USU Intramural Flag Football Rules

Participation Warning

There are inherent risks of mental and physical injury while participating in the Intramural Sports Program. Our goal is to reduce or eliminate as many risks as reasonably possible to provide a safe and fun program. This does not mean that injuries will not happen. We ask for your full cooperation in following instructions regarding proper conduct, proper use of equipment and facilities, and adherence to the rules of each sport as established by the Intramural Sports Program. Participants are responsible for the cost of any injury; therefore, you are encouraged and recommended to have adequate health insurance.

The Game

National Intramural & Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) Flag Football Rules will govern play with the following exceptions:

Team Regulations

1. 2 teams of 7 players for Men's or Women's Divisions
2. Co-Rec divisions will be 8v8
3. Minimum of 5 players to start a game
4. Co-Rec minimum is 5 as long as at lease 2 of each gender are on the field at all times and no team can ever play with more than four of one gender
5. 20-minute halves
6. The clock does not stop until the last 2 minutes of the second half provided the score differential is less than 19 points
7. During "stop time" the clock will stop when:
    i. A player goes out of bounds
    b. Incomplete passes
    c. Scores (including the point after touchdown)
    d. All timeouts
    e. Penalties
    f. 1st downs until the ball is set
8. Two 1-minute timeouts per game. Timeouts will stop the clock at any time

Eligibility

1. Current USU Students, faculty and staff, spouses of students/faculty/staff members
2. Every player must be on the roster before checking into the game
3. Players must bring a valid form of picture ID to EVERY game
    a. NO ID = NO PLAY, NO EXCEPTIONS!
4. Current varsity football players are ineligible
5. Varsity football players are not eligible to participate in their respective or alike intramural sport, activity, or event until a period of one year has passed following completion of all activities for the Department of Athletics. After the period has passed, former collegiate athletes must participate at the highest level of competition offered in their respective sport
6. Professional athletes, current or former, may not participate in their respective or alike sport, activity or event. A professional athlete is defined as a person who has been paid to participate in a sport, under contract with a professional team, included on a professional team roster, practiced with a professional team and/or compensated for trying out for a team.

Equipment and Jerseys/Clothing

1. NO JEWELRY IS PERMITTED DURING PLAY!
2. Pockets or belt loops in shorts/pants/hoodies are NOT permitted
3. Men's leagues must use a regulation size ball, women's and co-rec can use regulation, intermediate, youth or junior size ball
4. Each player must wear the distributed flags. Flags cannot be pinned, fastened, or tied on.
5. Proper footwear and attire is mandatory (cleats shall not contain any metal spikes)
6. Articles that may endanger other players are not permitted (I.e. jewelry, plaster casts, etc.)

7. Shirts must be tucked in at all times to avoid flag interference
8. Towels are not to be worn in the waistband of pants/shorts
9. No hard-billed hats or hoods permitted
10. If clothing or equipment is considered dangerous, the Intramural Staff can declare it illegal.

Scoring

1. Touchdowns are worth 6 points in all men's and women's leagues
    a. Touchdowns scored by female players in a co-rec game are worth 9 points
2. Point After Touchdown (PAT)
    a. 1 point from the 3-yard line
    b. 2 points from the 10-yard line
    c. 3 points from the 20-yard line
3. An interception by the defense on a PAT is DEAD
4. Safety is worth 2 points
5. No field goals
6. All ties stand at the end of regular season games
7. PLAYOFFS: If tied at the end of regulation each team will alternate starting from the 10 and have 4 downs to score until a winner is determined

The Try

1. Following a touchdown, the scoring team's captain must announce what points they will be attempting to gain – 1, 2, or 3 points. The official will announce this to the defending team
2. The team on offense may ONLY change their decision when a timeout is taken by either team
3. Iff, during the try, a loss of down penalty is given on the offense, then there is no score and no replay
4. If there is a foul on the defense during a successful try, the penalty will be enforced from the 14-yard line once the change of possession has occurred
5. If a double foul occurs, the down will be replayed

Safety: Occurs when..

1. A runner carries the ball into their own end zone, and it becomes dead while in their possession – they become de-flagged, step out of bounds, or drop the ball
2. A player on the offense commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and the measurement is from a spot in his/her end zone
3. After a safety, the ball will be snapped by the scoring team at their own 30-yard line (unless moved by penalty)

Playing Field

1. Fields are divided into 4 ZONES TO GAIN that are 20 yards long
2. Teams have 4 downs to gain NEXT zone to gain
3. Endzones are 10 yards unless changed due to field dimensions

