

Always exhibit sportsmanship and honesty. And have some fun.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. The following rules shall govern all teams and leagues of the adult flag football program under the jurisdiction of the Solvang Recreation Department. All other rules will be administered in accordance with the Southern California Municipal Athletic Federation Flag Football Rules 2003-2004.

B. The City of Solvang will not assume responsibility for personal injury or property damages to persons participating in this adult sport activity. The participant recognizes there is a risk of injury by participating in this program.

C. The City Recreation Staff shall serve as League Director and retains final authority to make decisions pertaining to all league rules and regulations.

D. All players must have a legal identification (photo i.d., Driver's License) with them on game days at the playing field to verify team rosters if necessary.

II. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY/TEAM ROSTERS/LATE ROSTER ADDS

A. A roster of players is to include names, addresses, phone numbers, and signatures of ALL players. The maximum number of players on a team roster is 16. The minimum number of players on a team roster is 7. Team rosters must be submitted prior to the start of the season. If a team fails to submit the roster, that team will forfeit every game until the roster is received and accepted by the Recreation Department.

B. A player must be eighteen (18) years of age and out of high school to participate.

C. Each Team Manager Assumes the Responsibility of assuring that each of his players are legally rostered. A player found to be "illegal" for whatever reason is subjecting his team to forfeit his Team Manager to a suspension, and himself to a suspension.

D. A player whose name appears on one or more rosters will have to "legally" participate on the team he plays for first in league play.

E. Players cannot be added to a Team Roster after the second game is played unless through the "Late Add" process. No players may be added to the roster one game after mid-season. **Teams to add players through this "Late Add" process need the approval from the league director and all other managers in the league prior to letting new players participate by way of signatures on a "Late Add" form available in the recreation department office. The newly added player(s) must then wait one regular season game before being eligible to play. All players must play a minimum of two regular season games before being eligible for the playoffs.*

III. PLAYERS, EQUIPMENT AND FIELD

A. The playing field will be 100 yards in length and 40 yards in width. It shall be marked with two 10-yard end zones and divided into four 20-yard zones, marked by orange cones/markers. The 20-yard zones will be divided in half for recognition of ball placement. The ball will always be placed for play in the center (vertically) of the field. I.e. balls will not be placed on the left or right of center as is common in the NFL.

B. The number of players per team will be seven (7). Four (4) offensive men must be on the line of scrimmage at the time of the snap. No player on the line of scrimmage shall be in a three- or four-point stance.

Teams may play with as few players as they wish without forfeiting. However, game time is forfeit time. If game is to be played with a shortage of players it **will** count as an official game. With six (6) or less players, three (3) men must be on the line of scrimmage.

C. No steel cleats or hard plastic cleats will be allowed. Only rubber-cleated football, soccer or any other rubber soled athletic shoes may be worn.

D. Players wearing any type of casts will not be permitted to participate in the game.

E. Teams must register the color of their uniform with the league director at time of team registration. Teams may choose their color on a first come, first serve basis. Each team must ultimately have a different color uniform (shirt) throughout the season.

F. Players must tuck in their shirts so as not to hinder flag removal.

G. Loose fitting clothing and certain rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings may have to be removed if it is deemed that they are hazardous. Wedding bands may be worn but they must be taped.

H. The home team is responsible for "manning" the down marker during their game.

I. A tied flag will constitute an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty of 15 yards. If the penalty occurs behind the line of scrimmage, the ball will be

placed 15 yards from the spot of the foul. If the penalty occurs past the line of scrimmage, the ball will return to the original spot (line of scrimmage) and the 15-yard penalty will be assigned from that point. There will also be a loss of down. The unsportsmanlike penalty will also go against the player who 'tied' the flag. If that player receives a second unsportsmanlike penalty, he will be ejected from the game.

IV. PLAYING TIME

A. Regulation game length will consist of two 20-minute halves and one five-minute halftime. The time will not stop except in the following cases:

1. Time-outs (each team will have two 45-second time-outs per half).

2. At the two-minute warning of the second half only. In the first half the two-minute clock will stop, however, for timeouts or an injury severe enough to stop the clock which is decided by official's discretion. During playoffs, there will be a standard two-minute warning in the first and second half.

3. During the last two minutes of a half a regulation clock will be used. An official is in charge of the regulation clock.

