

# Circle City Athletics™, Inc. 2010 Flag Football Rules

## I. General Play

### a. Competitive decorum.

- i. **CCA DOES NOT TOLERATE DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR TOWARD REFEREES OR PARTICIPANTS.** A violation of this rule will result in ejection from the game. Repeated violations will result in dismissal from the league without a refund.
- ii. **CCA FLAG FOOTBALL IS A NON-CONTACT ACTIVITY. DANGEROUS PLAY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.** Circle City Athletics desires to protect all participants and overly aggressive players will be dismissed from the league without a refund.
- iii. All penalties will be assessed by the referee and are subject to his discretion. A referee's call is final. All of the following rules may be modified at the referee's discretion to promote:
  1. **the safety of all participants**
  2. **an enjoyable, respectful atmosphere, and**
  3. **fair competition.**

### b. **Playing team.** Each team may have eight (8) players on the field. No more than five (5) of these players may be men. Teams that do not have at least five players on the field ten minutes after the game is scheduled to start automatically forfeit.

- i. Non-roster substitute players. Teams may pick up non-roster players during the **regular season only** and only if the player is a registered and paid player from another team. Picking up players that are not on your roster/waiver form is NOT permitted during any playoff game unless the opposing captain agrees BEFORE the game begins in the presence of the official. If the opposing team or official finds out that a player has been picked up after the game begins or has ended the game is an **AUTOMATIC** forfeit to the team who did not illegally pick up players. There is no discussion, the forfeit is automatic.
- ii. Team and player identification. All players must be prepared to provide photo identification to verify their proper place on a team roster. Teams should also wear the same color shirts as the rest of their team. Teams may request an opposing player change shirts if the color causes confusion with the opposing team players.

### c. **Waiver.** Each participant must print and sign his/her name on his/her team's waiver prior to participating in a CCA athletic activity. Players who have not signed the waiver by the fourth week of play will be ineligible for the playoffs. Players not on a CCA team roster will be ejected from the game and could result in a forfeit. It is the responsibility of the team captain to make sure all players sign the waiver prior to participating. Teams with players found not signed on the roster may be ejected from the league with no refund.

## II. Time

### a. Each game will consist of two 19 minute halves with a running clock and a four minute halftime. The referee may call an official timeout at any time. Referees are only obligated to announce when there are two minutes left in a half. Referees will also provide time updates anytime it is requested. The clock will run continuously except for the last two minutes of the game as described below. The referee may stop the clock and/or penalize a team at any time if he feels unfair delay tactics are being employed.

### b. **Final two minutes of game.** During the final two minutes of a contested game, the clock will stop if (1) a pass falls incomplete, (2) a ballcarrier runs out of bounds, (3) a touchdown is scored, (4) a penalty is assessed, (5) an injury occurs, (6) a timeout is called, (7) the ball is turned over, or (8) 20 seconds after the end of a play when the leading team has possession. The clock will run continuously otherwise.

- i. Contested game defined. A game is considered contested if the referee believes the losing team may be able to win the game.

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- c. **Timeouts.** Each team may use two timeouts per game. Play resumes after sixty seconds or when the team that called the timeout signals for play to commence, whichever occurs first.
- d. **Huddles.** An informal play clock of 30 seconds will be enforced at the referee's discretion. Huddles that last longer than 15 seconds will be presumed to violate this rule. A referee may give a team one warning. A violation of this rule may result in a loss of down.
- e. **Injuries.** In the event a participant is injured, the referee may stop the clock.
- f. **Overtime.** There is no overtime play during the regular season. Playoff games that end in a tie will go into non-sudden death overtime. During overtime, each team will be given a possession beginning at midfield. The game ends when the score is not tied after an equal number of possessions. Each team will be awarded one timeout during overtime.
  - i. Interception in overtime. If a pass is intercepted, the ballcarrier will be given the opportunity to return the ball for a touchdown. If the intercepting ballcarrier's flag is pulled, play will stop and his team will be given a new possession at midfield.
  - ii. Turnover on downs. If the offensive team turns the ball over on downs, the opposing team will be given the ball at midfield.