Play

1. There are no kickoffs. Beginning of the game, half, after scores or safeties the ball is put into play on the receiving team's 14-yard line
2. There is a 25 second play clock once the referee has put the ball in play and blown the "ready for play" whistle
3. Offense must have at least 1 player on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap
4. A snap must be made from the ground (not the cone) in one continuous motion
5. Teams must line up outside the neutral zone (1 yard between line of scrimmage and defense)
6. Fumbles are dead where they hit the ground
7. Ball is dead if ball carrier (excluding hand or foot) touches the ground
8. Bany lateral/backwards pass is dead at the spot where it hits the ground
9. Ball carrier is downed by one-hand tag between shoulder and knee if the flag belt is inadvertently lost
10. Teams are awarded one legal forward pass per down

Punts

1. Punts may be attempted on any down but they must be declared (no fake punts)
2. Snap must be made
3. No defensive restrictions on the line
4. No penetration of line of scrimmage is allowed until the ball is kicked
5. Ball is only dead if the punt is muffed, touches the ground in the end zone, or touched by the kicking team first
6. Participant receiving the punt may advance the ball off the ground as long as it hasn't touched anyone
7. The receiver must have the opportunity to catch the ball

Dead Ball Penalties

False Start – 5 yards
Offensive players may not enter the neutral zone or simulate the start of a play prior to the ball being snapped. Doing so will result in the play being blown dead by the officials.

Illegal Snap – 5 yards
A player must make one continuous motion to snap the ball from the ground to the person receiving the snap.

Encroachment – 5 yards
Defensive players may not enter the neutral zone prior to the ball being snapped. Doing so will result in the play being blown dead by the official.
**Any player intentionally jumping into the neutral zones to illegally consume time shall be assessed an Unsportsmanlike Penalty for "unfair play"

Delay of Game– 5 yards
Offense has a 25 second play clock that starts once the Referee blows the ready for play whistle

Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 10 yards (Disqualification if flagrant)

1. Abusive or insulting language
2. Unfair play
3. Excessive celebration
4. Fighting
5. Spiking the ball

Dead Ball Penalties

Illegal Motion– 5 yards
A player may be in motion, but not moving towards the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap

Illegal Substitution – 5 yards
Offense may only have 7 players on the field at the time of the snap. Failure to sub in and out legally prior to the ball being snapped will be a live ball, 5-yard penalty

Illegal Shift – 5 yards
There can be no more than one person shifting/moving at once at the time of the snap

Illegal Formation – 5 yards
The quarterback must receive the snap at least two yards behind the line of scrimmage; you cannot take the snap under center

Illegal Participation – 10 yards
A player may not go out of bounds to gain an advantage on a defender, come back in bounds and be the first to touch the ball

Roughing the Passer – 10 yards (and automatic first down)

Defense must make definite effort to avoid charging the passer after the ball is thrown. Any contact with the throwing arm, ball in hand, or body is Roughing the Passer

Illegal Equipment – 10 yards
Players are required to have proper, legal equipment prior to the snap and ball becoming live. Examples would be having jewelry, having pockets or a hood

Illegally Secured Flag Belt – 10 yards and ejection
A participant must not tamper with the flag belt and have it tied to prevent the removal by the defense. This would include tying or looping the clip so that it makes it more difficult for participants to pull the flag belt

Flag Guarding/Stiff Arm – 10 yards from the spot of the foul
Ball carrier may not use hands or arms to guard flags and may not stiff arm

Holding – 10 yards added to the end of run
Defender may not hold an opponent by contact or with their clothing to gain an advantage to de-flag the runner

Illegal Contact – 10 yards
Participant may not use excessive contact to gain an advantage

Defensive Pass Interference – 10 yards
Note: De-flagging a receiver prior to the receiver catching the ball is Pass Interference

Offensive Pass Interference – 10 yards

Substitutions

1. Unlimited substitutions on a dead ball

Mercy Rule

1. If a team is ahead by 19 or more points when the 2-minute warning is announced in the 2nd half, then the game is over. If a team scores in the last 2-minutes of the 2nd half and that score results in a point differential of 19 or more points, then the game is over.

Overtime Rule

1. A coin toss will precede the tiebreaker. Team winning the toss has three (3) options: A) offense; B) defense; or C) direction. The opposing team has the remaining choice.
2. Play will begin on the 10-yard line and each team will have four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If Team A scores on its four plays, then. Team B will have four (4) plays to score. If the score remains tied after each team finishes their possession, then the process is repeated. If Team A started the overtime on offense, then in the second overtime Team B will start on offense.
3. When a pass is intercepted, the possession is over. An interception cannot be returned.
4. Penalties are assessed like the regular game. A team shall be given a new series of four (4) plays when an automatic first down penalty is accepted

Co--Rec Rules

The rules stated above will govern play with the following exceptions:

