

CATHOLIC YOUTH ORGANIZATION

5vs5

C.Y.O. FLAG FOOTBALL

RULE BOOK



Revised 2022

C.Y.O. FLAG FOOTBALL

5on5 LEAGUE



POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Quarterback (QB):

- The Quarterback is the captain on offence.
- The QB calls the offensive plays and is the leader.
- The QB always stands behind the Center (C) and receives the football in what is called a “snap”.
- The QB has the option to either hand off the football or pass the football to a team mate on offence.

Center(C)

- The Center snaps the football to the QB. A snap is when the Center tosses the football between his/her legs to the QB. After the snap, the Center can run out for a pass.
- **The snap of the ball does not have to be in ‘shotgun’ form. The QB can receive the ball between the center’s legs from ‘Under the Center’.**

Wide Receiver (WR)

- The Wide Receiver is responsible for catching passes from the QB and running with the ball. The WR also can take a handoff. There are up to three WR’s on offense.

Running Back (RB)

- The Running Back stands behind the QB or next to the QB and is responsible for receiving handoffs from the QB and running with the ball.
- RB’s also catch passes from the QB.

Defensive Backs (DB)

- All defensive positions in Flag Football are called Defensive Backs.
- The DB is responsible for stopping the players on offense and trying to intercept or gain possession of the football.

The DB tries to pull the flag of the player with the football.

General Rules

We have tried to make these rules clear and concise and consistent with each other. However, there is the possibility that a specific play will occur that is not as yet covered by these rules.

Specific interpretations may be required from time to time. We will inform you of any changes that may be required in these regulations.

- If there are any points that are not clear, please contact the C.Y.O. Office immediately so that these points can be resolved without causing problems on the field.

Leagues: There are four (4) Leagues: Senior Girls, Senior Boys, Junior Girls, and Junior Boys

Divisions

- Division I Divisions are based on population of schools
- Division II Divisions are based on population of schools

Teams

Two teams play each other with five (5) players on the field each at any given time.

Playoffs

- All teams qualify for the playoffs.
- Separate playoffs for each division.
- Teams must have a minimum of 8 players able to play in playoffs. Rosters are not to be changed for the playoffs for the benefit of “shortening the bench”. Any team that does not have the proper amount of players for playoffs will forfeit the match.

Equipment

- Due to the availability of different shoes on the market, it is impossible to list those that are deemed acceptable or unacceptable. Turf shoes, rubber and plastic cleated shoes, etc. are acceptable. Shoes with metal spikes are unacceptable, and any shoes that an official deems unacceptable. The coaches are asked to be reasonable with the enforcement of this rule. Games, points and plays cannot be protested because of shoes. No helmets or shoulder pads are permitted.
- A junior size football will be used for all divisions.

Flag Belt

- Each member of both teams will wear a belt with two flags hanging from it, one on each side outside his/her sweater and pants. The ball carrier is down when one of the flags is removed from his/her belt. The defending team, on removing a flag should immediately hold it up and stop. The ball is declared dead at this point. An eligible pass receiver who loses a flag at the line of scrimmage can still receive a forward pass, but the ball will be declared dead at the point of reception. Players winding flags on belts will be warned the first time, next time removed from the game. Defending teams removing flags from players not in possession of the ball will be warned the first time, with any further infractions there will be a ten yard penalty and an automatic first down to the non-offending team. *The belts and flags for each game are supplied by the C.Y.O. Office and brought to the fields by the C.Y.O. Flag Football Officials.*

Shift Change Procedure

- Teams should have 10 players on their roster which would mean that each player plays 2 shifts (both offence and defense). At the beginning of the game, the referee is to be given a lineup sheet for the first shift. At the end of the first 10-minute shift, the second shift comes onto the field. This is not a timeout. A player from each team is to hand in the lineup sheet for the shift to the referee. Teams do not change ends after the first and third shift. The equal playing time policy is in effect for flag football. There is to be no substitution during the shifts. For playoffs, teams must have a minimum of 8 players competing in the game. Injured players do not count as competing players. Players must have numbers. Coaches will fill in the roster sheet at the beginning of the game and will also fill in the lineup sheet to be presented to the referee at the beginning of each shift.

