

# NFL Flag Coaches Packet

(updated Winter 2018-19)



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# United Sports Facility Rules



Individuals utilizing United Sports do so at their own risk. The property owner(s), league operators, officers, and staff of United Sports assume no liability for any injuries or accidents, which may occur.

- Conduct within the facility should be in the spirit of good sportsmanship **at all times**.
- At no time shall spectators enter the field to speak with officials, coaches, or players.

**Any spectator that enters the field to confront an official or another player may be subject to suspension from the facility.**

- Rude, inappropriate, and disrespectful language is not tolerated, and will result in facility suspension.
- All players must be paid in full and registered on a roster to play on a team. There are no sub players allowed.
- No refunds will be given. United Sports credit may be issued if warranted.
- United Sports reserves the right to change league and games schedules and days as it deems appropriate based on field and court availability.
- Should you find or lose any items please report the incident immediately to a United Sports employee. The United Sports owner(s) and staff do not assume responsibility for any items lost or stolen.
- No chewing tobacco, chewing gum, sunflower seeds, or similar type products permitted in facility.
- No glass containers on the field, volleyball courts, or in the player boxes.
- NO pets inside the facility or on the outdoor fields.
- Children must be supervised at all times.
- Violation of any of the above regulations may result in suspension from the facility.

**Weather Policy** - As an indoor sports facility, we try to stay open in all weather conditions. Our facility does not follow any of the school, city, or county cancellation policies. Cancellations will be posted on our website and phone system. If we remain open for league games and you feel that it is unsafe to travel, please stay at home.

***Rescheduling criteria for inclement weather cancellation:*** • **Playoff games will be rescheduled • 1 game missed due to weather- NO RESCHEDULE GUARANTEED, WILL IF POSSIBLE • 2 games missed due to weather- we will try to reschedule one of the games, but cannot make guarantees due to other programming • NO refunds will be given for missed games due to inclement weather.**

Before traveling, please call our weather hotline at 610-466-9744. We will update this line with the current status of all leagues and programs in the event of inclement weather. We will also update the website with any pertinent information.

**We encourage all coaches to set up some sort of communication method (phone tree, email chain, etc) that way everyone on the team can help make everyone else aware. All coaches received email lists and encourage them to communicate via email with their teams.**

*As a Coach, I promise to:*

**IMPORTANT UPDATE AS OF FALL 2016: ALL COACHES MUST PROVIDE PA CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK, HAND IN TO MATT ATTACHED TO THIS FORM OR SEND DIGITAL COPIES TO EMAIL (FREE FOR VOLUNTEERS AT THIS LINK [HERE](#))**

1. 1 Be responsible for my behavior and that of my team members, their parents, and fans.
2. Never physically, verbally, or mentally harm a child in my care.
3. Be consistent, set parameters, and don't let the players go outside them.
4. **BE POSITIVE!** Smile, and enthusiastically encourage my players. TONE is important!
5. Lead by example, and encourage my team members to play by the league rules and respect the rights of other players, coaches, fans and officials.
6. **Be knowledgeable of** and abide by the LEAGUE RULES AND REGULATIONS, and teach these rules to all players on my team.
7. Understand winning is **NOT** the priority of this league.
8. Place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire or external pressure to win.
9. Allow each athlete the opportunity to play each position as they desire.
10. Ensure that my players are supervised by myself or another designated adult and never allow my players to be left unattended or unsupervised at a game or practice.
11. Never knowingly permit an injured player to play/return to a game.
12. Respect the game and league officials and communicate with them in an appropriate manner.
13. Ensure all players have an **EQUAL** opportunity to play in the games. ALL players should be subbing on a rotation.

