

## ACTIVITY RULEBOOK

**Indoor Flag Football**

*Indoor Flag Football is a non-contact activity, however contact and injuries are a possibility. The Intramural Sports program assumes no responsibility for injuries and all participants must electronically acknowledge/consent to the online waiver in IMLeagues prior to participating. By agreeing to the online waiver, each participant agrees to rules and policies outlined in this and all other documents provided by Intramural Sports.*

*All information in this rule book pertains to the facilitation of Indoor Flag Football contests and its season administration. For questions or concerns, please contact [intramurals@uwlax.edu](mailto:intramurals@uwlax.edu).*

**REMINDER:** *all participants are encouraged to review the participant handbook and general rules overview prior to participating in each activity in which they are interested. View these documents by visiting the [“Rules” website](#).*

*UWL Intramural Sports welcomes all students and faculty/staff members meeting eligibility guidelines. Participants may compete in the gender league with which they identify. For any eligibility concerns, please contact [intramurals@uwlax.edu](mailto:intramurals@uwlax.edu).*

**Section 1: Starting the Contest****Start (Game) Time**

Game time is forfeit time. It is recommended teams arrive at the contest site 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start.

**Facility and Contest Set Up****a. Playing Location**

Indoor Flag Football is played in the Mitchell Hall Fieldhouse. It is recommended teams review their schedules prior to each contest. Intramural Sports will not contact teams to remind them of contest dates, times or locations, however participants have the option to receive automated email reminders from IMLeagues during the roster addition process.

**b. Field**

Fields are set up by staff only. All playing equipment is property of the Recreational Sports Department.

**c. Officiating**

All contests will be officiated by at least two (2) trained officials. All decisions made by officials are final, except for those eligible for protests.

Intramural Sports is always looking for officials and would love to have you join our team! To learn more about officiating, visit our [“Become an Official” website](#).

**d. Captain’s Meeting**

Captains are to meet with the contest official(s) prior to each contest to review rules, eligibility, legal equipment and to determine possession/team sides.

**Equipment**

Flag belts will be provided by Rec Sports.

Team jerseys are available for rent in the Rec Sports Office, 118 Mitchell Hall, prior to the contest.

Team members must wear the same color shirts.

Players must wear shorts, or pants WITHOUT POCKETS that differ in color than from their flag belts.

Flag belts will be provided. Players are not allowed to knot, twist, or tie their flag belts for any reason.

Football gloves and mouth guards are legal pieces of equipment.

A game ball will be available, though teams may provide the game ball for their offensive possessions.

Any game ball must be approved by an official before the start of your game.

**Participation**

Teams will consist of five (5) players on the field at one time.

Teams may start with as few as four (4) players.

If a team is reduced to less than four (4) players at any time during the contest, a forfeit will result.

**Eligibility****a. Sport Club Athlete**

- There are no restrictions on club athletes.

**b. Intercollegiate Athlete**

- Current members of the UWL football team may not participate in any football-related intramural activity during the current academic year while on the team's active roster (circumstances may apply to individuals on a practice or scrimmage squad). A player not on the official roster during the spring semester is permitted to play, given the appropriate circumstance. Roster verifications will be conducted with members of the UWL Athletics Department
- One (1) collegiate player from the previous academic year (including transfer students from other institutions) may participate on an intramural team permitted they are not on the roster during the current academic year

Intramural Sports administration will search and filter athletic athlete eligibility. It is not guaranteed that all roster violations will be noticed. Teams, players, officials and additional staff members are allowed to protest team rosters

When in-doubt about your roster or eligibility, please ask early. Contests (including playoffs) may be forfeited retroactively if ineligible rosters are discovered mid-season

**Section 2: Playing the Contest****Commencement**

The head official (referee) will flip a coin to determine possession. The winner of the flip will have a choice to start on offense, defense, choose goal, or defer the choice to the second half. Choosing defense does not mean you automatically get the ball in the second half (you must defer for this option).

**Scoring**

Touchdown	6 points
Point-After-Touchdown (PAT) #1	1 point from 3 yard-line
PAT #2	2 points from 10-yard line
PAT #3	3 points from 20-yard line (midfield)
Safety	2 points and possession for defense

PAT Clarification: Immediately after scoring a touchdown the Referee will ask the team captain for his/her choice for the conversion. Once this decision is made, it can only be changed by taking a charged time-out. A team's decision cannot be changed should a penalty occur on the conversion attempt.

