

HWFFL RULES AND REGULATIONS 2009 – 2010 SEASON

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ARTICLE 1: THE GAME AND PLAYERS

SECTION 1: THE GAME AND PLAYERS

A. TEAMS AND TEAM MEMBERS

The game of flag football played by the HWFFL shall be played between two teams of eight players each. All players must be at least 18 years old and must be prepared to show proper identification. All players must be "in good standing" with the league (e.g. league fees must be paid and the player can not be suspended or ineligible). If a player is suspended or ineligible for a game under any other rule, she is not "in good standing" for that game.

Once a player plays 1 game for any team during a season, that player is not eligible for another team roster during that season unless special approval by the HWFFL Board is obtained. A player may be on only 1 HWFFL team roster.

A player is eligible to participate in the playoffs if she is a member in good standing with the league for at least two weekends before the playoffs begin. The last date on which players may be added will be provided to each team when the league schedule is distributed. If, in the last six games, a team needs to replace a player who is lost for the rest of the season, the team may appeal to the HWFFL board for special approval.

Eligibility: No team shall be permitted to play HWFFL Flag Football games with more than six (6) professional players, as defined below, on the field at any given time. A professional player is defined as a player who is presently or has, during the current season, been a member of any professional, semi-professional, college football team or high school varsity tackle or flag football team, whether or not they actually receive compensation to play football. Any player who has played professional football shall no longer be considered a professional player for purposes of eligibility in HWFFL after one year after her last day as a member of a professional team.

Players designated as professional MUST wear armbands provided by the league. Armband placement shall be consistent league-wide. If a pro player does not wear assigned color of armband, they will not be eligible to play. Armbands designate players to be counted in the six (6) professional player limit on the field at any given time.

Each team must be able to provide a complete and up-to-date roster, including player name, jersey number, and professional designation, if applicable, whenever a roster is requested by an opposing team or by an HWFFL board member.

B. FORFEITS

A team may play with a minimum of six eligible players in order to avoid forfeit of a game. If at the scheduled start of or at any time during a game, a team cannot field a team of at least six eligible players, the game will be declared a forfeit and the opposing team will be declared the winner by forfeit. (There will be no grace period. There will be no exceptions to this rule.) If neither team is capable of fielding a team of at least six eligible players, the game will be declared a double forfeit and each team will be assigned a loss for that game.

If at any time during a game an ineligible player enters the game, the game will be declared a forfeit and the opposing team will be declared the winner by forfeit. If the game is in progress and the non-forfeiting team is ahead, the score will stand; if not, the score of 7 to 0 in favor of the non-forfeiting team will be assigned. An Official will call the forfeit.

Any team that forfeits more than one game during the season will be required to pay a \$25 Penalty for each forfeited game after the first forfeit. The Penalty must be paid before the team can play their next scheduled game.

Any team that forfeits more than three games during a season will not be allowed to play in the playoff tournament.

Player Pick-ups: Teams who need extra players to avoid a forfeit may pick up players from other teams to field a team of eight for that game. The game is mandatory and counts if three or fewer players are picked up. If more than three players are picked up, the game will count as a forfeit, but still be played. No pick-ups are allowed during the playoffs. If more players for the team show up, they must play and the picked up players stop.

C. BLOCKING

The type of blocking to be used will be contact blocking. Contact blocking is legally hindering the progress of an opponent in a fair and safe manner. Blockers may choose to block either by keeping their arms against their chest with their elbows pointed down or by extending their arms, open palms, to ward-off a defender. Blockers must be on their feet before, during and after contact is made with their opponent. The contact block area is between the shoulders and waist.

D. ELIGIBLE RECEIVERS

All players on the field are eligible to receive passes or become the ball carrier.

SECTION 2: THE RULES

HWFFL and IWFFA rules will govern play (in that order of priority). The Officials have authority to rule promptly and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. The Officials' decisions are final in all matters pertaining to the game. In the event there is a difference of opinion between the Officials, the Head Official will make the final decision.

SECTION 3: PLAY

Games will be played in all weather except for natural disasters and lightning. Officials will determine if games are to be called due to natural disaster or lightning, or if they deem playing conditions to be unsafe. However, players play at their own risk.

SECTION 4: GOAL LINES

At the beginning of each half of play, Goal Lines will be established for each team. A team's Goal Line (and its' "side of the field") will be the Goal Line (and "side of the field"), which that team attempts to defend. Each team will be allowed opportunities to advance the ball across their opponent's Goal Line.

SECTION 5: WINNING TEAM

A. WINNING TEAM

The teams will be awarded points for scoring according to the rules (ARTICLE 6 - SECTION 1). The team having the largest score at the end of the game will be the winning team (unless the game is declared a forfeit. See ARTICLE 1 - SECTION 1).

