Indoor Flag Football Rules  SPRING 2016

Click on the following links to visit specific areas of the rule book:

- Section 1: General Overview
- Section 2: General Procedures/Reminders
- Section 3: Activity-Specific Rules
- Section 4: REC*IT – Intramural Sports’ Mobile App

General Overview

Team Registration and Entry Fee
All team registrations are done online via IMLeagues. Registration periods are listed on the Intramural Sports website under the “List of Sports” section.

Instructions on how to register a team in IMLeagues can be found on our “Forms and Videos” page. Don’t forget about the pre-registration option!

The team entry fee for Indoor Flag Football is $35 and is to be paid online via PayPal at the time of registration. Captains will be able to pay with a credit/debit card or online check. In-person payment options are available if online payment is not feasible.

UW-L Rec Sports WILL NOT hold spots for teams or individuals during registration (including teams in the pre-registration waiting list).

Team Captain’s Quiz
All team captains are required to take an online rules and handbook quiz and score 100% in order to complete the registration process for a team. The quiz will contain general policy and sport-specific rules questions in multiple choice format.

Player Registration
Individual player registrations (i.e. roster additions) are also done via IMLeagues. Instructions can be found here.

All players are required to take a brief participant quiz and score 100% in order to be added to a team. Individuals will be prompted to take the quiz online in IMLeagues as part of the roster addition process.

No roster addition sheets are available on-site. Please make sure all roster additions are completed prior to the scheduled contest start time.

Team Schedules
All team schedules for regular season and playoff contests will be published in IMLeagues. Captains and participants will be contacted via IMLeagues when schedules are completed and ready to view.

Please do not ignore email or text messages from IMLeagues, as they will be sent from UW-L Intramural Staff

Forfeits and Defaults
If a team cannot participate in a contest, please notify the REC Information Counter (608-785-5225) at least three (3) hours prior to the scheduled contest to avoid a forfeit fee. Forfeit notifications will not be accepted via email.

Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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General Procedures/Reminders

Please refer to the 2015-16 Intramural Sports Participant Handbook for all policies and procedures related to Intramural contests. Additional information can be found on the Intramural Sports website.

1. No ID, No Play
   Each participant must present a valid (current) UW-L student I.D. to the Intramural Supervisor or Scorekeeper at every contest. No exceptions will be made and no other form of identification will be accepted.

   If a participant forgets their UW-L-issued I.D., a forgotten I.D. pass may be obtained at the REC Info Counter or the Rec Sports Office in Mitchell Hall (when applicable). Supervisors, Scorekeepers, and Officials do not distribute these passes. A forgotten I.D. pass may only be used once per semester across all program areas within Rec Sports.

2. Team Roster
   All participants must be on the team roster in IMLeagues. Any member not on the roster may complete a roster addition online via IMLeagues. **No roster add sheets will be made available at the site of the contest.**

   No participant may play on two teams in the same league or a forfeit will be charged to the second team he/she participated on. **Roster additions are allowed up until postseason brackets are published.**

3. Apparel
   Each participant must wear appropriate apparel and non-marking athletic footwear.

4. Injuries/First Aid
   First aid treatment is typically, but not always, available during Intramural contests. Any bleeding must be stopped and cleaned up before participant can re-enter the contest.

5. Jewelry
   For your safety, all visible jewelry, watches, and bracelets must be removed or covered legally prior to participation. Medical bracelets may stay on.

6. Sportsmanship/Participant Conduct
   Sportsmanship is important before, during, and after Intramural contests. Teams will be scored on a scale of 1 (unsatisfactory) to 5 (excellent) based on their behavior and conduct after every game. Teams must average a 3.5 rating in order to qualify for playoffs. Teams or individuals failing to abide by these sportsmanship guidelines must meet with the Intramural Sports Coordinator and Graduate Assistant for reinstatement.

7. Refunds
   Team registration fee refunds are permissible based on certain circumstances. Please email intramurals@uwlax.edu to request a refund. Due to online processing fees, you may not receive a full refund of your team’s registration.

8. Team Names
   Team names must be appropriate. Captains of teams that reference anything deemed inappropriate or offensive in their name will be contacted by Intramural Sports to change the team name. Intramural Sports reserves the right to change names at any time and without notice (based on circumstance).

9. Playoffs
   Playoffs will commence following the regular season. Teams playing more than four (4) contests are required to win two (2) contests and meet all outlined sportsmanship requirements. Teams that play four (4) or fewer contests will automatically make playoffs as long as sportsmanship requirements are met.

