELD GOALS: Immediate Rush. Upon announcing a FG attempt, the offense must send two players, from their sideline, out to hold up the portable goal posts on fields with no regular goal posts. The holder must set up a minimum of seven yards from the center. The defense cannot rush through either lane next to the center *unless the center or guard steps out to block an outside opponent ignoring the man head up from him, leaving a natural gap (this is referred to as an "A" Gap infraction)*. The defense cannot dive to block the kick or come in contact with the holder or kicker. **(This is a penalty whether kick is touched or not)**. Players can jump, as long as they land on their feet, but remember there can be no contact with the center. These are defensive penalties and the offense can elect to accept the penalty (15 yards and an automatic 1st down) or accept the 3 points for the field goal that would be automatically "good" and a 15-yard penalty from the succeeding spot on the ensuing kickoff. The referee has the option of ejecting any player who comes in contact with the kicker or holder. Kicking blocks are legal. Kicking shoes are legal. *The play is dead immediately after all missed FG attempts.* Any missed FG within the 20-yard-line will come out to the 20. A missed FG from outside the 20-yard-line will be placed at the previous line of scrimmage. Fake FG's are not allowed. *(If a violation occurs, Ball is dead immediately and a delay of game penalty is enforced.)* If a snap is fielded cleanly, even if it hits the ground first, the kick may still be attempted. If the holder *fumbles* (drops) the snap the play is dead.

If the defense commits a penalty during a down on which a field goal has been declared, the kicking team may choose to accept the result of the play or accept the penalty. If the kicking team accepts the penalty, they may choose to run a play from scrimmage or to kick a field goal. Whatever their choice, the kickers will not be charged with a timeout (or delay of game penalty if there are no timeouts remaining).

*If a team declares they want to go for a field goal and then decides to run a play from scrimmage, a time-out must be used to declare the switch. **If the team wants to switch and they don't have any time-outs left, they can take a delay of game penalty and then switch.***

21. EXTRA POINTS: : Immediate Rush. A one (1) point try may be kicked or attempted with a run/pass play with the line of scrimmage being the three-yard-line. Upon announcing an extra point kick attempt, the offense must send two players, from their sideline, out to hold up the portable goal posts on fields with no regular goal posts. The holder must set up a minimum of seven yards from the center. The defense cannot rush through either lane next to the center *unless the center or guard steps out to block an outside opponent ignoring the man head up from him, leaving a natural gap.(this is referred to as an "A" Gap infraction)*. If a snap is fielded cleanly, even if it hits the ground first, the kick may still be attempted. If the holder *fumbles* (drops) the snap the play is dead. The defense cannot **dive** to block the kick or come in contact with the holder or kicker. **(This is a penalty whether kick is touched or not)** Players can jump, as long as they land on their feet, but remember there can be no contact with the center. These are defensive penalties, the extra point will be ruled " good" automatically and a 15-yard penalty assessed from the succeeding spot on the ensuing kickoff. The referee has the option of ejecting any player who comes in contact with the kicker or holder. Kicking blocks are legal. Kicking shoes are legal. *The play is dead immediately after all missed Extra Point attempts.* A two point try may be attempted with a run/pass play from the ten-yard-line. If the defense intercepts the ball on an extra-point attempt they can return the ball and if they score they will be awarded the same number of points that the offense was attempting. *If an intercepting player goes into the endzone trying to avoid being tackled and is tackled in the endzone a safety is declared and one(1) point is added to the opponent's score. (this includes a play where the interception was caught in the endzone and the interceptor comes out of the endzone and goes back in).*

*If a team declares they want to go for a one point conversion and then decides to go for a two point conversion (or vice versa) a time-out must be used to declare the switch. **If the team wants to switch and they don't have any time-outs left, they can take a delay of game penalty and then switch.** This option is not permitted after the acceptance of a penalty.*

21a. GAME CLOCK AFTER EXTRA POINT (KICK) , Successful Field Goal or Safety, the kicking team has 60 seconds within which they must kickoff to the receiving team. However, the kicking team may kick the ball in under that allotted time (for example, in 15, 20 or 25 seconds). In

this way, the offense determines the start of play assuming they do not go past 60 seconds (delay of game, 5 yards). This 60-second allotment works much the same as the 30-second play clock, where there is no requirement to wait the full 30 seconds. As with the 30-second play clock, the kicking team must wait for the official's "ready" whistle after the ball has been set.

