**HR Flag Football**

**RULES FOR 2017**

If a rule is not covered below, this league will defer to the [NCAA College Football rules.](http://www.ncaapublications.com/p-4229-2011-2012-football-rule-book-2-year-publication.aspx)

**REFEREES**– Each coach will be required to ref a minimum two games (always want more) during the season. Scheduling will attempt to group the games together so that a ref can get all the games over during one weekend. Refs for first game will be responsible for setting up and ensuring the equipment is set up prior to game time.

Additional support for refs will come from high school students who will get service hours or $7 a game.

Home team for each game is responsible for supplying a parent to run the scoreboard during game.

**PLAYER LEVELS**– The **1st and 3rd** Quarters will consist of second through fifth graders only (**Little Kids**). The **2nd and 4th** Quarters will consist of sixth through eighth graders only (**Big Kids**). No child will play up or down an age group.

The home team will get the option to receive to start the 1st and 3rd quarters. Kicking team kicks off from far side of the field (opposite the parking lot).

**The Home team always has the bleacher side of the field as their sideline.**

**NEUTRAL ZONE** - There is a four yard (measured with a fixed-length rope) neutral zone between the teams at the line of scrimmage. The neutral zone drops to two yards once you are within five yards of the goal line.

**TIME-OUTS** – Each team receives **3 time-outs per game** (not per quarter or half).

**FIRST DOWNS** – First downs are achieved every time a team crosses or lands on the white lines on the field. The lines consist of two 20-yard markers and midfield.

**CLOCK, NORMAL TIME** – **Each quarter is 10 minutes**. The clocks starts and runs **continuously**when the receiving team on a kick-off puts the ball in play – meaning a player actually touches the ball after it is kicked further than 10 yards. (with the exception of the 1 minute warning periods mentioned next). **The clock continues to run following a touchdown** **or field-goal or a time-out**. It will restart when the receiving team (or the kick-off team legally) touches the ball after the kick-off. The exception is during the last two minutes of the game when the clock stops **following a touchdown or field-goal or a time-out and restarts when the ball is put into play.**

**CLOCK, 30 SECOND AND ONE MINUTE WARNINGS PERIODS**– There will only be a **30 second warning** **in the 1st and 2nd quarters and a 1 minute warning in the 3rd and 4th quarters.** The clock will stop at these points and the refs will inform the teams (with the exception if a play is ongoing when this point is reached. The clock will then be stopped at the conclusion of the play). From this point the clock will stop like professional football. **Incomplete passes, out-of-bounds, change of possession**, time-outs, etc.  **Exception / Clarification** – If the little kids score when time runs out, they must perform the extra-point” try.

**RULES ABOUT PLAYERS AND PLAYER CONTACT**

* No stiff-arming or "guarding" the flags where you try to push an arm/hand away from grabbing a flag.  This will result in a **five yard penalty from the spot**of the infraction.
* No shirt-grabbing to intentionally slow down or catch a player.  This will result in a **ten yard penalty**.
* If a player has less than three flags (even if one falls off accidentally), then once the ball carrier is considered within reach of a defensive player, the ball carrier will be ruled down.  This even occurs if a flag accidentally falls off.
* Must have **FOUR**players on the offensive line, no movement after set (except motion).
* Neutral Zone - Players cannot encroach into the neutral zone (between markers) or automatic **five yard penalty**.  REMEMBER: if the defense encroaches it is a "free play" but if the offense false starts it's a dead ball foul.

**THE CLOCK NEVER STOPS WHEN A TEAM PICKS UP A FIRST DOWN**

**ONE RUN RULE**– A team is allowed **one run every set of downs**. If you were to run on first down and achieve a first down on that play, you would have the option to run again. The run option resets every time you attain a first down.  **A FIVE-YARD PENALTY AND LOSS OF DOWN IS ASSESSED** if the one-run rule is violated.   A Quarterback taking a knee to run out the clock is NOT considered a run.

**SHOTGUN REQUIRED**– The **quarterback must receive the football via the shotgun**. The ball must be snapped back at least two yards. The quarterback is “not” allowed to go under center to receive the snap.

**CENTER SNAPPING FOOTBALL** – The center for **Little Kids** has the option to snap the ball in the normal way (face forward – between the legs) or can snap standing sideways and lateral to the quarterback. The center for **Big Kids** "must” snap in normal, center fashion.

**EXTRA POINTS** - A team may try for a 1, 2 or 3 point PAT by executing a play from the 3, 8 or 20 yard lines, respectively.  A team may also elect to kick the extra point, worth 1 point, from the 5 yard line with no defense.

**TOO MUCH TIME RULE** – Each team has **30 seconds** to get off a play following the referees putting the ball down in play (meaning placing the ball at the line of scrimmage following the conclusion of the play).  Failure to do so stops the clock and results in a 5-yard penalty.