Interceptions on PAT attempts will be blown dead by the officials and the defense will get the ball.

**General Game Play**

Games will consist of two (2) 15-minute halves with running clock and a 3-minute halftime. The clock will stop in the last two (2) minutes of the second half during dead ball situations and for timeouts.

If time expires during a touchdown scoring play, attempt for extra points will be allowed.

At the start of each half and touchdown, the ball will be placed at center of the tennis court nearest to your end zone, or two-point conversion spot.

At no time may the offense run the ball. Every play must include a legal forward pass.

The player with the ball will be marked down at the spot of the ball when the flag is removed.

Diving in any form is permitted, as long as the action does not initiate contact

**First Downs**

Teams have four (4) downs to reach the "line of gain". The line to gain will always be the center of the field (space between courts 3 and 4 in the field house). The line-to-gain is established by the head official's ready-for-play whistle.

**Mercy Rule**

If a team is ahead by 19 or more points at the two-minute mark of the second half, the contest will be ruled a mercy rule victory for the team in the lead.

**Timeouts**

Each team will have three (3) timeouts of 30 seconds per game.

In the event of overtime, each team will have one (1) timeout of 30 seconds for the duration of overtime, regardless of the number of “rounds” needed to complete the contest.

A timeout may be called by any member on a team roster.

**Offense**

There are no kickoffs. The ball will be put in-play at the 10-yard line to begin a half or following a score.

The offense has 25 seconds to snap the ball between plays (i.e. 25-second play clock).

The ball may be snapped between the legs or off to the side of the player.

The offense will have a five-second count to release a legal forward pass following the snap beginning a down. If the ball is not away before the five (5) seconds is up, the official will blow the whistle and the passer will be considered down at that spot (i.e. a “sack”).

Only one (1) forward pass is permitted per down.

All players are eligible to receive a pass.

The ball carrier may not hurdle an opponent or leave his/her feet at any point during the play.

**Punting**

There are no punts allowed. Teams must always “go for it” on fourth down. Failure to convert a fourth down attempt will result in the defensive team regaining possession at the spot of the turnover on downs.

**Defensive Restrictions**

The defense CANNOT rush the passer. The defense can cross the scrimmage line in an attempt to deflag a runner after the successful completion of a forward pass.

**Flag Belt Removal**

The ball becomes dead when a ball carrier’s flag belt is removed. The ball will be spotted at the location of the most forward point of the ball when the flag belt clip was removed. All players must be wearing a flag belt at the time of the snap. It is illegal to intentionally remove a player’s flag belt if he/she is not in possession of the ball. If a flag belt falls off of a ball carrier, he/she is considered down when a member of the opposing team tags him/her with one (1) hand between the shoulders and knees.

**Overview of Penalties**

Due to the shortened length of the playing surface, all regular ten-yard penalties will be five (5) yards in length and all five-yard penalties will be three (3) yards in length. For a definition of penalties, please visit the [“Rule Clarifications”](#) Section.

Common 3-yard penalties include:

- Delay of Game
- False Start
- Encroachment
- Illegal Procedure
- Illegal Motion/Shift
- Illegal Snap
- Handoffs/Running Through the Line of Scrimmage (Illegal Advancement)
- Intentional Grounding
- Illegal Substitution
- Illegal Equipment

*section continued on next page*

**Overview of Penalties (continued)**

Common 5-yard penalties include:

- Illegal Contact
- Unnecessary Roughness
- Illegal Participation
- Pass Interference
- Flag Guarding
- Too Many Players
- Illegally-Secured Flag Belt
- Rushing the Passer

Game officials shall always inform the team captain of a penalty and give options for accepting or declining the penalty. Failure to inform officials of your decision regarding penalties in a timely manner will result in the officials accepting the penalty on your behalf given the game situation.

**Dead Ball Situations**

The ball shall be declared dead when:

The ball comes in contact with the ceiling or anything hanging from the ceiling/rafters.

Ball carrier falls to the ground.

Ball carrier loses flags and then is touched by one (1) hand by the opponent.

Incomplete pass.