B. TIE BREAKING

If at the end of the second half the teams have identical scores, an attempt to resolve the tie will be made using the following tie-breaking procedure and this will be called a Tie Break Period:

Each team shall have one offensive series consisting of four downs to attempt to score one touchdown from the 10-yard line as decided by officials. The line-to-gain shall always be the goal line. Interceptions shall be considered turnovers and the completion of that team's offensive series or PAT. Defense cannot advance the ball after an interception during a Tie Break Period. During the Tie Break Period, any penalty that during regular play would require an automatic 1st down will result in a replay of that down and assessment of any necessary penalty yards.

There are no Kick-offs during a Tie Break Period.

Each team shall receive one time-out per Tie Break Period.

If, by scoring a touchdown, a clear winner by score is determined, no PAT shall be attempted.

All other rules are identical to regulation play.

If at the end of a Tie Break Period the score remains tied, the game will end in a tie for regular season games, but for play-off or tournament games, the game will continue using the same procedure, until a winner is determined.

SECTION 6: SUPERVISION

The game will be played under the supervision of either 2, 3 or 4 Officials: a Referee, Umpire, Linesman and Field Judge. One of the Officials will be designated the Head Official for each game. There will also be an Officer Of The Day (designated board member) for overall supervision of the games.

SECTION 7: TEAM CAPTAINS

Each team will designate **two** Team Captains to the Head Official. A team may name substitute team captains at any time during a game. The Team Captains are the spokespersons for the team in all dealings with the Officials. A Team Captain's first choice of any option will be irrevocable. No one other than a Team Captain is allowed to question the Officials during the game.

Penalty: 5 yards, down stands.

SECTION 8: PERSONS SUBJECT TO THE RULES

All players, substitutes, coaches, trainers and other persons (authorized within or associated with the team) are subject to the rules and will be governed by the decisions of the Officials.

SECTION 9: PROTESTS

No protests may be made regarding an Official's judgment call. A protest may be made regarding the interpretation or application of a rule. The notification of intent to protest must be made immediately before the next snap. The Coach, Acting Coach, or the Team Captain of the protesting team shall immediately notify the Head Official that the game is being played under protest. The Head Official shall in turn notify the opposing Coach, Acting Coach, or Team Captain. Immediately after the game, the protesting team must submit, in writing, the circumstances of the protest along with a \$25 protest fee (to the Officer Of The Day). The protest fee will be returned only if judgment is made in favor of the protesting team, that there was a misinterpretation or misapplication of a rule or rules. All interested parties shall take notice of the circumstances of the protested call. This will aid in the correct determination of the issue. All protests will be evaluated and ruled on by the HWFFL Rules Director and one team representative from each neutral team within two weeks. Neutral teams are defined as teams not involved in the protest. If there is a tie regarding protest resolution, the President shall break the tie. If the President is on a non-neutral team, responsibility of the tie break shall be handled by a neutral Officer. The order to follow until a neutral Officer is found shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer. To handle the protest properly, information from the non-protesting team must be obtained. Result of a successful protest may or may not result in replaying the game or may or may not include changing the outcome of a game's final score.

SECTION 10: HWFFL EQUIPMENT

Teams are responsible for ensuring all HWFFL equipment is returned following its use. Teams that lose equipment will be required to pay the HWFFL for its replacement prior to the Championship Tournament.

ARTICLE 2: THE FIELD

SECTION 1: DIMENSIONS

The regulation field shall be 80 yards long and 45 yards wide with 10 yard end zones.

SECTION 2: TEAM AREA

Team area is designated between the 20 yard lines, and 1 yard from the Side Line. All team players, coaches, and authorized team attendants must stay in this area, however each team will be allowed 1 coach/player that may go to the 10 yard line. The Officials may designate which side of the field is for the home team, if applicable.

SECTION 3: PYLONS

Soft flexible pylons will be placed at the inside corners of the four intersections of the Goal Lines and Side Lines.

SECTION 4: OBSTRUCTIONS

The Officials of the game and/or the Officer Of The Day will inspect the fields and the surrounding area and remove or order removed any obstruction which might prove dangerous to players.

ARTICLE 3: EQUIPMENT

SECTION 1: THE BALL

The official ball to be used will be the Wilson TDJ, Wilson TDY or any leather or composite ball of comparable size. The Head Official will be the sole judge of the legality of any ball offered for play. A receiving team may provide a ball of their choice for punts and kickoffs provided it is fully inflated. Each team is required to provide a ball of their choosing to be used during their offensive series.

SECTION 2: FLAGS

The official flags to be used are the Flag-A-Tag Sonic Socket Release type style, which are 14 inches long and 2 inches wide (minimum). The belt is to be worn fitting (not loosely) around the waist with 1 flag on each side (hip). They are to be worn with the stem of flag attachment protruding outward. Flag colors must contrast player's pants/shorts and opponent's flags. Flags are not to be folded over or tampered with in any way.