22. PUNTS: Immediate Rush A team may declare to punt the ball at any time. A snap is mandatory .

For any down in which a punt is declared :

A). The defensive team can rush the punter immediately after the snap but not through the A gap.(*The penalty options are to 1). accept result of the play or 2).. accept a 15 yard penalty from the LOS and **an automatic 1st down**) . .*

B). The receiving team must have a minimum of four (4) players on the line of scrimmage *with the internal 3 men head up* .

C) .There will be no movement down field by either team until the ball is punted.

Any contact made with the punter ***is a penalty whether kick is touched or not***) . You cannot fake a punt. If a team declares they want to punt and then decides to go for it instead, a time-out must be used to declare the switch. If the team wants to switch and they don't have any time-outs left, they can take a delay of game penalty and then switch. When the snap hits the ground, touched or untouched by an offensive player, the ball is dead at the spot. The teams will again line up for a punt with this spot as new line of scrimmage A punt may be advanced out of the endzone.

If the receiving team commits a penalty , prior to change of possession, during a down in which a punt has been declared, the kicking team may choose to accept the result of the play or accept the penalty. If the kicking team accepts the penalty, they may choose to run a play from scrimmage or to punt. Whatever their choice, the kickers will not be charged with a timeout (or delay of game penalty if there are no timeouts remaining).

NOTE : A PUNT ,TOUCHED BY ANY MEMBER OF THE KICKING TEAM ,THAT CONTINUES TO MOVE, IS CONSIDERED A “LIVE” Ball AND MAY BE PICKED UP AND ADVANCED BY THE RECEIVER. THE RECEIVERS HAVE THE OPTION OF TAKING THE BALL AT THE SPOT(S) WHERE THE KICKING TEAM FIRST TOUCHES THE BALL .

23. KICKOFFS: Kickoffs will be from the 25-yard line. Tees are allowed. Kicking off a teammates foot is not allowed. If no tee is available, teammate may hold ball on ground. The receiving team (R) will line up at their 35-yard line and must have a minimum of four players within 5 yards of its restraining line. Note: There will always be a 20-yard restraining zone. There are no onside kicks. Any kick that lands between the restraining lines is live and may be advanced. ***Any kick that goes out of bounds ,untouched by R, between the restraining lines comes in to play at the out of bounds spot. Any kick that goes out of bounds ,untouched by R, beyond R's restraining line and before the goal line comes in to play at the receiving teams restraining line. Any kick that touches the ground in the endzone and***

is not returned will be declared a touchback and will come out to the 20-yard-line. . Any player(s) crossing their restraining line before the kick will be flagged for offsides. This is considered a " live " ball foul and a five-yard penalty will be enforced, if accepted, and the ball will be re-kicked –

NOTE 1 : A KICKOFF/ FREE KICK TOUCHED BY ANY MEMBER OF THE KICKING TEAM IN THE NEUTRAL ZONE IS DECLARED DEAD IMMEDIATELY . THE RECEIVING TEAM HAS THE OPTION OF 1). ACCEPTING A 15 YARD UNSPORTSMANLIKE PENALTY FROM THE SPOT OF THE TOUCH AND PUTTING BALL IN PLAY ,FIRST DOWN OR 2). ACCEPTING A 10 YARD PENALTY ENFORCED FROM THE SPOT OF THE KICK AND HAVING THE BALL REKICKED.

REMEMBER, THERE ARE NO ONSIDE KICKS.

NOTE 2 : A KICKOFF/ FREE KICK, FIRST TOUCHED BY ANY MEMBER OF THE KICKING TEAM ,BEYOND THE NEUTRAL ZONE, THAT CONTINUES TO MOVE, IS CONSIDERED A "LIVE" BALL AND MAY BE PICKED UP AND ADVANCED BY THE RECEIVERS

23A. . Safeties are allowed. They are two points and the team who scored the safety receives the ball on a kickoff.. A safety is also scored when the offensive team commits a penalty in the end zone or commits a fumble in the end zone. The safety kickoff alignment is the same as a regular kickoff. The ball may be place kicked (from tee or while being held on the ground by a teammate) or punted in the proximity of the center of the yard line. This is considered a free kick.

