

South Bay Sports

OFFICIAL CO-ED FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

OVERVIEW

8 players on the field (5 Males/3 females)

A player must play one regular season game to become eligible for the playoffs

Two 20-minute halves / 2 Time Outs per game

First downs will be based on a 15-pace/yard distance

6-point touchdowns

Choice of 1 or 2 extra points on PAT's (*3 paces/yards for 1 Pt., 10 paces/yards for 2 pts.*)

TWO POINT CONVERSION ATTEMPTS MAY BE INTERCEPTED AND RETURNED FOR TWO POINTS

Dead ball on all fumbles

Quarterbacks cannot snap the ball to themselves

Ties during the regular season stay as a tie

A 5-bud rush count will be used and counted by the officials

PLAYERS ACTING AS OFFENSIVE LINEMAN MUST HAVE HANDS BEHIND THEIR BACK WHEN PROTECTING THEIR QUARTERBACK FROM PURSUING DEFENSIVE RUSHERS. THERE IS NO CONTACT AT OR BEHIND THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE.

Receivers need only one foot in-bounds with possession of the ball to be considered "in bounds"

No taunting or trash talking will be permitted to the other team.

COIN FLIP/BEGINNING OF GAME

- The team that wins the coin flip (or a one-time Ro-Sham-Bo) at the start of the game must choose one of two options: 1) which team is to receive, 2) the goal his/her team will defend. Teams flip flop direction, and the team that started the game on defense will start the second half on offense. There are no kick-offs.
- **Play starts 8-paces/yards from the goal line.**

TEAM SIZE

- Each team shall field no more than 8 players, with at least three women (five men, three women.) at any one time. Teams not able to field a "full" team may play with a minimum of 6 players (4 men and 2 women). Teams not able to field the minimum number of players (6) may play a "legal" game with the consent of the opposing captain and/or league staff. (Please note: if a team arrives with less than 6 players a "forfeit win" is also an option for the opposing captain.) Games will start no later than 10-minutes past the scheduled start time. At that time, it is up to the referee or staff member and opposing captain to allow play.
- If a team substitutes players during the game, they must do so from the same sideline the entire game.
- Eligible receivers must be on the playing field *before* the cadence is started.
- There is no maximum limit to the amount of females that must be on the field. To ensure coed participation, a penalty will ensue if the offensive team fails to use a female as an operative player within 3 consecutive downs.

An Operative Player is defined as a player who:

- Is the intended receiver in the eyes of the official
- Runs the ball as the primary runner (does not have to cross line of scrimmage) receives the snap as the QB and must attempt to be the person who initiates the ball crossing the line of scrimmage – unless he/she is sacked.
- Receives the snap and immediately spikes the ball at his/her feet in order to stop the clock in the last 2 minutes.

An Operative Player is NOT defined as a player who:

- Hands off the football
- Snaps the ball into play
- Receives a hand-off only to give it back to a male before crossing the line of scrimmage.

Examples:

- A pass deflected by a male and caught by a female is a female play
- A pass intended for a female (in the eyes of the referee) that is deflected by a female, and caught by a male counts as a female play
- A pass thrown by a male, received by a male and immediately pitched to a female (the “hook and ladder”) will not constitute a female play - no matter how far the female advances with the ball after the pitch
- A pass intentionally grounded by a female in the last two minutes of the second half in order to stop the clock counts as a female play
- If a female pitches the ball to a male behind the line of scrimmage this will not result in a female play.
- The penalty for running 3 consecutive plays without a female as an Operative Player will be a 5 yard loss and, loss of down (i.e. if it was 1st down during the penalty, it is now 2nd down). And the female must now be the operative player on the next play. If on this play a male catches or runs the ball: loss of down, the play is ruled "dead", and the ball is brought back to the line of scrimmage, and the next play must be a female play.
- Plays utilizing a female and resulting in “loss of down” penalties will still be considered “female” plays. Plays utilizing a female resulting in a non-loss of down penalty will not count as a gender play. The play never existed.
- The slate is clean for extra points and punts and everyone is eligible.

THE DREADED SACK

- If a male is the QB on a play which could either be to a male or female and the QB is sacked the ball is spotted where he was sacked and the play stands as a male play, no matter who was the intended receiver. If a team was forced to use a female as the operative player and the male QB is sacked the play stands as a male play and the offensive team must use a female on the next play.

TIME

- Play will be divided into two (2) 20-minute halves. Teams flip flop direction, and the team that started the game on defense will start the second half on offense. There will be a running clock maintained by a referee except for the final 2 minutes of play. During the first 38 minutes, the clock runs continuously with the exception of time-outs, serious injury and at referee’s discretion. Each team is allowed two (one-minute) time outs per game. Under two minutes in the first half and a touchdown is scored, the Defense can call a time out to stop the clock. The clock will not start until the Defensive team becomes Offense and snaps the ball.