SECTION 3: JERSEYS

All players must wear their team football jersey with blocked solid colored numbers contrasting with the jersey on the front and back of the jersey. Players must have their own unique number. Colors must also contrast opposing team. Shirts must be either long enough to remain tucked in pants/shorts throughout the game, or short enough so there is a minimum of 4 inches from the bottom of the jersey to player's waistline. The Officials will use a closed fist to measure the distance between the waistline and the bottom of the jersey. The visiting team is responsible for avoiding similarity of colors.

SECTION 4: SHOES

Each player must wear athletic shoes. Cleats made only of molded rubber or plastic are acceptable. No metal cleats or steel-tipped cleats are allowed. Opened toe shoes such as sandals or flip-flops are not allowed. If a player is found wearing any forbidden shoes, she will be ejected for the remainder of the game.

SECTION 5: SHORTS

All colors on shorts or pants must be of contrasting color to the flags. Shorts or pants must not have pockets. Taping the pocket is not acceptable.

SECTION 6: HATS, MOUTHPIECES, GLOVES & GLASSES

No helmets are allowed. Baseball caps with hard visors will be permitted only if worn with the visor toward the back. Stocking caps, ski caps and bandannas are permitted. A mouthpiece is not mandatory but strongly

recommended. Receiver's gloves are allowed. Padded gloves such as linemen's gloves are not allowed. Prescription glasses and/or sports sunglasses are allowed.

SECTION 7: ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT

Illegal equipment shall include, but not be limited to: any item which does not qualify under ARTICLE 3 - SECTIONS 1-6, jewelry, pads or padded uniforms, sole leather or other hard or unyielding substance on the hands, wrist, forearms or elbows (no matter how covered or padded), jerseys or attachments which tend to conceal the ball or flags by closely resembling it in color, slippery or sticky substances on a players person or clothing, electronic or other signaling devices for the purpose of communicating with any outside source, regulation shoulder pads and/or any equipment which (in the opinion of the Officials), would confuse or endanger other players.

No player or team wearing or using illegal equipment will be permitted to play. The Officials will check and decide the legality of all equipment prior to the game. (Teams will line up on the field for spot check 5 minutes before game time).

NOTE: If during the game illegal equipment is discovered by an Official, the Official may choose to (1) have it replaced during the interval between downs; (2) have the player leave the game until the illegal equipment is removed; or (3) charge the team with a time out. An Official's time out shall be declared to permit prompt repair of equipment that becomes illegal or defective through use.

ARTICLE 4: COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURES

SECTION 1. A player with an open, bleeding wound must leave the field until the bleeding stops and the wound is properly dressed.

SECTION 2. Persons assisting in cleanup of a wound are required to wear latex gloves.

ARTICLE 5: PETS, ALCOHOL, AND PARK RULES

SECTION 1. No pets will be allowed on the field.

SECTION 2. No alcohol will be allowed on the field at any time. If a player is suspected of drinking alcohol before the game (officials' discretion), the player may be ejected from the game. Any player/coach using alcohol during a game will be ejected. Other rules regarding alcohol may be established by the owner or manager of the playing fields.

SECTION 3. No littering on the field or Side Lines will be allowed. Teams are not allowed to leave litter behind. If the Officer Of The Day determines that a team is littering, the team will be fined \$50. The fine is to be paid prior to playing the team's next game. All subsequent games will be forfeited until the fine is paid.

Section 4. All persons indicated under Article 1, Section 8 must follow the facility rules. Any player or coach found in violation may be subject to a fine.

ARTICLE 6: SPECIFIC RULES OF PLAY

SECTION 1: SCORING

The object of the game is to score more points than the opponent. Points will be awarded as follows:

A. Touchdown = 6 points.

A touchdown is scored (unless there is a penalty applied to the scoring team) when both hips of the ball carrier crosses that team's opponent's Goal Line before the End of Down. (ARTICLE 6 - SECTION 4B).

B. Point After Touchdown (PAT) = 1 point, if from 3 yard line; = 2 points, if from 10 yard line.

After a team scores a touchdown, there will be 1 down (unless there is a penalty) to attempt to score a PAT. A PAT is scored (unless there is a penalty applied to the scoring team) when the ball, while in possession of a team's ball carrier, crosses that team's opponent's Goal Line before the End of Down (ARTICLE 6 - SECTION 4B).

Offense must declare to the Head Official prior to marking the ball ready for play which PAT (1 point or 2 points) will be attempted. Penalties will not affect the point value originally declared by the Offense.