### III. Offensive Possession

- a. **First downs.** The offense may advance the ball by throwing it, or running it after the defense has crossed the line of scrimmage. A first down is awarded when the offense completes two passes of three or more yards.
  - i. Three yard reception defined. A completion is awarded when an offensive player catches a pass three or more yards beyond the line of scrimmage. Yardage gained on passes caught short of three yards will count, but the play will not count as a completion.
- b. **End of play.** A play is over when the football hits the ground, a ballcarrier's flags are pulled, a ballcarrier runs out of bounds or into the endzone, a ballcarrier's knee, elbow or rear hits the ground, or the referee blows his whistle. Participants must stop play when they hear the whistle blown.
- c. **Co-ed play.** A female must be an operative offensive player at least once every three plays.
  - i. Operative player defined. An operative player is one who:
    - 1. throws the football, with intent to complete a pass, to a teammate who is beyond the line of scrimmage,
    - 2. is the intended receiver during a play or has a reasonable chance of catching a pass,
    - 3. runs the ball (after being rushed) beyond the line of scrimmage and scores.
  - ii. Insufficient involvement. If a third successive play is completed without using a girl as an operative player, any yardage gained on the play is lost and a loss of down occurs.
    - 1. **A guy can not run the ball in for a score on a girl play. (New Rule)**
  - iii. Intentional grounding. A play will not count as a girl play if the referee believes the quarterback made no attempt to complete a pass and instead threw the ball to the ground.
- d. **Down count.** The referee will announce the down before each play. In the intermediate and competitive leagues the referee is NOT obligated to announce a mandatory girl play but will do so if requested by the offensive team captain. The down and distance (i.e. first and two) will always be announced prior to the play. Any request regarding a girl play or down and distance by either team will be honored by the referee immediately.
  - i. For example. If the offensive team completes a pass to a guy on first down, the referee will state "Second Down and 1, Open for 1" prior to the next play. This will indicate the offensive team has one more open play before it must utilize an operative female player. The ref may also use shorthand and state "Twenty-one, for one" (2-1-1).
  - ii. Contesting the down. A team captain may ask for a referee timeout if he or she believes that the announced down is incorrect. If the defensive team continuously and incorrectly announces that it is a girl play, the offensive team will be awarded an open first down.
- e. **Punting.** The offensive team may choose to punt the ball on fourth down if it announces its intent to the referee. The referee must give the defensive team reasonable time to prepare for the

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punt. The defensive team must place at least two players within five yards of the line of scrimmage. A punted ball may only be advanced by throwing the football. The play is dead as soon as the punted ball hits the ground.

- i. **Punt return.** Only players on the receiving team who are behind the receiving ballcarrier may run down the field with the ballcarrier. All other teammates must maintain their position on the field and may not impede the movement of the kicking team. The kicking team may not cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is thrown.
- f. **Change of possession.** After a change of possession, the offensive team may hike the ball as soon as the ball marker has been placed. It is at the referee's discretion whether or not a team needs reasonable time to make defensive personnel changes, time remaining and any other relevant factors will be taken into consideration.
- g. **Quarterback sack.** The referee will place the ball at the point of "tackle" if the quarterback is sacked, and a loss of down will occur. There are no operative players when a sack occurs. This means that if a female quarterback is sacked a female play did NOT occur.
- h. **Receptions.** A passed ball that is in a receiver's grasp, but then knocked out due to either a defender's hand or contact initiated by a defender, will be ruled a catch. A reception will be awarded if a player's first foot to touch the ground after catching a pass is in bounds. A player is an eligible receiver even if the player leaves the field of play during an offensive play, however the player must reestablish position with both feet on the field before being an eligible receiver.
- i. **Laterals.** Downfield laterals will be whistled dead unless the referee is certain the ball traveled backward.
- j. **Blocking.** Neither team may purposely impede the direction of an opponent. Downfield offensive blocking will result in an immediate stop in play and additional yardage will not be awarded. Loss of down will occur if an offensive player runs into and makes no attempt to avoid a motionless defender.
- k. **Delay of game.** The referee may at any time run or stop the clock if he feels a team is purposely delaying the progression of the game.
- l. **Scoring.** A team is awarded six (6) points when it advances the ball into the endzone. The team will be awarded one (1) point if it converts an "extra point" from the three yard line, and will be awarded two (2) points if it converts from the seven yard line. **Teams will not be awarded two (2) points for making a tackle in the endzone, the ball will come out to the one point line.**  
**NOTE: This is a NEW RULE in 2010.**
  - i. **Jumping or diving to score.** A player who attempts to cross the endzone line by leaving his feet or diving forward will be ruled down at the two yard line.
  - ii. **Goal line situation.** Once a team advances the ball within three yards of the endzone, or is awarded a first down within six yards of the endzone, the team must score on that set of downs.
- m. **Substitutions.** All substitutions should occur from the sideline designated by the official. A loss of down may occur if...
  - i. the ball is hiked after an offensive player leaves the field of play via the far sideline or back endzone line,
  - ii. the offensive team has more than eight (8) players, or more than five (5) men, on the field when the ball is hiked, or
  - iii. an offensive player steps onto the field at such a time as to not give the opposing team notice that he/she is an eligible receiver. A receiver must line up at least two yards away from the substitution sideline so that the opponent may be aware of whether or not that receiver is on the field.

