

ADIRONDACK FOOTBALL LEAGUE FLAG RULES

PLAYERS AND COACHES

Maximum of 3 coaches per team

1. A game is played between two teams of 9 players each.
2. Only players appearing on the official team roster form are to be counted as players. The form is completed before the first game of the season and then certified by the league.
3. Each team shall designate two players as captains and only they shall represent the team and address the officials on matters of rule interpretation, or to obtain essential information.
4. The offensive team must have six players on the line and three in the backfield.
5. The defensive team may choose 6-3 or 6-2-1 formation.
6. The team will consist of players 5,6,7, and 8 years old.

PLAYING FIELDS

1. The field shall be rectangular with lines and zones as listed.
 1. The field shall be sixty yards long by thirty yards wide, with two five yard end zones.
 2. Goal posts are not needed as extra points are passed or ran in. There are no field goals.
 3. A conversion line will be marked three yards from each goal line and at an equal distance from each side line.
2. Field Equipment
 1. A down marker may be used to indicate the number of the down.
 2. A zone marker may be used to indicate the distance to go for the first down. (Placed at the forward zone line)
 3. Corner flags with flexible staffs will be placed at the four sections of the end zones and the side lines. Soft pylons may be used if flags are not available.

EQUIPMENT

1. Game ball shall be of good grade leather or rubber. It shall be a pee wee size ball
2. Flags
 1. Each player must wear a triple threat flag belt. The flags will be supplied by the league and may not be altered.
 2. The flags will be attached to the belt and extend or hang from each side of the player's body.
 3. Flags will be 14-20 inches long and a minimum of 2 inches wide.
 4. The belt must be light to prevent being turned around during de-flagging.
 5. The securing of the flags to the body or the belt other than by normal means (b) will be illegal.
 6. Jerseys cannot be worn over flags.
 7. If a players flag is lost, he is ineligible to handle the ball.
3. Game Uniforms
 1. All jerseys must be supplied by the league, and shall be tucked in at all times.
 2. League issued Game pants.
 3. Sneakers or non-detachable rubber cleat shoes (soccer style) are allowed. No other footwear is acceptable.
4. Eye Glasses
 1. Eye glasses shall be of an athletically approved construction with Non shattering lens (safety glass).
 2. Contact lens may be worn.
 3. Any player not wearing eye glasses per part (1) shall wear protective eye wear.
5. League will provide initial mouth guard, if lost or missing from that point on is parent responsibility to replace.

PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT

1. Metal spiked cleats.
2. Padding of any kind, including hard surface padding such as shoulder pads, hip pads, and helmets.
3. Hard metal or any other hard substance on a players clothing or person.
4. Anything that conceals the flags (see Rule 3-2f, regarding jerseys)
5. Foreign substances such as grease or glue on a players clothing.
6. Any equipment, in the referee's opinion, that will endanger or confuse players. (jewelry)

RULES OF THE GAME

1. Team captains.
 - The captain shall address the referee's only on matters of interpretation and to obtain information.
2. The free substitution rule is in effect and a player may enter the game at any time the ball is dead.
3. Two coach for each team will be permitted on the field at all times unless otherwise approved by the league.
4. Time.
 - There are four 12 minute quarters of running time.
 - Five minutes at the half.
 - Three time outs per half.
 - Clock will stop at two minutes from the end of the game.
 - Each half will start with the offensive team putting the ball in play at their own ten yard line.
 - A coin toss will decide which team will take the ball or go on Defense. The winning captain has the choice.
 - The losing captain has the choice at the start of the second half.
5. Downs.
 - Each team will have four consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone or to score a touchdown.
 - Once a team enters the next zone, it is a first down and a new series of downs begin. If the offensive team loss yardage behind the previous zone line, a first down can be achieved by reaching the second zone line; ie the one they needed to reach before the loss of yardage.
 - A team failing to move the ball into the next zone within 4 downs will lose possession. The opposing team will take over at their own ten yard line.
 - The forward part of the ball touching any part of the line will be the determining factor in measuring for the first down.
 - A down will be repeated as provided for in the rules (see penalties).
 - When the offensive team has the ball within the last zone, it will be considered first and goal to go.
 - At the conclusion of each down, the referee will place the ball at the center of the field equal distance from each sideline. (no playing or hash marks)
 - There will be only 1 handoff, pass, or pitch per play.
 - There will be no reverses, a ball carrier must start from the area between the offensive tackles.
 - The ball may not be run in the area between the two offensive guards.
6. De-flagging
 - **There will be no tackling of the ball carrier or passer.**
 - The player carrying or having possession of the ball is down when the flag is removed from the waist (de-flagging). The defensive player shall hold the flag above his head and stand still.
 - The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier to remove his flag. An accidental touch of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag shall not be considered a violation; however, touching of the face or head shall be considered a violation.
 - A defensive player may not run over, or pull a blocker away from him.
 - A defensive player must go for the passer's flag, and he may not touch the passers arm.
 - **The defensive team may have only one player eligible to cross the line of scrimmage to rush the quarterback.** The rusher must identify their self before the snap of the ball. The rusher may not rush in the area between the 2 offensive guards. Once the quarterback hands the ball off to another player, any defensive player may cross the line of scrimmage to de-flag the ball carrier.
 - A defensive player may not line up over the center.
 - The offense may not line up more than six players on the line of scrimmage.
 - The Defense will use a standard 6-2-1 or 6-3 defense.
 - Linebackers must start within the tackle box
7. Blocking