An offensive penalty that results in loss of down or down stands will count as an unsuccessful attempt at a PAT. All defensive penalties will be applied and the down will be replayed. The non-penalized team will have the option to decline the called penalty and let the play stand as completed without regard to the penalty. Penalties (which under other provisions of the rules provide for an automatic 1st down and, therefore, a new series of four downs) under this ARTICLE 6 - SECTION 1B provide for only 1 new attempt at PAT.

If the Defense intercepts, they may advance toward their opponent's Goal Line until End of Down. If they are able to advance to the Goal Line, they will score a PAT. Point value will be the same as the Offense declared for that attempt.

After the PAT attempt, the team that scored the touchdown will Kick-off to the opposing team.

C. Safety = 2 points

With exception of a Touchback (ARTICLE 6 - SECTION 5F), if at the End of Down (ARTICLE 6 - SECTION 4B) the ball is behind the goal line of the team in possession of the ball, a safety is scored by the team not in possession of the ball (unless there is a penalty applied against the scoring team).

After a Safety, the team that was scored upon will Safety Kick (ARTICLE 6 - SECTION 6C) the ball from their 20 yard line.

SECTION 2: STARTING AND TIMING THE GAME

The game shall be started and played with rules and time limits as follows:

A. Coin Toss

At the beginning of the game and each tie break period, the Officials and Team Captains will determine by coin toss (or some other random method) which team will have first possession of the ball. The Team

Captain who wins the toss (or other random method) will have the option of choosing to Kick-off/Defense, Receive /Offense, Goal Line/Field Direction or deferring (at the beginning of the game she may choose to make the choice at the beginning of the second half).

If a team defers: the non-coin toss winner will have choice of either Possession of the ball or Field Direction then coin toss winner will get the remaining option.

Note: HWFFL does not automatically switch sides of the field at half time. HWFFL does not automatically switch first possession of the ball at half time.

B. Time Factors

The game shall consist of two halves of 25 minutes each with a brief half-time rest of 5 minutes.

C. Game Clock

The Game Clock will start with the kickoff and will run, thereafter, until the 2-minute warning. The clock will be stopped only during Time Outs, for Official conferences, or during injury to player(s) or Official(s), which requires stoppage of play. The Game Clock will be maintained by the Officials.

D. 2-Minute Warning

2 minutes before the end of each half (while the ball is dead) the clock shall be stopped and both teams shall be given the 2-Minute Warning.

Following the 2-Minute Warning, there will be seven plays remaining to end the half or game. Kick-offs, Safety Kicks and PATs are not included in the seven plays. The game cannot end on a defensive penalty at the End of Down of the 7th play.

E. 30-Second Clock

After the ball is marked for play, the offensive team will have 30 seconds to start the next play. The 30-second clock will be maintained by the Officials.

F. Time Outs

Each team will receive two, 1-minute Time Outs per half. Each team will be allowed one, 1-minute Time Out per Tie Break Period.

SECTION 3: RULES OF SCRIMMAGE

A. Line of Scrimmage

The Line of Scrimmage is a line extending the width of the field, determined by the nose of the football as determined and placed by the Official. The Line of Scrimmage will be determined based on the position of the ball at the previous End of Down.

B. Zone-to-Gain

A Zone shall be 10 yards and marked at each 10 yard line. After a play in which a teams gains possession of

the football, that team's Offense (the team in possession of the ball when the ball is marked ready for play) will have a series of four downs (plays or attempts) to advance the football from one zone to the next zone (or further) or a touchdown. The Zone-to-Gain shall be the next zone from the Line of Scrimmage established on 1st down of that series or possession. The Zone-to-Gain after it has been established for the series will not be changed for that series by penalties. The Zone shall be considered reached when the ball is advanced on or beyond the next Zone-to-Gain. If the Offense reaches the Zone-to-Gain (unless they score a touchdown), they will have a new series of four downs to reach the next Zone-to-Gain. If the Offense does not reach the next Zone-to-Gain after four downs, the ball will be turned over to the opponents at the line of scrimmage following the 4th down. The Offense has the option of Punting on 4th down. (See ARTICLE 6 - SECTION 6B.)

C. Spot of Ball

The position of the ball carrier's hips will determine the placement of the ball for the next play. The Official will mark the spot of the ball placement in the middle of the field; however, prior to beginning the cadence the offensive center may move the ball anywhere on the line of scrimmage.

D. Ball ready for play

The Officials will mark the ball ready for play and the offensive team shall have 30 seconds in which to snap the ball. A Snap is the initial ball motion that starts the down.

Penalty: DELAY OF GAME - 5 yards, replay down, 30 second clock stops and resets

E. Offensive Formation and Set

After the offensive players set up for the play they must be behind the Line of Scrimmage at all times before the snap.

Penalty: OFFSIDE - 5 yards, replay down

The offensive team must have at least four players on the Line of Scrimmage. All players may use only a two-point stance.