Ball carrier goes out of bounds.

Fumbled balls are considered dead balls and cannot be advanced.

A snapped ball hits the ground.

- A snapped ball hitting the ground in the end zone is a safety

**Overtime Rules – Regular Season**

The official will flip a coin to determine possession.

- The winner of the flip will have a choice to have possession first or play defense. The loser of the coin toss will choose the goal for both teams.

Each team will have one (1) 4-down possession from the midfield to score. If the score is tied after both teams have a possession the teams will flip order and each will have one (1) more possession to decide a winner. If the game is still tied after each team has had two (2) possessions, the game will end in a tie.

If the defense returns a pass for a touchdown they win the game.

If the defense makes a stop or intercepts the ball without scoring on the first possession, they will start from mid-field with four (4) downs to score.

Each team will be granted one (1) timeout per overtime period.

**Overtime Rules - Playoffs**

All regular season overtime rules stand in the playoffs, except games will not end in a tie. If after each team has two possessions and the score remains a tie, the process will continue until a winner is determined.

**Rule Clarifications****Wearing the Flag Belt**

All players are required to wear a properly-secured flag belt while playing flag football. A flag belt is considered to be legally secured when the belt clip is fastened with one (1) flag on each hip and one (1) in the back.

Players engaged in game play without a flag belt on will receive an illegal equipment penalty. At no time in the contest shall a flag belt be illegal fastened (i.e. tied, tucked in to shirt/pants, flags wrapped around belt to prevent them falling off, etc.). A player wearing an illegally-fastened belt will be ejected from the game. Officials will check the flag belt of any player scoring a touchdown.

**Passing**

A forward pass is defined as a pass that is thrown with a trajectory initially propelling the ball forward. A legal forward pass takes place behind the line of scrimmage. Only one (1) forward pass is permitted per down, but an unlimited number of backwards passes (i.e. laterals) are allowed per down.

Players cannot run the ball through the line of scrimmage, so the ball can only be advanced following a forward pass that breaks through the line of scrimmage plane in the air.

**Contact/Blocking**

There is no contact allowed in flag football. Incidental contact will happen and is permissible as long as no advantage/disadvantage is gained.

At no time shall a player push, trip, knee, elbow or shoulder another player. Since there are no fumbles, any player trying to hit the ball out of an offensive player's hands will be penalized for illegal contact.

Screen blocking is legal as long as the following guidelines are followed:

- The blocker's arms must be kept at his/her side, in front of his/her waist, or behind his/her back.
- The blocker may not initiate contact with a defender.
- A penalty occurs when contact is initiated and there is an advantage gained.

**Flag Guarding**

Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opponent an opportunity to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes (but is not limited to):

- Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent a deflag.
- Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt to prevent a deflag.
- Lowering the shoulders in such a manner that places the arm over the flag belt to prevent a deflag.
- Any other act, besides spinning and various other types of hip movement, to prevent an opponent from deflagging.

**Clarification:** *spin moves are legal, as long as the defense can still attempt a legal deflag.*

Flag guarding is a very common penalty in flag football. Even natural running motion (swinging arms) may cause a penalty. Because of this, it is recommended all runners hold the ball out while a defender is near.

**Catching the Ball**

A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball in flight, and first contacting the ground inbounds or being contacted by an opponent in such a way that he/she is prevented from returning to the ground inbounds while maintaining possession of the ball.

One foot is required to be inbounds (while in player possession). Additionally, a catch by a kneeling or prone inbounds player is a completion.

A simultaneous catch or recovery is a catch in which there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are inbounds. The ball will be blown dead at that spot and possession will be awarded to the offense.

**Fumbles**

A fumble is a loss of player possession of the ball other than by handing, passing or punting the ball. A fumbled ball that hits the ground is dead at that spot. The only two forms of turnovers in flag football are turnovers on downs and interceptions.

**Snapping the Ball**

A snap must be one smooth, quick and continuous motion, either between the snapper's legs or from the side. The ball must leave the snapper's hand(s) during this motion. After the snapper takes his initial position over the ball, he/she may move or rotate the ball. After the snapper comes to a set position, he/she may not move the ball again until it is snapped.

The player who receives the snap must be at least two (2) yards behind the offensive scrimmage line. Direct snaps are illegal.