   Intramural Sports administration will send messages out to all participants regarding playoff procedures as regular season action winds down.

10. Communication Efforts
Throughout the season and playoffs, Intramural Sports may attempt to contact teams and/or individuals on multiple occasions. Please do not ignore messages from Intramural Sports or IMLeagues, and be sure to check your voicemail.

**Activity-Specific Rules**

*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 sign the online waiver in IMLeagues prior to competing.*

**Starting the Game**

1. **Game Time**
   
   GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME. It is recommended that teams arrive at the game site fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled start.

2. **Game Set Up**
   
   a. **Field**
      
      - All contests are played in the Mitchell Hall Fieldhouse. The field will be set up by the Rec Sports Staff.
      - The field has two (2) 20-yard zones (40 yards of playing surface) and two (2) end zones.
   
   b. **Officiating**
      
      All contests will be officiated by two (2) trained Intramural Flag Football officials. All calls made by officials are final. To become an official, click [here](#). The Intramural Supervisor on-site will keep track of the game score and time.

   c. **Pre-Game Captain’s Meeting**
      
      Captains will meet with game officials at midfield for a brief overview of game rules and to ensure all participants are eligible/properly equipped.

3. **Game Equipment**
   
   a. Flag belts will be provided by Rec Sports.
   
   b. Team jerseys are available for rent in the Rec Sports Office, 118 Mitchell Hall, prior to the contest.
   
   c. Team members must wear the same color shirts.
   
   d. Players must wear shorts, or pants WITHOUT POCKETS that differ in color than from their flag belts.
   
   e. Flag belts will be provided. Players are not allowed to knot, twist, or tie their flag belts for any reason.
   
   f. Football gloves and mouth guards are legal pieces of equipment.
   
   g. A game ball will be available, though teams may provide the game ball for their offensive possessions.
   
   h. Any game ball must be approved by an official before the start of your game.

4. **Participation**
   
   a. Teams will consist of five (5) players on the field at one time.
   
   b. Teams may start with as few as four (4) players.
   
   c. If a team is reduced to less than four (4) players at any time during the contest, a default will result.

5. **Eligibility**
   
   a. **Athletic Athlete (NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA, etc.) Eligibility**
      
      - The 2015-16 UW-L Men’s Football players may not participate in football-related Intramural activities during the 2015-16 academic year.
      - Only one (1) 2014-15 collegiate football player (regardless of institution) may play on a team.

*If any of the eligibility rules are broken and an ineligible player plays in a contest, that contest will be forfeited and that player will be removed from that team’s roster.*
Playing the Game

6. Game Commencement
   a. 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).

7. General Game Play
   a. 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.
   b. If time expires during a touchdown scoring play, attempt for extra points will be allowed.
   c. 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.
   d. At no time may the offense run the ball. Every play must include a legal forward pass.
   e. The player with the ball will be marked down at the spot of the ball when the flag is removed.
   f. DIVING IS PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES!

8. First Downs
   a. You will have 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.

9. Scoring
   a. Touchdown 6 points
   b. Point-After-Touchdown (PAT) 1 point from 3 yard-line
   c. PAT 2 points from 10-yard line
   d. PAT 3 points from 20-yard line (midfield)
   e. 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.

10. Mercy Rule
    If a team is ahead by 17 or more points at the 2-minute warning of the second half, the game will be ruled a victory
    for the team in the lead.

11. Timeouts
    a. Each team will have 3 timeouts of 30 seconds per game.
    b. In the event of overtime, each team will have 1 timeout of 30 seconds.
    c. A timeout may only be called by a player on the field.

12. Offense
    a. There are no kickoffs. The ball will be put in-play at the 10-yard line to begin a half or following a score.
    b. The offense has 25 seconds to snap the ball between plays (i.e. 25-second play clock).
    c. The ball may be snapped between the legs or off to the side of the player.
d. The quarterback will have a 7-second count to get rid of the ball. If the ball is not away before the seven (7) seconds is up, the official will blow the whistle and the passer will be considered down at that spot (i.e. a “sack”).

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

f. All players are eligible to receive a pass.

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

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. 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.

16. 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.

a. 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

b. 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 will 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.

17. Dead Ball Situations
The ball shall be declared dead when:
   a. The ball comes in contact with the ceiling or anything hanging from the ceiling/rafters.
   b. Ball carrier falls to the ground.
   c. Ball carrier losses flags and then is touched by one (1) hand by the opponent.
   d. Incomplete pass.
   e. Ball carrier goes out of bounds.
   f. Fumbled balls are considered dead balls and cannot be advanced.
   g. A snapped ball hits the ground.
      • A snapped ball hitting the ground in the end zone is a safety

18. Overtime Rules – Regular Season
   a. 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.
   b. 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.
   c. If the defense returns a pass for a touchdown they win the game.
   d. If the defense makes a stop or intercepts the ball without scoring on the first possession, they will start from midfield with four (4) downs to score.
   e. Each team will be granted one (1) timeout per overtime period.