Penalty: ILLEGAL FORMATION - 5 yards, replay down

After the offensive players come to the line of scrimmage for the play, they must all (with exception of player in motion) come to an absolute stop and remain stationary without movement of hands, feet, body or head for at least one second before the ball is snapped.

Penalty: ILLEGAL PROCEDURE - 5 yards, replay down

One offensive player at a time may be in motion before the snap. The player in motion may not advance toward the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped.

Penalty: ILLEGAL MOTION - 5 yards, replay down

F. False Start

After the ball is ready for play and before the snap, no False Start shall be made by an offensive player. A False Start is considered:

- a. a shift or feigned charge;
- b. any act that is clearly intended to cause an opponent to encroach; or
- c. any quick movement or movement of the ball prior to snap.

Penalty: FALSE START - 5 yards, replay down, 30 second clock stops and resets

G. Defensive Formation

Defense may use any arrangement of players. Defense may move at any time before the snap, but must be on their side of the Line of Scrimmage when the ball is snapped. The Defense may not come in contact with any offensive player until the ball is snapped.

Penalty: OFFSIDE - 5 yards, replay down

If the Defense is drawn offside illegally by the Offense (in the judgment of the Officials) they will not be charged with a penalty.

If the Defense crosses the line of scrimmage but returns to their side of the neutral zone before the ball is snapped and has not touched an offensive player, no penalty will be called.

H. Neutral Zone

An area one foot deep in front of the line of scrimmage is considered the neutral zone. No defensive player may be in the Neutral Zone when the ball is snapped. Defense may enter and leave the zone prior to the ball being snapped, unless contact is made with an offensive player.

Penalty: ENCROACHMENT - 5 yards, replay down

SECTION 4: ADVANCING THE BALL AND END OF DOWN

A. Advancing the ball

The ball may be advanced toward the opponent's goal by the ball carrier until the End of Down.

B. End of Down

An End of Down occurs when one of the ball carrier's flags has been removed by another player, the ball carrier goes out of bounds, the ball is declared dead, the ball is downed, a penalty is assessed which results in a downed ball, or if the runner falls to the ground and flagging is imminent. If flagging is not imminent, the runner may get up and continue to run. In the event a ball carrier's flag or flags have fallen off or have been pulled early, the End of Down occurs when an opposing team player touches the ball carrier above the knees and below the head with one hand. Officials will blow a whistle(s) to indicate End of Down.

C. Flagging

A player may remove a player's flag or flags only when making a proper attempt to down a ball carrier.

Penalty: Early Flagging - 10 yards from spot, replay down

Penalty: Offensive Self Flagging - 10 yards, loss of down

Penalty: Defensive Self Flagging - 10 yards from end of down, down stands

The Defense may not push or otherwise impede the runner in an attempt to remove the flag.

Note: In attempting to flag the runner, the Defense may (with open hands) inadvertently contact the runner between the shoulders and waist. The Defense may force the runner out of bounds only in a valid attempt to remove a flag. Intentionally forcing a runner out of bounds is not allowed.

Penalty: PERSONAL FOUL - 10 yards from end of down, down stands

***Note: It is not a flagging if at the time the pulling of the flag occurs the passer's arm is in forward motion and the ball is released at the end of that motion.**

In order to assist Officials in establishing the dead ball spot, Defense shall stop and raise the flag over her

head immediately upon flagging the runner. Defense shall return the flag to a member of the offense.

D. Diving for the Flag

A player may dive for the opponent's flag provided she does so in a safe and controlled manner. If the player dives into the runner or another player in a reckless manner it shall be a penalty.

Penalty: PERSONAL FOUL - 10 yards from end of down, down stands

E. Flag Guarding

The runner cannot place hands or arms in any way to impede removal of the flag.

Penalty: FLAG GUARDING - 10 yards from spot of foul, down stands.

Note: First down conversion clarification: After penalty yards are applied, if line-to-gain hasn't been crossed, no first down may be awarded. Example: It is 3rd down on the 15 with 5 yards needed (20 yard line) for a first down. The runner flag guards on the 25 and is finally stopped on the 35. The penalty is marked at the 25 (spot of the foul) and brought back to the 15 (penalized 10 yards). She does not have a first down so it is now 4th down with 5 yards to go. If however, she flag guarded at the 35 yard line, the penalty is marked at the 35 yard line and brought back 10 yards to the 25. At this point she has enough for the 1st down so it is a 1st down.

F. Control

The runner must maintain control of her momentum. Spinning to avoid being flagged is allowed provided the runner maintains control. If the runner leaves her feet (as in hurdling) and runs, dives or falls into a defensive player, she will be considered to be out of control and a penalty will be called.