4. If the offensive team commits a penalty with less than 15 seconds left in the half the half will end.

5. The half cannot end on a defensive penalty.

B. After the ball is set the offensive team will have 25 seconds to snap the ball.

C. In the event of a tie at the end of regulation an overtime period will be played.

1. A coin toss will determine who receives the ball first.

2. Overtime Rules: Each team gets one opportunity to score with a four-down series from the defender's 20-yard line. If during this series, the defending team takes possession of the ball through an interception or other means and scores immediately the game is over with the defending team becoming the victor. If, however, the defending team takes possession of the ball but fails to score on that possession they then simply take their turn with a four-down series from the new defending team's 20-yard line. (Regardless of what down a team scores on, once a team has scored they do not get to use the rest of their downs if they have any left and possession of the ball is now given to the other team.) If the first overtime results in a tie, a double overtime will commence. If the double overtime results in a tie the game's final result will be recorded as a tie.

3. Each team will receive one additional time-out for the overtime period. Teams may not carry their time-outs from regulation into the OT period.

D. Game time if forfeit time. A double forfeit will be declared if both teams cannot start at game time. A team that forfeits two games in succession or three games during the season may be dropped from the league. All games will be counted as wins for the opposition.

V. KICKOFFS AND PUNTS

A. Each game will begin with a coin toss. The winner of the coin toss can choose to (a) begin the game on offense **or** (b) defend a goal of their choice or (c) defer the choice. The team that receives the ball in the first half will then kick ball in second half, regardless.

B. There will be no kickoffs. The receiving team will begin on their 20-yard line. The ball shall be put into play on the 20-yard line at the beginning of the 3rd quarter and after each touchdown and/or conversion.

C. All punts must be announced (no fake punts). No player can cross the line of scrimmage until the ball has been kicked. Punts can be signaled with a fair catch. Punts must be run back or downed. The receiver cannot throw the ball downfield.

VI. FIRST DOWNS

A. The offensive team will have four (4) plays to advance the ball beyond the next cone, which will be placed at 20-yard intervals. For example: a team starting on the 20-yard line must advance the ball to the 40-yard line in four plays.

B. If the team loses yardage; they still have to advance the ball to the original new cone. If a team starts a possession on the 22-yard line, and then loses three yards they still must go to the 40-yard line for the first down.

VII. GENERAL GAME RULES

A. Any ball that is fumbled is a dead ball at the spot where the player fumbled the ball. There are two exceptions:

1. *On snaps.* If the ball hits the ground on a bad hike, the ball will be live and may be recovered by the offensive team only if picked up cleanly. If the ball touches the Quarter back and then hits the ground it is dead where it hits the ground unless it is batted forward in which it is down where it made contact with the quarterback. Once the quarterback has touched the ball, it will be considered live until it hits the ground.

2. *On punts.* The ball is not considered dead if it hits the ground before touching a player. The ball is considered dead if it is fumbled after a player has touched the ball.

B. The ball carrier is down if his knees touch the ground.

C. Blockers may extend their hands/arms in front of them, with elbows bent, or laterally; but beware of the holding call. There is no blocking in the back, or below the waist. Blockers may not leave their feet. All blocks where the feet have left the ground are illegal. No body blocks.

D. Absolutely no downfield blocking will be allowed at any time during the game. Once the ball carrier has crossed the line of scrimmage all offensive players must not move toward any defensive player. If a penalty is assigned, the ball will be placed at the point of the foul and the penalty (yards lost) will be assigned from that point.

E. Only defensive players on the line of scrimmage can rush. Linebackers, corners or other men on the defensive side of the field may rush if and only if they come up to the line during the quarterback count and then pause on the line before rushing. They may not start their approach in the backfield and then “storm” through the line.

F. Blocking is allowed three yards downfield by linemen within ten feet of center either side. No players outside that area may block downfield.

G. Backfield blocking. An offensive player may engage in backfield blocking with a defensive player and then re-engage with another defensive player within ten (10) yards back of the original line of scrimmage. However, after the ten (10) yard mark the offensive player may only engage with the last defensive player they were engaged with in the original ten (10) yards from the line of scrimmage. Offensive players may not pursue a defensive player with the intention of blocking if their quarterback has left the “pocket”.

H. Straight-arming and guarding the flags are illegal.

I. The ball carrier must attempt to evade the tackler. Deliberately running into the tackler will be illegal. Furthermore, it is illegal for a ball carrier to duck his head and run.