23B. Kick Catching Interference :

While any kickoff , kick after safety or punt is in flight , no player from the kicking team shall touch the ball nor obstruct any receiver's path to the ball .

These restrictions do not apply after a receiver has touched the ball .

Exception : A player on the kicking team may catch , bat or touch a punt in flight if no player from the receiving team is in position to catch the ball.

Penalty for kick catching interference :

The receiving team may accept a 10 yard penalty from previous spot and replay down or accept a 10 yard penalty from spot of foul.

24. GAME CLOCK: Games will consist of two 35-minute, running time, halves with a two-minute warning at the end of each half. *The clock will be stopped and the two minute warning will be issued after the end of the down immediately after 2 minutes is reached. Both team captains will be notified of the time and numbers of time outs they have. The clock will then be started on the snap.* Neither half can end on a defensive penalty that is accepted. **Inside two minutes**, normal football clock-stoppage rules will apply and is defined as follows: The clock will not stop for a first down when the play ends in the field of play. The clock stops after change of possession, incomplete passes (including "quick spikes"), plays ending out of bounds, time-outs and touchbacks and restarts on the ensuing snap . The clock stops for all scores, and restarts when receivers touch the ensuing kickoff. and advance the ball in the field of play. Clock doesn't run during extra points. The clock stops for all referee time-outs including penalty enforcement and restarts on "ready" whistle unless play dictates otherwise. For "delay of game" penalties the clock starts on the

snap. When a fumble occurs the clock is stopped, ball is reset, and clock restarts on the "ready" whistle. If the clock is stopped for an injury timeout, the team is charged with a timeout. If no timeouts are left, the team is assessed a five (5) yard delay of game penalty. The clock restarts on the "ready" whistle. *If an inadvertent whistle is sounded inside two minutes of either half, the clock will be stopped to administer the result of the inadvertent whistle. The clock will then be restarted when the ready-for-play whistle is sounded.*

Note: During the first thirty-three(33) minutes of either half, the clock is stopped and restarted on the "ready" whistle for an injury timeout

25. MERCY RULE: If a team is winning by 18 or more points, at the two-minute warning of the second half, the game will be ended.

26. TIME-OUTS: Each team will have three timeouts per half in a regulation game and they cannot be carried over to next half or overtime period. An on field captain and a non playing Coach will be designated for each team before the start of the game. These will be the only persons who can call the timeouts.

27. 30-SECOND PLAY CLOCK: The defense has 30 seconds to return the ball to the line of scrimmage after completion of the play. Once the ball is set, and the "ready" whistle is sounded, the offense has 30 seconds to snap the ball. The Line Referee will issue a fifteen (15) second warning and continue the count down with a silent hand motion and will announce the ten (10) second time point. He will continue the silent hand motion until the five(5) second point at which time he will both motion and announce the last five (5) seconds as 5, 4, 3, 2,1 .Delay of Game (5 yards) is the penalty for the violation of either of these offenses.

28. OVERTIME GAMES: If the game is tied after regulation, there is a one-minute intermission and the captains are brought to the center of the field for a coin toss. The winner of the toss can either choose 1.) to go on offense, 2.) to go on defense, or 3.) to defend a goal. Each team **will have the ball first and goal** starting from the 20-yard line (*or yard line determined by succeeding spot fouls*). (in an equal number of sets) to go for a score, touchdown AND the conversion or **field goal** (*The play is dead immediately after all missed FG attempts.*) . After each completed set the option to pick from the three choices alternates to each team. A winner is declared when one team scores more points than the other during a complete set. An interception returned for a TD ends the game. If an interception is not returned for a touchdown, it comes back to the 20-yard line. Sets are repeated until a winner is declared. Each team gets one 1 time-out during each overtime set. A team can go for either one or two points in an extra-point conversion attempt.

29. EQUIPMENT: Matching (same color, at least) numbered jerseys, must be worn by all team members. **Sonic Boom ("POP ")** Flagbelts only. The flagbelts must be of a **contrasting color** to leg covering (sweat pants, shorts, football pants). Any headgear/hats must not extend outward, "cutoff" jerseys must not cover flagbelt.