Penalty: PERSONAL FOUL - 10 yards from spot of foul, end of down, down stands

G. Inadvertent Whistles

In the event an Official accidentally whistle a play dead, the team in possession of the ball will be given a choice of (a) accepting the play as it was whistled dead at the spot, or (b) replay of the down.

SECTION 5: PASSES (FORWARD AND LATERAL) AND DEAD BALLS

A. Forward Passes

Forward Passes are thrown towards the opponent's goal in any manner by an offensive player. All offensive players are eligible to catch a forward pass. A pass is considered a Completion if a receiver catches the ball before it touches the ground, has control of the ball and has at least one foot in bounds when the catch is made. After a Completion, the receiver may continue to advance with the ball until the End of Down. Any defensive player may intercept a Forward Pass. An Interception occurs if the defensive player catches the ball before it touches the ground, has control of the ball and has at least one foot in bounds when the catch is made. After an Interception, the defensive player may continue to advance the ball until the End of Down. If both receiver and defender catch the ball simultaneously, the ball is a Completion and dead at that spot with the Offense retaining possession. A forward pass is considered Incomplete if it does not result in a Completion or Interception. If the pass falls Incomplete, the next down is played from the same Line of Scrimmage as the previous play.

The passer may not throw a Forward Pass after advancing past the Line of Scrimmage. Only one Forward Pass may be thrown during a down.

Penalty: ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS - 5 yards from spot of foul, loss of down

The passer may not throw the ball away (create an intentional incomplete pass) to avoid being deflagged. This is at the discretion of the officials.

Penalty: INTENTIONAL GROUNDING - 5 yards from spot of foul, loss of down.

No Forward Passes are allowed on Kick-offs, Punts or Safety Kicks.

Penalty: ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS - 5 yards from spot of foul, down stands

B. Lateral Passes or Hand-offs

Lateral Passes or Hand-offs may be made anywhere on the field provided they only travel backward from the original player (never forward). All offensive players are eligible to receive Lateral Passes or Hand-offs. Offensive players may continue to advance the ball (or throw a Forward Pass under ARTICLE 6 - SECTION 4A) after a Lateral Pass or Hand-off. If the ball is dropped, it is ruled a dead ball and Offense retains possession. The ball will be placed at the spot of the drop for the next down. Any defensive player may intercept a lateral pass. If a defensive player intercepts a Lateral Pass, she may continue to advance toward the opponent's Goal Line until the End of Down.

C. Fumbles

A fumble occurs when a ball carrier drops the ball. If a ball is dropped, it is immediately a dead ball (End of Down). Fumbles may not be recovered. Diving on a fumbled ball will not be allowed.

Penalty: DIVING ON THE BALL - 5 yards from spot, down stands

D. Muffs

A Muff is an unsuccessful attempt to catch or gain control of a Snap, Lateral Pass, Hand-off, Kick-off, Punt or Safety Kick during which the ball strikes the ground after it is touched. Muffs may not be recovered by the Defense or the Kicking team.

Muffs on Snaps, Lateral Passes and Hand-offs are immediately a dead ball (End of Down). These are treated as Fumbles.

Muffs on Kick-offs, Punts or Safety Kicks can be picked up and advanced by the Receiving team, provided the Defense has not yet touched the ball. The Kicking team may touch the ball while it is on the ground to cause the End of Down. Pouncing or diving on the ball is not allowed.

Penalty: DIVING ON THE BALL - 5 yards from spot, down stands

E. Dead Balls

In addition to any other dead ball rule, if a kicked or punted ball travels out of bounds between the Goal Lines, it is immediately a dead ball at the spot it crosses the Side Line.

F. Touchbacks

A Touchback occurs when 1) a player a) obtains possession of the ball behind her team's goal line during a Kick-off, a Punt, a Safety Kick or an Interception and b) makes no attempt to advance the ball or 2) a kicked or punted ball that travels through the End Zone without being touched. After a Touchback the ball will be placed on the 15-yard line of the team in possession and marked ready for play, 1st down.

SECTION 6: KICK-OFFS, PUNTS AND SAFETY KICKS

Illegal Blocking or Clipping on Kick-offs, Punts and Safety Kicks do not result in re-kicks. The penalty is assessed from the spot of the foul and results in End of Down.

A. Kick-offs

Kick-offs are plays used to put the ball in play at the beginning of each half or after a touchdown. Scoring team will Kick-off after each touchdown. Kicker must kick the ball off a kicking tee or the ground. A teammate may hold the ball steady. Each team will line up behind its Restraining Line. The Restraining Line is each team's own 30 yard line. Kicking team shall not pass this line until the ball is kicked. Receiving team must have 5 players within 5 yards of its restraining line and may not pass this line until the ball is kicked.

Penalty: ILLEGAL PROCEDURE - 5 yards, re-kick

Penalty: OFFSIDE - 5 yards, re-kick.

