



## Iowa Sports Foundation Flag Football State Championship Rules

### I. GENERAL RULES

- A. Only teams that agree to abide by these rules and regulations, established by the Iowa Sports Foundation (ISF) and the Football Committee, will be eligible to participate in the tournament.

### II. PLAYING REGULATIONS - Iowa High School Athletic Association Rules, except the following:

- A. Putting the ball in play:
  - 1. There is no kick-off. Play begins at the 20-yard line.
  - 2. The team listed first in the bracket will be the visiting team. The visiting team will call the coin toss.
  - 3. The team that wins the coin toss may elect to have possession of the ball, choice of end zone, or defer their decision to the second half. Teams will change direction in the second half.
- B. First downs shall be attained by advancing from one 20-yard zone in four downs.
- C. Fumbles: Any time the ball is fumbled, the ball is dead at that spot.
- D. No stripping or attacking the ball will be allowed.
- E. Blocking:
  - 1. In all instances, a blocker must be on his feet before and during contact with his opponent.
  - 2. Blocking can only be done with the hands, and contact may only be made against an opponent's torso, arms or hands.
  - 3. Under no condition shall a high-low block be permitted. (Approved ruling: In the event a blocker makes legal contact then loses footing or balance and in the process of falling makes contact below the hips, this will not be interpreted as a penalty unless the blocker continues to drive forward.)
  - 4. All blocking must be behind the line of scrimmage. **NO DOWN FIELD BLOCKING ALLOWED.** A blocker may not drive the opponent down field.
  - 5. Any member of the offensive team moving ahead of the ball carrier will be considered downfield blocking.
- F. The ball is downed and becomes dead when:
  - 1. An opposing player pulls one of the flags from the ball carrier's belt. The player who removed the flag from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag above his head at the spot where the flag was taken.
  - 2. The player who removes the flag should remain at the spot where he downed the ball carrier and then hand the flag back to the ball carrier. Failure to do so will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
  - 3. Any fumbled ball is dead at the spot of the fumble.
  - 4. No offensive player may dive. Doing so results in the ball becoming dead at the spot of the dive. Exception: jump pass behind the line of scrimmage.
- G. Fourth down only:
  - 1. The offensive team captain must notify the defensive team and officials if they are going to punt.
  - 2. If the ball is to be punted, the offensive team must remain stationary until the ball is punted. The punter may walk up to the line of scrimmage to take the ball before retreating a minimum of 3-yards behind the line of scrimmage.
  - 3. The ball must be punted within 25-seconds of the snap.
  - 4. Upon notification of a punt, the defensive team must have a minimum of three men on the line of scrimmage until the ball is touched. They are given a 2-yard zone behind themselves to block.
- H. Receivers must have one foot in bounds and control of the ball for a reception.
- I. Once a player goes out of bounds, he is out of that particular play.
- J. If the ball is in the air and the defensive player pulls the flag too soon, it becomes an automatic two hand touch from the shoulder to the knees.

- K. No ball carrier may try to run over a defensive player.
- L. If an offensive player with the ball loses his belt without the other team touching it, the defender must touch the offensive player with one hand to down the ball.
- M. Multiple forward passes may be used as long as they originate from behind the line of scrimmage.
- N. Backward passes (Lateral) may be used beyond the line of scrimmage.

### III. TIME OUTS

- A. Each team is entitled to two 30-second time-outs during each half. First-half time-outs will not carry over to the second half.
- B. The clock will stop during all time-outs.
- C. A two-minute warning will be issued at the end of each half. The clock will stop for the notification; Clock will resume when the ball is spotted.