**Pass Interference**

During a down in which a legal forward pass crosses the scrimmage line, contact which interferes with an eligible receiver who is beyond the scrimmage line is pass interference unless it occurs when two (2) or more eligible receivers make a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch, or bat a pass. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged prior to touching the ball on a pass thrown beyond the scrimmage line.

Offensive pass interference may be called at any time after the ball is snapped. Defensive pass interference, however, can only be called during the time of a pass attempt.

Face guarding is a form of pass interference.

**Offside Penalties**

Any player lining up or being drawn offside by a hard count results in a dead ball situation. In general, the line judge may call out “line is good” to indicate that the teams are legally ready for play (this is, however, just a courtesy and not a requirement).

**Rushing the Passer**

Players on defense are not permitted to rush the passer. The passer is also not permitted to advance the ball through the scrimmage line.

In lieu of a pass rush, the passer has five (5) seconds (to be counted by the referee) to throw the ball before the ball is declared dead at the spot (sack).

**Section 3: Winning Specifications**

**Contest**

Teams receive a win in standings by leading after the designated regulation time period or after applicable overtime period(s). Losses and ties are included in standings as well.

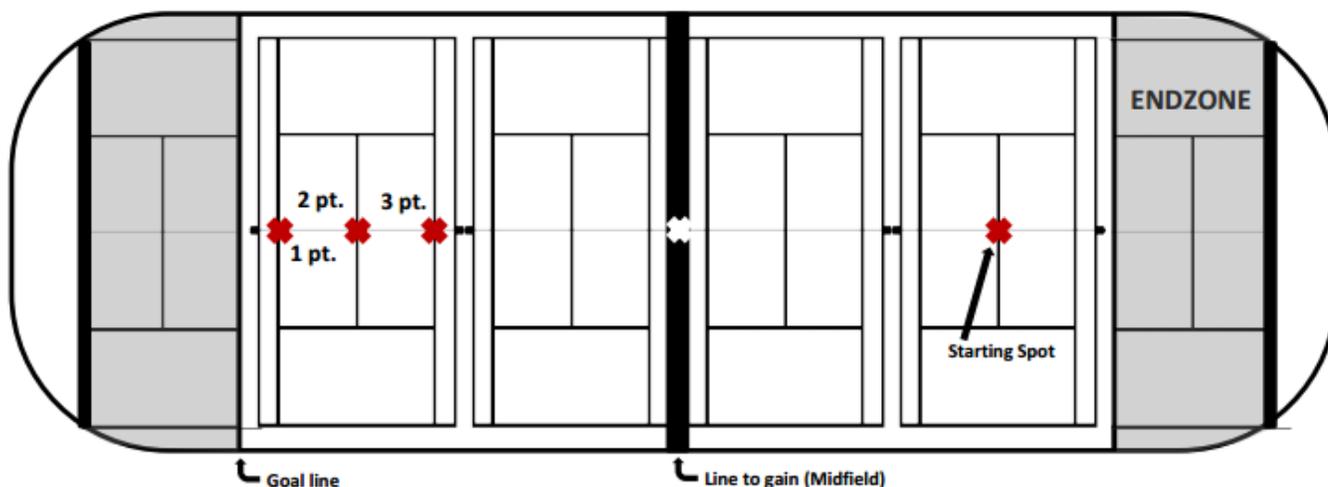
**Playoffs**

All rules apply to playoffs. To qualify, teams must win at least one (1) contest and maintain a sportsmanship average of 4.0 during the regular season in addition to following forfeit policies. Other scheduling differences may apply to certain playoff circumstances. Qualification is monitored at the discretion of Intramural Sports administration.

**Protests**

Protesting is permitted. If a team wishes to protest eligibility, rule implementation/interpretation or a perceived scoring error in-game, they shall notify a staff member right away. To file a post-game protest, email the program at intramurals@uwlax.edu or visit the [Online Protest Form](#). Teams may not protest officials’ judgment calls (i.e. incomplete vs. complete pass, foul vs. no foul, violation vs. no violation, inbounds vs. out-of-bounds, etc.).

**Section 4: The Playing Surface**



Other than the specifications listed in this rulebook, official [WIAA](#), [NFHS](#) and/or [NIRSA](#) rules will be followed.