



## GRIFFITH SPORT - SOCIAL SPORT COMPETITION

### Competition Rules – Flag Gridiron

All players are responsible for reading and understanding the sport specific rules contained herein. If there are any rules that are not clear please discuss these with the referee prior to the commencement of the game or at half time. Due to the time constraints of this competition the referees will not clarify rules or rulings during the game. All participants are also required to read and understand the Griffith Social Sport Terms and Conditions which contain information regarding uniforms, eligibility, wet weather, injury insurance and more.

Unless otherwise stated in these rules, Flag Gridiron rules apply as outlined by the Gridiron Australia Flag Football Competition Rules. All rules are open to the interpretation of the referee and their decision is final.

#### **RULE 1: Team Composition & Player Requirements**

- a) A team may have a maximum squad of twelve (12) players.
- b) Seven (7) players are allowed on the field at one time.
- c) In mixed competitions a maximum of five (5) males can be on the field at any one time.
- d) In open competitions a team may have any number of male or female players on the field so long as the previous point (1b) is satisfied.
- e) Four (4) players is the minimum number of players that a team can have without a forfeit resulting. Teams may commence games with four players provided the previous point (1c) is satisfied.
- f) All teams must adhere to the Uniform requirements set out in the Griffith Social Sport Terms and Conditions, breaches of this will result in playing points penalty imposed at half time of the match.

#### **RULE 2: Interchange**

- a) Teams can make as many substitutions as they like in a game. Substitutions can only take place when the game has stopped and play is ruled "dead", the referee must also be notified e.g. (Play is ruled "dead" when the referee blows his whistle, the ball carrier's flag is pulled or becomes illegal, when points are scored or when any part of the ball carrier's body, other than his hand or foot touches the ground.)
- b) The exiting player/s must be completely off the field before the substitution can take place.
- c) It is the responsibility of individual teams and team captains to ensure that they maintain the appropriate number of players on the field in accordance with Rule 1. It is NOT the responsibility of the referee to monitor this.
- d) Time wasting during substitutions may result in a penalty to the opposing team.

#### **RULE 3: Game Duration**

- Games consist of 2 by 20 minute halves with the half time break not exceeding three (3) minutes. Teams must change ends at half time.
- No clock stoppages will be made except under exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Referee and Sport Convenor.
- Each team has two 30 second timeouts that can be used in each half. These do not carry over if unused from the first half to the second half. Only on field players can signal the referee for a timeout. The game clock will NOT stop during a timeout.
- If a game commences late (and is not deemed a forfeit) then it still must finish at the scheduled time. If such a circumstance arises, the halves may be shortened. This is at the discretion of the Sport Convenor.

#### **RULE 4: Game Commencement**

- a) Teams should arrive 15 minutes prior to the commencement of their match to allow for smooth transition of games.
- b) Any teams that are not ready to commence play with a minimum of 4 appropriate players (Rule 1), ten (10) minutes after the referee has signalled the game can start will incur a 0- 21 forfeit loss.  
NB. The game may go ahead after 10 minutes; however the 0-21 loss will stand regardless of the actual score.
- c) In all circumstances the game must finish at the scheduled time.
- d) A coin toss determines first possession. The winner of the coin toss has possession of the football and the other team will have the choice of the end zone to defend.

### **RULE 5: Game Play**

- Flag Gridiron is non-contact, tackling, blocking or kicking the ball is not allowed.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) plays to cross the midfield. Once a team crosses the midfield, it has four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to cross the midfield or score within their play limit, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line. An automatic first down by penalty will overrule the other requirements regarding four (4) plays to make either a first down or score.
- All possession changes start on the offense's 5-yard line except in the case of interceptions.
- To start a play both teams line up opposite each other in a line of scrimmage at the spot indicated by the referee. The center player has 30 seconds from when the ball was spotted to snap the ball backwards to the quarterback. The offensive team then attempts to either run or pass the ball in order to score.
- The center is the player who gives the ball to the quarterback via a snap.
- The quarterback is the player who receives the ball directly from the snap.
- The defensive team must try and stop the offensive team from scoring by removing one of the flags attached to the ball carrier.

### **RULE 6: Sport Specific Rules**

#### ***a) Flags***

- Players must have their flags clearly displayed and not obscured by articles of clothing or equipment.
- If a ball carrier's flag falls off, play will be dead and the ball will be spotted where the flag fell off.
- Players are ineligible to catch a pass or receive the ball if their flag has fallen off.
- A player cannot guard their flags from the defensive team.
- The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are placed when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

#### ***b) Running***

- After the snap the center cannot take a direct hand off back from the quarterback (no center sneak play).
- The quarterback cannot run with the ball past the line of scrimmage, unless he has handed the ball off, tossed or pitched, and it has been returned to him.
- The offensive team may use multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage. Only backward & lateral handoffs are allowed during the down.
- Tosses or sweeps behind the line of scrimmage are allowed and are running plays.
- Once the ball carrier has crossed the line of scrimmage the ball cannot be handed off, tossed, pitched or passed in any way.
- "No-running zones," are located 5 yards in front of each end zone. When the ball is spotted on or inside the 5-yard line going towards the opponent's end zone, the offense cannot make a run play (only a pass play can be made to score).
- The player who takes the handoff, toss or pitch can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- All defensive players are eligible to rush once the ball has been handed off or tossed, or there is a play action fake or fake handoff.
- Spinning is allowed, but the ball carrier cannot dive forward or jump to avoid a defensive player or gain yardage (no diving).