### IV. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTION

- A. Substitutions: Unlimited substitutions may be made, except when the ball is in play.
- B. Teams must have seven (7) players to start and continue play. Failure to have the minimum number of seven (7) players will result in a forfeit

### V. SCORING

- A. Touchdowns
  - 1. Teams scoring a touchdown will be awarded six (6) points.
- B. Extra Points
  - 1. There will be no kicks for extra point attempts, only runs or passes.
  - 2. Conversion options:
    - a. One-point conversions from the three-yard line.
    - b. Two-point conversions from the 10-yard line.
    - c. Three-point conversion from the 20-yard line.
  - 3. The defensive team is allowed to return intercepted passes for points. Extra points intercepted and returned to the end zone are worth one point regardless of the type of conversion the offense was attempting.
- C. Safety
  - 1. After a safety, the ball is placed on the opposite 20-yard line.
  - 2. All players are eligible receivers. However, players may not block downfield.
  - 3. A safety is worth two points.

### VI. FOULS AND PENALTIES

#### A. OFFENSIVE

- 1. Illegal blocking: A 15-yard penalty will be assessed to anyone who leaves their feet or blocks below the hips in an attempt to impede an opponent.
- 2. No down field blocking: It shall be a 15-yard penalty for the offensive or defensive team to block downfield. Once the ball is across the line of scrimmage, offensive players must avoid contact. The offensive center only may be hit when fully upright and moving to a blocking position, never struck when down field.
- 3. Stiff-arming: It will be a 15-yard penalty to stiff-arm a defensive player.
- 4. Blocking out of bounds: It will be a 15-yard penalty for the defensive team to block or push a player out of bounds.
- 5. Blocking in the back, 15-yard penalty.
- 6. Cross body blocks will result in a 15-yard penalty.
- 7. No protecting the flag: It will be a 15-yard penalty for the ball carrier to brush away an opponent's hand when grasping for the flag.
- 8. Offensive Holding, grabbing any player to stop movement to the ball. 15-yard penalty.
- 9. Illegal Forward pass. 5-yard penalty loss of down. From line of scrimmage.
- 10. Forward lateral, 5-yard penalty loss of down. From spot of foul.
- 11. Failing to punt the ball when the team indicates it will do so will result in a 15-yard penalty.
- 12. Fouls by an offensive player behind the line of scrimmage are enforced at the spot of the foul.

#### B. DEFENSIVE

- 1. ***Failure by the defense to allow a 1-yard halo over the center will result in a 5-yard penalty.***
- 2. Tackling: It will be a 15-yard penalty to tackle, hold or rough another player.
- 3. Roughing the QB any bodily contact other than incidental, 15-yard penalty.
- 4. On all running plays, fouls by the defense will be penalized from where the run ends.

### C. GENERAL

1. Hands to the face/head, 15-yard penalty.
2. Wrapping, tying or securing a flag to pants or a belt will result in a 15-yard penalty.
3. Personal Fouls (or unsportsmanlike conduct) will be assessed a 15-yard penalty.
4. The foul will be measured from the most severe spot on running plays.
5. If the foul occurs behind the ball, the penalty will be enforced from the spot of the foul.
6. On kicks, passes, etc., the penalty will be enforced from the previous spot.
7. **Only the team captains are allowed to communicate with the game officials. Players violating this rule will be assessed a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.**

## VII. CONDUCT

- A. Players, coaches and fans are expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner. Please display good sportsmanship at all times. The Iowa Sports Foundation Football Committee has the authority to suspend any player, manager, representative or team for violations of tournament rules. A person may be ejected for any action not addressed in the rules that is determined to be detrimental to the good conduct of the tournament.
- B. The game officials will be in charge during play, and their decisions will be final. Matters of protest will be submitted to the Football Committee and/or Director. Steps must follow those outlined in section X.
- C. Alcohol is not allowed at any time on the tournament premises by athletes or spectators.
- D. Game officials have the authority to eject any person from a game for serious misconduct. This includes unsportsmanlike conduct and offensive language. An ejected athlete will leave the playing field and the sideline area (out of sight and sound) immediately or the game will be forfeited.
- E. Prior to the game, each team must designate a team captain or captains for the opening coin toss. The captains are the only game participants allowed to communicate with the game officials (see section XI.C.7).