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach: _____	(Print)	_____	(Sign)
Coach: _____	(Print)	_____	(Sign)
Coach: _____	(Print)	_____	(Sign)

## United Sports Youth Flag Football League – Updated 11/6/17 – Winter Season

### **CLOCK AND GAME:**

- K-1 will play 7v7 - ALL other divisions will play 6v6 indoors on the turf fields
- If a team only has only 5 players present, the opposing team must play 5v5. Teams that are short may play 4v5, but a team will not be forced to drop below 5 players at any time. The game may be forfeited with a 21-0 score reported and be played for fun with sharing players if teams choose.
- Two (2) Twenty (20) minute halves with running clock (quick half-time)
- Coin toss determines who begins with ball at beginning of game, other team starts second half
- Each team has **2 time outs per game** of 30 seconds (time out resets play clock)
- **40 second play clock** (kept by the referee)
- **30 second P.A.T. play clock**
- Team should take separate sidelines. The home team, should be on the sideline of the HOME side of the scoreboard when facing it, the visiting team should be on the opposite side lined up with GUESTS on the scoreboard.
- **K-1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade coaches are encouraged to be on the field to help on either Offense or Defense, but must be sure to stay out of the play and let players play.**
  - If a coach gets in the way, they will be warned **ONCE**, any subsequent interference with play will require the defensive coach to be removed from the field for the rest of the game.
  - **Coaches are not to call out opponents plays or assist players in that capacity. Will be warned once, then assessed unsportsmanlike penalty for this behavior.**
- **4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade and 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade** defensive coaches will remain on sidelines once a possession begins in order to be out of the way and provide more opportunity for the players to take leadership roles. One (1) offensive coach may stay on the field to huddle team and call plays.
  - Clock will stop at 1 minute left in the game if the game is within one score (9 or point differential, the clock will run – if a stop clock scenario, the clock will stop on incomplete pass, out of bounds, penalties, TDs and change of possession. PATs are untimed downs.
  - There is no Overtime in the regular season. Games may end in a TIE.

### **BALL MOVEMENT:**

- Offense begins on 5-yard line as marked by official.
- Center starts offense by snapping the ball to QB (DOES NOT need to be through legs, but ball must be on the ground when starting)
- The offensive team must have a minimum of TWO players on the line of scrimmage at the snap. The players do not have to be “lineman” ie. Guard,center they just must be simply on the LOS anywhere along the line.
- Only one player may be in motion, but they do not count as a player on the line.
  - Team has **3** plays to cross mid-field for first down and then **3** plays to score (**\* K-1 Division has 4 downs\***)
    - **After 3<sup>rd</sup> down, if the offensive team has not reached midfield, nor scored a touchdown, the opposing team gets the ball on their 5 yard line. There are no “punts”.**
- If the ball is intercepted, offense is spotted at end of return and offense is started.
- **NO FUMBLE RECOVERIES** Ball is dead on contact with turf. (**\*\*If a snap is fumbled, it may be picked up ONLY by the player who it is snapped to (QB) and resume play\*\***)
- Play is dead when ball carrier’s flag is pulled or knees/elbow/shoulder/etc. make contact with the ground.

- Spot of the ball is the players entire body/hips, NOT FOOTBALL – reaching ball over the goal line doesn't get you a touchdown, player must cross goal line/first down with hips/whole body
  - Quarterback has 7 seconds to throw the ball unless blitzed.
    - After 7 seconds, the play is blown dead and the down is lost.
      - Referee will count the seconds out loud.
- -Quarterback (Player who initially takes snap) may only run the ball when he is blitzed and only after blitzer crosses the LOS.

#### **RUNNING/RECEIVING:**

- Set screens (picks) are allowed. There is no **BLOCKING**. An offensive player must **NOT** move their feet or extend arms/legs to impede the defense. Offense may run down field, but if contact is made with defense, they may be called with a moving pick and illegal block.
  - Best for offensive players to get down field and hold position to avoid penalty.
  - Setting intentionally rough, blind-screens may be grounds for an unsportsmanlike penalty at the referee's sole discretion.
- A completed pass is when a player comes down with the ball in bounds with one foot touching in bounds. (College Rules).
- Laterals and pitches are allowed (**must not be forward**).
- Everyone is an eligible receiver.
- Ball carriers may not jump through a flag pull **while carrying with the ball**—will be immediately blown dead if ref rules a jumping action to avoid a flag pull took place
  - **NO DIVING, NO JUMPING, NO HURDLING while carrying the football. Play will be blown dead at spot of a jump. Lateral cuts okay, but jumping through a flag is prohibited**

**\*\*NO FLAG GAURDING-** any action to impede the defense to pull a flag is prohibited. i.e. Running with arms in way of flags/blocking/swiping/ at defenders hands and stiff arming.

