

CITY OF CARSON

2018 YOUTH



FLAG  
FOOTBALL  
RULE BOOK

RECREATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. CLASSIFICATIONS .....	1
2. REGISTRATION .....	1
3. ELIGIBILITY .....	1
4. PROTESTS .....	2
5. EQUIPMENT .....	3
6. THE FIELD .....	3
7. COACHES AND SPECTATORS .....	3
8. TIE GAMES .....	3
9. RULE 1 - DEFINITIONS OF PLAYING TERMS .....	4
10. RULE 2 - SUBSTITUTIONS .....	10
11. RULE 3 - STARTING GAME, PERIODS, STARTING/STOPPING CLOCK, TIMEOUTS AND BALL READY-FOR-PLAY .....	11
12. RULE 4 - BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL, OUT OF BOUNDS .....	13
13. RULE 5 - SERIES OF DOWNS, DOWN AND POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY AND LINE TO GAIN .....	15
14. RULE 6 - KICKING THE BALL AND FAIR CATCH .....	16
15. RULE 7 - SNAPPING, HANDING, PASSING THE BALL, BALL CARRIER, BLOCKING AND DEFENSIVE ROUGHNESS .....	18
16. RULE 8 - SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACK .....	22
17. RULE 9 - CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND OTHERS .....	24
18. RULE 10 - ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES .....	27
19. CITY PLAY-OFFS AND CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES .....	30
20. ALL LEAGUE SELECTION .....	30
21. SPORTSMANSHIP PROGRAM .....	30
22. PENALTY ENFORCEMENT CHART .....	31
23. CLINIC FLAG FOOTBALL RULES .....	32

The following rules and regulations have been formulated and adopted by the Youth Sports Section for the 2018 Youth Flag Football Season.

The Youth Sports Section will have jurisdiction over all rules and regulations governing any City of Carson Youth Flag Football event. For any Flag Football rule herein not covered refer to the 2018 National Federation of State High School Associations Football Rules Book.

The 2018 Flag Football Season (including playoffs) will be conducted from September 22 to November 17, 2018.

## 1. CLASSIFICATIONS

**Clinic – 2010, 2011, 2012**

### BOYS

**1A** Year Born - **2008 - 2009**  
**2A** Year Born - **2006 - 2007**  
**3A** Year Born - **2004 - 2005**  
**4A** Year Born - **2001, 2002, 2003**

### GIRLS

**1A** Year Born - **2008 - 2009**  
**2A** Year Born - **2006 - 2007**  
**3A** Year Born - **2003, 2004, 2005**  
**4A** Year Born - **2001 - 2002**

## 2. REGISTRATION

All players must be listed on the **Official Team Roster** form and have a **Sports Registration/ Waiver Card** on file with the park office before taking part in a league game. Registrants must present proof of birth date at the time of registration. An **original birth certificate** is the only proof of birth accepted as verification of age.

## 3. ELIGIBILITY

- A. A **Sports Registration/Waiver Card** must be signed by the participant's parent or guardian and be on file at the park in which said participant is registered.
- B. A player shall play for one team and one league only. A player is considered on a team when his name is placed on the **Official Team Roster** which is on file in the park office.
- C. Once a player is dropped from a team he cannot be added to another team during that current sport season at any park in the City of Carson unless he changes residence. A player can never play for another team at the same park or at a different park during the same sport season.
- D. Youth participating in a sports league sanctioned by the California Interscholastic Federation (C.I.F.) are ineligible to concurrently play for a City of Carson Recreation and Human Services Division team while participating in the same sport (i.e., high school softball-girl's softball, high school football-flag football). If said youth has stopped playing on a C.I.F. team prior to tryouts for the department's league, he is eligible to go through the tryout and drafting procedure. If said youth has not stopped playing on a C.I.F. team as of the tryout date, he will not be eligible to go through the tryout and drafting procedure, but is eligible to be added to a team from a waiting list once he has stopped playing for the C.I.F. team provided the department's team qualifies for adding a player as described in the Youth Coaches Manual under the heading "Waiting List".
- E. The use of an ineligible player(s) will result in the forfeiture of all games in which said player(s) participated.
- F. Falsification of any information on the player's **Sports Registration/Waiver Card** is grounds for forfeiture of any or all games in which said player participated.
- G. Per the Youth Coaches Manual teams may have a maximum of fifteen and a minimum of ten rostered players.
- H. There must be a minimum of four youngsters on the waiting list before assignments from the waiting list can be made, except in an emergency situation (when team roster falls below ten players).
- I. The dropping and adding of players will not be done at the coaches' whim. In order for a coach to drop a player, the coach must fill out a **Park Player Release Form** and submit it to the Center

Supervisor, who will then call the player's parent/guardian to verify the situation. If it is done properly and with good cause, only then will the coach be able to acquire a youngster from the waiting list to replace the dropped player. The Center Supervisor will then assign a player or players to a team once the drop has been confirmed.

- J. No new players can be added to a team following regular season play (prior to the City Play-offs). To be eligible for the City Play-offs, a player must have participated in at least one regular season game.
- K. Any player(s) that have been suspended shall have no contact with his team for the entire duration of the game(s) in which he is suspended.

#### 4. **PROTESTS**

##### **A. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:**

- 1. Questions regarding the eligibility of a player(s) do not need to be made in protest form and may be raised at any time by a coach.
- 2. Any coach questioning the eligibility of a player(s) shall notify the Youth Sports Section.
- 3. The Youth Sports Section will render a decision regarding player(s) eligibility after all pertinent information has been obtained and reviewed.

##### **B. RULE INTERPRETATION:**

- 1. In order that a protest be proper and subject to a ruling by the Protest Committee, the following list of requirements must be met:
  - A. Whenever a matter of protest arises during a game, time out is called by the team making the protest immediately following the play in question and a notice of intent to protest must be verbally given by the coach of the protesting team to the referee. The referee will then notify the coach of the opposing team that the game will be continued under protest. The error must be recognized before the next legal play begins. If the protest cannot be resolved at this time the referee shall make a note on the scorecard reflecting the rule being protested, the score at the time of the protest, the time remaining in the game, what quarter/down was being played, which team has possession of the ball, yardage to go for a first down (if any) and the location of the ball on the field. The head coach from each team shall initial the scorecard to verify that the information recorded by the referee is correct.
  - B. A protest shall be considered only if it is placed in writing on the ***Coach's Protest Report Form*** and submitted to the Center Supervisor or one of his/her staff members along with a \$25.00 (cash or money order) protest fee within twenty-four hours of the game. The written protest must contain the date, time and location of the game, the names of both teams, the division, Rule, Section or Article #, of the official rule(s) under which the protest is being made, the decision made by the referee, and all other essential facts involved with the matter protested.
  - C. A protest must involve the interpretation or application of a playing rule and not involve the accuracy of the judgment of a referee.
  - D. The head referee has the authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in the rulebook.
  - E. Highly technical protests or those, which could have little or no effect on subsequent play or the final result of the game, shall not be considered.
  - F. When a protest for the misinterpretation of a playing rule is allowed, the game will be replayed from the point at which the improper decision was made, with the decision corrected. When a protest for an illegal player(s) is allowed, all games the ineligible player(s) participated in shall be forfeited to the opponent of the offending team.
  - G. All protests will be handled by the Youth Sports Section. All rulings will be made in writing, after receiving all the pertinent information needed to make a decision.
  - H. The following will be taken into consideration when determining a final ruling: the official score card; statements of game officials, supervising park staff, and coaches; all applicable

rules and any other pertinent information needed to make a decision.

- I. The use of video or other electronic devices will not be allowed as evidence in a protest, nor shall it be used by a sports official in an attempt to render a decision.
- J. Protests that do not contain all information necessary to determine a ruling, or have been found inconclusive by the protest committee, will be subject to a final ruling by the Recreation Program Manager.
- K. The protest fee will be refunded if a protest is decided in favor of the coach who submitted it.

## 5. EQUIPMENT

### A. Game Equipment:

- 1. The official game ball will be of a rubber, pebbled-grain composition in the following sizes:
  - A. 1A and 2A Divisions will use a #6 junior-size football.
  - B. 3A Division will use a #7 intermediate-size football.
  - C. 4A Division will use a #9 official-size football.
- 2. An official down indicator will be used on the same side of the field as the teams.
- 3. A timing device (official game clock) will be operated by a designated referee on the field.
- 4. Flag Belts. All divisions shall use a regulation three flag belt system.

### B. Player Equipment:

- 1. **A player shall wear:**
  - A. Either basketball, tennis, cross-country or rubber-cleated multipurpose shoes must be worn. Hard soled street shoes and metal cleats will not be allowed.
  - B. A numbered jersey/shirt of the same color is required of each member of a participating team in league play. Dyed or non-dyed T-shirts with numbers are acceptable as jerseys.
  - C. Pants of any length.
  - D. An oral mouthpiece is highly recommended but not required.
- 2. A player shall not wear any type of jewelry while participating in a game. Religious and medical alert medals are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical alert medal must be taped and may be visible.

## 6. THE FIELD

- A. The field will be eighty (80) yards long and forty (40) yards wide, with two, ten (10)-yard end zones.
- B. A restraining line shall be placed completely around the outside of the field at least three yards from the sidelines and end lines as an extension of the line limiting the team box area.

## 7. COACHES AND SPECTATORS

- A. The head coach is responsible for the conduct and behavior of all players, assistant coaches and disqualified team members. ***The conduct and behavior of team parents and spectators is also the responsibility of the head coach.***
- B. Coaches and players must stay between their own twenty (20) and thirty-five (35) yard lines. Both teams will be located on the same side of the field. ***Only three adult coaches (maximum), are allowed to be in the team area.***
- C. Spectators are required to remain completely behind the restraining line on the opposite side of the field from the players. If no restraining line is visible, spectators must remain at least three yards back from the sidelines and end lines at all times.

## 8. TIE GAMES

- A. Regular season games, which end in a tie, will remain a tie. No extra periods will be played.
- B. Play-off games which end in a tie will be completed in the following manner:
  - 1. A flip of a coin shall determine the defending and receiving teams. The winner of the coin toss shall be given their choice of receiving the ball or defending a goal. The ball shall be put in play at the defensive team's twenty (20) yard line.
  - 2. The overtime period will be five minutes in length, regulation time (stopping of clock). Each team will be given one additional time-out plus any unused second-half regulation game time-outs. The

- team scoring the greater number of points in the overtime period shall be declared the winner.
3. If the game is still tied at the end of the first overtime period the following procedure shall be used:
    - A. The loser of the first overtime coin toss shall be given their choice of either receiving the ball or defending a goal.
    - B. The 2<sup>nd</sup> overtime period will start with the first offensive team putting the ball in play, first and goal, at the twenty (20) yard line (unless moved by penalty). Each team will play a series of four downs, towards the same goal line. After the offensive team has completed its series of four downs, the defense will gain possession of the ball at the 20-yard line (first and goal) for a series of four downs.
    - C. Team Series: Teams which begin their overtime period outside of the 20-yard line due to penalty will NOT receive any first downs for crossing the zone-line-to-gain in the process. Teams may receive another set of downs by penalty only (automatic first down).
    - D. Scoring:
      1. When a team scores, they must attempt a two (2) point conversion. The team on defense first will then begin its series of downs.
      2. The team that scores the most points in the overtime period is declared the winner.
      3. If both teams fail to score in any overtime period the winner will be determined by the team that has gained the most net yardage from the 20-yard line. *EXAMPLE: If Team A finishes its possession at the 22-yard line and Team B finishes its possession at the 25-yard line Team A shall be declared the winner.* (The referees will mark the dead ball spot after completion of Team A's fourth down to determine the line to gain for Team B).
      4. If the teams are tied in score or in yardage at the end of an overtime period, the overtime procedure will be repeated until there is a winner.
    - E. Interceptions: Team B may intercept the ball and return it for a touchdown. In this case they will win the game. If they do not score on the interception, the ball will be placed on the 20-yard line to begin their series of downs
    - F. If a safety is scored by the offensive team, the succeeding spot will be at the 20-yard line in possession of the team that was on defense, provided the defensive team has not had its series of downs. When the defensive team gains possession of the ball, the down and series immediately end for the offensive team.
    - G. The offensive team shall be awarded a new series of downs when any one of the following occurs:
      1. Penalty for defensive pass interference is accepted.
      2. Offensive team recovers a scrimmage kick between the goal lines after it has been touched first by the defensive team beyond the neutral zone.
      3. Defensive team is guilty of roughing the passer or illegally blocking the center.
    - H. The line to gain is always the goal line.
    - I. Each team will be given one timeout for each overtime period. Unused overtime timeouts may not be carried over to other overtime periods.