**ARM-IN-MOTION** – If the Quarterback’s (or other thrower’s) **arm is in motion** while his flag is grabbed, he is **not** considered **down**.

**RUN VS. PASS** – A player must cross the line of scrimmage for a play to be considered a run and use the 1-run limit.

**8TH GRADE BOYS & 5th GRADE BOYS CAN’T RUSH** – 8th Grade boys are **not allowed to rush** on defense over the line of scrimmage unless the Quarterback scrambles “**outside the pocket**” (which will be considered the left or right of a “tackle” area in pro-football). 8th Grade girls and all others are allowed to rush.  Similarly, 5th grade boys can't rush unless the Quarterback scrambles out of the pocket.  These two groups cannot attempt to recover an onside kick.

**DEAD BALL / LIVE BALL ON KICKS/PUNTS** – On regular Kick-offs AND on Kick’s/Punts resulting from “safeties”, the ball will be considered LIVE, meaning if it hits someone or if it is dropped or misplayed – the ball is still in play for anyone to control. On Punts, if the **receiving team touches the ball and it drops or hits the ground**, the ball is considered **DEAD** and will be spotted at that point.  Kicks (both kickoffs and punts) into the end zones will be considered automatic touchbacks and the ball placed at the 20 yard line.

**KICKOFFS OUT OF BOUNDS** – On regular Kick-offs if a kick goes out of bounds in the regular field of play (i.e. not the end zones), the receiving team has the option for the kicking team to re-kick and add 5 yards at the end of the run or they can take the ball at the 20 yard line plus 5 yards.

**KNEE / FOOT** – If a knee is on the ground – kid is down. Catching near out-of-bounds – only one foot required to be on ground.

**QB’S TAKING A KNEE**– If a Quarterback takes a knee (usually to run down time), this is not considered a run.

**ON-SIDE KICKS** – **You cannot On-Side Kick to start a game**. You are **only** allowed to do it if your **team is losing**. If the score is tied, no on-side kicks are allowed. If a kid mis-hits a kick (even though he is attempting a long kick) and if it only goes a minor distance, the rules will still apply and the receiving team will maintain control of the ball.

**NO HALF-TIMES** – There will be no Half-Times during the regular season. Once the Big Kids finish the 2nd Quarter, we will immediately go into the 3rd Quarter with the Little Kids. During playoffs and the championship game, a limited amount of time will be given at half-time.

**# OF PLAYERS ALLOWED** – A minimum of **7 players** for each team is required each quarter. **Little Kids** will be allowed to field up to **11 players** on each side. **Big Kids** can field up to **9 players**. We will play the highest number of players that both teams can field within the parameters above.

**COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES, # OF COACHES ALLOWED ON FIELD & INSTRUCTIONS** – A team can have 1 coach on the field for offense and defense.  If the coach on the field gets in the way or inhibits some action by players on the field - **5-yard penalty from the spot where the action occurred.** (The violation must affect the play in some way.  If a coach blocks a 3rd grader 20 yards from a play, that is not a penalty).  Once the play begins, on-field coaches are NOT allowed to shout out directions to their players.  They have to be silent.  **Violation of this rule is a 5-yard penalty.**  All parents deemed coaches must participate in some way - either through play calling during the games, coaching defense, substituting players or actively participating in practices throughout the season.

**PUSHING OUT-OF-BOUNDS**– A defensive player can guide an offensive player out of bounds. But **any strong force will not be tolerated** and will result in a 10-yard penalty.

**CURSING & UNSPORTSMAN-LIKE CONDUCT** – **No cursing by players or coaches will be tolerated.  Automatic 10-yard penalty or further penalties at the complete discretion of the referees.**

**MUST HAVE 4 OFFENSIVE PLAYERS ON LINE & NO MOVEMENT AFTER “SET”**– You must have 4 offensive players on the line of scrimmage to start a play. These “can” include wide receivers. But they have to be at the line. **Biggest problems**– Players are not up to the line. The line ref (or refs) will be standing at the line so they can use that as a guide along with the ball. Also NO MOVEMENT after the QB calls “set” (unless a player is in motion, but that player can’t go forward).

**NEUTRAL ZONE**– The Neutral Zone is the space between the bean bags. The defensive bean bag is set 1-Yard past he ball for Big Kids. 3-Yards past the ball for little kids. The Defense “must” line up at the defensive bean bag or further. If a defender violates the Neutral Zone once the offense is lined up and the QB starts the count, then it is an immediate **5-Yard Penalty.**

**FIELD GOALS** – A team may try for a Field Goal at any time.  The ball is considered live until it (a) passes thru the goalposts for a successful try or (b) hits the ground or goes out of bounds.  Defense must be at least 10 yards from the point of the kick.  A caught and returned ball can result in a defensive touchdown.