

# FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

## RULES & EQUIPMENT



**“FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS”** (FNL) Flag Football is a 6 on 6 game filled with fun and action. The offensive team plays for a first down at midfield and a touchdown in the end zone. Running and passing plays are allowed, although there are **“no running zones”** at midfield and near each goal line. The defensive team covers receivers, rushes the passer and grabs flags to make “tackles”. It is intended to be a **“non-contact”** sport

### **THE BASICS**

- Home team will have first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5 yard line and has 3 plays to cross midfield for a 1<sup>st</sup> down. Once a team crosses midfield, it has 3 plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5 yard line..
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5 yard line.
- All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5 yard line.
- Interceptions may be returned
- Teams change sides after halftime. Possession changes
- For divisions K, 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade....1 Coach is allowed on field per team.
- Field dimensions approx. 50 x 30

### **PLAYERS/GAMES**

- Teams must field a minimum of 5 players at all times.
- Teams consist of 8 players – 6 on the field, with 2 substitutes.
- **ALL PLAYERS MUST PLAY A MINIMUM 3 OUT OF THE 4 QUARTERS**
  - **EVERYONE SITS ONE FULL QUARTER**
- **SUBSTITUTIONS ARE ONLY ALLOWED AT THE QUARTER BREAKS UNLESS THERE IS AN INJURY**

### **PLAY ADVANTAGE RULE (8 vs. 7 only)**

- If one team has 8 players and the other team has 7 player:
  - The coach with 7 players, must notify the other coach and Referee prior to the start of game that there are only has 7 players.
  - The other coach then has the **OPTION** to identify which of the 7 players **MUST** sit one quarter.
  - The 7 player teams coach will decide which quarter this player will sit.

- If this is not identified prior to the start of the game, for whatever reason, and later recognized during the game.....the 8 player teams coach can still identify the player that must sit.
- It is both the Referee and 7 player Coach's responsibility to recognize and identify this prior to the start of the game.

## **TIMING/OVERTIME**

### **GAMES**

- 10 minute running quarters (40 minutes), and a 3 minute halftime.
- 30 second play clock from the time the referee spots the ball and rush puck

### **OVERTIME**

- If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, teams move directly into overtime
  - **EXCEPT 1<sup>ST</sup>/2<sup>ND</sup> GRADE AND 3<sup>RD</sup>/4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE DIVISION WHICH WILL REMAIN A TIE)**
- The following tie-breaker system will be used for all overtime games:
  - Coin flip determines possession
  - Ball is placed at Midfield
  - After 3 plays, the referee will mark where the ball ended up (cone, flag, etc)
  - Opposing team will now take over at Midfield run their 3 plays going in the same direction.
  - Whichever team gains the most yards on 3 plays wins the game
  - If both teams are tied after 3 plays, we do it again until there is a winner.
  - Negative net yards on offense will count against you. Other team must still run their 3 plays.
  - If ball is intercepted and returned for a touchdown, game is over.
  - No Time outs in over time.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. The 30 second clock starts once ball and marker have been placed. Teams will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced
- 2 timeouts per half and they do not carry over to 2<sup>nd</sup> half if unused.

## **SCORING**

- Touchdown = 6 points
- Extra Point:
  - 1 point (played from 5 yard line)
  - OR
  - 2 points (played from 12 yard line)

### **OVER SCORING RULE**

- Any team beating another team by **more than 42 points** will be penalized.
- Each point above the 42 point differential will then count against that team's points allowed.
  - Example- Team A beats Team B by the score of 49 to 2... Team A will then have 5 points placed against them in points allowed. POINTS SCORED DOES NOT HAVE ANY BEARING ON SEEDINGS FOR PLAYOFFS BUT POINTS ALLOWED DOES... SO RUNNING THE

SCORE UP DOESN'T HELP WITH SEEDINGS... BUT NOW IF YOU DO RUN UP THE SCORE... IT WILL HURT YOU IN THE SEEDINGS.

## RUNNING

- The quarterback cannot run with the ball.
- Handoffs, laterals and pitches are allowed as per NFL rules.
- **NO CENTER SNEAKS!!**
- No-Running zones located approx. 5 yards from each end zone (as marked) and approx. 5 yards on either side of midfield (as marked) are designed to avoid short yardage, power-running situations.
- The player who takes the handoff, lateral or pitch can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, lateraled or pitched, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving no jumping)
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- Player running with the ball must make an effort to avoid **INTENTIONALLY** running over or initiating aggressive contact on the defensive player. Penalty, if called, is unsportsmanlike conduct. Do NOT teach your players to run through the defenders.

## RECEIVING

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the QB, if the ball has been handed off, laterally or pitched behind the line of scrimmage as per NFL Rules).
- As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- A player must have at least **one foot inbounds** when making a reception.