## **RULE 1 - DEFINITIONS OF PLAYING TERMS**

### **SECTION 1 - BALL- DEAD, LIVE, LOOSE**

**ART. 1...** A dead ball is a ball not in play. The ball is dead during the interval between downs.

**ART. 2...** A live ball is a ball in play. A ball becomes live when the ball has been legally snapped or free kicked and a down is in progress.

**ART. 3...** A loose ball is a pass, fumble or a kick. The terms "pass," "fumble," and "kick," are sometimes used as abbreviations when the ball is loose following the acts of passing, fumbling or kicking the ball. A loose ball, which has not yet touched the ground is in flight. A grounded loose ball is one which has touched the ground. Any loose ball continues to be a loose ball until a player secures possession of it or until it becomes dead, whichever comes first.

### **SECTION 2 - BATTING**

Batting is intentionally slapping or striking the ball with the arm or hand.

### **SECTION 3 - BLOCKING**

**ART. 1...** Blocking is obstructing an opponent by contacting him with any part of the blocker's body.

**ART. 2...** In blocking, a player may contact opponents with the arms or hands provided the following technique is used:

**Closed or cupped hand technique:**

1. The elbows may be inside or outside the shoulders.
2. The hands must be closed or cupped with the palms not facing the opponent.
3. The forearms are extended no more than forty-five degrees from the body.

**ART. 3...** The blocker's hand(s) may not be locked nor may he swing, throw, or flip the elbow or forearm so that it is moving faster than the blocker's shoulders at the time the elbow, forearm or shoulder contacts the opponent. The blocker may not initiate contact with his arm or hand against an opponent above the opponent's shoulder, but he may use his hand or arm to break a fall or maintain his balance.

**ART. 4...** An offensive player may also use his hands or arms:

- A. When he is a runner, to ward off or push any player.
- B. During a kick, to ward off an opponent who is attempting to block him.
- C. To push, pull or ward off an opponent when the ball is loose if he may legally touch or possess the ball if such contact is not pass interference, a personal foul or illegal use of hands.

**ART. 5...** A defensive player may also:

- A. Use unlocked hands, hand or arm to ward off an opponent who is blocking him or is attempting to block him.
- B. Push, pull or ward off an opponent in an actual attempt to get at the runner or a loose ball if such contact is not pass interference, a personal foul, or illegal use of hands.

**ART. 6...** When a player on defense uses a hand or arm, the hand must be in advance of the elbow at the time of the contact and at the shoulder or below unless the opponent squats or ducks.

**ART. 7...** Blocking below the waist is making initial contact below the waist from the front or side against an opponent other than a runner. Blocking below the waist applies only when the opponent has one or both feet on the ground.

**ART. 8...** Chop block is a combination block by two or more teammates against an opponent other than the runner, with or without delay, where one of the blocks is low (at the knees or below) and one of the blocks is high (above the knee).

### **SECTION 4 - CATCH**

**ART. 1...** A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball which is in flight. In order for a player to complete a catch or interception, while in the air, he must contact the ground inbounds with the ball in his possession prior to touching out-of-bounds, unless an opponent's contact causes him to first touch out-of-bounds while maintaining possession of the ball.

**ART. 2...** Catching is always preceded by touching the ball; thus, if touching causes the ball to become dead, securing possession of the ball has no significance.

**ART. 3...** A simultaneous catch is a catch in which there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are inbounds.

### **SECTION 5 – CLIPPING / BLOCKING IN THE BACK**

**ART. 1...** Clipping is a block against an opponent when the initial contact is from behind, at or below the waist, and not against a player who is a runner or pretending to be a runner.

**ART. 2...** Blocking in the back is a block against an opponent when the initial contact is in the opponent's back, inside the shoulders and below the neck and above the waist, and not against a player who is a runner or pretending to be a runner.

**ART. 3...** Such cases shall not be ruled clipping and/or blocking in the back unless the official sees the initial contact. When in doubt, the contact is legal and not from behind. When the contact is ruled

to be from behind, and the official has question as to the initial point of contact, it shall be ruled clipping.

## **SECTION 6 - CONFERENCES**

The following team conferences are permitted during charged time-outs:

- A. One or more team members and one or two coaches directly in front of the team box and within five yards of the sideline.
- B. One coach on the field to confer with no more than eight players at his team's huddle between the inbounds marks.

## **SECTION 7 - DOWN, LOSS OF DOWN**

**ART. 1...** A down is action which starts with a legal snap (beginning a scrimmage down) or when the ball is kicked on a free kick (beginning a free kick down). A down ends when the ball next becomes dead.

**ART. 2...** Loss of a down is the loss of the right to replay a down.

## **SECTION 8 - ENCROACHMENT**

Encroachment occurs when a player is illegally in the neutral zone during the time interval starting when the ball is marked ready for play and until the ball is snapped.

## **SECTION 9 - FAIR CATCH**

**ART. 1...** A fair catch is a catch by a receiver of a free kick in or beyond the neutral zone to the receiver's goal line, or of a scrimmage kick beyond the neutral zone to the receiver's goal line, after a valid signal, under conditions in which the receiver forfeits the right to advance the ball in return for protection from being blocked or having his flag pulled by an opponent.

**ART. 2...** A valid fair catch signal is the extending and lateral waving of one arm, at full arm's length above the head, by any member of the receiving team.

## **SECTION 10 - FIRST TOUCHING**

**ART. 1...** During a free kick it is first touching if the ball is touched in the field of play by any K player before it crosses R's free kick line and before it is touched there by any R player.

**ART. 2...** During a scrimmage kick it is first touching if the ball is touched by any K player in the field of play and beyond the expanded neutral zone before it is touched there by R and before the ball has come to rest.

## **SECTION 11 - FORCE**

**ART. 1...** Force is the result of energy exerted by a player which provides movement of the ball. The term force is used only in connection with the goal line and in only one direction (i.e., from the field of play into the end zone). Initial force results from a carry, fumble, kick, pass or snap. After a fumble, kick or backward pass has been grounded, a new force may result from a bat, an illegal kick, or a muff.

**ART. 2...** The muffing or batting of a pass, kick or fumble in flight is not considered a new force.

**ART. 3...** Force is not a factor:

- A. On kicks going into R's end zone, since these kicks are always a touchback regardless of who supplied the force.
- B. When a backward pass or fumble is declared dead in the end zone of the opponent of the player who passed or fumbled, with no player possession.

## **SECTION 12 - FOULS**

**ART. 1...** A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed.

**ART. 2...** Types of fouls are:

- A. **Dead ball** - A foul which occurs in the time interval after a down has ended and before the ball is next snapped or free kicked.
- B. **Double** - One or more live ball fouls (other than unsportsmanlike) are committed by each

team at such a time that the penalties offset.

- C. **Flagrant** – A foul so severe or extreme that it places an opponent in danger of serious injury, and/or involves violations that are extremely or persistently vulgar or abusive conduct.
- D. **Live ball** – A foul which occurs during a down.
- E. **Multiple** - Two or more live-ball fouls (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) are committed during the same down by the same team at such a time that the offended team is permitted a choice of penalties.
- F. **Nonplayer or unsportsmanlike** - A noncontact foul while the ball is dead or during the down which is not illegal participation and does not influence the play in progress.
- G. **Player** - A foul (other than nonplayer or unsportsmanlike) by a player in the game hereafter referred to as a foul.

**ART. 3...** No foul causes a loss of the ball.

**ART. 4...** No foul causes a live ball to become dead.

**ART. 5...** Game situations which produce results somewhat similar to penalties, but which are not classified as fouls are: disqualification of a player, first touching of a kick by K and forfeiture of a game.

### **SECTION 13 - FUMBLE**

A fumble is any loss of player possession other than by legal handing, passing or kicking.

### **SECTION 14 - HANDING**

Handing the ball is transferring player possession from one player to a teammate in such a way that the ball is still in contact with the first player when it is touched by the teammate. Handing the ball is not a pass. Loss of player possession by unsuccessful execution of attempted handing is a fumble.

### **SECTION 15 - HURDLING**

Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump (hurdle) with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent who is contacting the ground with no part of his body except one or both feet. A ball carrier may jump or twirl to avoid having his flag pulled as long as it is not over a defensive player who is still on his feet.

### **SECTION 16 - INTERCEPTION**

An interception is the catch of an opponent's fumble or pass.

### **SECTION 17 - KICKS**

**ART. 1...** A kick is the intentional striking of the ball with the knee, lower leg or foot.

**ART. 2...** A kick ends when a player gains possession or when the ball becomes dead while not in player possession.

**ART. 3...** A free kick is any legal kick which puts the ball in play to start a free kick down. After the ready for play signal and before the kick, each player other than the kicker must be behind his free kick line. A free kick is used following a safety.

**ART. 4...** A punt is a legal kick by a player who drops the ball and kicks it before it has touched the ground.

### **SECTION 18 - LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**

**ART. 1...** The scrimmage line for each team is a vertical plane through the point of the ball nearest the team's goal line. It is determined when the ball is marked ready for play and remains until the next ready-for-play signal.

**ART. 2...** An offensive player is on his line of scrimmage when he faces his opponent's goal line with the line of his shoulders approximately parallel thereto and with his head or foot breaking the plane of an imaginary line drawn through the waist of the snapper and parallel to the line of scrimmage.

**ART. 3...** A defensive player is on his line of scrimmage when he is within one yard of his scrimmage line at the snap.

## **SECTION 19 - LINES**

- ART. 1...** The goal line is the vertical plane which separates the field of play from the end zone. When related to a live ball in a runner's possession (touching inbounds) while the ball is over the out-of-bounds area, the goal line includes the extension beyond the sidelines. A team's own goal line is the one it is defending.
- ART. 2...** The line to gain is the yard line established when a new series (first down) is awarded. Unless there is a penalty following the ready-for-play signal, the line to gain is in advance of the foremost point of the ball when placed for the first down of the series. If the line to gain extends into the end zone, the goal line is the line to gain.

## **SECTION 20 - A MUFF**

A muff is the touching of a loose ball by a player in an unsuccessful attempt to secure possession.

## **SECTION 21 - NEUTRAL ZONE**

- ART. 1...** The neutral zone is the space between the two scrimmage lines during a scrimmage down and is as wide as the length of the football. It is established when the ball is marked ready for play.
- ART. 2...** The neutral zone may be expanded following the snap up to a maximum of two yards behind the defensive line of scrimmage, in the field of play, during any scrimmage down.

## **SECTION 22 - OUT OF BOUNDS**

- ART. 1...** A player or other person is out of bounds when any part of the person is touching anything, other than another player or game official that is on or outside the sideline or end line.
- ART. 2...** A ball in player possession is out of bounds when the runner or the ball touches anything, other than another player or game official that is on or outside a sideline or end line.
- ART. 3...** A loose ball is out of bounds when it touches anything, including a player or game official that is out of bounds.

