

1st Annual Eagle Football Tournament

May 17, 2019

Edison High School

5801 Franconia Road, Alexandria VA

Sponsored by the Northern Virginia Flag Football League

TOURNAMENT RULEBOOK

QUICK REFERENCE RULES -

1. This will be 5 vs 5 on the field, with coaches and players on the sidelines. Games will be 25 minutes in length with a running clock with no timeouts.
2. Teams will play at least 3 round robin tournament games, with additional playoff games for the top placing teams. Games per team may increase but will not decrease as the date of the tournament gets closer. Top teams will compete in the tournament championship in each Division.
3. Teams are responsible for providing their own gear, including jerseys and flag belts.
 - a. Only "NFL Flag" flag belts are allowed (and flags cannot be the same color as the shorts or pants, nor can the shorts or pants have any color patterns that are the same or similar color as the flags).
 - b. Jerseys may be anything matching that the team chooses. Teams must have a home (dark color) and away (white or light color) option.
 - c. Please avoid wearing shorts or pants with pockets or belt loops. These can be taped, but gameplay will not stop for taping. Also, if tape continues to come off, that player may not be able to play in the game until he or she can put on other shorts or pants.
 - d. All players must wear mouthguards. Mouthguards will be available for purchase at the NVFFL tent.
4. Only one head coach and assistant coach are allowed on the sidelines during the games. Exceptions can be made for team photo/videographers, but prior approval is necessary.
5. In case of a tie (or ties) after regulation play, head to head competition will be compared first, then total points allowed during the tournament, then the point differential (total points scored vs. points allowed). If all of this still leads to a tie, then a coin toss will determine the rankings.
6. No active screening or blocking is allowed. See rule on page 4.
7. Teams have 3 downs to gain a first down and 3 downs to score a touchdown.
8. All passes must be thrown beyond the line of scrimmage.
9. Interceptions are not returnable in point after touchdown attempts.
10. Penalties are more severe – see page 8.

Check In and Registration –

1. Check in begins at 5:00pm for all teams.

2. All players and coaches MUST be registered with NFL Flag in order to participate. You may register online at <https://www.nflflag.com/register>
3. All players are required to confirm their age and grade level during check in. Forms of ID that will work include birth certificate, passport, government issued ID, school ID, or medical record with birthday.

Rules –

1. At the start of each game, two captains from both teams shall meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who shall start with the ball. The visiting team shall call the toss.
2. The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Teams may **not** choose to defer to the second half.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has three (3) downs (or plays) to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, downs start over and they have three (3) additional downs to score a touchdown.
4. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team starts its drive on its own 5-yard line.
5. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line.
6. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense's 5-yard line.
7. Teams change sides after the first half (12:30 each half). Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.

Field –

1. Field is 70 x 30, with two 7-10 yard end zones.
2. No run zones will be enforced 5 yards from the first down marker and 5 yards to the end zone.

Timing and Overtime –

1. Games will be 25 minutes in length, with two 12:30 minute halves. Halftime will be one minute.
2. Once the ball is spotted and the whistle is blown, the offensive team will have 25 seconds to snap the ball.
3. Teams have NO timeouts.
4. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
5. If the score is tied at the end of regulation, an overtime period will begin. Overtime format is as follows:
 - a. A coin toss will determine the team that chooses to start on offense or defense.
 - i. If additional rounds of overtime are needed, the possession will rotate between each team.
 - b. Each team will take turns getting one play from the defense's 5 yard line (one point) or 12 yard line (two points).

- i. EXAMPLE – if Team A is on offense and goes for one and scores, Team B will have an opportunity to also go for one point an tie, thus sending the game to a second overtime, or go for two and win (if converted).
- c. Both teams must go for two points starting with the 3rd round of overtime.
- d. Only the winning team will have additional points added to their final score.
- e. There are no timeouts in overtime.

Scoring –

- 1. Touchdown – 6 points
- 2. PAT (point after touchdown)
 - a. 1-point – 5 yard line and must be a pass
 - b. 2-point – 12 yard line and can be a run or pass play
- 3. Safety – 2 points
- 4. When a touchdown is scored, the scoring team’s coach must tell the official if they would like to go for one or two. Once a decision has been made, the team cannot change its choice.
- 5. Should one team get ahead by 28 or more points, the game is over.

Live Ball/Dead Ball –

- 1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
- 2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is a dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense is in the neutral zone when the ball is snapped. An official may give both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.
- 3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
- 4. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals or attempt to communicate with anyone on offense while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.
- 5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- 6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
- 7. Play is ruled “dead” when:
 - a. The ball hits the ground.
 - b. The ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
 - c. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - d. A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
 - e. The ball carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground (only a ball carrier’s hands and feet are allowed to touch the ground).
 - f. The ball carrier’s flag falls out.
 - g. The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
 - h. The 7 second pass clock expires.
 - i. Inadvertent whistle.