#### **NO RUN ZONE**

- Offense may not run the ball within 5 yards of midfield and 5 yards of end zone unless quarterback is blitzed. (Ref will inform both coaches when the play is in the “no-run zone.”)
- Team **MAY NOT** use a running back/wide receiver pass in the no run zone. QB must keep the ball and pass in this situation.
  - If a ball is handed off or pitched, play should immediately be blown dead and play is over.
- The quarterback must pass the ball across the line of scrimmage when in the “no-run zone.”
  - No screens/shovels behind the LOS to satisfy a pass in “no-run zone”, must be forward.

#### **DEFENSE:**

- Defense may send one (1) blitzer on any down, except K-1<sup>st</sup> who may only blitz once per ever 4 down series.
- The blitz must start 7 yards AWAY OFF OF the line of scrimmage. (Referee will mark the blitzing line with bean bag and it extends across the field)
- Rush can come from anywhere on the field behind the line, as long as the player checks in with ref prior to the play if rushing from a corner or defensive backfield position.
  - Blitzer may rush once the ball is snapped.
- Defense may cross the line of scrimmage on a hand off/pitch, **but must wait until the ball changes possession (unless blitzing)**.
- For K-1<sup>st</sup> ONLY - Defenses will start off the line with a 3-yard buffer off of the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped, the referee will do his best to enforce this, but coaches please help with this as well. It will help to keep the cluster off of the line of scrimmage and players stepping into the backfield before the ball is snapped or handed off.

## FLAG PULLING:

- Player is “down” when **one** flag is pulled or a knee, elbow, other body part is down.
  - **Spot of the ball is player’s entire body/flags/hips, NOT BALL like tackle since a flag may still be pulled in the field of play with a ball being stretched out**
- After pulling a flag, defender should raise the flag above his head to help referee see the spot.
- Defender should drop flag on the spot or hand flag back to ball carrier after pull.
- **If flag falls out at any time, or player starts play without a flag, player is still eligible of possession of ball, but will be down with one hand touch.**
- A defensive player shall not hold, grasp or obstruct the forward progress of the runner when attempting to remove the flag.
  - Both the ball carrier and flag puller must make efforts to avoid direct body contact or impeding forward progress.
  - Intentional grabbing the ball carrier’s clothing or body will result in a penalty added onto the end of the play.
  - Defensive players must always make an effort to pull the flag. Players **MAY NOT** blatantly/purposefully force a player out-of-bounds.
  - Clear Path Rule – If a player is pushed out-of-bounds, held, tackled, etc. by the last line of defense to prevent a touchdown, the play will be ruled as a touchdown. This will be ruled in the referees discretion based on intent of the play and with total understanding that the player was last line of defense.
- Any player pursuing a running or throwing quarterback may only pull flags. **No contact, incidental or otherwise is allowed.**
- **KICKING:**
  - There is no kicking in the game
- **SCORING:**
  - 6 points for a Touchdown
  - 2 points for safety
  - 1 point for conversion after touchdown, ball is spotted on 4 yard line
    - Interceptions may be returned for 1-pt, defense MAY blitz – not a wise idea as it allows the QB to run if you blitz.
    - The ball must be passed- inside the “no run zone” unless blitzed.
  - 2 point conversion after touchdown, ball is spotted on the 7 yard line.
    - Team may run or pass, interceptions MAY be returned for 2 points, and Defense may send a blitz.