## **SECTION 23 - PASSING**

- ART. 1...** Passing the ball is throwing a ball that is in player possession. In a pass, the ball travels in flight.
- ART. 2...** A forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction toward the opponent's end line.
- NOTE:** Prior to releasing the ball on a pass, if the potential passer is contacted, and the ball is released, it is a forward pass if his arm was moving forward on contact.
- ART. 3...** A forward pass ends when it is caught, touches the ground or is out of bounds.
- ART. 4...** A backward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the runner's end line.
- ART. 5...** A backward pass ends when it is caught or recovered or is out of bounds.

## **SECTION 24 - PLAYER DESIGNATIONS**

- ART. 1...** A player is one of the eight team members who is designated to start either half of the game or who subsequently replaces another player. A player continues to be a player until a substitute enters the field and indicates to the player that he is replaced, or when the substitute otherwise becomes a player.
- ART. 2...** An offensive back is a player who has no part of his body breaking the plane of an imaginary line drawn parallel to the line of scrimmage through the waist of the nearest teammate who is legally on the line.
- ART. 3...** A maximum of three offensive players may be in the backfield for all downs. Defensive teams may align in any set formation they choose, except during scrimmage kicks.
- ART. 4...** A captain of a team is a player designated to represent his team during:
- A. The pregame and overtime coin toss.
  - B. The selection of second half options.

C. Penalty decisions following a foul.

**ART. 5...** A disqualified player is a player barred from further participation in a game.

**ART. 6...** A kicker is any player who legally punts or drop kicks. He continues to be the kicker until he has had reasonable opportunity to regain his balance or until after a free kick, he has advanced five yards beyond his free-kick line or the kick has touched the ground or any other player.

**ART. 7...** A nonplayer is a coach, assistant coach or a substitute who does not participate by touching the ball, hindering an opponent or influencing the play.

**ART. 8...** A passer is a player who throws a legal forward pass. He continues to be a passer until the legal forward pass ends or until he moves to participate in the play.

**ART. 9...** A replaced player is one who has been notified by a substitute that he is to leave the field. A player is also replaced when the entering substitute becomes a player.

**ART. 10...** A runner is a player who is in possession of a live ball or is simulating possession of a live ball.

**ART. 11...** A substitute is a team member who may replace a player. He becomes a player when he communicates with a team mate or referee, enters the huddle or participates in the play.

### **SECTION 25 - POSSESSION**

**ART. 1...** A ball in player possession is a live ball held or controlled by a player after it has been handed or snapped to him, or after he has caught or recovered it.

**ART. 2...** A ball in team possession is a live ball which is in player possession or one which is loose following loss of such player possession. A live ball is always in the possession of a team.

**ART. 3...** A change of possession occurs when the opponent gains player possession during the down.

### **SECTION 26 – READY FOR PLAY**

Ready for play signifies the referee has signaled the ball may be put in play by a snap or free kick and the twenty-five second count is to begin.

### **SECTION 27 - RECOVERY**

A recovery is gaining possession of a live ball after it strikes the ground. An airborne player has completed a recovery when he first contacts the ground inbounds with the ball in his possession.

### **SECTION 28 - A RULE**

A rule is one of the groups of regulations, which govern the game. A rule sometimes states what a player may do, but if there is no such statement for a given act (such as faking a kick), it is assumed that he may do what is not prohibited. In like manner, a rule sometimes states or implies that the ball is dead or that a foul is involved. If it does not, it is assumed that the ball is live and that no foul has occurred. If a foul is mentioned, it is assumed that it is not part of a double or multiple foul unless so stated or implied.

### **SECTION 29 - SCRIMMAGE**

Scrimmage is the action of the two teams during a down which begins with a snap.

### **SECTION 30 - A SHIFT**

A shift is the action of one or more offensive players who, after a huddle or after taking set positions, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap.

### **SECTION 31 - SNAP**

**ART. 1...** A snap is the legal act of passing or handing the ball backward from its position on the ground.

**ART. 2...** The snap begins when the snapper first moves the ball legally other than in adjustment. In a snap, the movement must be a quick and continuous backward motion of the ball during which the ball immediately leaves the hand(s) of the snapper and touches a backfield player or the ground before it touches an A lineman.

**ART. 3...** The snap ends when the ball touches the ground or any player.

## **SECTION 32 - SPOTS**

- ART. 1...** The **basic spot** is a point of reference for penalty enforcement. It is the previous spot for a loose-ball play and the end of the run for a running play.
- ART. 2...** The **enforcement spot** is the point from which a penalty is enforced.
- ART. 3...** The **dead-ball spot** is the spot under the foremost point of the ball when it becomes dead by rule.
- ART. 4...** The **inbounds spot** is the intersection of the inbounds line and the yard line:
- A. Through the foremost point of the ball when the ball becomes dead in a side zone.
  - B. Through the foremost point of the ball on the sideline between the goal lines when a loose ball goes out of bounds.
  - C. Through the spot under the foremost point of the ball in possession of a runner when he crosses the plane of the sideline and goes out of bounds.
- NOTE:** If a penalty measurement leaves the ball in a side zone, the new inbounds spot is fixed by the yard line through the foremost point of the ball after measurement.
- ART. 5...** The **out-of-bounds spot** is where the ball becomes dead because of going out of bounds.
- ART. 6...** The **previous spot** is where the ball was last snapped or free kicked.
- ART. 7...** The **spot of the foul** is where the foul occurs. If a foul occurs out of bounds, the spot of the foul is at the intersection of the nearer inbounds line and the yard line extended on which the foul occurs.
- ART. 8...** The **spot where a run ends** is where the ball becomes dead in the runner's possession; where the runner loses player possession if his run is followed by a loose ball.
- ART. 9...** The **succeeding spot** is where the ball would next be snapped or free kicked if a foul had not occurred.

## **SECTION 33 - TACKLING**

Tackling is the attempt to remove a flag by holding, pushing or knocking the ball carrier down.

## **SECTION 34 - TEAM DESIGNATIONS**

- ART. 1...** The offense is the team which is in possession of the ball. The opponent is the defense.
- ART. 2...** A is the team which puts the ball in play. The opponent is B.
- ART. 3...** K is the team which legally kicks the ball during the down. The opponent is R.

## **SECTION 35 - TOUCHING**

Touching refers to any contact with the ball, i.e., either by touching or being touched by it. Touching by an official in the field of play or end zone is ignored.

## **SECTION 36 - TRIPPING**

Tripping is the use of the lower leg or foot to obstruct an opponent, who is not the runner, below the knee.

# **RULE 2 - SUBSTITUTIONS**

## **SECTION 1 - SUBSTITUTIONS**

**Coaches will be responsible for the enforcement of all articles within this rule, regardless of the circumstances.**

- ART. 1...** When present, each team member in good standing must play in each game a minimum of one complete quarter (ten minutes).
- ART. 2...** A combination of minutes adding up to ten within two or more quarters does not constitute the playing of one complete quarter. A player must play the entire quarter, to satisfy the minimum participation requirements.
- PENALTY:** (ART. 1-2), Forfeiture of game.
- ART. 3...** ***Substitutions will not be allowed during the first quarter***, with the exception of replacing an

injured player. After completion of the first quarter, any player may be substituted for, provided the substitute will play a minimum of one complete quarter (from beginning to end). **At the start of each quarter, all entering substitutes must report to the referee.**

- ART. 4...** Players arriving late (within the first three quarters) must still play one complete quarter to meet the minimum participation requirement and can only enter the game at the beginning of the next quarter. Players arriving after the fourth quarter has begun will not be allowed to play.
- ART. 5...** If a player is injured prior to having played the minimum required playing time, the referee must be notified prior to a substitute replacement. A player that has not yet played must replace the injured player. If all players have played, the manager can designate any player to replace the injured player.
- ART. 6...** An injured player who has been withdrawn and who has been unable to complete the required playing time, constitutes a legal player and may re-enter as a substitute at the discretion of the referee.
- ART. 7...** If a player is to become a legal substitute, he/she must, at the beginning of a quarter, report to the referee before entering the game.
- ART. 8...** No substitute shall enter during a down.
- ART. 9...** Between downs, any number of eligible substitutes may replace players. Replaced players shall leave the field immediately before the ball becomes live.
- ART. 10...** A player, replaced player, or a substitute is required to leave the field at the side on which his team box is located and go directly to his team box.
- ART. 11...** During the same dead ball interval, no substitute shall become a player and then withdraw and no player shall withdraw and re-enter as a substitute unless a penalty is accepted, a dead-ball foul occurs, there is a charged time-out or the period ends.
- ART. 12...** During a down a replaced player or substitute who attempts unsuccessfully to leave the field and who does not participate in or affect the play, constitutes an illegal substitution.
- NOTE:** Participation by a replaced player or substitute is illegal participation.
- PENALTY:** (ART. 7-12), Illegal substitution - five yards; (ART. 8), Nonplayer foul; (ART. 9-11), Dead ball foul; (ART.12), Live ball foul.
- ART. 13...** ***It is the responsibility of a manager or coach to see to it that all players' present play their minimum required playing time, and that all substitutes report to the referee prior to entering the game.***
- PENALTY:** Failure to adhere to this article may result in the head coach being suspended from his/her next scheduled game.
- ART. 14...** Any disciplinary action taken by the head coach against a member of his team that would affect any of the participation or substitution rules must be reported to the referee and also noted on the scorecard prior to the start of the game.

**RULE 3 - STARTING GAME, PERIODS, STARTING/STOPPING CLOCK, TIME-OUTS,  
BALL READY FOR PLAY AND DELAY**

**SECTION 1 - STARTING GAME**

- ART. 1...** Each team must have a minimum of six players and a maximum of eight players on the field. The team captain is the representative of his team and may address an official on matters of rule interpretation or to obtain essential information, if it is done in a courteous manner. When the captain leaves the field, he must designate a player to be captain while out of the game. Any player may address an official to request a time-out or permission to leave the field.
- ART. 2...** ***A team not having six players on the field ready to play at game time will forfeit the game.*** Game time is the scheduled game time or time designated by the referee.

- ART. 3...** Teams failing to arrive by their scheduled game time, field minimum players, or violating any other rule penalized by forfeit will be so penalized. Team coaches to benefit from said forfeit **may not waive forfeit under any circumstances.**
- ART. 4...** The Center Supervisor is solely responsible for determining whether or not a game will be started or continued. An official may stop a game in the Center Supervisor's absence if rain or other conditions exist which may cause injury to players or makes the field unplayable.
- ART. 5...** Each half of the game shall be started with the ball being placed on the receiving team's twenty (20) yard line. Before starting the game the referee, in the presence of the field captains, shall toss a coin which the visiting captain shall call. **Not more than two captains from each team may be present at the coin toss and only one from each team shall be designated as its spokesman.**
- ART. 6...** The winner of the toss shall have first choice of options for the first half or to defer and have first choice for the second half. The loser shall have the first choice of options for the half the winner of the toss did not select. **The options for each half shall be:**
- A. To choose whether his team will take the ball at their twenty (20) yard line or receive.
  - B. To choose the goal his team will defend.
- ART. 7...** Between the first and second and between the third and fourth quarters, the teams shall change goals. Team possession, number of the next down, the relative position of the ball and the line-to-gain remain unchanged.