Anybody found IMPROPERLY tying flagbelt will be ejected and the team will be assessed a 15-yard penalty. No football pads or hard knee braces/casts (*unless in compliance with 29c below*),, no metal cleats, no foreign substances on football or hands. Receiver gloves are legal. Mouth guards are suggested. It is suggested that each coach have a First-Aid kit.

NOTE : There will be one warning issued to each team at the coin toss to ensure that all players keep flag belts fully accessible. If during a play , the official deems that a ball carrier's flag belt is not accessible, the ball carrier will be ruled as being "tackled" at the spot of a one hand touch by the opposing team.!!

Equipment Details :

29a UNIFORMS ;

. **A team may wear any color** as their team color. Colors must remain the same throughout the season unless league approval is granted. . Any player not in the proper color may not be allowed to play. The final decision is up to the referees as to what is acceptable. An opposing coach will want to bring it to the attention of the referee before the start of a game. Once a player starts a game with a different color shirt, he will be allowed to complete the game this way. Coaches may want to keep some extra shirts of their color just in case.

If two teams have similar color play EACH OTHER and one has the official ACFL football jersey, the team with the official ACFL football jersey will NOT have to wear the pinnies (regular season and post season). Teams can also purchase official ACFL patches for their existing jerseys and NOT have to wear pinnies. If both teams have the official ACFL football jersey then the team with more ACFL years in regular season and better record in the playoffs have the choice. If a determination cannot be made to the satisfaction of the referees, the winner of a coin toss will decide which team wear the pinnies.

NOTE : OFFICIAL ACFL FOOTBALL JERSEY MEANS A JERSEY THAT HAS THE ACFL PATCH AFFIXED TO IT.

29b FOOTBALLS ;

Any adult sized football , composite or leather, including tackified versions , that have either an NFL, NCAA or NFHS logo embossed on it.

EXCEPTION : Wilson Ultra can be used (not embossed)

No foreign substances may be applied to the ball , the player's hands or gloves(if worn).

The ball must be inflated to approximately 13 pounds (to be approved by the referee).

All footballs that a team wishes to use during the game must be brought to the coin toss for inspection and approval by the officials . These footballs will be referred to as “ game approved” .

The officials have sole discretion to disallow the use of a football and there will be no further discussion.

If ,subsequent to this pre game meeting , another football needs to be approved, this must be requested during a timeout period, at half time, or prior to the start of overtime.

If a team uses a football that has not been approved by the officials, a 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty will be enforced .and the team will continue the game using an approved ball.

A team can switch balls at any time assuming it is for a “ game approved “ football and it is done within the 30-second play clock.

29c AUXILIARY EQUIPMENT :

No hard substance in its final form such as leather, rubber, plastic, plaster or fiberglass shall be worn unless covered on all exterior surfaces with no less than ½ inch thick, high density , closed cell polyurethane or an alternate material of the same thickness and with similar physical properties to protect any injury. This appliance is to be brought to the attention of the officials prior to the coin toss who shall inspect and approve it for use.

Tape, bandage or support wrap not to exceed three thicknesses may be worn to protect an existing injury but must be brought to the attention of the officials prior to the coin toss.

30. SIDELINES: All players and coaches must stay in the area between the 20-yard-lines. All coaches are responsible for keeping all spectators 5 yards from sideline. Anytime a coach enters the playing field to question a call a time-out will be assessed. If a coach requests a timeout to question a rule and the rule is not changed, the team is charged with a timeout or assessed a five (5) yard delay of game penalty if no timeouts are left. All coaches should have garbage bags to clean up their sidelines before leaving the field. Leaving garbage on the field will result in a \$50 fine, which must be paid before the next week's game or the team will forfeit until they pay fine.

30a . The home team (team that secures the field) has the option to choose a sideline

31. PROTESTS: If a possible rule misinterpretation directly affects the outcome of the game, a protest may be filed in the following manner: 1). Coach informs Head Referee immediately (before next play) of the protest 2). Head referee will note the exact conditions at the time of protest, including time, team in possession, spot of ball, down, distance and reason for the protest. He will obtain signature of both coaches signifying agreement. 3). Coach & Head Referee call league office and a decision will be rendered by the league office as early in the following week as possible. Upheld protests will be played at a time and place designated by the league office from the point in the game when the protest was declared with conditions as defined in sentence 2). above. Remember, a protest cannot be lodged for a judgment call. All decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

32. THE TOSS: *The visiting team always has first choice of toss, at start of game and first overtime session.*

The team that wins the toss may elect to: 1) receive, 2) kick, 3) choose direction, or 4) defer. Captains bring their sign-in sheets & ref fees to the toss.

