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RULE CHANGES FOR 2016

Jersey change from NFL to NCAA

Football field size change: 40 yard x 80 yard with two 10 yard end zones

New 7 on 7 format

Two 20 minute halves and 5 minute halftime

The quarterback can run

Screening at the line of scrimmage

Two timeouts per half, one 60 second and one 30 second

Punts are now allowed

Spin moves, the player can leave their feet without penalty

Unsportsmanlike conduct, not returning the flag 15 yard penalty with a warning (first time)

Mercy rule, 28 points + running clock

No more run zones
1. At the start of each game, captains from both teams shall meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball. The visiting team shall call the toss.

2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Teams may not choose to defer to the second half.

3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 20-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, they have four (4) plays to score a touchdown.

4. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts where the other team lost possession.

5. Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.
**TERMINOLOGY**

**Boundary Lines**
the outer perimeter lines around the field. They include the sidelines, and back of the end zone lines.

**Line of Scrimmage** (LOS) imaginary line running through the point of football and across width of the field.

**Line-to-Gain**
the line the offense must pass to get a first down or score.

**Rush Line**
an imaginary line running across the width of the field 5 yards (into the defensive side) from the line of scrimmage.

**Offense**
the squad with possession of the ball.

**Defense**
the squad opposing the offense to prevent them from advancing the ball.

**Passer**
the offensive player that throws the ball and may or may not be the quarterback.

**Rusher**
the defensive player assigned to rush the quarterback to prevent him/her from passing the ball by pulling his/her flags or by blocking the pass.

**Downs (1-2-3)**
the offensive squad has four attempts or “downs” to advance the ball. They must cross the line to gain to get another set of downs or to score.

**Live Ball**
refers to the period of time that the play is in action. Generally used in regard to penalties, live ball penalties are considered part of the play and must be enforced before the down is considered complete.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TERMINOLOGY (CONTINUED)</strong></th>
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1. The league provides each player with a flag belt and jersey. Teams will use the football provided by their league.

2. Players must wear shoes. Football cleats are encouraged; however cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.

3. Players must use a mouthguard during play. Players without a mouthguard will NOT be allowed on the field.

4. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.

5. Players must remove all watches, earrings and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.

6. Players’ jerseys must be tucked into the pants if they hang below the belt line.

7. Pants or shorts with belt loops or pockets must be taped.
FIELD

1. The field dimensions are 40 yards by 80 yards with two 10-yard end zones, and a midfield line-to-gain

2. Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.

ROSTERS

1. Teams must consist of at least seven players.

2. Teams must start a game with a minimum of six players. In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient substitute players may play with six players on the field, but no fewer than six.
TIMING AND OVERTIME

1. Games are played on a 40 minute continuous clock with two twenty minute halves. The clock stops only for timeouts.

2. Halftime is 5 minutes long.

3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.

4. Each team has one 60-second time out AND one 30-second time per half.

5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.

6. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.

7. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, College OT rules apply, no first downs.

8. In tournament or playoff situations, an overtime (OT) Period will be used to determine a winner. OT format is as follows College Rules format.
If a game is tied after four quarters, the teams will play extra periods until the game finds a victor. Each period consists of one possession for each team, the order of which is decided by a pre-overtime coin toss. After each period, the order of possession flips.

Each drive starts at the defense’s 25-yard line.

If the teams remain tied at the end of a period, they play another.

Coaches are typically volunteer parents or family members helping the players learn and enjoy the game. Parents are encouraged to support the coach at all time.

Coaches are allowed on the field to direct players according to need and division. Only one coach is allowed on the field during game time.

Coaches are expected to adhere to the philosophies, coaching guidelines, and codes of conduct of Elite Youth Sports.
SCORING

1. **Touchdown** 6 points

2. **PAT (Point After Touchdown)** 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (12-yard line)

   Note: 1 point PAT, 2 point PAT can be run or pass. Team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-pt. conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-pt. conversion (from the 12-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged time out. Decision cannot be changed after a penalty. Interceptions on conversions cannot be returned.

3. **Safety** 2 points

   Note: A Safety occurs when the ball carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. They can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, their flag falls out, they step out of bounds or they hit the ground with their knee or arm. A Safety also occurs when there is an offensive penalty in the end zone.

4. **Mercy Rule** After one team is winning by twenty eight points or more, with a running clock
1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.

2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.

3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.

4. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

5. Any official can whistle the play dead.

6. Play is ruled “dead” when:
   a. The ball hits the ground.
   b. The ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
   c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
   d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
   e. The ball carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground.
   f. The ball carrier’s flag falls out.
   g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
   h. Inadvertent whistle.

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet were at the time of the fumble.
7. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
   a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew and the down is consumed.
   b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

8. A team is allowed to use a time out to question an official’s rule interpretation. If the official’s ruling is correct, the team will be charged a time out. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.
RUNNING AND SCREENING

1. The ball is spotted where the runner’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the players front foot.

2. Handoffs, or pitches behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage. The offense may use multiple handoffs. Center Sneak play: The ball must completely leave the center’s hands on the snap and he/she must step backwards off the line of scrimmage in order to receive a direct handoff from the QB before advancing the ball.

3. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

4. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding. And the player can leave their feet within the spin without penalty.

5. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.

6. Screening is allowed at any time. Blocking is defined as a screen only at the line of scrimmage after the snap, this is defined as a non-contact screening technique. This means players can impede the progress of an opponent to interfere with or to block the path to create an obstacle. These blockers are eligible to receive a pass after the screen/block.

7. Flag Obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player’s hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.
**PASSING**

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage.

2. Shovel passes are allowed, but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.

**RECEIVING**

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).

2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.

3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.

5. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception.

6. Interceptions are returnable but not on conversions after touchdowns.
### PUNTING

1. Offense starts the beginning of each half or after the score at their own 20. (No fake punts allowed).

2. Offense must inform defense of their punting, must snap the ball to the punter in shotgun formation (fumble is dead ball) then only the punter can kick the ball.

3. The defense can have a player down the field to receive the kick (or touch it at which time it’s a dead ball).

4. If the defensive player isn’t able to field the punt, they will take over on downs where the ball comes to rest or goes out of bounds. No punt returns.

### FLAG PULLING

1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball carrier is in full possession of the ball.

2. Defenders can dive to pull flags, but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.

3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier’s possession at any time.

4. If a player’s flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends.

5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.

6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender’s access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.
1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of five yards from the line of scrimmage unless the offense is 5 yards from the first down or goal line. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

2. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a Rush Line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.

   a. A legal rush is:
      i. Any rush from a point 5 yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
      ii. If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 5 yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.

   b. A penalty may be called if:
      i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – Illegal Rush (5 yards LOS and first down).
      ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – Offside (5 yards LOS and first down).
      iii. Any defensive player, not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – Illegal Rush (5 yards LOS and first down).

3. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO contact can be made with the quarterback in any way. Blocking the pass or attempting to block the pass and then making contact with the passer will result in a roughing the passer penalty.
1. Offense must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
   b. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
   c. No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.

4. Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.

5. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.

6. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.
1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee’s discretion. No appeals will be considered. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!

2. Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.

4. Ball carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.

5. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.

6. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship, as well:  
   a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.  
   b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.  
   c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.

7. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly:  
   a. Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the end zone area.  
   b. Stay in the end zone area, not between fields.

8. Not returning a flag back to the player, first offense is a warning, a second offense results in a 15 yard penalty.
**PENALTIES - GENERAL**

1. The referee will call all penalties.

2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (spot fouls)

4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question judgment calls.

5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.

7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
# PENALTIES - SPOT FOULS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Penalty</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Defensive Pass</td>
<td>Automatic First Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holding</td>
<td>+5 yards &amp; Automatic First Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stripping</td>
<td>+10 yards &amp; Automatic First Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive</td>
<td>+10 yards &amp; Automatic First Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnecessary Roughness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening, Blocking or Running with the Ball Carrier</td>
<td>-5 yards &amp; Loss of Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charging</td>
<td>-10 yards &amp; Loss of Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flag Guarding</td>
<td>-10 yards &amp; Loss of Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offensive</td>
<td>-10 yards &amp; Loss of Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnecessary Roughness</td>
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# Penalties - Defensive

<table>
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<th>Penalty</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Offside</td>
<td>+5 yards from line of scrimmage &amp; Automatic First Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Rush</td>
<td>+5 yards from line of scrimmage &amp; Automatic First Down (Start rushing from 7 yard marker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Flag Pull</td>
<td>+5 yards from line of scrimmage &amp; Automatic First Down (Before receiver has the ball)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roughing the Passer</td>
<td>+10 yards from line of scrimmage &amp; Automatic First Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taunting</td>
<td>+10 yards from line of scrimmage &amp; Automatic First Down</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defensive Pass Interference</td>
<td>SPOT FOUL, Automatic First Down</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holding</td>
<td>SPOT FOUL, +5 yards and Automatic First Down</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stripping</td>
<td>SPOT FOUL, +10 yards and Automatic First Down</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defensive Unnecessary Roughness</td>
<td>SPOT FOUL, +10 yards and Automatic First Down</td>
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### PENALTIES - OFFENSIVE

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<th>Penalty Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offside/False Start</td>
<td>-5 yards from line of scrimmage &amp; loss of down</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illegal Forward Pass</td>
<td>-5 yards from line of scrimmage &amp; loss of down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Pass received behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass beyond the line of scrimmage)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offensive Pass Interference</td>
<td>-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illegal Motion</td>
<td>-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down</td>
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<tr>
<td>(More than one person moving)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delay of Game</td>
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<td>Impeding the Rusher</td>
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<td>SPOT FOUL, -5 yards and loss of down</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charging</td>
<td>SPOT FOUL, -10 yards and loss of down</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flag Guarding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offensive Unnecessary Roughness</td>
<td>SPOT FOUL, -10 yards and loss of down</td>
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