During the final 2 minutes of the game, the referee shall stop the game clock if:

- An incomplete pass is thrown
- A player ends play by going out of bounds
- Either team scores (clock will remain off until the opposing team snaps the ball after the PAT attempt; the clock does not run during extra points)
- Change of possession
- A penalty which must be marked off occurs
- A team declares a punt and their “30 seconds” (see below) has elapsed - the clock will resume for the punt and the ensuing return. It will be stopped when the returnee is tagged and up until their first snap from scrimmage.
- A team calls a time out.
- **THE CLOCK DOES NOT STOP ON FIRST DOWNS OR FUMBLES.**

For the entire game, the offensive team has 30 seconds to snap the ball once the referee spots the ball. **If the referee feels that this is being taking advantage of, they can:**

- On the first recognized abuse - Stop the clock.
- On subsequent abuses - Stop clock, and penalize the offense 5 paces/yards.

**** If a team is up by 17 points or more, the clock runs continuously during the last two minutes of play.**

TIE GAMES/SCORING

- Games ending in a tie score will be recorded as tie games during regular season play. Please refer to the **OVERTIME** section for ties during the playoffs. Touchdowns are awarded 6 pts. Extra points: 3 paces/yards off the goal line = 1 pt., 10 paces/yards = 2pts.
- Two point conversion attempts may be intercepted and returned for two points. One-point attempts may not be intercepted and returned.

*****NEW RULE:*****

FIRST DOWNS

- Each team shall have 4 downs to either score or earn another first down. **First downs are achieved when a team advances the ball past the first down marker. First down markers will be placed every 15 paces from one end zone to the other end zone.** If a team fails to score or earn a first down, possession will go to the other team. Offensive teams may elect to punt on fourth down.

PUNTS

- A punt must be declared and cannot be faked. All punts are "free" punts. A team need not snap during a punt, a dropped snap during a punt is not a fumble. Punts must be kicked. Punts cannot be thrown. Punts are "open" plays meaning, there are no Male/Female rules for punts. The punting team need not have a minimum number of players on the line of scrimmage (LOS). The returning team must have at least 3 players within 5 yards of the LOS.
- **NO DOWNFIELD BLOCKING or BLOCKING AT THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE!**
- Neither team may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is kicked.
- The receiving team may not raise hands or jump to block a punt. If a punt is "shanked" and caught it is a live ball and is returnable.
- The return team may not field a ball off the ground. It is a dead ball when it comes into contact with the ground.
- A punt through the end zone comes back to 10 paces/yards off the goal line. If a player drops the ball in the end zone, the ball is again spotted 10 paces/yards out from the goal line and is not counted as a safety.

CONTINUANCE OF PLAY

Play shall continue until:

- Ball carrier has at least one flag pulled by an opponent (see flag specifics for the few exceptions/additions concerning flag pulling)
- Ball-carrier leaves the field of play
- Ball-carrier scores
- Ball touches the ground as a result of a fumble, punt or incomplete pass (the ball is not an extension of the arm. If the ball is pinned between the ground and the ball carriers hand, the play is dead)
- Ball Carrier's knee touches the ground or football.

SPOT OF THE BALL

- The ball will be spotted where the ball is at the time the ball carries flag is pulled. If the ball crosses the plane of the goal line before the ball carriers flag has been pulled it will result in a touchdown (ball extension).

TURNOVERS

- A change of possession can occur due to downs, an interception on a forward pass, or a lateral that is picked off in mid-air by the defense. Lateral maybe picked off and returned for touchdowns. Offensive teams will no longer retain possession at spot of lateral.

NO CONTACT AT THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE!

Players acting as offensive lineman must have hands behind their back when protecting their quarterback from pursuing defensive rushers. There is no contact at or behind the line of scrimmage. Offensive lineman can position their body at any particular angle in an attempt to the direct the rushers to a particular area, but they may not physically direct them.

PENALTIES

- Normal rules and penalties of NCAA apply unless exceptions have been made herein.

Some Common Examples of Penalties:

Illegal Contact - At or Behind the Line of Scrimmage:

- In cases where the person(s) acting as the offensive lineman, initiates any contact (at the ref's discretion), it will be ruled a 5 pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and we will replay the down. If this contact is deemed excessive by the ref, an "unnecessary roughness" penalty of 10 paces/yards can be assessed.

Illegal Contact - Down Field:

- 5 paces/yards from point where ball carrier is at the time of infraction.

Offsides (Offensive):

- 5 paces/yards, play is ruled dead immediately, no option to decline, down is replayed.

Offsides (Defense):

- 5 paces/yards, offense has option to decline.