- A blocker must be on his feet at all times while blocking. All lineman, except the center, must not assume the three point stance or otherwise spring from a coiled or crouching start. Instead they must simply stand on the line of scrimmage and await the snap. The center, though crouching, if he is to block, must first stand straight up.
 - Cross body or roll blocking are not permitted.
 - A blocker may use his hands (open handed block).
 - Shoulder and brush blocking are not permitted.
 - A defensive player cannot block or push a ball carrier out of bounds. Incidental contact will not be penalized.
 - Butting, elbowing, or knee blocking are not permitted.
 - There will be no two on one blocking for the ball carrier beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - Blocking a player from behind is not permitted (clipping).
 - There will be no interlock blocking.
 - A defensive player will be restricted in the use of his hands to the blockers body or shoulders.
8. Ball Carrier.
- The ball carrier cannot use his hands or arms to protect his flags. The defensive player must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier's flags.
 - The ball carrier may not lower his head to dive or run into a defensive player.
 - **Stiff arming by the ball carrier is illegal.** (Dead ball at spot of stiff arm)
 - The ball carrier cannot hurdle or drive to prevent a defensive player from removing his flags.
 - A ball carrier may run in any direction until the ball is declared dead.
 - Quarterback sneaks will not be allowed. **A quarterback draw is allowed provided the quarterback takes a three step drop.**
9. Center
- The center must snap the ball between his legs.
 - He must have both feet on the line of scrimmage with no part of his body beyond the forward point of the ball.
 - He may adjust the long part of the ball at right angles to the line of scrimmage, one time only.
10. Passing.
- All backfield players are eligible passers.
 - Passing will be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage only.
 - A lateral pass is a pass thrown parallel to the line of scrimmage or back towards the passers own goal line. A lateral pass is not considered a forward pass.
 - A forward pass is a pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage towards the defensive teams goal line.
 - Interception: A forward pass may be intercepted by the defensive player and advanced until the ball is declared dead. The intercepting team shall take over on offense at the point the ball was declared dead.
 - Each team must pass once every series of downs, with these exceptions:
 1. If it's 4th down and less than 3 yards (in the determination of the game officials), the offensive team need not pass.
 2. If the series of downs begin inside the opponents 10 yard line, the offensive team need not pass.
11. Receiving
- All players receiving passes must be in a position that is eligible to receive forward passes. (ie RB,WR,TE)
 - A player may catch the ball even if he steps out of bounds or out of the end zone after he catches the ball, as long as he comes down with one foot in bounds.
 - Two or more receivers may touch the ball in succession resulting in a completed pass.
 - If an offensive and defensive player catch a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch and the passing team is awarded possession.
 - An offensive player cannot be out of bounds and return in bounds to catch a pass. This will be ruled an incomplete pass.
12. Dead Ball. All balls touching the ground are immediately dead.
- When the ball carrier touches the ground with his body other than hands and feet.
 - When the ball carriers flag has been pulled.

