

# **SOUTH SHORE FLAG FOOTBALL**

## **LEAGUE RULE BOOK**

Revised August 2022

### **EQUIPMENT**

1. Every coach will be provided with a football, flags, and SSFFL Dri-Fit jersey for each player on their team. Teams will use the football provided by the league or league approved football that matches the size for their division.
2. Jersey's must be tucked in while playing.
3. All players must wear a mouthpiece.
4. All players should have 3 exposed flags on their belts while in the game.
5. Teams should use the football assigned to them, or another ball of equal size that is approved by the league.

### **ROSTERS**

1. Each team will field 6 players on offense and defense.
2. If a team cannot field 6 players at the start of the game, the game can start as a 5 on 5. If a team does not have the players to start the game, they will be penalized (See, Timing #7).
3. In accordance with good sportsmanship, the opposing team should match the number of players the opposing team has to start the game.
4. Only players who are registered and on a team's roster are eligible to play for that team.

### **TIMING**

1. All divisions are played on a 50 minute continuous clock with two twenty-five minute halves. The clock will stop only for timeouts until the 1-minute warning in each half.
2. At the one minute warning, the clock will stop for timeouts, incomplete passes, ball carriers running out of bounds, penalties, extra points and change of possession. It does not stop on a first down if the ball carrier gets flagged in bounds. The clock starts again on the offensive snap.
3. Halftime is only 1 minute long (2nd half clock starts on referee's whistle).
4. Each time the ball (puck) is spotted, the offensive team has 40 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced. Please try to keep the games moving at a good pace.
5. Teams will have 3 timeouts per game.

6. If the score is tied at the end of 50 minutes, the game will be determined a tie. (Play-off tie breaker rules in postseason play)

7. All games will start on time. If a team does not have enough players at the start of the game, that team will have a 15 minute wait period. The game clock starts and will run as if the game was being played. Once 15 minutes has elapsed the game is considered a forfeit (18-0). If the team has enough players before the 15 minutes has elapsed the opponent will get the ball or choice of direction at the start of both halves.

## **FIELDS**

1. The overall field dimensions are 70 yards by 30 yards. This includes two 10-yard end zones. The midfield line (first down line) is 25 yards away from each end zone.

## **START OF GAME**

1. At the start of each game, the home team will decide if they want to play offense or **choose direction** (no coin toss).

2. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their own 5 yard line and it's 1st & 20 (to mid-field). Once a team crosses the mid-field line, it becomes 1st & Goal from that spot.

3. If the offensive team does not score a touchdown, the opposing team starts with the ball on their own 5 yard line. If the defensive team intercepts the ball, they will start at the spot they get flagged. Any interception that gets flagged within the 5 yard line is considered a touchback and that team will begin the drive at their 5 yard line.

## **SCORING**

1. Touchdown: 6 points

2. PAT (Point After Touchdown) - 1 point (from 5 yard line) or 2 points (from 12 yard line). Offensive team determines if they want to go for 1 or 2.

3. Safety: 2 points (No safeties in Pee-Wee Division)

4. A team's +/- cannot exceed 18 points per game. Blowing a team out by 18+ points or getting a "shutout" doesn't matter for the standings. If a team is winning by 18+ points and gets possession of the ball in the last 2 minutes of the second half, **the game clock will not stop for any reason.**

## **PLAYING DEFENSE**

1. Once the ball is snapped the referee will count to 3 Mississippi. Defensive players must wait for the completion of the count before crossing the line of scrimmage or they will be penalized for off-sides.

2. Once the QB throws, tosses, hands the ball off or attacks the line of scrimmage as a "runner" or runs the "option" the count stops and the defensive players may cross the line of scrimmage.

3. The QB is allowed to roll out of the pocket as a passer (no pass rush), but is considered a “runner” once he/she attacks the line of scrimmage.
4. If the ball carrier’s flag belt unintentionally falls off for any reason during a play, the defensive team needs to one hand touch the ball carrier.
5. Defensive players who play on the line (at the puck) must give room between themselves and the center.