## **SECTION 2 – PERIODS / ENDING A PERIOD**

- ART. 1...** The length of the game shall be four ten (10) minute quarters, running time.
- ART. 2...** There shall be a one-minute rest period between the first and second quarters and between the third and fourth quarters. There will be a five-minute rest period (half-time) between the second and third quarters.
- ART. 3...** If time for any period expires during a down, play shall continue until the down ends.
- ART. 4...** A period shall be extended by an untimed down if during the last timed down of the period, one of the following occurred:
- A. There was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted, except for unsportsmanlike fouls, non-player fouls, and fouls that specify a loss of down.
  - B. There was a double foul.
  - C. There was an inadvertent whistle.
  - D. If a touchdown was scored, the try is attempted unless the touchdown is scored during the last down of the fourth period and the point(s) would not affect the outcome of the game.
- NOTE:** If (ART. 4A-D), occurs during the untimed down, the procedure is repeated.
- ART. 5...** A period shall not be extended by an untimed down if one of the following occurred during a down in which time expires:
- A. When the defense fouls during a successful try for point and the offended team accepts the results of the play with enforcement of the penalty from the succeeding spot.
  - B. There was a foul by either team and the penalty is accepted for: unsportsmanlike fouls, non-player fouls, fouls that specify a loss of down and fouls for which enforcement, by rule, result in a safety. The score is cancelled in the event of an accepted penalty that specifies a loss of down.
- ART. 6...** If a dead ball foul occurs after time expires for any period, the penalty shall be measured from the succeeding spot.
- ART. 7...** If a game is suspended because of conditions that make it impossible to continue playing, the game may be rescheduled or it could be declared an official game if three or more complete quarters of the game have been played.
- ART. 8...** At the conclusion of the third quarter, if one team has gained a twenty-five point differential or if it

secures such differential at any time during the fourth quarter, the game shall be ended upon completion of the down in progress.

### **SECTION 3 - STARTING/STOPPING CLOCK**

- ART. 1...** During the first three quarters of play, the clock shall stop for time-outs, touchdowns and emergencies only.
- ART. 2...** The clock shall start for a period when the ball is legally snapped.
- ART. 3...** The clock shall not be started during the attempt for point after a touchdown.
- ART. 4...** If there are less than twenty-four points separating the teams at the two-minute mark of the fourth quarter, the clock will stop on all incomplete passes, dropped balls, penalties, out of bounds, first downs or changes of possession. The clock will re-start when the ball is snapped.
- ART. 5...** The referee shall have authority to correct obvious errors in timing if discovery is prior to the second live ball following the error, unless the period has officially ended.
- ART. 6...** When a team attempts to conserve or consume time illegally, the referee shall order the clock started or stopped.

### **SECTION 4 - TIME-OUTS**

- ART. 1...** Each team is entitled to two time-outs per half during a regulation game. Each team is entitled to one additional time-out during each overtime period. Any unused time-outs from the second half may be carried over to an overtime period during play-off games only.
- ART. 2...** A charged team time-out occurs when the ball is dead and a player or coach's request is legally granted. A single charged time-out shall not exceed one minute.
- ART. 3...** One coach may enter the field at his team's huddle between the inbound marks to confer with eight players only.
- ART. 4...** If a time-out is requested by a player on the field or a coach and is granted for the purpose of reviewing an official's application of a rule which may have been misapplied or misinterpreted, the time-out remains charged to the requesting team if no change in the ruling results. If the referee alters his ruling, the opposing coach will be notified, the revision made, and the time-out shall be an official's time-out.

### **SECTION 5 - BALL READY FOR PLAY AND DELAY**

- ART. 1...** The ball is marked ready for play when, after it has been placed for a down, the referee gives the ready-for-play signal. The twenty-five second count shall then begin.
- ART. 2...** Action or inaction which prevents promptness in putting the ball in play is delay of game. This includes:
- A. Failure to snap or free kick within twenty-five seconds after the ball is ready-for-play.
  - B. Unnecessarily carrying the ball after it has become dead.
  - C. A coach-referee conference after all the permissible charged timed-outs for the coach's team have been used, and during which the referee is requested to reconsider the application of a rule and no change in the ruling results.
  - D. Failure to properly wear the required player equipment when the ball is about to become live.
  - E. Any other conduct which unduly prolongs the game.
- ART. 3...** Failure of a team to play within two minutes after being ordered to do so by the referee shall result in a delay of game penalty.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 2 & 3), Delay of game - five yards.

## **RULE 4 - BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL AND OUT OF BOUNDS**

### **SECTION 1 - PUTTING BALL IN PLAY**

- ART. 1...** To start each half and to resume play after a touchdown or try for point, the ball shall be put in

play by placing it on the receiving team's twenty (20) yard line.

**ART. 2...** A snap shall put the ball in play.

**ART. 3...** A free kick shall also put the ball in play:  
A. After a safety  
B. When a free kick down is replayed.

**ART. 4...** A snap or free kick shall be made between the inbounds lines.

**ART. 5...** After being put in play, the ball remains live until the down ends.

**ART. 6...** The ball remains dead and a down is not begun if a snap or free kick is attempted before the ball is marked ready for play, or there is an illegal snap, other snap infraction or a dead-ball foul occurs.

## **SECTION 2 - DEAD BALL AND END OF DOWN**

**ART. 1...** An official shall indicate the ball to remain dead by sounding his whistle immediately when a foul occurs before a snap or free kick.

**ART. 2...** *The ball becomes dead and the down is ended when:*

- A. A runner goes out of bounds or allows any part of his person other than hand or foot to touch the ground.
- B. A live ball goes out of bounds.
- C. Any forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete or is simultaneously caught by opposing players.
- D. Any loose ball is simultaneously caught or recovered by opposing players, or is on the ground motionless and no player attempts to secure possession.
- E. The kickers catch or recover any free kick anywhere and when the kickers are first (i.e., before any touching by the receiving team) to touch a free kick after it has come to rest beyond the neutral zone and between the goal lines.
- F. Following a valid or invalid fair-catch signal given by any member of the receiving team when the kick is caught or recovered by any member of the receiving team beyond, in or behind the neutral zone.
- G. A touchdown occurs.
- H. During a try for point if B secures possession of the ball.
- I. An official sounds his whistle inadvertently.

**ART. 3...** An *Inadvertent whistle* ends the down. Inadvertent whistles are administered as follows:

- A. The down shall be replayed if, during a down or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, an inadvertent whistle is sounded while a legal forward pass or snap is in flight, or during a legal kick.
- B. The team last in possession may choose to either put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down if, during a down or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, an inadvertent whistle is sounded while the ball is loose following a backward pass, fumble or illegal forward pass.
- C. The team in possession may choose to either accept the results of the play at the dead-ball spot or replay the down if, during a down or during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, an inadvertent whistle is sounded while the ball is in player possession.
- D. The penalty shall be administered as determined by the basic spot and takes precedence over inadvertent whistle administration if, during a down in a live-ball foul occurs prior to the inadvertent whistle and the penalty is accepted.

## **SECTION 3 - OUT-OF-BOUNDS AND INBOUNDS SPOTS**

**ART. 1...** When a loose ball goes out of bounds, the out-of-bounds spot is fixed by the yard line where the foremost point of the ball crossed the sideline. When the ball becomes dead in the field of play because of touching a person who is out of bounds, the out-of-bounds spot is fixed by where the runner crosses the plane of the sideline.

**ART. 2...** When the out-of-bounds spot is between the goal lines, the ball shall be put in play at the

inbounds spot unless a forward pass is involved. If the out-of-bounds spot is behind a goal line, it is a safety or a touchback.

- ART. 3...** When a runner goes out of bounds, the inbounds spot is fixed by the yard line where the runner crosses the plane of the sideline.
- ART. 4...** When the ball becomes dead between the inbounds lines, play is resumed at the dead-ball spot, unless it is a legal forward-pass incompleteness in which case the ball is returned to the previous spot.
- ART. 5...** When the ball becomes dead in a side zone or is awarded to a team there or is left there by a penalty, play is resumed at the inbounds spot. This does not apply to:
- A. An incomplete forward pass.
  - B. A replay due to inadvertent whistle.
  - C. A replayed try for point.

**NOTE:** In (A and B), the ball is returned to the previous spot of the snap.

## **RULE 5 - SERIES OF DOWNS, NUMBER OF DOWN, POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY AND LINE TO GAIN**

### **SECTION 1 - SERIES OF DOWNS**

- ART. 1...** The team which next puts the ball in play by scrimmage following a free kick, touchback or fair catch is awarded a series of four consecutively numbered downs in which to advance the ball to the line to gain. Each awarded first down starts a new series of four downs.
- ART. 2...** When a scrimmage down ends with the ball in the field of play or out of bounds between the goal lines, a new series is awarded to:
- A. Team A, if the ball belongs to A on or beyond the line to gain.
  - B. Team B, if the ball belongs to B at the end of any down.
  - C. Team B if, at the end of the fourth down, the ball belongs to A behind the line to gain.
  - D. The team in possession at the end of the down, if there is a change of team possession during the down, unless the penalty is accepted for a foul which occurred before the change of possession.
  - E. The receiving team, if K legally kicks during any scrimmage down and the ball is recovered by R, or is in joint possession of opponents, goes out of bounds or becomes dead with no player in possession.
  - F. The team in possession at the end of the down, if R is the first to touch a scrimmage kick while it is beyond the line, unless the penalty is accepted for a foul which occurred before the kick ended.
  - G. The receiving team, at the spot of first touching by K, if K is first to touch the kicked ball beyond the line before it is touched by R and before it has come to rest.
- ART. 3 ...** In Article 2g above, the right of R to take the ball at the spot of the first touching by K is canceled if R touches the kick and thereafter during the down commits a foul or if the penalty is accepted for any foul committed during the down.

### **SECTION 2 - DOWN AND POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY**

- ART. 1...** When a penalty is declined, the number of the next down is the same as if the foul had not occurred. If a double foul occurs during a down, the number of the next down is the same as that of the down in which the foul occurred. After a distance penalty, the ball belongs to the team in possession at the time of the foul unless the foul carried a loss of down and the team did not make a first down. Team possession may then change if a new series is awarded.
- ART. 2...** When a foul occurs during a scrimmage down and before any change of team possession, and before a receiver is first to touch a scrimmage kick while it is beyond the line, the ball belongs to A after enforcement. The number of the next down is the same as that of the down during which the foul occurred unless penalty acceptance includes a first down or loss of down, or the enforcement or the advance results in a first down. The loss of down aspect of a penalty has no

significance following a change of possession or if the line to gain is reached after enforcement.

- ART. 3...** When a foul occurs prior to a scrimmage down, or simultaneously with the snap, the number of the next down after enforcement is the same as the number established before the foul occurred, unless enforcement for a foul by B results in a first down.
- ART. 4...** When a foul occurs prior to or during a free-kick down and before any change of team possession, the down which follows enforcement is a free-kick down, unless following a fair catch or an awarded fair catch, a scrimmage down is chosen for the replay.
- ART. 5... *Following a foul, a series of downs ends when:***
- A. The acceptance of the penalty includes the award of a first down.
  - B. Acceptance or declination of any penalty leaves A in possession beyond the line to gain.
  - C. Declination of any penalty leaves A in possession behind the line-to-gain after fourth down.
  - D. Declination of any penalty leaves B in possession.
  - E. There is acceptance or declination of the penalty for any foul which occurs after team possession changes during the down, or after R is first to touch a scrimmage kick while it is beyond the line, unless the foul occurs before the kick ends and the penalty is accepted.
  - F. Acceptance of a penalty on the fourth down which carries a loss of down leaves A in possession behind the line to gain (i.e., flag guarding).
- ART. 6...** After a series of downs ends, a new series with first and one line to gain is awarded unless one of the following is involved: a try for point; after a safety; fair catch; or awarded fair catch. The first down is awarded to the team in possession when the foul occurs unless, declining the penalty leaves the other team in possession, or as in (C and F) above, accepting or declining the penalty leaves the other team in possession after fourth down.