J. Defensive players must play the flag rather than the man. Tackling is illegal. If a player reaches for a flag but grabs clothing instead, he must let go immediately.

K. A defensive player may dive for the flags of an offensive player.

L. It is illegal to push a ball carrier out of bounds.

M. All players are eligible to receive a pass.

N. If a player's flag has fallen off then he only needs to be touched below the neck to be considered down.

O. After the ball is snapped, unlimited forward passes may be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage.

P. The snap must be through the center's legs.

Q. No three-point or four-point stances will be allowed.

R. Wrapping the flags around the belt will be illegal.

S. Intercepted passes may be run out of an opponent's end zone.

T. Blocking passes overhead/overhead is allowed but blocker cannot touch the quarterback – unless it is incidental contact, which will be judged at the official's discretion.

U. If the ball is hiked over the quarterback's head without the quarterback touching the ball then it is considered live.

V. No stripping of the ball is allowed.

W. Repeated abuse of unsportsmanlike conduct or unnecessary roughness may be deemed sufficient justification for suspension.

X. Intentional grounding (no legal receiver within/near vicinity of pass) will be considered a sack and the ball will be placed at point of release from player responsible for intentional grounding.

Y. Last line of defense. If the ball carrier is held, tackled or intentionally tripped by a defensive player and the official deems that defensive player to be the last player between the ball carrier and the end zone, a touchdown will be awarded to the offense (or ball carrier's team) just as if he had scored. This does NOT apply to pass interference calls or holding before a player has possession of the ball

Z. The home team and visiting team will occupy opposite sidelines. The home team will occupy the northern sideline (closest to the softball diamond) and the visiting team will occupy the southern sideline (closest to Coyote Creek Rd).

VIII. PENALTIES

Regarding all penalties – If a penalty occurs that does not directly affect the outcome of a play or is sufficiently away/removed from the play, unless it is unsportsmanlike or flagrant (i.e. flagrant foul), the penalty will not be acknowledged.

A. Loss of five (5) yards:

1. Failure to announce intention to punt.
2. Guarding the flag.
3. Using a three-point or four-point stance.
4. Stiff arming.
5. Illegal snap.
6. If any player on the field does not have a flag and “breaks huddle” to prepare for an offensive or defensive player it will be considered a delay of game.

7. Other standard five (5) yard football penalties.

B. Loss of ten (10) yards:

1. Illegal tackling.
2. Blocking in the back or below the waist.
3. Pass interference.
4. Offensive man running into defensive man.
5. Illegal player on the field (ex. eighth player).

C. Loss of fifteen (15) yards:

1. Unsportsmanlike conduct / personal foul.
2. Unnecessary roughness.
3. Tying the flag.

IX. SCORING

A. Touchdown will be worth six (6) points.

B. Try for extra point conversions will begin from the 3-yard line.

1. One (1) point will be awarded for running the ball across the goal line.
2. Two (2) points will be awarded for passing the ball across the goal

line.

3. If an interception is returned for a touchdown during an extra point attempt, that team will be awarded two (2) points.

C. Two (2) points will be awarded for a safety. After the safety occurs the team scoring the safety will be awarded the ball at their own 20. There will be no punts or kickoffs.

D. Playoff positioning may be determined through tiebreakers.

Tiebreaker 1: Head to Head Competition. Tiebreaker 2: Head to Head Point Spread/Total. Tiebreaker 3: Head to Head Competition vs. Playoff Teams. Tiebreaker 4: Head to Head Point Spread/Total with Playoff Teams.

E. Forward progress is marked on the ball, not the player when the flags have been pulled. Exception: when the ball carrier extends the ball forward, progress is then marked at his waist.

X. AWARDS

Individual awards will be given to the first place teams. Awards are sacrificed if not picked up within 60 days of the end of the season.

XI. CONDUCT

1. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Unsportsmanlike conduct can be defined as fighting, using profanity, trash talking, taunting, and basically anything that could be considered to instigate a verbal or physical altercation. Coaches are reminded that they are responsible for their conduct as well as the conduct of their players. This is a **flag** football league; unnecessary roughness will be strictly enforced. Players ejected from a game will receive, at minimum, an additional one game suspension. The department will review each case to determine if a more severe penalty is warranted. A suspension may range from one game to permanent disqualification.

