SD7 TOURNAMENT GAME PLAY RULES

RULE #1:

We will utilize NFL Flag rules as a guideline. SD7 staff will have final say on rules and interpretations.

DIVISIONS:
Coed: 8U, 10U, 12U, 14U

Girls: 8U, 10U, 12U, 14U, High School

GENERAL RULES/EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES:

- The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser chooses direction. Possession changes at half to the team that started on defense.
- Players must wear YOUTH flags with poppers (2)
- All players MUST wear mouth guards at all times while on the field. Game balls need to be age specific.
- Players must wear cleats. Cleats with exposed metal are never allowed and must be removed.
- Players may wear soft shell helmets, halos and sunglasses but they must be secured at all times while on the field. Prescription glasses are permitted without a strap.
- Players' jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants, if they hang below the belt line.
- No pockets on shorts/pants/sweats/etc.
- 8Participants must bring their own flag belts and mouth guards to the field.
- Extra belts and mouth guards may be available for purchase.
- Flag belts and flags cannot be the same color as the player's shorts or pants.
- Teams not prepared to play at Game Time due to equipment compliance issues will have their team timeouts used, up to 2, for the time taken to get compliant.

Ball Size:

- 11U-HS: Junior size or bigger
- 6U-10U: Pee Wee size or bigger

SHOWDOWN SERIES

FIELD DIMENSIONS:

- About 25 yards wide by 50 yards long, including 2 endzones 7-10 yards long

OFFENSIVE POSSESSION:

- Ball starts at the 5-yard line. Offense has 4 downs to cross midfield.
- After crossing midfield, offense has 3 downs to score.
- If offense elects to Punt on 4th down before crossing midfield, ball moves to opposing 5-yard line.
- If offense goes for it on 4th down and fails, opposing team takes over at the spot.

4TH DOWN DECLARATION:

• Offense must declare "Play" or "Punt" when asked by referee.

• Timeout may be used to change declaration before the play clock expires.

• Once "Punt" is declared, possession changes immediately to opposing 5-yard line.

NO RUN ZONES:

• No-run zones exist 5 yards before midfield and 5 yards before the end zone.

• Teams must run pass plays in these zones.

GAME TIMING:

• Two 12-minute halves (24-minute continuous clock).

• 25-second play clock.

• 2 timeouts per game.

OVERTIME (Bracket Play Only):

• Each team gets one play from 5-yard line for 1 point OR 10-yard line for 2 points in 1st OT.

• Starting 2nd OT: all attempts must be from 10-yard line (2 points).

• 3rd OT: longest play from midfield, each team gets 1-play. Higher seed gets choice.



SCORING:

• Touchdown: 6 points

• 1-point try: pass from 5-yard line

• 2-point try: run or pass from 10-yard line

• Interception Return (regulation): 6 points

• Interception (conversion/OT): 2 points

• Safety: 2 points

RUNNING:

• QB may not directly run.

• No diving/hurdling.

• Ball spotted where ball is at flag pull.

PASSING:

• Forward passes must cross line of scrimmage unless touched by defender.

• QB has 7-second pass clock.

• Only 1 forward pass, thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, is permitted each offensive play. The ball must be released prior to crossing the line of scrimmage. There can be unlimited backward passes behind the line of scrimmage.

• There is no intentional grounding. The quarterback may throw the ball anywhere across the line of scrimmage to avoid a sack.

• All forward passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage are illegal forward passes, unless touched by a defender. All forward passes must go beyond the line of scrimmage.

If a pass is not thrown within 7 seconds, the play is dead, the down counts and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, pitched or lateraled behind the line of scrimmage, the 7 second rule is no longer in effect.

• If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7 second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS) and it will be the next down.