In overtime, the choices at the toss *to start the first overtime session* are to 1). Go on offense, 2) Go on defense or 3). Choose direction.

If the game remains tied after the first overtime session , the first choice of the toss options goes to the team that lost the toss to start the overtime.

If game still remains tied the first choice of the toss options alternates between the teams at the start of every new session.

Note: There is only one coin toss in the overtime segment of the game and it occurs at the start the first overtime session .

. **33. SCORING:** Touchdown = 6 points...Field Goal = 3 points. Safety = 2 points (ensuing kickoff may be punted or kicked, with tee, from 25-yard-line) . *Safety on Extra Point = 1 point .(See Rule 21) . PAT = 1 point (kick/run/pass from 3-yard-line) ...OR... 2 points (run/pass from 10-yard-line).*

. **34. HEAD REFEREE:** Head ref can reverse any other referee's call. Can elevate any potentially hazardous play to "unnecessary roughness" status and expulsion if necessary. Has the right to terminate any game at any point, without refund of fees if game conditions warrant it.

35. 5-YARD PENALTIES: Offside, false start, encroachment, equipment, illegal procedure, *illegal formation*, ineligible receiver , illegal substitution, illegal motion, illegal shift, delay of game, defensive holding (and automatic first down) *and illegal chuck(and automatic first down).*

35a. Should the defense go offside, the offense has the option of accepting the results of the play or the penalty with or without the distance (5 yards) being enforced. Should the defense continue to go offside during the same down, an unsportsmanlike conduct (15-yard) foul may be assessed.

35b. False Start , Definition :

After becoming set, it is a false start (dead ball) penalty if an O-lineman (Center and the two players adjacent to the center) moves before the snap or any offensive player makes any movement that simulates action at the snap.

NOTE : if a defensive player is in the neutral zone at the time of the false start or offensive offsides, the ball is declared dead and a defensive offsides penalty is declared.

35c. Offside , Definition :

1). Defensive offside occurs when any defensive player enters the neutral zone prior to the snap. This is a live ball foul *unless there is contact before the snap or the official declares the rush is unabated to the QB, at which time the whistle will blow declaring the play dead.*

2). *Offensive offside occurs when any player (other than the center and the two players adjacent to the center) enter the neutral zone before the snap.The whistle will blow declaring the play dead*

36. 10-YARD PENALTIES: Illegal participation, *illegal block in the back*, offensive holding, offensive pass interference, *defensive holding on offensive blocker(s)*, charging/lowering of head and/or shoulder by runner (spot minus 10 and down counts), flag shield (spot minus 10 and down counts), diving (spot player leaves his feet minus 10 and down counts) , *ball stripping,(from the end of run and REPLAY down) ,deflagging/early flag removal per Rule 17 and Rule 19 Note 2 (from end of run after one hand touch is accomplished and REPLAY down) , , deflagging/early flag removal per Rule 19 Note 3 ,hold of runner (from the end of run and REPLAYdown)*, tackle(pull-down) of runner (from the end of the run and REPLAY down **Kick catching interference** : **The receiving team may accept a 10 yard penalty from previous spot and replay down or accept a 10 yard penalty from spot of foul. (Rule 23B) .**

. Note: For any penalty listed in Para 36 , if in the judgment of the Referee a touchdown was prevented, the Referee can award a touchdown .

37. 15-YARD PENALTIES : Clipping, illegal block (*violation of Rule 10*), pushing out of bounds, { These three fouls are enforced from the spot of the infraction if the penalty is accepted and **the down is replayed** } . and *Unsportsmanlike conduct .(Administered from succeeding spot)*

. Note: For any penalty listed in Para 37 , if in judgment of the Referee a touchdown was prevented, the Referee can award a touchdown

37a). 15 YARD Personal Foul PENALTIES ALSO RESULTING IN AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN OR LOSS OF DOWN:

Personal Fouls / Unnecessary Roughness **of any kind**, including bullrush, barreling a player over when blocking, on a kickoff or at any time, rough tackle/flag pull, contact with potential receiver (offense or defense), *hands to the face*, fighting of any kind including throwing of punches whether there is contact or not and contact used to break up a pass play, roughing the passer (15 YARDS added on to end of run if completed pass or from previous spot if pass is incomplete) and roughing kicker and/or holder. **Illegal stiff arm (penalized from the spot of the foul and the down counts)**, Illegally tied flag belt (*from the LOS and down counts* including immediate ejection)

. Note: For any penalty listed in Para 37a , if in judgment of the Referee a touchdown was prevented, the Referee can award a touchdown

. Roughing kicker or holder or an "A" Gap infraction on extra point

The extra point will be ruled " good" automatically and a 15-yard penalty assessed from the succeeding spot on the ensuing kickoff .

. Roughing kicker or holder or an "A" Gap infraction on field goal attempt . The offense has 2 options :

1) *accept* . the field goal for 3 points which is ruled " good" automatically and a 15-yard penalty assessed from the succeeding spot on the ensuing kickoff

OR

2) elect to accept the penalty ,15 yards from LOS and an **automatic 1st down** .

. Roughing kicker or holder or an "A" Gap infraction on punt attempt . The offense has 2 options :

1) elect to accept the penalty ,15 yards from LOS and an **automatic 1st down** .

OR

2). *Accept the result of the play*

Definition of Personal Foul/Unnecessary Roughness :

A). No player may roughly contact or shove any player in order to prevent a reception or interception. -- after any player touches the ball -- in hopes of jostling the ball free. This is treated as a live ball unnecessary roughness foul . If on defense, a 15-yard penalty will be assessed from the line of scrimmage if the ball is dropped, or from the end of the run if it is caught and **an automatic first down** will also be declared . This is not a pass interference penalty since it occurs after the **BALL IS TOUCHED**. If the

penalty is on the offense 1). If pass is incomplete or caught by offense, catch is nullified, a 15 yard penalty is enforced from LOS **and a loss of down** is declared.

THE NAME OF THE GAME IT TO PLAY THE BALL AND NOT THE MAN !.

B). Linemen , when blocking must not put their hands on an opponent above the shoulders. This includes defensive linemen using a “swim” or “rip” move to get by an offensive lineman . This penalty will be called “hands to the face “. If on offense , defense can take result of the play or 15 yard penalty from LOS and loss of down. If on defense , offense can take the result of the play or a 15 yard penalty from LOS and an automatic first down.

Definition of Roughing the Passer :

Roughing the passer is defined as while the passer is in the act of throwing a forward pass:

- *Any contact is made with the passer’s throwing arm/ hand whether the ball is touched or not*
- *Any contact is made above the passer’s shoulders, including an attempt to make a “tackle”.*
- *Any physical contact is made to the passer including pushing , shoving ,lowering of shoulder to knock the passer over,etc. while attempting to make the flag-pull.*

. Definition of QB sack: The QB is considered to be “ sacked “ when a defender pulls his flag prior to the ball being released, as in a forward or backward pass or hand-off. The position and/or motion of the QB’s arm has no bearing on the call.

Definition of Roughing the Kicker/Punter and /or Holder :

Roughing the kicker/punter and/or holder is defined as while the player contacted is in the act of kicking or in position to hold for a field goal attempt :

- *Any physical contact is made with the kicker/punter or holder, whether the ball is touched or not, including pushing , shoving ,lowering of shoulder to knock the player over,etc. while attempting to block the kick.*

38. Defensive and Offensive pass interference penalties can only be called when the pass is ruled "catchable" . Defensive Pass Interference (DPI) will result in an automatic first down and the ball being placed at the spot of infraction (if the DPI occurs in the endzone, place the ball at the one(1) yard line) . Offensive pass interference will result in a 10-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage. Either penalty could result in an ejection at the referee's discretion.

NOTE: Face Guarding is a form of Pass Interference (PI) . Face guarding is defined as a player (offense or defense) who turns his back to the ball and directs his attention to his opponent and waves his arm(s) to block the vision of the potential receiver or interceptor. There is no attempt by the player (offense or defense) to look back at the ball. No contact need be made for PI to be called.

39. ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS/ ILLEGAL TOUCHING/ ILLEGAL FORWARD HANDING : 5 yards from spot of infraction and loss of down.