#### ***c) Receiving***

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off or tossed behind the line of scrimmage).
- A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

#### ***d) Passing***

- Only players starting a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage can rush the passer. Once the ball is handed off or tossed, or there is a play action fake or fake handoff, the 7 yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
- Only one forward pass, thrown from behind the line of scrimmage is allowed in a down.

**e) Interceptions**

- Interceptions change the possession of the ball.
- Interceptions can be returned by the defense to the opposing end zone for a score of 6 points.
- When Interceptions occur and remain in the end zone, the ball will become dead and will result in the ball belonging to the intercepting team at its 5-yard line.
- Should an interception occur in the end zone and the ball carrier leaves the end zone and then returns and is deflagged or the ball become dead the result would be a safety for the other team.

**f) Scoring**

- Safety - 2 points (an offensive player gets their flag pulled while in their own end zone)
- Touchdown - 6 points
- Extra Point - 1 point (played from the midpoint of the 5-yard line only)
- Extra Point - 2 points (played from the midpoint of the 12-yard line only)

NB. An interception return to opponent's end zone on any extra point play by the defence will result in the defence scoring 2 points plus possession for the next series at their 5-yard line.

- Bonus Extra Point – 2 points (will be awarded on top of the standard 6 points for a touchdown if there is a female quarterback or if a female player scores the touchdown)

NB. Bonus extra points are compoundable. If there is both a female quarterback and a female player scores the touchdown then 4 extra points will be awarded.

**RULE 7: Penalties/Sin Bin**

- This competition is social. Any rough play, abusive language, backchat or challenge to the referee's authority etc. will not be tolerated. Team captains must take responsibility for their team and ensure all matches are contested in the spirit of the game.
- Rough play includes any form of aggressive contact, tackling, blocking and any other act or omission that, in the referees opinion, places the safety of players at risk.

In most instances the following procedure will apply for the above infringements. Note however that the referee is entitled to send off any player at any stage for any reason for any period of time if they feel it necessary to do so for player safety or their ability to effectively control the game.

***Game Penalties***

- All penalties are 5 yards. The down will be repeated unless otherwise noted, and will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.
- All penalties may be declined by the non-offending team by signalling the referee, except a false start.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
- Penalties after an interception shall be assessed after the return is over and/or the play is blown dead.

***Defensive Penalties***

- Offside - 5 yards.
- Substitution fouls - 5 yards (player enters field after ball is blown ready for play, i.e. to deceive the opponents, or breaches rule 1b or 1c).
- Disconcerting signals - 5 yards (signals to distract / simulate offensive signals prior to snap).
- Interference with opponent or ball at the snap - 5 yards.
- Illegal rushing - 5 yards (starting rush from inside 7-yard from the line of scrimmage).
- Interference - 5 yards and automatic first down.
- Illegal contact - 5 yards and automatic first down (holding, blocking, etc.).
- Illegal flag pull - 5 yards and automatic first down (before receiver has ball).

### ***Offensive Penalties***

- Flag guarding - 5 yards.
- Delay of game - 5 yards (failing to snap the ball within 30 seconds of it being spotted).
- Substitution fouls - 5 yards (player enters field after ball is blown ready for play, i.e. to deceive the opponents, or breaches rule 1b or 1c).
- Illegal motion - 5 yards (more than one person moving, etc.).
- False start - 5 yards (crossing the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped, this cannot be declined).
- Illegal snap - 5 yards.
- Illegal shift or failure to pause for 1 second (players must stop motion before the ball is snapped) - 5 yards.
- Offensive holding - 5 yards.
- Diving/Jumping - 5 yards.
- Player out of bounds - 5 yards (if player goes out of bounds, player cannot return to the field and catch ball).
- Illegal forward pass - 5 yards and loss of down (a second forward pass or after ball has crossed the line of scrimmage).
- Offensive pass interference - 5 yards and loss of down (illegal pick play, pushing off/away a defender).
- Running inside a no running zone is a loss of down at the previous spot.

### **RULE 8: Points**

Points are awarded in matches as follows:

Win - 3 Points

Bye - 3 Points

Draw - 2 Points

Loss - 1 Point

Forfeit - 0 Points

In the event of tied points at the end of round matches, placing's will be determined by for and against point count.

### **RULE 9: Finals**

- During Finals matches in the event of a tied game, extra time will be played. A coin toss will determine first possession of overtime. The team winning the coin toss starts with the ball on its own 5-yard line. Play continues as in regulation until one team scores.
  - There will be no time outs granted during the overtime period.
  - Before a winner can be declared, both teams must have had possession. If a team scores before their opponents have had possession, the touchdown counts and the match commences as per normal after a touchdown is awarded. Once possession is lost the winner is then confirmed.