## PASSING

- The QB has a seven second "pass clock". If the QB does not get rid of the ball within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven second rule no longer is in effect.
- Shovel passes are allowed
- Interceptions may be returned.

## DEAD BALLS

- The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start play.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
  - Ball carrier's flag is pulled
  - Ball carrier steps out of bounds
  - Touchdown or safety is scored
  - Ball carrier's knee hits the ground
  - Ball carrier's flag falls out
  - **Ball carrier's flags are not positioned on the side of the hips (slide to back side by tailbone) and a defensive player is making an attempt to pull flag. This is very subjective and up to the ref to**

determine the severity of the issue. Warnings MAY be given instead of dead ball. It is Coach & Players responsibility to check this throughout the game.

**\*\*NOTE: THERE ARE NO FUMBLES (therefore NO STRIPPING OF THE BALL). THE BALL IS SPOTTED WHERE THE BALL HITS THE GROUND\*\***

## **RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK**

All players who rush the QB must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage (as marked by ref) when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the QB. Players not rushing the QB may defend on the line of scrimmage only until the ball leaves QB hands.

Once the ball is handed off, the seven – yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage. **Remember, NO BLOCKING, TACKLING, OR STRIPPING OF THE BALL IS ALLOWED.**

## **SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING**

If the field Official/Referee or Commissioner witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or **ANY** unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player/coach or fan may be ejected from the game. The penalty if called is a dead ball at point of infraction and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down. If penalty is against the offense, then 10yds + loss of down, from original line of scrimmage. It will **ALWAYS** benefit the other team.

### **\*\*FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED\*\***

Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee **may** give one warning and if it continues, the player(s), coaches and fans will be subject to ejection from the field and premises. The game will not continue until the ejected party has left the premises. If they do not leave, the ref will forfeit the game immediately and award the Win to the opposing team.

Anyone ejected from a game (player, coach, fans), for any reason, could be subjected to a one game suspension. If they are ejected a 2<sup>nd</sup> time during the season, they may be subjected to a **TWO** game suspension and are subject to dismissal from the league with **NO REFUND**.

**UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT BY ANYONE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!!**

**COMMISSIONER AND BOARD HAVE FINAL SAY ON FOUL PLAY SITUATIONS.**

## **PENALTIES (ALL PENALTIES CAN BE DECLINED)**

All penalties will be called by the referee.

**DEFENSE:**

**Offsides:**

5 yards and automatic 1st down

**Interference:**

10 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.

**Illegal Contact:**

(Holding, blocking, etc)

10 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.

**Illegal Flag pull**

(before receiver has ball)

10 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down

**Illegal rushing**

(starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)

10 yards and automatic 1<sup>st</sup> down.

**“Last Man Standing”**

(last defender tackles ball carrier, instead of pulling flag)

Automatic Touchdown

If a defensive player intentionally pulls an offensive players flag prior to him receiving the ball.....and the referee determines it was to prevent a TD.....the ref shall reward the offensive team a TD.....assuming pass/pitch or lateral was completed. This will also be accompanied with a Unsportsmanlike penalty and be subject to either ejection or warning.

**OFFENSE**

**Illegal motion**

(more than one person moving, false start, etc.)

5 Yards and loss of down

**Illegal forward pass**

(pass thrown beyond line of scrimmage)

5 yards and loss of down

**Offensive pass interference**

(Illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender)

10 yards and loss of down

**Flag guarding**

10 yards (from line of scrimmage and loss of down)

**Charging (Intentionally running over defender)**

10 yards and loss of down

**Delay of Game**

Clock stops, 10 yards and loss of down

Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. **All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage!!**

Only the head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Coaches cannot question judgment calls. Players and Parents are NOT allowed to question referee's calls.

Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

## **STANDINGS**

Official league standings and playoff seedings\* are determined based on the following:

1. Win/Loss Winning PCT (All games are included)
2. Pts. Allowed
3. Coin Flip

\*\*Points scored never determine standings... therefore do NOT run up scores!

## **ATTIRE**

Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections will be made. **All players must wear a protective mouthpiece: there are no exceptions!!**

Official FNL Team jerseys and FNL Flags must be worn during play. **Flags must be of a different color than the shorts.** Shorts must be of a solid color. **No stripes or pockets are allowed on the shorts.** FNL commissioners and/or referees will determine if there are any uniform violations. Any violation of the attire rule should be rectified ASAP. If violation continues the Head Coach is subject to a 1 game suspension and game is subject to forfeit as determined by the FNL Commissioners.

**NOTE: THERE ARE NO KICKOFFS. AND NO BLOCKING IS ALLOWED**

**COACHES COACH – PLAYERS PLAY – REFEREES REF – FANS CHEER**