Mandatory Playing Time Policy

Actual Number of Player Required for Games:

- For the **regular season**, we will accept a minimum of 5 players
- For all **playoff games**, we will accept a minimum of 8 players

Playoffs: With regards to playing time policy

- Teams are not allowed to match the opposing teams' bench. You must following the equal playing time policy for all athletes present.
- Teams that do not meet the minimum requirement will forfeit the game

Playing Time Required for Games:

- EQUAL PLAYING TIME for all athletes in the C.Y.O. Crusader Athletic Program is the fundamental principle of this Playing Time Policy

The Rule:

- Coaches have the right to use the withdrawal of playing time from any player as a disciplinary tool (this is not to be confused with benching a player because of physical or mental mistakes).
- Injuries & or discipline situations must be noted on the score sheet and the coach of the opposing team must be informed before the start of the game.

Game Procedures:

- The game is 40 minutes divided into four (4) – ten (10) minute shifts. (2 shifts per half)
- For teams with less than 10 players, coaches will be required to follow the schedule of shift changes below:
 - 10 players – everyone plays 2 shifts
 - 9 players – 2 players play 3 shifts, 7 players play 2 shifts
 - 8 players – 4 players play 3 shifts, 4 players play 2 shifts
 - 7 players – 6 players play 3 shifts, 1 player plays 2 shifts
 - 6 players – 2 players play 4 shifts, 4 players play 3 shifts
 - 5 players – everyone plays 4 shifts

- Coaches who choose to play more than 10 players will be required to observe this rule:
More than 10 players – no player plays more than 2 shifts

Playoffs

- All teams qualify for the playoffs.
- Separate playoffs for each division.
- Teams must have a minimum of 8 players able to play in playoffs. Rosters are not to be changed for the playoffs for the benefit of “shortening the bench”. Any team that does not have the proper amount of players for playoffs will forfeit the match.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Field Dimensions and Markings

- Length: 60 (or 80) yards.
- Width: 25 (or 30) yards.
- End Zones: Maximum 10 yards deep, minimum 7 yards deep.
- No-running zones: Must be marked 5 yards from each end zone.
- Field conditions can change due to league discretion

Possession

- A coin toss determines first possession. Loser of the coin toss has choice of end zone to defend.
- The team that loses the coin toss gets possession at the beginning of the second half starting at its own 5-yard line.
- There are no kick offs. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three plays to score a touchdown. If the offence fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line. An automatic first down by penalty will overrule the other requirements regarding three plays to make either a first down or score.
- 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 offence’s 5-yard line.
- Teams change sides at half time.

Number of Players

- Teams consist of 10 Players (5 on the field at a time).
- Teams may play with a minimum of five (5) Players during regular season
- Teams must have a minimum of eight (8) players for playoffs.

Timing/Overtime

- The game shall consist of **40 minutes** of playing time.
- *The 40 minutes will be divided into four 10-minute quarters.*
- The referee will give a 2-minute warning and signal the last 3 plays.

- If the score is tied at the end of regulation time in playoffs only, teams move directly into overtime.
- A coin toss determines first possession of overtime. The team that wins the coin toss starts with the ball.
- We will play sudden death converts to determine winner. Coin toss winner plays first.
- You may go for 1 or 2 points. There will be no timeouts granted during the overtime period.
- Each time the ball is spotted the offense has 30 seconds to snap the ball.
- Each team has 1 x 60-second timeouts per half. These cannot be carried over to the second half or overtime.
- Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- The teams will be warned when there are two minutes left to play in the second and fourth shift.
- There will be a halftime period of 2 minutes between the first and second half.

Scoring

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

Note: An interception return to opponent's end zone on any extra-point play by the defense will result in the defense scoring 2 points plus gaining possession for the next series at its own 5-yard line.

Running

- To start the play, the ball must be snapped between the legs of the Center.
- The Center is the Player who gives the ball to the Quarterback via a snap. The Center cannot take a direct handoff back from the Quarterback (no Center sneak play).
- The Quarterback is the Player who receives the ball directly from the Center.
- The Quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage.
- An offence may use multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage. All handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are legal.
- **Backward tosses, pitches or sweeps behind the line of scrimmage are allowed and are considered running plays. Downfield tosses are not permitted. Once a player has possession of the ball beyond the line of scrimmage, any loss of possession will be blown dead by the official.**
- "No-running zones" are located 5 yards from each end zone. When the ball is on or inside the 5-yard line going towards the opponent's end zone, the offense cannot run. The offense cannot use a running play to cross the line of scrimmage.
- **Any forward throw, toss or pitch by the QB, behind or across the line of scrimmage, is considered a passing play.**
- The Player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- All Defensive Players are eligible to rush once the ball has been handed off or tossed, you cannot jump the line on play action.
- Spinning is allowed, but Players cannot leave their feet to avoid a Defensive Player (no

offensive diving).

- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- It is up to the ball carrier to avoid contact with the defender. Good defensive positioning should be rewarded by the officials. The result is offensive charging.

Receiving

- All Players are eligible to receive passes (including the Quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage). As in the NFL, only one Player may be in motion, but not in motion towards the opponent's end zone at the snap.
- A Player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception. (They cannot return on to the playing field from an out of bounds position.)

Passing

- Only Players starting 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage can rush the passer.
- The Quarterback has seven seconds to throw the ball.
- If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, results in a loss of down and the ball is spotted at the previous line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or tossed, the seven seconds does not apply.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball
- The defence can return interceptions.
- On interceptions that occur and remain in the end zone, the ball will become dead and will result in the ball belonging to the intercepting team at its 5-yard line. Should an interception occur in the end zone and the ball carrier leave the end zone, the ball will belong to the intercepting team at the spot the ball becomes dead. However, should the ball carrier return to the end zone and be flagged, or the ball be ruled dead the result would be a safety for the other team.
- All Forward passes no matter behind or in front of the line of scrimmage are allowed.

Dead Balls

Play is ruled "dead" when:

- Official blows the whistle.
- Ball carrier's flag is pulled or becomes illegal.
- Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
- Touchdown or safety is scored.
- When any part of the ball carrier's body, other than a hand or foot, touches the ground.
 - If the ball carriers flag falls off, the play will be whistled dead and the ball will be spotted at the spot where the flag fell off.

• Players are eligible to catch a pass if their flag has fallen off but cannot advance the ball.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball will be spotted where the ball carrier's feet were when the fumble was made. I.e. a bad snap will be blown dead and the ball will be spotted at the Center's feet. Therefore, a fumbled snap will result in a loss of down and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. All other fumbles will be placed where the ball hit the ground. A fumble cannot add yards to a play. The ball will be placed where the ball carrier fumbled. There is no stripping of the ball.

Rushing the Quarterback

- All Players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of Players can rush the Quarterback. Players not rushing the Quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or tossed, the 7-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 7 yards from the line of scrimmage.
- **The Rusher is allowed to attempt to block a pass, but may NOT make contact with the QB. Any contact will result in a pass interference penalty.**
- **The Rusher may also NOT leave their feet, i.e. jump**

Sportsmanship/Roughing

If the referee witnesses any acts of flagrant contact, tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the Player will be ejected from the game.

FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the Player or Players will be ejected from the game.

Penalties

- All penalties can be declined.
- Penalties will not exceed half the distance to the opposing team's goal line from the line of scrimmage.
- Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offence declines it.

Defensive Penalties

- Offside — 5 yards
- Pass Interference — Spot of Foul and automatic first down.
- Illegal contact (holding, blocking, etc.) — 5 yards and automatic first down.
- Illegal flag pull (before Receiver has ball) — 5 yards from where the runner is stopped
- Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) — 5 yards
- Disconcerting signals (signals to distract opponent or simulate offensive signals prior to snap) — 5 yards
- Interference with opponent or ball at the snap — 10 yards, automatic first down

Offensive Penalties

- Delay of Game — 5 yards
- Substitution Fouls — 5 yards
- Illegal motion (more than one person moving, etc.) — 5 yards

- False Start – 5 yards
- Illegal Snap – 5 yards
- Offensive Holding – 5 yards
- Forward motion – 5 yards
- Player out of bounds (if Player goes out of bounds, Player cannot return to the field and catch ball) – 5 yards and a loss of down
- Illegal forward pass – 5 yards and loss of down.
- Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away Defender) — 5 yards and loss of down.
- Flag guarding — 5 yards from the point of foul and loss of down.
 - If a 1st down is made before a guard it will take precedent

All other infractions will follow the rules of the CFL.