### IV. The Flag Belt

- a. **Position.** A flag belt must be worn at all times on the field. The belt must be worn over the player's outermost layer of clothing with the middle flag in the middle of the player's back. A player may not leave the line of scrimmage before his belt is fastened around his waist. A player is an ineligible receiver if one or more of his flags are:
  - i. in his crotch,

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- ii. wrapped around his flag belt, or
  - iii. hidden to any degree by his shirt.
- b. **Tackle.** A ballcarrier's progress will be blown dead as soon as his flags begin to separate from his waist. The defender should either hand the ballcarrier's flag belt back to him or place it at the spot of the "tackle." The ball will be placed relative to the ballcarrier's position when he was tackled.
- i. **Ball Extension Rule.** A referee may award a touchdown to a player who appeared to extend the ball over the goal line before his flags were pulled, regardless of his position. A player who is tackled within one yard of the endzone will be presumed to have extended the ball for a touchdown.
- c. **Inadvertent pull or separation.** A player who begins a play with his flags fastened may finish the play if his flags accidentally separate prior to the end of the play. The player will be ruled down as soon as he possesses the ball or is touched by an opposing player.
- i. **Tackle after lateral.** A player whose flags are pulled after the player has passed or lateraled the football may continue to participate in the play. If he comes into possession of the ball again, he will be ruled down when he is touched by a defensive player.
- d. **Clothing pull.** An automatic open first down or a touchdown may be awarded by the referee if a defensive player uses his grip on a ballcarrier's clothing or body to assist in pulling the carrier's flags. This rule does not apply if a ballcarrier's baggy clothing makes it difficult to grab the player's flags.
- e. **Flag guarding.** The referee may limit a ballcarrier's yardage on a play if he believes that the ballcarrier either purposely or inadvertently used his arms or body to impede an opponent's effort to pull his flags. A ballcarrier may not lower his head or shoulder when advancing the football.

### V. Defensive Rules

- a. **Quarterback rush.** A defensive rusher will be ruled offsides if he crosses the line of scrimmage before the referee clearly hears the entire rush count. Rushers who count too quietly or in a way that seems unclear or slurred will be presumed to be offsides.
- i. **Rush count defined.** Recreational A and B leagues utilize a "ten-apple" rush count. Intermediate and competitive leagues utilize an "eight-apple" rush count.
  - ii. **Proper enunciation.** A defensive player will be ruled offsides if:
    - 1. the rusher counts so quickly that the referee is not absolutely sure that the rusher fully enunciated the count, or
    - 2. the player crosses the line of scrimmage before the rusher finishes a legitimate rush count.
  - iii. **Policy.** This rule will be strictly enforced. It is intended to promote fair competition and adequate time for quarterbacks to throw the ball.
    - 1. Rushers who 'clip' ("sixapp, sevenapp") or mute ("sixappsevenappa") the "el" sound in the rush count will be called offsides.
    - 2. To ensure fair play, rushers must fully enunciate APPLE (**\*a-pəl**).
  - iv. **Female quarterback.** A male player may not rush a female quarterback. **(New for 2010 there are no exceptions to this rule)**
- b. **Pass Interference.** An offensive or defensive player who physically obstructs an opponent from catching a thrown ball will be called for pass interference. For purposes of this rule, it is irrelevant if the defensive player contacts the football before contacting his opponent.
- i. **Defensive.** Defensive pass interference will result in the ball being placed at the spot of the interference and a first down awarded to the offensive team. If the defensive pass interference occurs in the endzone, the referee may award either a touchdown or an open first down on the two yard line. Minimal, harmless and insignificant bumping is subject to the referee's discretion. In questionable situations the referee may call a "replay" at his discretion in lieu of awarding a reception.