• If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated like an incomplete pass

RECEIVING:

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off, pitched or lateraled behind the line of scrimmage).
- A player must have at least one foot or other body part in bounds, contacting the ground first with possession.
- In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- Interceptions are returnable. If returned for a score during regular game play, the score will be worth six points, two points if returned during conversions and/or overtime

RUSHING THE PASSER:

- Allowed beginning at 8U divisions.
- Rusher must start 7 yards off LOS.
- Once the ball is handed off, pitched or lateraled backwards behind the line of scrimmage, all defenders may cross the line of scrimmage to defend and pull the flag.
- The offense cannot impede the rusher's PATH to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. The PATH is set pre-snap from the rusher or rushers directly to the QB. PATH does not move once the quarterback moves. If the "path or line" is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense's responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher's path and/or contact will result in an 'Impeding the Rusher' penalty. If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher(s) responsibility to go around the offensive player and avoid contact.
- We will utilize NFL Flag rules as a guideline, SD7 officials will have the final say

FLAG PULLING:

- A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.
- It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball carrier's possession at any time.



- If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during a play while that player has possession, the player is down immediately and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
- If a player who has one or no flags on their belt takes possession of the ball, the play is dead at that spot on the field.
- A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flag(s) off a player who is not in possession of the ball.
- Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, ball, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey

FORMATIONS:

- Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
- Movement simulating the snap, by a player who is set, is considered a false start.
- The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

**Only one player is allowed in motion when the ball is snapped. The player MUST be in motion, off the line of scrimmage. All motion must be parallel or backwards to the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

**Players may shift positions on offense at any time, all players must still reset for 1 second, prior to the snap

COACHES:

• Max 2 per sideline. Each team will receive 2 coach's wristbands at no cost. Any amount over 2 is required to pay the gate fee, but will still receive their coach's wristband. Team managers and personal photographers/videographers are required to pay the gate fee as well.

• 8U and below: 1 offensive coach allowed on field at least 5 yards behind QB, no defensive coaches on field.



MERCY RULE:

• Game ends immediately once point differential reaches 28 points.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:

- If the field manager or game officials witness any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the game officials' discretion. No appeals will be considered. INTENTIONAL PHYSICAL PLAY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED! Offensive or confrontational language is NOT allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the officials' will penalize for unsportsmanlike conduct and determine if an ejection is warranted. Players or Coaches may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or game official. Ball-carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
- Defenders must give free releases off the line of scrimmage to offensive players and are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when pulling flags. Offensive players may NOT initiate contact at the line of scrimmage with defenders.
- Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well: • Fans should cheer on their players only, not harass officials or opposing team. • Comments must be clean and profanity free. • Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team. 1. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly and adhere to facility requirements for seating:
- Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the end zone area.
- Stay in the end zone area, not between fields.
- Dispose of ALL trash in designated trash cans.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:
- Defensive penalty +10 yards from the dead ball spot and an automatic first down Offensive penalty -10 yards from the dead ball spot and a loss of down
- Two (2) unsportsmanlike penalties on any player or coach in a game result in a disqualification and may lead to additional discipline.



GENERAL:

- The game officials will administer all penalties. The officials will determine incidental contact that may result from the normal run of play.
- All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)
- Only the head coach may ask referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Games or halves may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
- Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
- Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
- Spot fouls administered in the end zone: Defensive (Ball on one-yard line, first down) / Offensive (Safety)
- If the last defender commits a penalty deemed to solely prevent the offensive player from scoring (tripping, tackling, holding, etc.), the offense will be rewarded a touchdown. This will be known as the “last man standing” rule. SD7 officials/staff will have the final decision.

SHOWDOWN SERIES

ii. Defensive spot fouls

Defensive pass interference	Automatic first down
Holding/Illegal Contact	+5 yards and automatic first down
Stripping	+5 yards and automatic first down

iii. Offensive spot fouls

Screening or blocking	-5 yards and loss of down
Charging	-5 yards and loss of down
Flag guarding	-5 yards and loss of down
Holding/Illegal Contact	-5 yards and loss of down

iv. Defensive penalties

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and automatic first down
Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards and automatic first down
Offside / illegal substitution	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (Before the receiver has the ball)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	+10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

v. Offensive penalties

Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards and loss of down
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards and loss of down
Offside / false start / illegal substitution	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal forward pass (Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Offensive pass interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal motion (More than one person moving)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Procedure	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Taunting	-10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down