## VIII. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- A. There are three steps to the ejection process:
  1. 1<sup>st</sup> Infraction –15-yard penalty.
  2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Infraction – 15-yard penalty and ejection from the particular game in which the athlete is participating (out of sight and sound of the game).
  3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Infraction – 15-yard penalty, ejection from the game, ejection from the tournament and immediate evacuation from the premises.
  4. Depending on severity of the infraction the athlete may be ejected from the tournament immediately.

## IX. EJECTION PROCESS

An athlete may be ejected for any of the following reasons:

1. Serious misconduct of any kind.
2. Commission of fraud, such as playing under an assumed name, falsifying information on rosters or giving false information to program and game officials.
3. Physical violence by any person, involving officials, other participants or spectators proceeding, during or following a game.
4. A player ejected from the tournament has the right to appear before the Football Director to appeal the ejection.

## X. PROTESTS

- A. Protests relating to rule interpretations must be made directly to the game officials and the opposing manager at the time of the violation and before play resumes.
- B. An official protest must be submitted to the Director directly following the game and be accompanied by a \$50.00 protest fee. The fee will be returned if the protest is upheld. Judgment calls by the official cannot be protested.
- C. A decision will be made on the protest before any subsequent tournament games will be allowed to begin. If a game must be replayed as a result of the decision, the Director will notify all related parties.
- D. Eligibility complaints will not be regarded as protests. These complaints may be made at any time to game officials, opposing managers and the Football Committee for investigation and possible suspension, ejection or disqualification of the athlete. Violation of entry rules will result in forfeiture of any games in which the athlete has participated. The athlete is ejected from the tournament, but the team is allowed to compete in the next game if the format of the tournament allows for losing teams to continue playing.
- E. Video tape will not be used in determining the outcome of protests or officials rulings.

**XI. EQUIPMENT**

- A. ISF will provide the flags (red and yellow). Two flags must be worn on the hips at all times.
- B. Opposing teams must wear jerseys of contrasting colors. Team members all must wear jerseys of the same color. If jersey colors are the same for both teams, the visiting team must change.
- C. Athletes may wear any type of pants. Pants cannot be the same color as the flags used.
- D. Protective equipment other than knee braces, mouth guards, and ankle braces will not be allowed. No hip, thigh, forearm or hand pads are allowed.
- E. Molded rubber cleats may be worn. **No steel cleats will be allowed.**
- F. All shirts must be tucked in to allow complete access to the entire flag.
- G. Each team must provide a football of high school, college or professional regulation size.

**XII. ELIGIBILITY**

- A. All athletes must be eighteen (18) years of age or older prior to October 23, 2009
- B. No person who is currently or in the last year is/was a member of a professional football team is allowed to participate.

**XIII. ROSTERS**

- A. At no time will a roster contain fewer than seven (7) or more than 20 players.

**XIV. LENGTH OF GAME**

- A. The game will be played in two 20 minute halves, with a two minute halftime. The last two minutes of the second half will be a regulation clock if the point differential is eight points or less.

**XV. PLAYING FIELD**

- A. The official size of the football field will be 80 yards by 40 yards.
- B. Field lines will be marked every 20 yards.

**XVI. TIE BREAKING PROCEDURES**

- A. Overtime coin toss:
  - 1. The referee will toss a coin in the presence of the two captains.
  - 2. The visiting team will make the call in the coin toss.
  - 3. The captain winning the coin toss will have the choice of having the ball offensively or determining which 20-yard line will be used for the overtime period.
- B. Overtime Play:
  - 1. Each team will be given one series of downs in which to score.
  - 2. Both teams will start at the same 20-yard line.
  - 3. The teams will move back 10 yards if the score remains tied after the each overtime period.
- C. Play for the overtime period will start one minute after the end of the second half.
- D. A series interrupted by change of possession, intercepted pass or score will be considered a complete series.
- E. The defensive team may return an interception for a touchdown in overtime. If this occurs the game will be over.
- F. Penalties will be interpreted according to the regular rules under which the first two halves were played.
- G. Any time-outs left at the end of regulation will carry over into the overtime period. Teams will be given one 30-second time-out for the entire overtime period.