### **SECTION 3 - THE LINE TO GAIN**

- ART. 1...** The line to gain is the twenty (20) yard line in advance of the ball's foremost point when a new series of downs is awarded. When a new series of downs is awarded, the penalties for all fouls (including nonplayer and unsportsmanlike) committed prior to the ready-for-play signal shall be administered before the line to gain is established. The line to gain then remains fixed until the series ends and a new line to gain is established.
- ART. 2...** A team has four scrimmage downs to advance the ball, from wherever the team takes possession of the ball to the next zone. If they fail to reach the next zone in four downs, their opponents shall gain possession of the ball at the point where the ball is declared dead after the fourth down.

## **RULE 6 - KICKING THE BALL AND FAIR CATCH**

### **SECTION 1 - THE KICKOFF AND OTHER FREE KICKS**

- ART. 1...** ***There will be no kickoffs*** in any of the City of Carson leagues. After a team scores a touchdown and attempts their try for point, the ball will be placed at the opponents twenty (20) yard line.
- ART. 2...** After a safety, the ball will be placed on the twenty (20) yard line for the kick. The restraining line for the receiving team will be their twenty (20) yard line.
- ART. 3...** A free kick shall be made from any point between the inbound lines and on K's free-kick line. When a punt is used following a safety, the ball must be kicked within one step behind K's free-kick line. In an emergency, such as a pool of water on K's free-kick line, the referee has authority to move the ball to a playable line, in which case, both free-kick lines are moved to compensate.
- ART. 4...** After the ball is marked ready for play and until it is kicked, no player, other than the kicker may be beyond his free-kick line.
- ART. 5...** If at least three R players are not within five yards of their free kick line after the ball is declared ready-for-play and until it is kicked, it is a free kick infraction.
- ART. 6...** Any receiver may catch a free kick in the field of play and advance, unless any member of the

receiving team has given a valid or invalid fair catch signal. R may catch a free kick in R's end zone.

- ART. 7...** A kick which touches a player of either team and then touches the ground is dead at the spot of touching the ground and belongs to the receiving team at that spot, or at the spot of first touching by the kicking team.
- ART. 8...** If a free kick becomes dead inbounds between the goal lines while no player is in possession, or inbounds anywhere while opponents are in joint possession, the ball is awarded to R.
- ART. 9...** If any kicker touches a free kick before it crosses R's free-kick line and before it is touched there by any R player, it is referred to as "first touching of the kick". R may take the ball at the spot of first touching or may choose to have the ball put in play as determined by the action which follows first touching. The right of R to take the ball at the spot of first touching by K is canceled if R touches the kick and thereafter during the down commits a foul or if the penalty is accepted for any foul committed during the down.
- ART. 10...** A free kick is not repeated unless:
- A. A foul occurs prior to a change of possession and the penalty acceptance requires a replay of the down.
  - B. There is a double foul.
  - C. There is an inadvertent whistle during the kick.
- ART. 11...** A free kick shall not be kicked out of bounds between the goal lines untouched inbounds by R. If it is, R has the following:
- A. Accept a five yard penalty from the previous spot and have K rekick.
  - B. Put the ball in play at the inbounds spot fifteen yards beyond the previous spot.
  - C. Decline the penalty and put the ball in play at the inbounds spot (following a safety).
- ART. 12...** If a free kick goes out of bounds between the goal lines touched inbounds by R, the ball is put in play by R at the inbounds spot.
- PENALTY:** (ART. 3 & 5), Free kick infraction - five yards; (ART. 4), Encroachment - five yards; (ART. 11), Free kick out of bounds - five yards and re-kick, or put in play at the inbounds spot fifteen yards beyond the previous spot.

## **SECTION 2 - SCRIMMAGE KICKS**

- ART. 1...** *All punts must be declared.*
- ART. 2...** All punts must be kicked within twenty-five seconds after the official declares the ball ready for play. The ball may be punted on any down, as long as it is declared.
- NOTE:** If a penalty is called during the down in which a punt has been declared and play stops, the offensive team may continue with the declared punt or they may choose not to punt when play resumes. The offensive team must notify the official of this change prior to the ball being put back into play.
- ART. 3...** The ball must be kicked from behind the line of scrimmage. The kicker has five seconds from the snap to kick the ball. No offensive player shall leave the line of scrimmage during scrimmage kicks until the ball is kicked.
- ART. 4...** The defensive team must have at least five players on the line of scrimmage during scrimmage kicks and they shall not leave the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked. No defensive player shall attempt to hinder or block a punted ball; this includes raising their arms at the line of scrimmage in an attempt to block the ball.
- ART. 5...** In the 3A and 4A Divisions, the ball must be hiked to the punter a minimum of five yards from the line of scrimmage.
- ART. 6...** A punt not declared and thus attempted will be penalized by five yards and administered as a dead ball foul.
- ART. 7...** Any receiver may catch or recover a scrimmage kick in the field of play and advance, unless it is

during a try, or unless any member of the receiving team has given a valid or invalid fair catch signal. R may catch or recover a scrimmage kick in K's end zone.

**ART. 8...** No member of the kicking team may catch or recover, and advance a scrimmage kick.

**ART. 9...** When a member of the kicking team touches a scrimmage kick beyond the line of scrimmage before it is touched by a receiving player and before the ball has come to rest, it is referred to as "first touching of the kick" and the place is the "spot of first touching".

A. When first touching occurs the receiving team may take the ball at the spot of first touching or the result of the play.

B. First touching does not cause the ball to be dead. The ball's motion must be stopped entirely and the official must signal for the ball to be considered dead.

**ART. 10...** When any scrimmage kick is out of bounds between the goal lines or becomes dead inbounds between the goal lines while no player is in possession, or inbounds anywhere while opponents are in joint possession, the ball is awarded to R. Following an out-of-bounds kick, the ball is put in play at the inbounds spot unless R chooses a spot of first touching.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 2-5), Illegal Procedure - five yards; (ART. 6), Dead ball foul - five yards.

### **SECTION 3 - MUFFING OF FREE AND SCRIMMAGE KICKS**

**ART. 1...** Any kicked ball remains live if it is recovered in the air, prior to hitting the ground from a muff.

**ART. 2...** Any kick becomes dead when it is muffed and the ball hits the ground.

### **SECTION 4 - TOUCHBACK**

If any free kick or scrimmage kick becomes dead in the kicker's end zone while no player has possession, it is a safety or touchback.

### **SECTION 5 - FAIR CATCH**

**ART. 1...** **Any receiver may signal for a fair catch while any legal kick is in flight.** Any receiver who has given a valid or invalid fair-catch signal is prohibited from blocking until the kick has ended. If after a receiver signals, the catch is made by a teammate, it is not a fair catch but the ball becomes dead.

**ART. 2...** No receiver may advance the ball after any member of the receiving team has given a valid or invalid fair catch signal.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1), Blocking after giving a valid or invalid signal - ten yards; (ART. 2), Delay of game - five yards.

## **RULE 7 - SNAPPING, HANDING, PASSING THE BALL, BALL CARRIER, BLOCKING, AND DEFENSIVE ROUGHNESS**

### **SECTION 1 - BEFORE THE SNAP**

**ART. 1...** When over the ball, the snapper shall have his feet behind his line and no part of his person other than a hand(s) on the ball may be beyond the foremost point of the ball.

**ART. 2...** The snapper may lift the ball for lateral rotation but may not rotate end-for-end or change the location or fail to keep the long axis of the ball at right angles to the line of scrimmage.

**ART. 3...** Following the ready-for-play signal and after touching the ball, the snapper shall not:

A. Remove both hands from the ball.

B. Make any movement that simulates a snap.

C. Fail to clearly pause before the snap.

D. Following adjustment, lift or move the ball other than in a legal snap.

E. Slide his hand along the ball.

**ART. 4...** An illegal snap or other snap infraction causes the ball to remain dead.

**ART. 5...** No other player shall encroach on the neutral zone after the ball is marked ready for play by

touching the ball or an opponent.

- ART. 6...** Following the ready-for-play signal and after the snapper has placed his hand(s) on the ball, encroachment occurs if any other player breaks the plane of his line of scrimmage or a defensive player makes contact with the ball or the hand(s) or arm(s) of the snapper prior to the snapper releasing the ball.
- ART. 7...** After the ball is marked ready for play and before the snap begins, no false start shall be made by any offensive player. ***It is a false start if:***
- A. A shift or feigned charge simulates action at the snap.
  - B. Any act is clearly intended to cause a defensive player to encroach.
- ART. 8...** If a false start causes the defense to encroach, only the false start is penalized.
- PENALTY:** (ART. 1, 5 and 6), Encroachment - five yards; (ART. 2 and 3), Snap infraction - five yards; (ART. 7), False start - five yards.

## **SECTION 2 - POSITION AND ACTION DURING THE SNAP**

- ART. 1...** The players on each side of and next to the snapper may lock legs with the snapper, but any other Team A lineman must have both feet outside the closest foot of the player next to him at the snap.
- ART. 2...** Of the players of Team A who are not on their line at the snap only one may penetrate the vertical plane through the waistline of his nearest teammate who is on his line and he must have his hands in position to receive the ball if it is snapped between the snapper's legs but he is not required to receive the snap. Any other player(s) must be in legal position as a back.
- ART. 3...** A snap shall be such that the ball immediately leaves the hand or hands of the snapper and touches a backfield player or the ground before it touches a Team A lineman. A scrimmage down must start with a legal snap. An illegal snap causes the ball to remain dead.
- ART. 4...** After a huddle or a shift, all eight players of A shall come to an absolute stop and shall remain stationary simultaneously without movement of hands, feet, head or body for at least one second before the snap.
- ART. 5...** Only one Team A player may be in motion at the snap and then only if such motion is not toward his opponent's goal line. Except for the player "under the snapper" as outlined in Art. 2, the player in motion shall be at least five yards behind his line of scrimmage at the snap if he started from any position not clearly behind the line and did not establish himself as a backfield player by stopping for at least one full second while no part of his body is breaking the vertical plane through the waistline of his nearest teammate who is on the line.
- ART. 6...** When a team huddles, all players must break from the huddle or be at least five yards from the sideline when the ball is snapped (i.e., illegal hideout). If a team does not huddle, players may align in any legal formation.
- PENALTY:** (ART. 1, 2 and 6), Illegal formation - five yards; (ART. 3), Illegal snap - five yards; (ART. 4), Illegal shift - five yards; (ART. 5), Illegal motion - five yards.

## **SECTION 3 - HANDING THE BALL**

- ART. 1...** Any player may hand the ball backward at any time.
- ART. 2...** A player may only hand the ball forward during a scrimmage down and before a change of possession provided both players are in or behind the line and it is to:
- A. A lineman who has clearly faced his goal line by moving both feet in a half-turn and is at least one yard behind the line when he receives the ball.
  - B. To a back or a teammate who, at the snap, was on an end of his line and was not the snapper nor adjacent to the snapper.
- ART. 3...** During a scrimmage down after a change of team possession, no player may hand the ball forward to a teammate.
- ART. 4...** The quarterback may not hand the ball off to the center through the center's legs.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 2-4), Illegal handing - five yards and loss of down. The loss of down penalty does not apply when there has been a change of team possession.