## SPORTSMANSHIP RULES:

- If a team takes a 21-point lead the following rules go into place:
  - Team that is leading may no longer blitz.
  - All scoring will be recorded on the referee’s card, but wins will only be recorded with a margin of 21 points in order to discourage teams from intentionally running up the score.

## PENALTIES:

- Offside - 5 yards or half the distance replay down
- Defensive Holding/Obstruction of Forward progress on a ball carrier: 5 yards from spot of the foul or half the distance, first down
  - Referee’s judgment call - Incidental contact will not be called, only intentional grabbing or lack of care when attempting to pull flag
- Delay of game - 5 yards or half the distance

- Illegal Blocks – extending arms to block or setting a moving screen – spot of the ball at the spot of the foul, loss of down
- Offset penalties - replay down
- Illegal rush (starting rush early or inside 7-yard marker)- 5 yards and replay the down
- Illegal forward pass – 5 yards and loss of down
- Illegal motion (more than one person moving or false start) – 5 yards and replay the down (will be lenient with K-1<sup>st</sup>)
- Flag guarding – any action the player takes to guard his/her flag, arm in the way, stiff arm, swiping hand, etc.
  - Offense: 5 yards from spot of the foul and the play will be whistled dead.
  - Defense after interception: 5 yards from spot of foul begin offense
- Offensive pass interference- 10 yards from original spot, loss of down
- Defensive Pass interference – 10 yards from original spot, automatic first down
- Illegal contact with Passer – 10 yards from original spot, automatic first down
- Unnecessary roughness/Unsportsmanlike Conduct/Personal Foul –
  - Defense: 15 yards automatic first down
  - Offense: 15 yards loss of down
- **Acts of deliberate tackling, cheap shots, or an unsportsmanlike act will not be tolerated. Player may be ejected from the game and will result in unsportsmanlike penalty at the sole discretion of the referee.**
  - Depending on severity, player may be subject to suspension or expulsion from the league without refund.
- Any player instigating or encouraging a fight, taunting or throwing a punch/kick will be immediately removed from the game and be subject to further disciplinary action at the sole discretion of the league director.
- **Trash talking is illegal and may result in unsportsmanlike penalty. Any player, coach or spectator verbally abusing a player, spectator, referee or employee of United Sports will be immediately removed from the game and escorted from the facility.**
- Personal fouls/unsportsmanlike penalties will result in an automatic first down and 15 yards from the end of the play. Player assessed the foul may be subject to removal from the game for the remainder of the half, or longer at the referees sole discretion based on severity of incident.

## Coaching Tips

### Practices:

Thank you for coaching. Please use the practice time to put in a basic offense and defensive sets. Spend plenty of time practicing different drills to pull flags as it does not matter if everyone is in the right spot, if they don't pull flags, you simply cannot stop the other team. Have fun, create fun games for flag pulling, if you need help with some drills or anything, let me know. Build on what you worked on and review for the second practice.

### Offense:

Be sure to put in a couple of plays and explain basic passing routes so the team can react in a huddle for the first game with a play clock ticking down. Depending on the age group, it is usually best to keep things more or less basic and build upon that. Some older groups can catch onto more complex packages early, but basic handoffs, tosses, and passes are a good place to start.

Be sure to have a play or a set handy to beat a blitz. If a team has a good blitzer, it can make for a nightmare if you are unprepared for it. Make sure QBs know that they can run when blitzed and have short dumps prepared if he needs help. Short dump patterns will take immense pressure off the QB knowing he has that safety valve.

### Defense:

As coaches, you will have to decide you will want to play. Will you blitz? How often? Will you play with a safety over the top? Man? Zone? A hybrid?

There are many choices. Again, dependent on the age group and the team's ability to catch on will allow you to be very basic or do more.

It is important to teach communication when coaching man-to-man defense. The team will learn they have to be vocal and call out which player they have to be set. You will have the flexibility to put a safety over the top or to blitz when in man coverage or zones.