DEFINITIONS :

ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS:

A). *Forward Pass from beyond the line of scrimmage. Foot or feet of QB is in contact with the ground beyond the LOS*

B). *Intentional Grounding , a Forward Pass intentionally thrown to save loss of yardage into an area not occupied by an eligible offensive receiver or to conserve time*

EXCEPTION: During the last two(2) minutes of each half, the QB may spike the ball (from *under* center or shotgun), immediately upon catching the snap, to stop the clock. This is defined as a "quick spike."

EXCEPTION : Intentional grounding will not be called if the QB is outside the tackles **AND THE FORWARD PASS REACHES THE PROXIMITY OF THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE(LOS).**

C). A second or subsequent forward pass during the down

D). *Forward Pass after team possession has changed during the down*

ILLEGAL TOUCHING BY AN INELIGIBLE RECEIVER :

A forward pass, batted muffed or caught by an ineligible offensive player who is behind or beyond the LOS

ILLEGAL FORWARD HANDING :

A). *No player may hand a ball forward except during a scrimmage down before a change of possession , provided both players are behind the LOS*

B). *During a scrimmage down after a change of team possession, no player may hand the ball forward to a teammate.*

Note: When penalty yardage exceeds 50% of the yardage to a TD mark off only half the distance to the goal line.

40. Penalty Enforcement Clarification: Should an offensive penalty that occurs during a running play in which a first down is established be accepted, the new first down yard line is established /announced, the penalty yardage will be marked off from the spot of the foul, and the new LOS established.. Should a dead ball foul be committed by the offense after a new first down yard line is established /announced, the penalty yardage will be marked off from the succeeding spot (end of run.) .

Example: 3rd down and 10 yards to go for a first down at mid-field (40-yard line). Offense completes a pass/run and flag is pulled at the opposing 26-yard line. New first down is established as 20-yard line.

A "live ball" penalty for a clip against the offense occurs during the play at the defensive team's 30-yard line. This is a 15-yard penalty. The ball will be placed at the 35-yard line of the offense and it will be 1st down and 25 yards to go to the 20-yard line of the defense.

A dead ball unsportsman-like foul is called on the offense. The ball will be placed on the 39-yard line of the offense and it will be 1st down and 21 yards to go to the 20-yard line of the defense.

Please realize that this enforcement is for acceptance of offensive penalties by the defensive during a play from scrimmage.

It does not apply to penalties accepted during kickoffs or change of possession plays such as scrimmage kick returns or interceptions.

In these cases, the penalty is enforced and the result of the enforcement establishes a new Line of Scrimmage and first down yard marker.

Example:

Kickoff, punt and /or interception are returned to the receivers/defenders 30-yard line.

Case 1). No penalty, receivers/defenders go on offense 1st down and 10 yards to go to the 40-yard line

Case 2). Penalty on receivers/defenders for a clip at the 25-yard line is accepted. Penalty is enforced to 12 1/2-yard line, receivers go on offense, 1st down and 8 1/2 yards to go to the 20 yard line .

41. Foul on Last Play of Half or Game

1. On a foul by defense on last play of half or game, the down is replayed if penalty is accepted.

2. On a foul by the offense on last play of half or game, the down is not replayed and the play in which the foul is committed is nullified.

Exception: Fair catch interference, foul following change of possession, illegal touching. No score by offense counts

41a : INADVERTENT WHISTLE ON LAST PLAY OF HALF OR GAME :

If there is an inadvertent whistle during the last timed down of either half, the half must be extended by an untimed down.

42 . Penalty Enforcement During and After Touchdowns and Extra Points :

a). If during a TD scoring play in which there is no change of possession, the opponent of the scoring team commits a foul, the scoring team is awarded the TD and has the option to have the penalty enforced from the succeeding spot(extra point spot or if in OT, the 20 yard line) or the subsequent kick-off.

b). If during a TD scoring play in which there is a change of possession, the opponent of the scoring team commits a foul after the change of possession , the scoring team is awarded the TD and has the option to have the penalty enforced from the succeeding spot(extra point spot) or the subsequent kick -off.

c). If after a TD scoring play and prior to the initial ready for play signal for the try, either team commits a foul , the offended team has the option to have the penalty enforced from the succeeding spot(extra point spot or if in OT, the 20 yard line) or on the subsequent kick –off.

d). If during a successful try, a loss of down foul by the offense occurs, there is no score and no replay .

e). If during a successful try, a foul by the defense occurs, the offense is given the choice of:

- 1. Accepting the penalty and replaying the down following enforcement ; or*
- 2. Accepting the result of the play and enforcement of the penalty from the succeeding spot (kick-off or if in OT, the 20 yard line).*

f). Should either team commit a dead ball foul after the extra point try , the penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot (kick-off or if in OT, the 20 yard line).