2. Consuming alcohol prior to, or during games, is not permitted. A team or player may be subjecting themselves to a forfeit and/or a suspension if caught violating this SCMAF and City of Solvang rule. Consuming alcohol or tobacco on school property is a violation of state law. Minimum penalty: suspension from two league games, placed on probation for the remainder of the season. Maximum penalty: suspension for the remainder of the season.

3. Any physical contact or threat thereof upon an official, player or spectator meant to do harm will mean automatic removal from a game, and the offender(s) will be placed on suspension until action is taken. Minimum penalty: suspension from two league games, placed on probation for the remainder of the season. Maximum penalty: suspension for life and/or assault charges filed.

4. No player shall refuse to abide by official's decision. Minimum penalty: placed on probation for the remainder of the season. Maximum penalty: suspension from two league games, placed on probation for remainder of the season.

5. No player shall be guilty of objectionable demonstrations of dissent at official's decision. Penalty: the degree of infraction of this tenet of good sportsmanship shall in the official's judgment draw - minimum penalty: warning from the official; maximum penalty: removal from the game.

6. No player shall be guilty of using unnecessarily rough tactics in the course of the game against the body and person of an opposing player. Officials are required

to immediately suspend players from further play and report to the League Director. Minimum penalty: placed on probation for the remainder of the season. Maximum penalty: suspension for two league games and placed on probation for the remainder of the season.

7. No player shall be guilty of an abusive verbal attack upon any player, official, or spectator. Officials are required to immediately suspend player from further play and report such player to the League Director. Minimum penalty: placed on probation for the remainder of the season. Maximum penalty: suspension from two league games and placed on probation for the remainder of the season.

8. No player shall be guilty of discussing publicly with spectators in a derogatory or abusive manner any play decisions of his/her personal opinion of other players during the game. Penalty: officials are required to warn players guilty of infraction of this rule, and failure of such player to comply will result in removal from the game.

9. No players or manager shall be guilty of using, playing, or have knowledge of an illegal player, or player using an assumed name. Minimum penalty: two game suspension. Maximum penalty: suspension for the remainder of the season.

Please note: a) suspensions have no boundaries. I.e. If a player gets suspended or put on probation during one season, it may carry onto the next season and/or other sports; b) any player being placed on probation for the remainder of the season and reported again for violation of the "Code of Conduct" will be suspended for the remainder of the season; c) any player removed from the game may be required to leave the field immediately, failure to do so will carry the maximum penalty of suspension for the remainder of the season.

10. There is NO SMOKING at Sunny Fields. It is against state law because of its vicinity to the playground.

11. Teams (including players, coaches, and spectators) participating in sport leagues that are sponsored by the Solvang Parks and Recreation Department, or where officials and umpires are furnished by the City, shall be expected to exhibit proper sportsmanship before, during and after all games. Teams are responsible for the conduct of their team's spectators. Teams repeatedly abusing the sportsmanship rules as deemed by the official(s) and/or League Director may be unable to participate in any playoffs, nor may they receive any awards due for winning a given league. They may also lose priority for registering in further leagues. A team manager is the ultimate official representative for a team and is therefore responsible for informing all players of conduct rules.

12. The game official is allowed to give each team one (1) warning per game for using profane language. Any further infractions will result in, at minimum, a forfeit of the game or ejection of the offending player.

13. Officials assigned to games shall have complete charge of the game, and have the power to banish players, managers, sponsors, spectators, or any other person from the players bench for misconduct, delaying the game, or any other reason deemed necessary for the good of the game. Officials' decisions shall be final, with the exception of misinterpretation of the rules.

14. Families and friends are welcome to come and watch, however, CHILDREN MUST BE SUPERVISED AT ALL TIMES by an individual not playing. If play must be stopped due to a child coming on or coming too close to the field a time-out may be charged to the offending team. If there are no time-outs available, the referee can require a player to be pulled from the game to supervise the children. Infractions of these rules by any individual related to a team directly/indirectly will result in possible forfeit(s). Repeated infractions will lead to severe action taken by League Director.

15. If officials do not arrive at game time, or shortly thereafter, the game will be cancelled and rescheduled by league director. *However*, if both team captains agree to play the game with temporary, non-sanctioned referees, i.e. "pick-up refs", the game **will** count in league standings and **cannot** be petitioned or argued at a later time. The recreation department will schedule the regular season, make up and playoff games. Make up games may not be played if they have no bearing on the league outcome. Changes will not be made without approval from the League Director.

16. All teams are responsible for cleaning up the area of game play after each game.