Illegal Motion:

- Players may not be in motion towards the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. This will result in a dead ball, five-yard penalty and repeat the down. Only one player can be in motion moving parallel to the LOS.

Offensive Picking/Interference:

- The offensive team may not initiate a pick/block while in motion. 5-pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage, loss of down (i.e. if it was 1st down during the penalty, it is now 2nd down). If a catch is made after a clear pick, it will be ruled no catch, 5 pace/yard penalty from line of scrimmage, and loss of down. **Remember: Some acceptable incidental contact will occur while running routes and within the normal course of play, and will not be called.**

Unnecessary Roughness:

- This includes any illegal tag such as grabbing jerseys or excessive pushing etc. This behavior will result in a 10-pace/yard penalty from point of the infraction and automatic first down. Extreme roughness will result in ejection from the game and or league if deemed necessary by the referee and league staff.

Defensive Pass Interference:

- Spot foul and offense is awarded an automatic first down. If the pass interference is in the end zone, the ball comes out to the 1-pace/yard line and it will be 1st down.

Defensive Holding:

- 5 pace/yard penalty from line of scrimmage, replay down. Offense can accept or decline the penalty.

Defensive Checking:

- 5 pace/yard penalty from line of scrimmage, replay down. The "bump and run" will not be allowed. No player may initiate contact at the line of scrimmage. There is no 5-yard Bump Zone.

Safeties:

- A safety will be scored if a player is:
- Tagged down in their own end zone (not on a punt return)
- Runs out of bounds in their own end zone
- Snaps the ball out of the end one
- If the offense fumbles the ball in their own end zone. As a result, the team on defense receives 2 points, and the team on offense must now punt a "free" kick from their own 10-paces/yard line.
- Also, a player having intercepted a pass or received a punt in the end zone cannot be tagged in the end zone for a safety unless he/she has previously crossed the plane of the end zone with the ball.

Intentional Grounding:

- This penalty will be called when a passer facing an imminent loss of yardage because of pressure from the defense, throws a forward pass, without a realistic chance of completion. 5-pace/yard penalty from the point of infraction. This will also result in a loss of down (i.e. if it was 1st down during the penalty, it is now 2nd down).

Miscellaneous:

- If the QB crosses the line of scrimmage and then throws a forward pass the penalty will be 5-pace/yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and loss of down (i.e. if it was 1st down during the penalty, it is now 2nd down).
- The quarterback may not field the ball off a bounce during the snap if done cleanly. A snap that is muffed by or goes past the quarterback will be down where it lands.
- The QB may NOT snap the ball to him/herself. If the QB does snap to him/herself, play will stop immediately and it will result in a five-yard penalty and repeat the down.
- Loss of down penalties, which occur on fourth down, will result in change of possession.
- **No jumping or diving into the end zone for a touchdown. The ball will be downed at the point where the ball carrier left his/her feet.**

FLAG SPECIFICS

- **No flag guarding.** This will result in a 10-paces/yard penalty from the spot of infraction. Defensive player returning an interception, who flag guards, will be penalized 10 paces/yards from the spot of infraction.
- **Shirt must be tucked in and flags must be securely attached.** Loose hanging articles (i.e. sweatshirts, long T-shirts, etc.) that are held/ripped will not result in a holding penalty, unless, in the ref's eyes, a player was not attempting to go for the flag.
- Any ball carrier whose flags are (in ref's opinion) not accessible to be pulled will be down at 1st point of contact with the defense.
- Any ball carrier that has a flag or both flags missing for whatever reason (falls out, accidentally pulled before reception, not noticed before snap, etc.) will be down at the first point of contact.
- Players may leave their feet to pull flag.
- Spin moves will be allowed.
- Belt grabbing will result in a 5-paces/yard penalty from end of play.
- Any belt grabbing at the end of a half or game will result in a 5 paces/yard penalty from point of infraction and replay of down. If this penalty occurs within 5 paces/yard of the end zone, the ball will be spotted at the one-yard line and the offense will receive one play.

OVERTIME

- During regular season play, all ties will be scored as a tie. In the playoffs, however, the Four Downs-and-Out format will apply. The winner in a coin toss or Ro-Sham-Bo will decide if the team will either take first or second possession. Teams will attempt to score in the same end zone. Each team will then have 4 downs to score in the same end zone. Each team will then have 4 downs to score from 10 paces/yards from the goal line. If a team scores, they will have the opportunity to go for one or two on the Pat. A female must be used once within the first three plays or on the 1st and 4th downs when applicable. An interception will result in a team losing its possession. The game will be decided when one team scores more points in the rotation. No first downs will be awarded in overtime except in the case of a penalty. Interceptions will result in a turnover and may be returned for any points.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Receivers need only one foot in bounds for a reception. If in the referee's eyes, a receiver would be able to legally catch a pass but was pushed out of bounds by a defender while in the air a catch will be awarded.
- Receivers intentionally leaving the field of play are ineligible to receive a pass. This includes the back of the end zone. **However (as in NCAA), if another player tips the ball in the air, the ineligible player becomes an eligible player if he/she catches the ball.**
- Excessive roughness can get a player/team ejected from the game and or league.
- A player who catches the ball and lands with 1 or 2 feet across the goal line, but has his/her flag pulled before he/she pulls the ball across the plane of the goal will not be awarded a touchdown. The ball will be spotted at the point of where the ball was at the time he/she was called "down".