#### **SECTION 4 - FUMBLE AND BACKWARD PASS**

- ART. 1...** During any down, any player in possession may make a backward pass or may lose player possession through a fumble.
- ART. 2...** If any player catches a fumble or backward pass, he may advance.
- ART. 3...** If a fumble or backward pass goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines or becomes dead inbounds while no player is in possession or while opponents are in joint possession, the ball belongs to the passing or fumbling team unless lost after the fourth down.
- ART. 4...** If a fumble or backward pass is out of bounds behind a goal line, the ball belongs to the team defending that goal and the result is either a touchback or a safety.
- ART. 5...** Anytime that a fumble hits the ground it is a dead ball and no team may recover the ball and advance. The team that was in possession of the ball at the time of the fumble shall retain possession of the ball unless it occurred on the fourth down.
- ART. 6...** A center snap that goes over the head of the quarterback and is not touched will be returned to the line of scrimmage with a loss of down.
- ART. 7...** If the quarterback touches a center snap and then it touches the ground, the ball will be placed at the spot where the quarterback last touched the ball.

**NOTE:** The ball will always be placed where it was last touched.

**EXCEPTION:** On a declared kick down, a snap which hits the ground before or after getting to the intended punter remains live, even if muffed, for the purpose of being kicked. It must be kicked immediately from the spot it is recovered by the kicker.

#### **SECTION 5 - FORWARD PASS**

- ART. 1...** A forward pass may be thrown by the team which has put the ball in play from the scrimmage line. Only one forward pass may be thrown during the down.
- ART. 2...** ***An illegal forward pass is a foul.*** The illegal forward passes are:
- A. A pass after team possession has changed during the down.
  - B. A pass from beyond the line of scrimmage.
  - C. A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible offensive receiver.
  - D. A pass intentionally thrown incomplete to save loss of yardage or to conserve time.
  - E. A second or subsequent forward pass thrown during a down.
- ART. 3...** If the penalty for an illegal forward pass is accepted, measurement is from the spot of such forward pass. If the offended team declines the distance penalty it has the choice of having the down counted at the spot of the illegal incomplete forward pass or (if the illegal forward pass is caught or intercepted) of having the ball put in play as determined by the action which followed the catch.
- ART. 4...** A forward pass (legal or illegal) is complete and the ball may be advanced when caught by any player of A or B. If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by two opponents, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the passing team.
- ART. 5...** A forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete and the ball becomes dead when the pass touches the ground or goes out of bounds. It is also incomplete when a player in the air possesses the pass and alights so that his first contact with the ground or with anything other than a player or game official is on or outside the boundary. When an incompleteness occurs the down counts unless the pass is after a change of possession. If the pass is legal the passing team next snaps the ball at the previous spot, unless lost after the fourth down.
- ART. 6...** Pass eligibility rules apply only to a legal forward pass. The following players are eligible pass receivers:
- A. All Team A players.

- B. All Team B players.
- C. A player who is eligible at the start of the down remains eligible throughout the down.

**ART. 7...** Pass interference restrictions only apply beyond the line of scrimmage and only if the legal forward pass crosses the line.

**ART. 8...** Pass interference restrictions are in effect for all A and B players until the ball is touched or the pass is incomplete. Pass interference restrictions on a legal forward pass begin for:

- A. A at the time of the snap.
- B. B when the ball leaves the passer's hand.

**ART. 9...** Pass interference restrictions on a legal forward pass end for all:

- A. A players, when B touches the last forward pass.
- B. Eligible A players when A touches the last forward pass.
- C. B players when the first forward pass has been touched by A or B.

**ART. 10... *It is forward pass interference if:***

- A. Any player of A or B who is beyond the neutral zone interferes with an eligible opponent's opportunity to move toward, catch or bat the pass.
- B. Any player hinders an opponent's vision without making an attempt to catch, intercept or bat the ball, even though no contact was made.

**ART. 11... *It is not forward pass interference if:***

- A. Unavoidable contact occurs when two or more players are making a simultaneous, bona fide attempt to move toward, catch or bat the pass.
- B. Contact by A is immediately made on a Team B lineman and the contact does not continue beyond the expanded neutral zone.
- C. Contact by B is obviously away from the direction of the pass.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 2A), Illegal forward pass – five yards; (ART. 2B), Illegal forward pass – five yards, plus loss of down; (ART. 2C and D), Intentional grounding – five yards, plus loss of down; (ART. 10), Pass Interference – ten yards plus loss of down if by A, if by B, it is first down for A. If the pass interference by either player is intentional or unsportsmanlike conduct, his team shall be penalized an additional ten yards.

## **SECTION 6 - THE BALL CARRIER**

**ART. 1...** The ball carrier shall not deliberately run over, hurdle or straight-arm a defensive player.

**ART. 2...** Protecting (guarding) the flags by holding them or pushing a defensive player's hand(s) away is illegal.

**NOTE:** Hurdling is an attempt by a player to jump (hurdle) with one or both feet or knees foremost over an opponent who is contacting the ground with no part of his body except one or both feet. A ball carrier may jump or twirl to avoid having his flag pulled as long as it is not over a defensive player who is still on his feet.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1), Ten yards and possible disqualification from game plus a loss of down; (ART. 2), Ten yards and loss of down.

## **SECTION 7 - STOPPING THE BALL CARRIER AND LOOSE EQUIPMENT**

**ART. 1... *In order to down a ball carrier, an opponent must pull one of three flags from his flag belt.*** It will aid the officials if the flag puller will hold the flag up in the air.

**ART. 2...** Pulling the flag of an offensive player who does not have the ball will be penalized by five yards. However, when an offensive player pretends to have the ball, reasonable allowance for failure of the defense to discover the deception may be made.

**ART. 3...** Each player is responsible for not having loose clothing, equipment (shirts, jerseys, flag belts, etc.). All clothing must be tucked inside the pants so that the flag belt and flags will be visible, tight and worn at waist level with a flag on the back and each side of the player's body.

**NOTE:** Remember, **each player, not the official**, is responsible for ensuring that his

equipment and clothes are being properly worn.

#### **INFRACTIONS OF THIS RULE SHOULD BE ENFORCED AS FOLLOWS:**

- A. Between downs - If noticed between downs, the official should warn the team captain and the affected player.
- B. Down in progress - If faulty clothing or equipment occurs during a down and, for any reason, it becomes difficult or impossible to pull a flag from the ball carrier, a hand tag will down the ball carrier.

**ART. 4...** If a ball carrier inadvertently loses a flag, ***a one-hand tag by a defensive player, between the shoulders and the knees of the ball carrier***, will be ruled as downing the ball carrier.

#### **SECTION 8 - BLOCKING**

**ART. 1...** An offensive blocker may use only the standing block, with the forearms and hands folded to the body. No part of the blocker's body, except the feet, shall be in contact with the ground throughout the block. **A three-point blocking stance is not allowed.**

**ART. 2...** Defensive players are restrained in use of hands to pushing the shoulders and body of offensive blockers, provided the closed or cupped hand technique is used. Slapping or striking is not allowed and will be penalized.

**ART. 3...** When a player on defense uses a hand or arm, the hand must be in advance of the elbow at the time of the contact and at the shoulder or below.

**ART. 4...** Blocking below the waist is making initial contact below the waist from the front or side against an opponent other than a runner. Blocking below the waist applies only when the opponent has one or both feet on the ground.

**ART. 5...** There is no free blocking zone.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1 and 2), Illegal block; (ART. 3), Illegal use of hands; (ART. 4), Blocking below the waist – ten yards.

#### **SECTION 9 - DEFENSIVE ROUGHNESS**

**ART. 1...** Against the ball carrier shall include:

- A. Tackling, holding, blocking, tripping, pushing and charging the ball carrier.
- B. Pushing out-of-bounds.

**NOTE:** At the discretion of the official, if the last defensive player between the ball carrier and the goal line is guilty of any of the above violations under ART. 1, the ball carrier shall be given the score he would have attained had he not been fouled.

**ART. 2...** Against the passer:

A defensive player may attempt to block a pass as long as contact is not made with passer. In an attempt to remove the flag from the ball carrier, defensive players may contact the body of the opponent with their hands. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the ball carrier down in an attempt to remove the flag.

**ART. 3...** Blocking the center:

It is illegal for a defensive player to block the offensive center on or immediately after the initial snap until the center assumes a blocking stance.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1-3), Unnecessary roughness – ten yards and possible disqualification if flagrant; (ART. 2), Roughing the passer – Automatic first down.

### **RULE 8 - SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACK**

#### **SECTION 1 - SCORING**

**ART. 1...** The game is won by the team, which accumulates the most points. Points are scored as follows for:

- A. **TOUCHDOWN** ..... 6 points
- B. **SAFETY** - Points awarded to opponent..... 2 points
- C. **SUCCESSFUL TRY FOR POINT**
  - 1. From the five-yard line ..... 2 points
  - 2. From the two-yard line ..... 1 point

**SECTION 2 - TOUCHDOWN**

- ART. 1... It is a touchdown when a loose ball is caught by a player while the ball is on or behind his opponent's goal line.
- ART. 2... If a foul by the opponents of the scoring team occurs during a touchdown, the penalty is automatically declined and no penalty is assessed on the try.

**SECTION 3 - TRY FOR POINT**

- ART. 1... After a touchdown, the scoring team shall attempt a try for point during which the ball is snapped from either the two or five yard lines and anywhere between the inbounds lines. This involves a scrimmage down, which is neither numbered nor timed.
- ART. 2... The try for point begins when the ball is marked ready-for-play. It ends when:
  - A. B secures possession.
  - B. The try is successful.
  - C. The ball becomes dead for any other reason.
- ART. 3... **During a try for point, Team A may score two points if their try for point is from the five yard line or one point if their try for point is from the two yard line.**
- ART. 4... If during a successful try, a loss of down foul by A occurs, there are no point(s) scored and no replay.
- ART. 5... If during a successful try, a foul by B occurs, the penalty is automatically declined and the result of the play stands. If A fouls, the down shall be replayed if the penalty is accepted.
- ART. 6... If during an unsuccessful try, a foul by A occurs, the penalty is obviously declined, the results of the play stand and there is no replay. If B fouls, the down is replayed after enforcement.
- ART. 7... If a double foul occurs, the down shall be replayed.
- ART. 8... When a try for point is replayed, the snap may be from any point between the inbounds lines on the yard line through the spot of the ball.

**SECTION 4 - FORCE, SAFETY AND TOUCHBACK**

- ART. 1... Responsibility for forcing the ball from the field of play across a goal line is attributed to the player who carries, snaps, passes, fumbles or kicks the ball, unless a new force is applied to a grounded backward pass, kick or fumble. The muffing or batting of a pass, kick or fumble in flight is not considered a new force.
- ART. 2... ***It is a safety when:***
  - A. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his own goal line, and it becomes dead there in his team's possession.
 

**EXCEPTION:** When a defensive player intercepts an opponent's forward pass, intercepts or recovers an opponent's fumble or backward pass; or an R player catches or recovers a scrimmage kick or free kick between his five yard line and the goal line and his original momentum carries him into the end zone where the ball is declared dead in his team's possession or it goes out-of-bounds in the end zone, the ball belongs to Team B at the spot where the pass or fumble was intercepted or recovered or the kick was caught or recovered.
  - B. A player, who is either in the field of play or in his end zone, forces a loose ball from the field of play to or across his goal line by his kick, pass, fumble, snap or by a new force to a grounded loose ball with his muff or bat (when the penalty is declined), provided the ball becomes dead there in his team's possession (including when the ball is declared dead with

no player in possession), or the ball is out-of-bounds when it becomes dead on or behind their goal line. This does not apply to a legal forward pass, which becomes incomplete.

- C. A player on offense commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and enforcement is from a spot in his end zone; or throws an illegal forward pass from his end zone and the penalty is declined in a situation which leaves him in possession at the spot of the illegal pass and with the ball having been forced into the end zone by the passing team.