The kick must stay in bounds. If the ball goes out of bounds between the Goal Lines after being kicked, the ball is dead at the point it crosses the Side Line. The receiving team has an option to take possession at that spot or demand re-kick with 5 yard penalty to kicking team.

Penalty: ILLEGAL PROCEDURE - 5 yards, re-kick

B. Punts

A Punt is a kick by the Offense that gives possession of the ball to the Defense. Punter must take a Snap to obtain the ball. Kicker may stand shotgun or take snap directly from center. Punting team must have all players other than the punter on the Line of Scrimmage. No other offensive players may move until ball is kicked. Kicker must kick the ball without it touching the ground prior to the kick. Punter must kick the ball without using a kicking tee. Offense may choose to Punt on any down. The Head Official and the Defense must be notified before a Punt. No fake Punts are allowed.

Penalty: ILLEGAL PROCEDURE - 5 yards, replay down

Penalty: ILLEGAL PUNT - 5 yards, loss of down

Penalty: FAKE PUNT - 5 yards, loss of down

If the center's snap touches the ground before the ball is kicked the play is dead. Receiving team takes possession at the spot where the ball touches the ground.

If the ball goes out of bounds between the Goal Lines, the ball is dead at the point it crosses the Side Line.

The receiving team (Defense) must have 5 players on the line. Defense may not move before the ball is kicked. Defense may not rush on a Punt.

Penalty: ILLEGAL PROCEDURE - 5 yard, replay down

Penalty: ILLEGAL RUSH - 5 yards, replay down

C. Safety Kicks

A Safety Kick is a free kick that puts the ball into play following a safety. Each team will line up behind its Restraining Line. From their own 20 yard line, the team on which the safety was scored must punt the ball to their opponents. No kicking tee can be used. The Restraining Line for the receiving team is the 40 yard line. Kicking team must have all players with exception of the Kicker on its restraining line and shall not pass this line until the ball is kicked. Receiving team must have 5 players within 5 yards of its restraining line and may not pass this line until the ball is kicked.

Penalty: ILLEGAL PROCEDURE - 5 yards, re-kick

Penalty: OFFSIDE - 5 yards, re-kick.

The kick must stay in bounds. If the ball goes out of bounds between the Goal Lines after being kicked, the ball is dead at the point it crosses the Side Line. The receiving team has an option to take possession at that spot or demand a re-kick with 5 yard penalty to kicking team.

Penalty: ILLEGAL PROCEDURE - 5 yards, re-kick

D. Loose Balls

A loose ball is a kicked or punted ball not in a player's possession. Loose balls are dead when downed (touched while on the ground) by either team. Receiving team's ball, 1st down at the spot touched.

E. Interference

Defense must not make contact with a kick-returner until that player has caught or has attempted to catch the ball. Defense must not touch a kicked ball until the ball has touched the ground. Penalty: INTERFERENCE – 5 yards from the spot, down stands

SECTION 7: PENALTIES AND VIOLATIONS

A. Assessment and Down

Penalties are assessed from the Line of Scrimmage or the spot at which the foul occurred. If a foul is assessed from the spot, the End of Down occurs at the spot of the foul. After the penalty the down may stand, may be lost or replayed. Assessed penalties will not result in moving the ball more than half the distance toward the Goal Line. Withstanding other provisions, any offensive penalty that occurs in the offensive team's end zone, while the ball is also in the offensive team's end zone, will result in an automatic safety.

The non-penalized team may choose to accept or decline penalties (with exception of Unsportsperson-like Conduct penalty).

B. Unsportsperson-like Conduct

Any act which indicates 1) a person has a lack of consideration for another person's well-being and safety or 2) a person is trying to gain an unfair advantage is considered Unsportsperson-like Conduct.

Penalty: Unsportsperson-like Conduct Personal Foul - 10 to 15 yards and/or ejection of violating player(s) or coach(s) (Official's decision based on severity), down stands

Examples of Unsportsperson-like Conduct include (but are not limited to):

- * an attempt to deliberately harm another person;
- * fighting, kicking, pulling hair, tackling, slapping, verbally taunting or swearing at opponent, Official(s), spectator, or League Officials;
- * physical or verbal abuse toward Official(s);
- * tampering with flags (i.e. affixing in a manner to hamper removal); and
- * use of alcohol during a game.

NOTE: Depending on the severity of the conduct, the penalty may range from Unsportsperson-like Conduct Personal Foul to Unsportsperson-like Conduct Personal Foul and Ejection from the rest of the game. Penalties with the "*" result in automatic Ejection. The Official may also choose to eject the player from the player's next game, depending on severity and time left in the current game. Any ejection of a player will result in a review of the incident by the HWFFL Board for possible fine and/or suspension. The amount of the fine, not to exceed the annual "regular" registration fee, and/or the number of games suspended will be a

decision of the HWFFL Board. The player has the right to speak on her behalf at the review. Player reviews will occur within two weeks of the ejection. Any imposed fine must be paid before the player will become eligible subsequent to the suspension period.

