

## **SPYA FLAG FOOTBALL RULES**

### **DIVISIONS:**

2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Grade

5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade

### **TIME:**

Game duration is 40 minutes total time. Two 20-minute halves will be played. Time will be running except during the last 2 minutes of each half. During the last two minutes of the half, the clock will be stopped on all incomplete passes, penalties, scores, player out-of-bounds, and change of possession.

### **FIELD:**

The field will be 80 yards in length; including two 10-yard end zones. The field will be divided into 10-yard increments.

### **GAME PLAY:**

- A coin toss will determine who gets first possession. The team that wins the coin toss has the option to receive the kick, kick-off, or defer possession to the second half. The team that loses the coin toss will choose which end zone they want to defend.
- One coach is allowed on the field between plays to assist with play-calling; the coach must never interfere with any play being made.
- Each play will start and stop with the referee blowing the whistle.
- Teams will have four plays to make a first down (10 yard gain).
- HS Play-Clock: the referee will declare “ready” and teams will have 25 seconds from that point to snap the ball offensively.
- If a pass is intercepted, play is live and can be advanced.
- Substitutions are allowed at any dead ball situation.

### **SCORING:**

- Six points shall be awarded for a touchdown.
- Extra Point – After a touchdown, the scoring team is allowed one down for an attempt, unless there is a defensive penalty on the try. In which case, the ball is moved half the distance to the goal. One point is awarded for a successful extra point try from the three-yard mark and two points will be awarded for an extra point conversion from the ten-yard line. No defensive scores allowed on extra-point attempts (HS rule).
- Two points will be awarded for a safety. A safety is scored when the defending team causes a live ball to go back over the goal line or when an offensive player’s flag in its team’s own end zone. After a safety, the team scored upon will punt from its own 10 yard line.
- Forward motion of a ball carrier into the end zone after the flag has been pulled will not count as a touchdown. Forward progress is stopped at the point the flag is pulled.

### **KICKOFFS & PUNTS:**

- Kickoffs will be taken at midfield.
- Kickoffs may be placed on a toe or a tee.
- If a kickoff goes out of bounds it will be placed at the spot the ball went out of bounds or the 20-yard line (whichever is best for the receiving team).
- Teams must declare if they are punting or going for on 4<sup>th</sup> down. No fake punts are allowed.
- There is no rushing the punt.
- Players must wait to run down field until the ball has been punted.
- Players on the receiving team may pick up a muffed/dropped kickoff/punt and run with the ball if the opposing team is not within 2 yards. If the kicking team is within the 2-yard halo, the ball will be ruled down. The ball may not be picked up by the kickoff team.

### **PLAYERS & EQUIPMENT:**

- A junior/ intermediate size football will be used.
- Teams can field a maximum of 8 players at one time and a minimum of 5 players. A team can start with five players. If a team does not field a minimum of 5 players at any time, a forfeit will result.
- Every player must wear a belt provided by the league. Belts and flags must be visible and exposed and worn around the player's waist with individual flags one the back and sides.
- No metal cleats
- Every player must play half of the game and equally on offense and defense.
- Shirts must be tucked in. If a shirt is hanging over a flag belt, it will be called a flag-guarding penalty.
- All participants must wear a mouth-guard. No exceptions.

### **FIRST DOWNS:**

First downs are accomplished by completing 10 yards from the original line of scrimmage.

- Coaches may dispute a first down call and ask for a measurement, but will be charged a timeout.

### **TIMEOUTS:**

Each Team is allowed 3 timeouts per half. Each timeout is 30 seconds in length.

### **BLOCKING:**

Players may use hands to the chest and shoulder area in a blocking motion only. No hands to the head, using elbows, tripping or grabbing – a penalty will result. Down field blocking is permitted.

### **RUNNING AND RECEIVING:**

- All players are eligible to receive a pass.
- Ball carriers are allowed to spin but may not leave their feet to avoid flag pull.
- Players must have at least one foot in bounds for a legal catch.
- If a pass is caught by a player without a flag, the ball is dead at the spot of the catch.
- Any player who takes a handoff or pitch may throw the ball as long as they have not crossed the line of scrimmage.
- Stiff arm moves by a ball carrier are not allowed.
- Diving is not allowed by a ball carrier.
- No guarding flags while running with the ball.
- There are NO center sneak plays. The ball must change possession.

### **DEAD BALLS:**

Play is ruled dead when:

- Offensive player's flag is pulled.
- Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
- Touchdown is scored.
- Ball carrier's knee touches the ground.
- Ball carrier's flag belt falls off.
- The snap is muffed.

There are NO fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground.

### **OFFENSIVE FORMATIONS:**

- The offense must have 5 players lined up on the line of scrimmage. 3 must be linemen (one center, two guards) in 3-point stances. Guards must be within 2 yards of the center and in a 3-point stance. The remaining 2 can line up on the line of scrimmage anywhere else.
- The quarterback or a running back must take a direct snap or shotgun snap from between the center's legs to start the play (the ball is dead if the snap is dropped).
- Once the quarterback is set, the offense cannot move with the exception of one player in motion.
- There must be a minimum of one yard between interior linemen.
- Reverses, screen passes, counters are allowed.

### **DEFENSIVE FORMATIONS:**

- There must be 3 players on the defensive line. They must line up a minimum of one yard back off of the ball and 1 within one yard wide of the offensive player across from them.
- Defensive players will use a 2-point stance. This is a safety rule.

## **PENALTIES:**

- The referee will call all penalties.
  - All penalties will be assessed at the spot of the foul, according to high school rules.
  - Referees determine incidental contact, which may result from normal plays.
  - Halves cannot end on a defensive penalty.
  - Fighting will result in an ejection and suspension from further games.
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- **Penalties will be enforced per high school rules.**

## ***Exceptions/Flag Football Specific Rules:***

- Flag Guarding by Ball Carrier: 10 yard penalty against offense.
- Illegal Flag Pulling (before receiver has ball): 5 yard penalty against defense.
- Diving for the Flag (defensive penalty – safety rule): 10 yard penalty on defense.

## **MISC:**

- The home team will supply a “chain-gang” for the first down chains.
- The visiting team will supply a time-keeper to operate the scoreboard/clock.

## **CONDUCT:**

- There is no alcohol or tobacco permitted on school district property.
- Any coach, player or spectator who is abusive toward another coach, participant, or referee will be asked to leave the field immediately with a suspension to follow (minimum of 2 games).
- Any player or coach ejected from a game will automatically be suspended for the next 2 games at a minimum.