**ART. 3... *It is a touchback when:***

- A. Any kick (scrimmage or free) touches anything while the ball is on or behind K's goal line.
- B. Any kick becomes dead on or behind K's goal line with the ball in possession of Team K (including when the ball is declared dead with no player in possession) and the new force is R's muff or bat of the kick after it has touched the ground.
- C. A fumble is the force, or a muff or bat of a backward pass or a fumble after either has touched the ground is the new force, which sends the ball to or across the opponent's goal line and provided such opponent is in team possession or the ball is out-of-bounds when it becomes dead on or behind its goal line.
- D. A forward pass is intercepted in B's end zone and becomes dead there in B's possession.

- ART. 4...** The team whose goal line is involved shall put the ball in play anywhere between the inbounds lines on its twenty yard line by a snap after a touchback and by a free kick after a safety.

## **RULE 9 - CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND OTHERS**

### **SECTION 1 - HELPING THE RUNNER**

An offensive player shall not push, pull or lift the runner to assist his forward progress.

**PENALTY:** Helping the runner - ten yards.

### **SECTION 2 - ILLEGAL USE OF HANDS AND HOLDING**

**ART. 1... *An offensive player (except the runner) shall not:***

- A. Use a blocking technique which is not permissible by rule.
- B. Grasp or encircle any teammate to form interlocked blocking.
- C. Use his hands, arms or legs to hook, lock, clamp, grasp, encircle or hold in an effort to restrain an opponent other than the runner.

- ART. 2...** The runner may not grasp a teammate.

**ART. 3... *A defensive player shall not:***

- A. Use a technique which is not permissible by rule.
- B. Use his hands to add momentum to the charge of a teammate who is on the line of scrimmage.
- C. Use his hands or arms to hook, lock, clamp, grasp, encircle or hold in an effort to restrain an opponent other than the runner.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1A, 2, 3A-B), Illegal use of hands or arms - ten yards; (ART. 1B), Interlocked blocking - ten yards; (ART. 1C and 3C), Holding - ten yards.

### **SECTION 3 - ILLEGAL BLOCKING**

**ART. 1... *Blocking by a player either on offense or defense is illegal when it is:***

- A. Forward pass interference.
- B. A personal foul.

- ART. 2...** A player shall not block an opponent below the waist.

- ART. 3...** A receiver who has given a valid or invalid fair-catch signal shall not block an opponent until the kick has ended.

- ART. 4...** A player shall not block an opponent in the back except when using hands and arms to contact an opponent above the waist in warding off a blocker, or when attempting to reach a runner, or catch or recover a loose ball which he may legally touch or possess.

**ART. 5...** A player shall not chop block or clip.

**ART. 6...** A player shall not trip an opponent who is not a runner.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1A), Forward Pass Interference – ten yards plus loss of down if by A, if by B, it is first down for A. If the pass interference by either player is intentional or unsportsmanlike, his team shall be penalized an additional ten yards; (ART. 2), Blocking below the waist - ten yards; (ART. 3), Blocking after signal - ten yards; (ART. 4), Blocking in the back - ten yards; (ART. 5), Chop block - ten yards; (ART. 6), Tripping - ten yards.

#### **SECTION 4 - ILLEGAL PERSONAL CONTACT**

**ART. 1...** No player or nonplayer shall fight or intentionally contact an official.

**ART. 2... *No player shall:***

- A. Swing the foot, shin or knee into an opponent, nor extend the knee to meet a blocker.
- B. Charge into or throw an opponent to the ground after he is obviously out of the play, or after the ball is clearly dead either in or out-of-bounds.
- C. Hurdle any other player.
- D. Position himself on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage.
- E. Make any other contact with an opponent which is deemed unnecessary and which incites roughness.
- F. Strike an opponent with his fist, locked hands, forearm or elbow, nor kick or knee him

**ART. 3...** Roughing the passer. Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer, after it is clear the ball has been thrown. No defensive player shall charge into the passer who is standing still or fading back, as he is considered out of the play after the pass.

**ART. 4...** Roughing the kicker. A defensive player shall not block or charge into the kicker during a scrimmage kick.

**ART. 5...** Roughing the snapper. A defensive player shall not charge directly into the snapper when the offensive team is in a scrimmage formation.

**ART. 6...** No defensive player shall attempt to bat, hit or steal a ball when in possession of an offensive player.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1 and 2), Fighting, intentionally contacting an official, striking, kicking or kneeing - ten yards and disqualification; (ART. 2A-E and 6), Personal fouls - ten yards; (ART. 3), Roughing passer - ten yards and first down from the dead ball spot when the dead ball spot is beyond the neutral zone and the offensive team has possession of the ball at the end of the down and there has been no change of team possession, or otherwise, ten yards and first down from previous spot; (ART. 4), Roughing kicker - ten yards and first down from previous spot; (ART. 5), Roughing the snapper - ten yards and first down from previous spot; (ALL ARTICLES), Listed penalty plus disqualification if any foul is flagrant.

#### **SECTION 5 - NONCONTACT UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT BY PLAYERS**

**ART. 1... *No player shall act in an unsporting manner at any time during the game or during either a period or intermission.*** Examples are, but not limited to:

- A. Baiting or taunting acts or words or insignia worn that engenders ill will.
- B. Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
- C. Using disconcerting acts or words prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with A's signals or movements.
- D. Intentionally kicking at the ball, other than during a legal kick.
- E. Leaving the field between downs to gain an advantage unless replaced or unless with permission of the referee.
- F. Refusing to comply with an official's request.

**ART. 2... *When the ball becomes dead in possession of a player, he shall not:***

- A. Intentionally kick the ball.
- B. Spike the ball into the ground.
- C. Throw the ball high into the air or from the field of play.
- D. Fail to immediately return the ball to a nearby official.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1 & 2), Unsportsmanlike conduct - ten yards, also disqualification if flagrant. In (ART. 1A), the player must remove the offending item before he is allowed to participate. The second unsportsmanlike foul results in disqualification.

### **SECTION 6 - ILLEGAL PARTICIPATION**

**ART. 1...** Prior to a change of possession, or when there is no change of possession, no player of A or K shall go out-of-bounds and return during the down unless blocked out-of-bounds by an opponent. If a player is blocked out-of-bounds by an opponent and returns inbounds during the down, he shall return at the first opportunity.

**ART. 2...** No player shall intentionally go out of bounds during the down and then return to the field.

**ART. 3...** No replaced player or substitute shall hinder an opponent, touch the ball, influence the play or otherwise participate.

**ART. 4... *It is illegal participation:***

- A. To have more than eight players participating at the snap.
- B. To use a replaced player or substitute in a substitution or pretended substitution to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap.
- C. For a player to be lying on the ground to deceive the opponents at or immediately before the snap.
- D. For a disqualified player to re-enter the game.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1-3), Illegal participation (live ball, basic spot) – ten yards. (ART. 4), Illegal participation (live ball, previous spot) – ten yards.

### **SECTION 7 - ILLEGAL KICKING AND BATTING**

**ART. 1...** No player shall intentionally kick the ball other than as a scrimmage kick.

**ART. 2...** No player shall bat a loose ball other than a pass or a fumble in flight, or a low scrimmage kick in flight, which he is attempting to block in the neutral zone.

**ART. 3...** Any pass in flight may be batted in any direction, by an eligible receiver unless it is a backward pass batted forward by the passing team.

**ART. 4...** A ball in player possession shall not be batted forward by a player of the team in possession.

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1-4), Illegal kicking or batting - ten yards

### **SECTION 8 - NONCONTACT UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT BY NONPLAYERS**

**ART. 1... *No coach, substitute, or other team attendant shall act in an unsportsmanlike manner at any time during the game or during an intermission.*** Examples are, but not limited to:

- A. Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
- B. Attempting to influence a decision by an official.
- C. Disrespectfully addressing an official.
- D. Indicating objections to an official's decision.
- E. Using an artificial aid to coach or direct play.
- F. Holding an unauthorized conference.
- G. The failure of a team to be ready to start either half.
- H. Being on the field except as a substitute or replaced player.
- I. The use of mechanical visual-aid equipment, including computers, television and videotape for monitoring, replay or coaching purposes during the game and intermission.
- J. Being outside the team box but not on the field.

**ART. 2...** Two attendants, neither of whom is a coach, may enter the field to attend their team during a charged time-out. During a time-out for injury, the coach and/or such attendants as may be

deemed necessary by the referee may, with permission, enter to attend the injured player(s).

**ART. 3...** A nonplayer shall not be outside his team box except to become a player or return as a replaced player. ***No more than a maximum of three coaches may be in the coaches' area.***

**PENALTY:** (ART. 1A-I), Nonplayer fouls - if dead ball – ten yards; (ART. 2), Nonplayer foul, five yards, unless repeated - or unsportsmanlike, ten yards; (ART. 1J and 3), First offense - warning; Second offense – five yards; each subsequent offense – ten yards; (ART. 1-3), Any single flagrant foul - may be disqualified. A second unsportsmanlike foul with a ten yard penalty results in disqualification. A disqualified member of the coaching staff shall be removed from the game. Ejected coaches must leave the immediate field area and take no further part in said game. For failure to comply, the referee may forfeit the game.

## **SECTION 9 - UNFAIR ACTS**

**ART. 1...** A player or nonplayer not subject to the rules shall not hinder play by an unfair act, which has no specific rule coverage.

**ART. 2...** No team shall repeatedly commit fouls, which halve the distance to the goal line.

**ART. 3...** Neither team shall commit any act which, in the opinion of the referee, tends to make a travesty of the game.

**PENALTY:** Unfair act - The referee enforces any penalty he considers equitable, including the award of a score. (ART. 2), Repeated fouls - the game may be forfeited.

## **RULE 10 - ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES**

### **SECTION 1 - PROCEDURE AFTER A FOUL**

**ART. 1...** When a foul occurs during a live ball, the referee shall, at the end of the down, notify both captains. He shall inform the captain of the offended team regarding the rights of penalty acceptance or declination and shall indicate to him the number of the ensuing down, distance to be gained, and status of the ball for each available choice. The distance penalty for any foul may be declined. If the penalty is declined or if there is a double foul, there is no loss of distance. In case of a double foul, the captains are not consulted since the penalties offset. The captain's choice of options may not be revoked. Decisions involving penalties shall be made before any charged time-out is granted either team.

**ART. 2...** When a foul occurs during a dead ball between downs or prior to a free kick or snap, the official shall not permit the ball to become alive. The referee shall notify the captains, and the captain of the offended team will be presented with the options and the effect of acceptance or declination on the down and distance to be gained. The captain may accept or decline the penalty.

**ART. 3...** When a live ball foul by one team is followed by a dead ball foul by the opponent, the penalties are administered separately and in the order of occurrence.

**ART. 4...** When the same team commits a live-ball foul followed by one or more dead ball fouls, all fouls may be penalized.

**ART. 5...** Enforcement of a penalty cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. If the prescribed penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway from the spot of enforcement to the goal line.

**ART. 6...** The following fouls by A include loss of the right to replay a down:

- A. Illegally handing the ball forward.
- B. Illegal forward pass.
- C. Forward pass interference.

**ART. 7...** The following fouls by B give A an automatic first down:

- A. Roughing the passer.
- B. Roughing the snapper.

C. Forward pass interference.

## **SECTION 2 - DOUBLE AND MULTIPLE FOULS**

- ART. 1...** It is a double foul if both teams commit fouls, other than nonplayer or unsportsmanlike, during the same live ball period in which:
- A. There is no change of team possession.
  - B. There is a change of team possession, and the team in possession at the end of the down fouls prior to final change of possession.
  - C. There is a change of possession and the team in final possession accepts the penalty for its opponent's foul at any time during the down.