1. The Co-Rec game shall be played between 2 teams of 8 players, 4 men and 4 women. Teams with 7 players shall be 4 men and 3 women or 3 women and 4 men. Teams with 6 players shall be 3 men and 3 women. Teams with 5 players shall play with 3 men and 2 women or 3 women and 2 men.
2. While 5 is the minimum to begin a game, the game may continue with fewer than 5 players as long as the team has a chance to win. NOTE: If in doubt, continue the game
3. Teams cannot play with more than four men or four women at a time.
4. No restrictions regarding who may advance a punt.
5. Open and Closed

a. When a play is open, a male passer may throw the ball to anyone on the field.
    i. After a male-to-male completion, the next play is considered "closed"
    ii. Two male-male completions in a row is considered an illegal forward pass.
b. During a "closed" play a woman must be involved as a passer, runner, or receiver.
    i. To open a play there needs to be all of the following in a play: woman involved; legal forward pass; and positive yards gained.
    ii. All plays will remain closed until these criteria have been met
c. Men may not run the ball past the line of scrimmage, but they may receive a legal forward pass behind the line of scrimmage and run past the line of scrimmage.

6. Touchdowns scored by women players will be worth nine points, this includes any legal forward pass by a female to a male which results in a touchdown.
    a. Extra points will be one point from the three-yard line, two points from the 10-yard line, and three points from the 20-yard line.
7. With two minutes left in the game and one team is ahead by 25 or more points, the game is declared over, and the team with the lead is declared the winner.

Injured Player(s) Policy

If someone on your team becomes injured, please contact the Intramural Program staff at intramurals@usu.edu or435-797-8388 24 hours before your next scheduled game to inquire about replacing the injured player on your team. Doctor or Athletic Trainers note may be required. Intramural Sports Program staff has the authority to determine if an injured player will be allowed a substitute. There are limitations when it comes to who can substitute during tournament play. If someone becomes injured during the tournament, an eligible participant may play in their place. Once the injured individual becomes approved to play again, that substitute is then removed from the team roster.

Sportsmanship Rating System

The sportsmanship rating system is intended to be an objective scale by which teams' attitudes and behaviors can be assessed. Behavior before, during, and after a contest is included in each rating. Each team captain is responsible for educating **ALL players and spectators** affiliated with his/her team about the system. **Teams must maintain a 3.0 average in order to qualify for tournament play**. **Teams must also receive AT LEAST a 3.0 in each contest during tournament play to advance.** The Intramural Staff will determine the score for the teams after each intramural contest. The Intramural Staff reserves the right to review and/or change any sportsmanship rating given. Captains inquiring about their team's sportsmanship rating should do so the business day following the contest by contacting the Coordinator of Competitive Sports or Graduate Assistants of Competitive Sports by emailing intramurals@usu.edu or calling 435-797-8388.

Sport Code	Description
4.0	Team members cooperate with and demonstrate good sportsmanship toward members of opposing teams, spectators, and ALL campus recreation staff. Team manager exhibits control over his/her team and spectators, converses reasonably and rationally with officials about rule interpretations, and cooperates by providing any information requested by any intramural staff member.
3.0	Team members verbally complain about some of the decisions made by the officials and/or show minor dissensions, which may or may not merit an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. Teams receiving one unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will receive no higher than this rating. A team defaults the contest, meaning they contact the Intramural Sports office before noon on the day they are scheduled to play to let them know they will not attend.
2.0	Team shows verbal dissent toward officials and/or the opposing team throughout the game, which may or may not result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. There may be one player who consistently question calls in a rude behavior or speak negatively towards the opposing team throughout the game. A penalty may not be enforced as no one instance may warrant that, but the overall behavior may award the team this rating in sportsmanship. Team captain exhibits minor control over team/spectators, but is in control of himself/herself. Teams receiving more than one unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will receive no higher than this rating. Team is unable to produce a team at game time resulting in a forfeit.
1.0	Team continually dissents the officials and/or opposing team from the court/sidelines.There may not be an unsportsmanlike penalty enforced as no one scenario may mandate that, but if multiple players exhibit rude

	or negative behavior toward the staff or the opposing team, they will be awarded this rating. Team manager exhibits little or no control over team/spectators or himself/herself. Teams that have a player ejected will receive no higher than this rating. The team captain will be required to meet with a Competitive Sports Administrator
0	Team is completely uncooperative; manager has no control over team/spectators/self. Teams play with ineligible participants or withhold any information requested. Damage or destruction of any Campus Recreation facility/equipment. At least one player ejection or causing a contest to be forfeited by any reason than not having enough players will receive this rating. Any threatening behavior (verbal/nonverbal) towards any player, spectator, or campus recreation employee. The team captain will be required to meet with a Competitive Sports Administrator

Teams that receive a sportsmanship rating lower than a 3.0 during any Tournament contest will automatically be disqualified from the tournament.

For full details and our entire Intramural Sports Program Manual, please visit https://www.usu.edu/campusrec/intramural_sports/homepage_intramural

Everything is at the discretion of the Coordinator of Competitive Sports and Graduate Assistant of Competitive Sports. If you have any questions, contact them at intramurals@usu.edu or 435-797-8388