## PLAYING OFFENSE

- 1a. **Pee-Wee division** - the center will snap or hand the ball to the QB to start the offensive play. Quarterbacks must complete a football move (fake handoff, drop back and pump) **before running while under center**.
- 1b. **Rookie division** - if the QB is under center, the center must snap the ball in a continuous motion between their legs to begin the play. No direct QB sneaks or Center keeps are allowed while under center.
- 1c. **All other divisions** - the center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to another player in the backfield. There must be clear separation (3-5 yards) between the Center and QB exchange (shotgun). While in shotgun there are not any restrictions with the QB running.
2. If the snap is dropped only the QB can pick up the ball to continue the offensive play. If another member of the team picks up the ball, the play will be whistled dead and spotted at original LOS. The defense must still listen for the 3 Mississippi count before crossing the **puck (line of scrimmage)** if there is a dropped or bad snap.
3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception. If the ball carrier steps on the line, they are considered out of bounds.
4. All players are eligible to receive the ball, including the QB and Center.
5. The offensive runner must try to avoid a collision at all times with the defender when running with the ball. If contact occurs the offensive player can be called for charging or roughing.
6. **For safety reasons**, the ball carrier should not dive forward to advance the ball. The play will be whistled dead at the spot, if the player leaves their feet and dives forward.
7. The spot of the ball is determined by the front of the runner’s hips (flags), not where the ball is. Do not reach out the ball for a 1st down or TD. The referee will be watching hips/flags to determine the spot. Both the ball and the players hips/flags must break the line when going for a 1st down or TD.
8. Flag guarding is any attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender’s access to their flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or intentionally covering the flags with their jersey or football.
9. **No blocking, picks or screens**. Players who do not have the ball can run in a continuous line, but are not permitted to alter their path to get in the way of a defender.

10. There are no fumbles in flag football. If a runner inadvertently fumbles or drops the ball while running, the play will be whistled dead at that spot. **If a defender “strips” the ball from the runner the offense will replay the down from that spot or the original LOS (if the foul occurs behind the LOS).** If the offensive team drops the ball on a basic handoff the play will be whistled dead and spotted at the original LOS.

11. If the offensive team runs an option or tosses the ball backwards during a play, the defensive team can “intercept” the toss and run it back for a touchdown. If the ball touches the ground or is swatted away by a defender, the play will be blown dead at that spot.

12. If the ball carrier’s knee touches the ground, the play will be blown dead.

13. The offensive team is allowed to complete two forward passes during a play, as long as the first pass does not cross the line of scrimmage. This is to eliminate any judgment calls on a double pass.

14. Any time the offense “self-destructs”, the ball will be spotted back at the original LOS. This includes an initial fumbled handoff or any other play that is not directly caused by a defensive player. In the Pee-Wee division the offensive team will never start inside their own 5 yard line.

15. There is no longer a “No Run Zone”.

## **COACHES**

1. One coach may be in the offensive and defensive huddles before the play (Pee-wee 2 coaches). The coaches must back out of the way before the snap. In all divisions the defensive coach should be completely out of the way.

2. All coaches are encouraged to stay positive with their players during the game and demonstrate good sportsmanship for their team and the fans.

3. Please encourage your players to play until they hear the whistle on offense and defense.

4. **CURSING IS PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES!** Disciplinary action will be taken if heard by a league official. Let’s set a good example for the kids and the fans.

## **STANDINGS**

- All teams will play 6 games and receive 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie and 0 points for a loss.
- A team’s +/- will also be recorded for tie breaker situations (maximum +/- 18 points per game).
- In the event of a team having the same record and the same +/- the tie breaker will include head-to-head, record vs common opponents, +/- vs common opponents, then strength of schedule (opponent’s points).

## **PENALTIES**

\* All offensive penalties will be whistled dead and marked off where and when they happen (play stops).

\* The referee will call the game as they see it. Please respect their final decision and set a good example for your team.

\* All players, coaches and parents are expected to behave in a positive manner. Players or coaches who taunt an opposing team or demonstrate unsportsmanlike behavior could be penalized and disciplined for their actions.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

League officials and referees can remove any player or fan from a game or field of play, if that person exhibits non-compliant behavior of our league expectations. We want everyone to have a positive experience while at the field and the safety of our players is our number one priority. Please do your part to help us create a welcoming environment for all players and guests. Thank you.

### **OFFENSIVE PENALTIES**

| <b>Penalty</b>        | <b>Yards</b>         | <b>Extra</b> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| False Start (no play) | 5 yards - from LOS   | Replay Down  |
| Delay of Game         | 5 yards – from LOS   | Replay Down  |
| Flag Shield/Stiff Arm | Dead at spot of foul | Loss of Down |
| Blocking/Screening    | Dead at spot of foul | Loss of Down |
| Charging/Roughing     | Dead at spot of foul | Loss of Down |
| Pass Interference     | 5 yards – from LOS   | Loss of Down |
| Illegal Forward Pass  | Original Spot - LOS  | Loss of Down |

### **DEFENSIVE PENALTIES**

| <b>Penalty</b>            | <b>Yards</b>        | <b>Extra</b>           |
|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Off-Sides (continue play) | 5 Yards – from LOS  | Decline or Replay Down |
| Holding the Ball Carrier  | 5 Yards – from SPOT | Auto 1 <sup>st</sup>   |
| Pass Interference         | SPOT FOUL           | Auto 1 <sup>st</sup>   |
| Unnecessary Roughness     | 5 Yards – from SPOT | Auto 1 <sup>st</sup>   |
| Stripping                 | SPOT FOUL           | Replay Down            |
| Holding (without Ball)    | 5 Yards – from LOS  | Replay Down            |