**NOTE:** In A, B or C, the penalties cancel and the down is replayed.

- ART. 2...** If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of team possession and the play does not have a post-scrimmage kick foul, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided the foul by the team last gaining possession is not prior to the final change of possession and the team last gaining possession declines the penalty for its opponent's foul(s), other than a nonplayer or unsportsmanlike foul. In this case, the team that was not last in possession has no penalty options until the team last in possession has made its penalty decision on the fouls prior to the change of possession. After that decision by the team last in possession, the team not last in possession may decline or accept the penalty by the team last in possession or choose which foul to have enforced in the case that the team last in possession committed more than one foul following the change.
- ART. 3...** If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of team possession and all R fouls are post-scrimmage kick fouls, then R may retain the ball, provided R declines the penalty for K's foul(s), other than a nonplayer or unsportsmanlike foul. In this case, the team that was not in possession has no penalty options until the team last in possession has made its penalty decision. After that decision by the team last in possession, the team not last in possession may decline or accept the penalty by the team last in possession or choose which foul to have enforced in the case that the team last in possession committed more than one foul following the change.
- ART. 4...** When two or more live-ball fouls (other than a nonplayer or unsportsmanlike) are committed during the same down by the same team (multiple fouls), only one penalty may be enforced. The offended captain may choose which one shall be administered, or he may decline all penalties. When a team commits a nonplayer or unsportsmanlike foul during that same down, it is administered from the succeeding spot as established by the acceptance or declination of the penalty for the other foul.
- ART. 5...** Penalties for dead ball fouls are administered separately and in the order of their occurrence: A dead ball foul is not paired with a live ball foul or another dead ball foul to create a double or multiple foul.
- ART. 6...** A foul during a try for point is not paired with a dead ball foul to create a double or multiple foul.

## **SECTION 3 - TYPES OF PLAY**

- ART. 1... A loose ball play is action during:**
- A. A free kick or scrimmage kick.
  - B. A legal forward pass.
  - C. A backward pass (including the snap), illegal kick or fumble made by A from in or behind his scrimmage line and prior to a change of team possession.
- NOTE:** The run(s) which precedes such legal forward pass, backward pass or fumble is (are) considered part of the action during a loose-ball play.
- ART. 2...** A running play is any action not included under Article 1.
- ART. 3...** The end of the run is:
- A. Where the ball becomes dead in the runner's possession.

- B. Where the runner loses possession if his run is followed by a loose ball.
- C. The spot of the catch when the momentum rule is in effect.

#### **SECTION 4 - BASIC SPOTS**

- ART. 1...** If a foul occurs during a down, the basic spot is determined by the action that occurs during the down. This is the basic spot for penalty enforcement.
- ART. 2...** The basic spot is the previous spot:
  - A. For a foul which occurs simultaneously with the snap or free kick.
  - B. For a foul which occurs during a loose ball play.
- ART. 3...** The basic spot for a foul which occurs during a running play is the spot where the related run ends.
- ART. 4...** The basic spot is the succeeding spot:
  - A. For an unsportsmanlike foul.
  - B. For a dead ball foul.
  - C. For a nonplayer foul.
- NOTE:** It is important to note that if the spot of the foul is beyond the first down line to gain, the team is awarded a first down, even if the measurement for the penalty takes them behind the line to gain.
- ART. 5...** The basic spot is the 20-yard line for fouls by either team when the opponent of the team in possession at the time of the foul is responsible for forcing the ball across the goal line of the team in possession, and the related run ends in the end zone and is followed by a loose ball, regardless of where the loose ball becomes dead.
- ART. 6...** The basic spot is the goal line for fouls which are committed during running plays by the opponent of the team in possession at the time of the foul when the team in possession is responsible for forcing the ball across its own goal line, and the related run ends in the end zone and is followed by a loose ball, regardless of where the loose ball becomes dead.

#### **SECTION 5 – SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT RULES**

- ART. 1...** The following fouls have special enforcement provisions and options for the offended team.
  - A. Free kick out-of-bounds untouched by R.
  - B. Kick-catching interference.
  - C. Unfair acts.
  - D. A foul by B on a successful try.
  - E. Roughing the passer.
  - F. Roughing the snapper.
- ART. 2...** The enforcement spot for any foul by the defense is the goal line when the run ends in the end zone and would result in a safety.
- ART. 3...** The score is nullified if the penalty is accepted for a foul, other than non-player or unsportsmanlike, by A which occurs during a down resulting in a successful try or touchdown.
- ART. 4...** If the offensive team throws an illegal forward pass from its end zone or commits any other foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from on or behind its goal line, it is a safety.
- ART. 5...** The enforcement spot is the end of the last run for roughing the passer when the last run ends beyond the neutral zone and there has been no change of team possession.

#### **SECTION 6 - ENFORCEMENT SPOTS, ALL-BUT-ONE PRINCIPLE**

Unless otherwise listed in Section 4 and 5, a penalty for a foul occurring during a play is enforced from the basic spot with the exception of a foul by the offense which occurs behind the basic spot during a loose ball play or running play. This particular foul is enforced from the spot of the foul.

**PLAY -** Team A has the ball with a first down on their twenty yard line and the forty yard line as the line-to-

gain. A-1 runs the ball past the forty, and at Team B's thirty-five yard line: **(A)** Guards his flags; or **(B)** A holding penalty is called; or **(C)** Gets to Team B's twenty-nine yard line when an illegal block is called there.

**RULINGS:** **(A)** Second down at Team A's thirty-five with Team B's twenty as the line to gain (2nd and two lines). Penalty was for ten yards and a loss of down; **(B)** First down at Team A's thirty-five with Team B's twenty as the line to gain (1st and two lines). Penalty was for ten yards; **(C)** First down at Team B's thirty-nine with Team B's twenty as the line to gain (1st and one line). Penalty was for ten yards.

### **CITY PLAY-OFFS AND CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES**

- A. The City Championship Tournament will be conducted the week following the end of the regular season league play.
- B. The same rules and regulations which governed league play shall govern the City Play-offs and Championship games.
- C. To be eligible for playoffs a player must have participated in at least one regular season game.
- D. If at the end of the fourth period, the score is tied during a City Play-off and/or final Championship game, playing time will be extended as outlined under the section – TIE GAMES, on page 3.
- E. A paid scorekeeper will be the official scorekeeper in final Championship games only.
- F. Protests during City Play-offs or Championship games will be rendered on the site by the Center Supervisor or Youth Sports Coordinator. In the absence of both, the highest ranking staff member present will handle all protests. The protest must be made verbally to the Head Referee, stating the Rule #, Section, and/or Article that governs the rule interpretation in question.
- G. In the event a player is discovered during the City Play-offs to be ineligible, the opposing team playing, or the last team to have played the offending team, will advance to the next round of the Play-offs, or be awarded the City Championship (if ineligible player is discovered during or following the final City Championship game) by forfeit.
- H. The use of video or other electronic devices will not be allowed as evidence in a protest, nor shall it be used by a sports official in an attempt to render a decision.

### **ALL LEAGUE SELECTION**

- A. Selection Criteria will be based on:
  - 1. Best athletic ability and skill
  - 2. Sportsmanship
  - 3. Team dedication
- B. Selection Process:
  - 1. Each player will be allowed to cast two votes for his selection. In the event of a tie, one vote will be cast. Secret ballots will be used. All voting will be administered by the coach while the accounting of each ballot will be processed by the park staff.
  - 2. Each team will have two players selected to represent their league as All-League.
  - 3. Players selected to All-League teams must have played at least one-half (1/2) of the regular season.
  - 4. All-League selections will be for recognition purposes only. No game will be played. All-League selected players will be given separate awards. First and Second team selections will be awarded as well as honorable mentions.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP PROGRAM**

This program has been established to promote better sportsmanship among the players, parents, and coaches within our Youth Sports Programs. At the end of each game, the site supervisor, sports officials,

and/or park staff will get together to rate each team in three areas: the Coach, the Players, and the Fans, according to their behavior on the court or field. Each area can receive a maximum of four points (on a scale of 0-4). At the end of the league, the teams in each division with the best average (points divided by games played) will be determined our best sportsmanship teams. Overall best sportsmanship awards will be given to individual teams, and they will be invited to attend a Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to be recognized as winners of the sportsmanship program.

## **PENALTY ENFORCEMENT CHART**

There are only two types of yardage penalties: ***Loss of five (5) yards or Loss of ten (10) yards.***

Defensive pass interference and roughing the passer are the only fouls, which are penalized with an automatic first down.

### **FIVE (5) YARD PENALTIES**

### **ENFORCED FROM**

1. Encroachment	L.O.S.
2. Illegal Procedure	L.O.S.
3. Delay of Game - twenty-five seconds	L.O.S.
4. Illegal Forward Pass (Loss of Down)	Spot of Foul
5. Intentional Grounding (Loss of Down)	Spot of Foul
6. Less Than Five Linemen At Snap	L.O.S.
7. Illegal Handing Ball Forward (Loss of Down)	L.O.S.
8. Illegal Hideout	L.O.S.
9. Punting Ball That Is Not Declared	L.O.S.

### **TEN (10) YARD PENALTIES**

### **ENFORCED FROM**

1. Offensive & Defensive Holding	B.E.S.
2. Hurdling	B.E.S.
3. Tripping	B.E.S.
4. Roughing The Passer (Automatic First Down)	L.O.S.
5. Clipping	B.E.S.
6. Offensive Pass Interference (Repeat Down)	L.O.S.
7. Defensive Pass Interference (Automatic First Down)	L.O.S.
8. Flag Guarding (Loss of Down)	B.E.S.
9. Fouls By Ball Carrier (Loss of Down)	B.E.S.
10. Unnecessary Roughness	B.E.S.
11. Unsportsmanlike conduct	B.E.S.
12. Illegal Block	B.E.S.
13. Illegal Use of Arms Or Hands	B.E.S.
14. Helping the Runner	B.E.S.

**L.O.S. = LINE OF SCRIMMAGE**

**B.E.S. = BASIC ENFORCEMENT SPOT**

## CLINIC FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

The following rules have been adopted for the 2018 Clinic Flag Football Season. With the exception of the following rules, the 2018 Youth Flag Football Rulebook shall govern all other play.

1. A rubber covered pee-wee sized football (#5) will be used for all games.
2. **Only one coach per team will be allowed on the field during play.** It is the coaches' responsibility to ensure that his/her presence on the field does not hinder any live ball play or any Officials view of the play in progress.
3. Free substitution throughout the game will be allowed. However, it will be **the coaches responsibility to notify the referee when a substitution is taking place and that all players present during the game play a minimum of one complete quarter.**
4. A regulation game shall be two twenty minute halves in length. Only one time-out (not to exceed one minute in length) per team, per half will be allowed.
5. Late running games can be ended early at the discretion of either the head referee, Center Supervisor, Youth Sports Coordinator or the highest ranking staff member present.
6. The game will be administered with a running clock. The clock will stop for time-outs, touchdowns and emergencies only.
7. The defensive team may align themselves in any formation they choose provided they line up at least one yard from the line of scrimmage.
8. No punting will be allowed. If a team fails to gain a first down or touchdown, their opponents shall take possession of the ball at their twenty yard line.
9. After a touchdown, there shall be no attempt at a try for point (conversion attempt).
10. **As in all Clinic Division sports in the City of Carson, this is only a fundamental league. NO SCORES WILL BE KEPT. EVERYONE IS A WINNER!**

**NOTE:** Referee's, like coaches, are there to help players learn the fundamentals of the game. Calling every foul that they see arise, not only slows down the pace of the game, but sometimes takes all the fun out. **When a foul arises, referee's will use their own judgment as to whether a foul needs to be strictly enforced, or perhaps a warning would be sufficient. However, all fouls relating to the safety of a player (contact fouls) should be called.** Referee's should also take the time, when possible, to explain a foul or penalty to a player and/or coach.