19. Overtime Rules – Playoffs
   a. All above overtime rules stand in the playoffs, except games will not end in a tie.
   b. If after each team has two possessions and the score remains a tie, the process will continue until a winner is determined.

20. Protests
Teams are permitted to protest. If you wish to protest in game, notify the game official and find an Intramural Supervisor right away. To file a post-game protest, email the program at intramurals@uw lax.edu or visit the online protest form here. Teams cannot protest a judgment call made by an official, only scores or rule enforcements.

21. Officiating
   a. Officials are hired and trained by the Intramural Sports Staff
      i. Officials are provided a quality hands-on experience both on and off the court/field while developing skills in conflict resolution, team building, time management, communication, and leadership.
      ii. Officials are not required to have a certification, however some officials are certified. The Intramural Sports Staff puts on sport specific training clinics prior to each season to properly inform all interested applicants.
      iii. To become an official, click here.
b. Post-game rating
   i. After each contest, captains will have the opportunity to rate and give feedback on the official’s performance and professionalism. This information will be utilized by the Intramural Sport Staff to further enhance participants experience and as a development opportunity for officials.
   ii. Rating forms will be available in-person at the Intramural Supervisor’s or scorekeeper’s table and online via the Intramural Sports “Forms and Videos” website.
   iii. Comments, Questions, Feedback can be directed to intramurals@uwlox.edu

c. The UWL Student Officials Association (SOA)
   i. The organization is comprised of students interested in the field of sports officiating and meets monthly to discuss sport-specific points of emphasis, WIAA and NFHS rule implementations, training clinics, prepare for certification exams, study game film, and much more.
   ii. The purpose of the SOA is to enhance the overall participant experience related to contest officiating in Intramural Sports in addition to introducing prospective student officials to the many components officiating brings to the UWL campus and general La Crosse community.
   iii. The SOA is open to all students, not just Intramural Officials. To learn more, please visit the Student Officials Association website.

Rule Clarifications

1. 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.

   Wearing the Flag Belt (continued)
   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.

2. 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.

3. 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 (see “Fumbles” section on next page), 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:
   a. The blocker’s arms must be kept at his/her side, in front of his/her waist, or behind his/her back.
   b. The blocker may not initiate contact with a defender.
   c. A penalty occurs when contact is initiated and there is an advantage gained.

4. 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:

- 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 that all runners hold the ball out while a defender is near.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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 will 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).

10. 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 seven (7) seconds (to be counted by the referee) to throw the ball before the
ball is declared dead at the spot (sack).

**The Playing Surface**

![Diagram of the playing surface](image)

**Drink Policy**
Participants and fans are not permitted to bring/consume alcoholic beverages at any Rec Sports facility and event. Violators of this policy will be removed from the facility and a forfeiture of the Intramural contest/suspension from Intramural activity is possible.

Any participant and/or spectator suspected of possessing an alcoholic beverage must cooperate with Rec Sports Staff.

**Drug and Alcohol Policy**
All team members (including “coaches” and “fans”) coming to any Intramural activity under the influence of alcohol
and/or drugs will be asked to leave to site of competition immediately if, in the opinion of the Rec Sports Staff, they
pose a threat to the safety, welfare, fairness, and overall enjoyment of all players, officials, and spectators. Teams/players will also face likely disciplinary measures determined by Rec Sports administration.
REC*IT – Intramural Sports’ Mobile App
All participants are invited to download the official smartphone app of UW-L Intramural Sports and IMLeagues, REC*IT! REC*IT allows users to track their personal Intramural schedules and statistics, see content updates from the Rec Sports program, interact with other participants, and much more!

Download REC*IT for FREE from the Android or iPhone stores. To learn more about REC*IT, visit recitcollege.com.

Watch the REC*IT promo video here!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

BEST OF LUCK THIS SEASON!

Like us on Facebook
UW-L Intramural Sports (official)

Follow us on Twitter
@UWLRecSports

We’d love to hear from you!
Intramural Sports Rule Suggestion Form
Intramural Sports Activity Suggestion Form
Rec Sports Feedback Form
intramurals@uwlax.edu

Click the logo to return to the Intramural Sports website