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet were at the time of the fumble.

8. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
 - a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew, and the down is consumed.
 - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.

Running –

1. The ball is spotted where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the player's front foot.
 - a. Exception – if a player dives to make a catch and makes the catch and is on the ground – the ball will be placed where the catch occurred and not where his or her feet were.
2. The quarterback cannot directly cross the line of scrimmage with the ball. The quarterback is the first offensive player that receives the snap. But, if the quarterback gets rid of the ball in some manner, the quarterback is eligible to receive a pass.
3. Direct handoffs are only permitted behind the line of scrimmage. Handoffs may be in front, behind, or to the side of the offensive player, but must be behind the line of scrimmage. Only one hand off per play is permitted. The QB must be in clear possession of the ball in order to hand it off.
4. Absolutely NO hand-offs, laterals or pitches of any kind beyond the line of scrimmage or down field ("Hook and Ladder" plays are illegal). One lateral or pitch is allowed in the backfield before the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage.
5. "No-Run Zones," located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to use run plays in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE.
(Reminder: Each offensive squad approaches only TWO No-Run Zones in each drive – one 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).
6. Any player who takes a handoff behind the line of scrimmage can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
7. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
8. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping, or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding. This rule does not apply to defenders going for the flag (i.e., diving for a flag), but if contact is made, the defender may be called for a holding penalty.
 - a. Exception: Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a flag guarding penalty enforced.
9. Spinning is allowed, but players may not leave their feet to avoid a flag pull. Lateral moves to the left or right are permitted.
10. No active blocking or screening is allowed. Any offensive players downfield must stop their forward progression and stand still if they are near the ball carrier (within 10 yards). Officials will use judgement to see if active screening is occurring.

11. Flag Obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding. Officials may give a warning and but cannot stop the clock to allow a player to tuck in a jersey.

Passing –

1. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - a. All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes.
2. Shovel passes are allowed. A shovel pass is a pass that is shoved from the chest toward the player – no underhand tosses are allowed.
3. The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock” if the defense does not blitz. If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, lateralled or passed to another player, the 7-second rule no longer is in effect.
 - a. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).

Receiving –

1. All players are eligible to receive passes.
2. One player is allowed in motion at the time of a snap. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage (and not moving towards the LOS) at the time of the snap.
3. A player must have a least one foot inbounds when making a reception. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
4. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
5. Interceptions are returnable, but not on conversions after touchdowns.

Rushing the Passer –

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
 - a. A legal rush is:
 - i. Any rush from a point 7-yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
 - ii. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.

- iii. If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7-yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
 - iv. If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before he/she crosses the line of scrimmage, he/she may legally rush the quarterback.
 - b. A penalty may be called if:
 - i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
 - ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5-yards from line of scrimmage and first down).
 - iii. Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
 - c. Special circumstances:
 - i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the seven second clock in effect.
 - ii. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.
- 4. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, contact to the QB, unless ruled incidental by the official, would result in a roughing the passer penalty.
- 5. The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. If the “path or line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher’s path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. **If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher’s responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.**
- 6. A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball is placed where the quarterback’s feet are when flag is pulled.
 - a. A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

Flag Pulling –

- 1. A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- 2. Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
- 3. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier’s possession at any time.
- 4. If a player’s flag inadvertently falls off during the play, the player is down immediately upon possession of the ball and the play ends.
- 5. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
- 6. Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender’s access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jerseys.

Formations –

1. Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
 - a. One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.
 - b. No motion is allowed toward the line of scrimmage.
2. Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
3. Shifting is allowed, but once the QB starts cadence, multiple players moving will be called illegal motion.
 - a. EXAMPLE – a team may get set, and the first command from the QB may be to have the team shift. This is ok. Once the QB starts cadence and then more than one player moves on the second command, it will be an illegal shift.
4. The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct –

1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act (including verbal abuse), the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**
2. Offensive or confrontational language is not allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.
3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
4. Ball-carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
5. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
6. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well:
 - a. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.
 - b. Keep comments clean and profanity free.
 - c. Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.
7. Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:
 - a. Defense + 10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
 - b. Offense - 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

Penalties –

1. The referee will call all penalties.
2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted.
4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question calls.
5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.

6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

Defensive Penalties

Defensive unnecessary roughness	+10 yards and automatic first down
Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards and automatic first down
Offside	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (Before the receiver has the ball)	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Roughing the passer	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
Taunting	+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down

Offensive Penalties

Offensive unnecessary roughness	-10 yards and loss of down
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards and loss of down
Offside / false start	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal forward pass (Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Offensive pass interference	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal motion	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Delay of game	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Impeding the rusher	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
Illegal Procedure	-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down