LEAGUE POLICIES

GAMES:

- During the regular season games are to be played within time allotted (warm up time is included).

REFS:

- It is the responsibility of each team to provide a referee(s) for the game that follows/precedes your game.
- Teams failing to provide a referee will incur the following penalties.

First Offense:

- Teams will automatically receive a **10-point deficit** for their next game, and a warning will be issued.

Second Offense:

- The team will again receive a **10-point deficit** on their next game, and at this point, **the staff reserves the right to remove them from playoffs.**

Third Offense:

- Removal from the league. If you know in advance that your team is going to forfeit a game, we encourage you to call our office so as to help us schedule your opponent a game.

FORFEITS:

If your team forfeits a game during the season, the following rules apply:

First Offense:

- Loss of game and warning issued.

Second Offense:

- Loss of game and staff reserves the right to remove team from playoffs.

Third Offense:

- Removal from the league. If you know in advance that your is going to forfeit a game, we encourage you to call our office so as to help us schedule your opponent a game.

Teams have until ten (10) minutes past the designated start time to field a full squad (minimum number of players required according to the rules). Anything less must be approved by SBS staff & opposing captain.

STANDINGS:

- The standings will be updated and posted weekly.

PLAYOFFS:

- All eligible teams make the playoffs (teams that have not abused any policies are eligible). In certain situations, teams at or near the bottom of the standings may not advance to the playoffs. Check with the SBS league coordinator to see if this applies to your league.

Playoffs are single elimination.

WAIVERS:

- In order to participate in the league, each participant must sign the team waiver. Waivers are provided and must be completed and handed in no later than the first night of play. Players not present the first week of play will still be required to sign a waiver with our staff before participating in their first game.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:

- A formal protest may be filed before a game if an opposing player's eligibility is in question. The player in question will be required to provide his/her player information (name, address, phone #, signature) in writing to a SBS staff member prior to the start of the game. This qualifies as an official protest. The game will then be played in its entirety as scheduled. **A player must play one regular season game in order to qualify for the playoffs.**

SPORTSMANSHIP:

- **The idea of SBS is to have fun.** We hope that all participants keep that in mind when becoming involved. Although the games may become intense, you still can be competitive while maintaining good sportsmanship. With this said, any behavior deemed unacceptable by staff may result in suspension and/or ejection from a game or the league.
- **Fighting will result in a one (1) game suspension and/or possible league ejection for all parties involved.**

Taunting and trash talking will not be tolerated!

First Incident:

- Upon the referee's discretion, that player/players will receive a warning.

Second Incident:

- Said player/players will sit out for two (2) full minutes, **a SBS staff will be alerted and a warning will be issued to the entire team by the SBS staff.**

Third Incident:

- A forfeit may result.

STAFF:

- To coordinate and run the league, our refs and/or staff will be available at all times to help the league run as smoothly as possible. If you have questions regarding schedules, policies, rule interpretations, directions to the bar, etc. please ask.

LEAGUE CANCELLATION/RAINOUT:

- Leagues may be cancelled due to existing weather conditions, dangerous or unplayable field conditions, facility constraints, etc. SBS staff makes every effort to play all scheduled games, thus we will not cancel games until absolutely necessary. Therefore, if you are calling concerning a decision on a cancellation, remember we will not have an answer until close to the start of the league. If the league is cancelled, SBS staff will change the voicemail immediately. SBS will then call/e-mail all of the captains. If a league is cancelled on site, SBS staff will attempt to contact those teams still scheduled to play the remainder of the league day/night. Depending on the time of cancellation, some teams will have to be notified on site. If we do cancel, follow next week's schedule (ex. If April 13 is cancelled teams should follow the April 20 schedule for their next game). The games that are cancelled will be made up at the end of the season if time allows. In extreme circumstances, SBS reserves the right to run a shortened season without a refund of schedule matches on days other than our regularly scheduled league day/night.
- These policies are designed to make the league run as smoothly and safely as possible, and provide continuity for its participants. Each player in the league is responsible for this information. Please advise your team of these policies/rules and thank you for playing.