This penalty will be combined with any other penalties that are to be enforced from the succeeding spot (kick-off or if in OT, the 20 yard line) from previous playing action.

43. SCORE CALL-IN: The coach of the winning team must call the score in to (201)-767-6054, by 5 p.m. on Sundays or post it on the ACFL Message Board at <http://members4.boardhost.com/ACFL/>. Games not called in will go down as 0-0 in the standings. You may call the same phone number, after 6 p.m. on Sundays, for a recap of the entire day's results. The same number will also serve as the "Weather Phone" on Sunday mornings after 6:45 am.

44. Unfair acts - any action not specified in rules and/or deemed actions that make a travesty of the game. Penalty - referee can award any penalty he sees fit, including a score.

45. CONDUCT: Conduct

There will be absolutely zero tolerance for unsportsmanlike conduct. Anyone who engages in unsportsmanlike conduct, as defined below, will severely disqualify his team and his chances for resuming play this or any season. **A player who throws a punch or who makes physical contact with a referee. This action could also result in an immediate forfeit of the game will be suspended for the entire season. 8 regular season games (which can overlap seasons) and you are ineligible for the playoffs in the season in which the punch was thrown. Mandatory 3 games for verbally abusing/threatening refs.**

Coaches are alerted to the fact that they should not bring a potential problem player onto their team. These players tend to show themselves more than once during the course of a season and will adversely affect your team's chances for success. Avert the problem, don't sign him. This is meant to be a friendly league. We will let no one player or one team jeopardize our good-natured, recreation pursuits of the league, our use of fields and insurance privileges.

Unsportsmanlike conduct is any conduct that is not contingent to the game. Any participant of a fight will unquestionably be expelled from the game. It will be up to the referee as to whether or not that player is to return the following week, or any game thereafter (upon consultation with league management). If a precipitator can be determined, he will be ejected. If not, both players will be automatically ejected. Any player ejected from a game is to leave the field property entirely or the team will suffer a forfeit. A referee and league officials can hold a team accountable (in the form of forfeit) for any unsuitable actions taken by the player after he is ejected.

The second player from the same team engaged in a second fight will automatically be ejected for that game plus the following game. It will be up to the discretion of the official whether or not a team should be held accountable for the actions of the second ejected player by levying a team forfeit of the current game.

A major responsibility of the refs is to watch out for cheap shots. This will lead to an automatic ejection. Anyone developing a reputation for committing cheap shots or any chronic conduct violation will be monitored closely by the league and will probably not finish the season.

The referee can request a mandatory forfeit for a subsequent week of any team engaging as a whole or majority in unsportsmanlike actions. This can only be upheld, however, after consultation with league management. The same rules apply for any verbal assault on a referee.

The only players allowed to question the call of an official is be the coach or the designated captain. All else are subject to ejection for all or part of a game at the ref's discretion. The preface of any confrontation with a referee must be to ask for an explanation of a rule or a call -- not to chastise the official.

This is not a "rough touch" league. However, if you feel you were unjustly rough-touched, you may not confront the accused offender to express your displeasure. All calls by the officials are final. If the official does not call a penalty for a rough touch, there was none in the eyes of the league.

Harassing verbal confrontation will also not be tolerated. It will be up to the official whether or not language is fight provoking and if action need be taken. Any player abusive in this manner may be asked by the official to sit out the remainder of the half. If this persists, he may then be asked to leave the game by the official. Trash talking is discouraged as it could be considered fight-provoking behavior.

46. RULE AMENDMENT: Requests to amend a rule may be made to league officials and will be decided upon by league management. No rules will be amended on game day.

47. MORE QUESTIONS: E-mail it to Head Referee, Martin Landin, at mglandin@hotmail.com and he will respond to any intelligent questions.

The logo for the American Canadian Football League (ACFL) is displayed in a bold, green, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving it a three-dimensional appearance.

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