NOTE: If players from both teams commit a violation during the same play, which result in automatic ejection, both players will be ejected and the yardage penalties offset.

NOTE: If a block is technically legal but unnecessary or unnecessarily rough (e.g., blocking an opponent when the opponent is clearly out of the play), it will be considered Unsportsman-like Conduct.

NOTE: A penalty assessed for Unsportsman-like Conduct may not be declined by the non-penalized team.

NOTE: Reasonable, legal blocking or defensive parrying is not considered Unsportsman-like Conduct.

C. EQUIPMENT

For equipment violations, see ARTICLE 3 – SECTION 7.

D. SCRIMMAGE PENALTIES

In addition to or in reiteration of previously defined penalties, the following are penalties for violations during play.

Flag Guarding - Placing hands or arms in a way that might impede removal of the flag.

Penalty: FLAG GUARDING - 10 yards from spot of foul, down stands.

Stiff Arming - Warding off defender by swinging or extending arms at the opponent.

Penalty: STIFF ARMING - 10 yards from spot of foul, end of down, down stands

Charging - Lowering head or dropping shoulder in attempt to force a way through an opposing player or running into an opposing player if she is planted.

Penalty: CHARGING - 10 yards from spot of foul, end of down, down stands

Illegal Blocking - Blocking with elbows extended further from the torso than the hands, blocking by or with swinging arms and/or elbows, blocking with hands extended in fists, blocking with forearms extended away from the chest, blocking while diving, blocking below the waist or blocking above the shoulders. The blocker must keep both feet on the ground at all times. **Penalty: ILLEGAL BLOCK** - 10 yards, replay down

Holding - Holding, hooking, encircling or grabbing an opponent to slow down their movement.

Penalty: OFFENSIVE HOLDING - 10 yards, replay down
or **DEFENSIVE HOLDING** - 10 yards, automatic first down

Clipping - Blocking or running into another player from behind.

Penalty : CLIPPING - 10 yards, replay down

Illegal Chucking - Chucking past 5 yards from the Line of Scrimmage or chucking the receiver twice on the same play.

Note: While in the chucking zone (5 yards from line of scrimmage), until a forward pass is in flight, a defensive player may once per play utilize the open-hand "chuck" to block an offensive player coming off the line. The offensive player may use open hands or forearms to ward off defensive player's chuck.

Penalty - ILLEGAL CHUCKING - 10 yards, replay down

Pass Interference - Interfering with the opponent's opportunity to catch a forward pass by touching, holding, waving arms, etc.

Note: While a forward pass is in the air, any player may make a fair pursuit and attempt to catch the ball. Any contact incidental to their attempt to catch a ball is not a penalty. When a player interferes with opponent's opportunity to catch the ball without intending to catch the pass herself, pass interference will be called.

Penalty: OFFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE - 10 yard penalty, loss of down
or **DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE** - spot of foul, automatic first down.

Tackling - Pulling or throwing an opponent to the ground.

Penalty: PERSONAL FOUL - 10 or 15 yards from end of down, automatic first down
(Official's decision based on severity)

Roughing the Passer - Charging or running into the passer or passer's arm or hand.

Note: Defense must make clear effort to avoid charging into passer, before and after the ball is thrown. The rusher cannot slap or knock the quarterback's hand or arm at any time.

Penalty: PERSONAL FOUL - 10 or 15 yards from end of down, automatic first down
(Official's decision based on severity)

Stripping – A defender cannot strip the ball when the receiver has clear possession of the ball, whether the receiver's feet are on or off the ground.

Penalty: PERSONAL FOUL - 10 or 15 yards from end of down, automatic first down
(Official's decision based on severity)

SECTION 8: SPORTSMANSHIP

The purpose of these rules is twofold: (1) to provide a playing field that is equally fair to both teams and (2) to provide guidelines that enhance safety. Not every situation can be covered in the rules. During games, the Officials will have the final authority to rule on matters not specifically covered in these rules. Decisions will be made based on the spirit of the rules -- fair competition and safety. Teams are not to manipulate a rule or absence of a rule to gain an unfair advantage over their opponents.

It is the responsibility of the coach and the team captains to maintain high morale, high ethical standards, and sportsperson-like conduct throughout each game and the season. It is recommended that each team and each player view every game as an opportunity to improve on one's own ability and to reach one's highest potential. Every opponent is a potential teammate, either in a new season or on a travel team. So when opponents play well, our entire league benefits. **PLAY SAFE! PLAY FAIR! AND HAVE FUN!**