- If a pass receiver or ball carrier has a missing flag the ball is dead at that spot.
- Following a touchdown, safety, or touchback.
- When the ball goes out of bounds for any reason.
- If the center snap hits the ground before reaching the backfield man.
- When the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble or muffed play. There are no fumble recoveries.
- If a lateral pass goes out of bounds the ball is ruled dead at the point it crosses the boundary line.
- If a forward pass strikes the ground or is caught at the same time by an opposing player.

PENALTIES

1. The offended team will always have the choice of accepting or declining a penalty. If the penalty is declined, the down will remain the as if no infraction occurred. If the penalty is accepted, the down is repeated unless otherwise noted below. Also, when the penalty is greater than the distance to the goal line, the penalty shall be half the distance to the goal line.
2. Line of scrimmage centering
 - Offside; defense or offense: 5 yds
 - Illegal snap: 5 yds.
 - Failure to obey 30/40 second rule: 5 yds
 - Illegal motion; more than one backfield man in motion: 5 yds.
3. Passing
 - If an illegal forward pass is thrown and intercepted, the play will continue until the ball is declared dead. The intercepting team has the option of possession from that spot or accepting the penalty. 5 yds .
 - Passer crosses the line of scrimmage: 5 yds / loss of down.
 - Intentional grounding: 5 yds / loss of down.
 - Offensive pass interference: 10 yds from line of scrimmage loss of down.
 - Defensive pass interference: First down from the spot of infraction for the offensive team. If interference occurs in the end zone, offensive team will put ball into play at the 1 yd. line; first down.
 - More than one defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the quarterback hands ball off or a non designated rusher crosses line of scrimmage: 5 yds.
 - Player does not have safety glasses on:
 1. Offensive player: stop play at snap, loss of down
 2. Defensive player: 5 yds
4. Delay of game
 - Continuing to play after ball is dead: 5 yds from spot ball is dead.
 - Recovering fumble or falling on loose ball: 5 yds
 - Unnecessary delay of game for any reason: 5yds
5. Flag wearing / De-flagging
 - Tackling: 5 yds
 - Wearing flags illegally: 5 yds
 - Ball carrier using hands to prevent de-flagging: 10 yds
 - Holding, pushing, or hitting ball carrier while de-flagging: 5 yds from spot of foul.
 - Wearing of less than 3 flags: 5 yds
6. Illegal handoff
 - If ball is handed forward beyond line of scrimmage: 5 yds / loss of down.
 - Handing or snapping a ball to a lineman: 5 yds
7. Illegal substitutions
 - More than nine players on field: 5 yds
 - Substitutions while ball is in play or not declared dead: 5 yds
 - Disqualified player enters game: 10 yds
8. Blocking
 - Leaving feet to block: 10 yds
 - Cross body or roll blocking: 10 yds
 - Illegal use of hands by blocker: 10 yds
 - Holding a defensive player: 10 yds
 - Defensive player blocking or pushing ball carrier out of bounds 10 yds
 - Butting, elbowing, or knee blocking: 10 yds

- Defensive player using hands illegally: 5 yds
- More than two blockers for the ball carrier (on one defensive player) beyond the line of scrimmage: 5 yds
- Clipping: 15 yds
- Interlock blocking: 5 yds from spot of foul
- 9. Ball carrier
 - Stiff arming: 10 yds from spot of foul
 - Lowering head to drive or run into defensive player: 10 yds
 - Use of head: 10 yds
 - Use of hands or arms to protect flags: 10 yds
- 10. Unnecessary Roughness
 - Offensive and defensive: 10 yds
 - Disqualification of player or players if repeated.
- 11. Unsportsmanlike conduct
 - Fighting: 10 yds / offenders ejected from game
 - Defensive player pulling offensive players flag to make him ineligible to play: 10 yds
 - Insulting or abusive language: 10 yds
 - Interference with progress of game by coaches or any other team personnel: 10 yds
 - Illegal play 10 yds
 - Team leaving field before game is completed: 10 yds. Failure to return is a forfeit. Win for team remaining on field.
 - Failure of team to control players or its own fans: 10 yds / forfeit if not controlled.

**Updated July 2023,
Adirondack Football league**