

## 5ON5 Youth Rules

### **The Game**

No contact allowed! A coin toss determines 1st possession. The team can elect to have offense, defense, defer or direction. Choice in the 2nd half will be awarded to the team that did not have choice 1st half. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at their 5-yard line and has three plays to cross mid-field (with the exception of 6U-read below). Once a team crosses mid-field they have three plays to score (with the exception of 6U-read below). If the offensive team fails to cross mid-field, the ball changes possession. If the offense does not score, the ball changes possession. All drives start from the 5-yard line with the exception of an interception.

### **EXCEPTIONS FOR 6U**

Offense has 4 downs to cross mid-field and 4 downs to score. Run options are allowed and there won't be a no-run zone, so the offense can have the run or throw offense the entire time of possession.

### **Game Clock Format**

Each game is formatted in a 30 minute block period. Each half is 12 minutes long and a 1 minute halftime. If games are behind, it's at the discretion of the referee to skip the half, as long as both coaches agree.

Each time the ball is spotted the offense has 20 seconds to snap the ball (Officials will warn the offense when there is 10 seconds left to snap the ball). Teams must wait until the referees are set prior to the play. Only one referee needs to be set prior to the snap. If the score difference is within 8 points at the end of regulation there will be an additional 4 plays at the of the game. Delay of game in the last minute of the game is a loss of down and stops the clock.

## **Time Outs**

Each team has a 30 second time out per half. If a time out is called after a TD the clock will not run until the change of possession and the offense snaps their ball.

## **Rushing the Quarterback**

Players that rush the quarterback must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. The 7 yards will be measured off by a referee.

Players that are not 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped may not enter into the backfield until there is a change of possession. The official will designate 7 yards from the line of scrimmage. The rusher is allowed a direct lane to the quarterback as long as he or she rushes from either side of the center or outside the bunch formation. The offense must avoid interfering with the rusher if he or she has established a lane.

## **Running**

The quarterback may not run unless the ball has been thrown back, handed or pitched to him or her in the backfield.

Teams may handoff, pitch, or throw back the football in the backfield. The player who receives the pitch or handoff may throw the ball as long as he or she is not beyond the line of scrimmage (any part of the body). Pitching (backwards) is allowed downfield. Handoffs are only allowed in front of the player. No handoffs allowed behind the player on their back.

No run zones are located 5 yards before mid-field and 5-yards before the end zone (with the exception of 6U-read at top). You may not run the ball in the no run zone (5-yards before the first down and end zone), only forward passes are allowed. Ball is spotted where the flag is pulled. The lead flag must break the plane of the midfield or goal line to be considered a first down or touchdown. The ball doesn't have to cross. Players may screen block behind the line of scrimmage. Players may NOT block down field. Jumping is allowed as long as it does not cause any contact.

## **Passing**

The quarterback has 5 seconds to pass the ball if there is no rush. If the ball is not thrown, then the play is dead. After the ball is ruled dead it is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off or pitched backwards the 5 second count stops. If the defensive team rushes, then there is no 5 second count. There is no arm in motion, if the ball is in hand when the quarterback's flag is pulled then it will be ruled a sack. Interceptions may be returned. The rusher may not have any contact with the QB. No part of the body can cross the line of scrimmage.

## **Receiving**

All players are eligible to receive a pass, including the quarterback, if the ball has been pitched or handed off in the backfield. Players must have at least one foot in bounds when making catch. Players that run out of bounds during a play cannot be the first player to touch a ball when attempting to make a catch. If the player is pushed out of bounds by a defender, then comes back into the play, he or she is still eligible to touch the ball first.

## **Play is Ruled Dead When**

The offensive player's flag is pulled.

Ball carrier steps out of bounds.

A touchdown is scored.

Ball carrier's knee touches the ground.

Incomplete pass.

Ball hits the ground.

If a player loses a flag unintentionally, the defense only has to touch the ball carrier, not pull the flag.

If center/quarterback starts a play without a flag the play is dead. All others must be the touched if only one flag is on.

## **Defensive Penalties:**

Offside-illegal Rush. Pass interference / Face Guarding (must play/look at ball).

Illegal contact (holding, bump and run, blocking)

\* Note the officials will determine incidental contact which may result from normal run of play.

Roughing the quarterback- the rusher may not knock the ball out of the quarterback's hand (unless rusher is attempting to pull qb's flag while the qb has the ball in front of the flag) or bump into them.

Excessive contact even if the defender is making a play on the ball. If the official feels it was intentional or with intent to harm the player will be ejected from the game and may be removed from the tournament.

All defensive penalties are five yards from the line of scrimmage and automatic first down with the exception of holding is a spot foul plus 5, and pass interference-15 yards from line of scrimmage

## **Offensive Penalties:**

Pre-Snap Penalties are not a loss of down. Illegal motion /False Start/ delay of game/ illegal equipment violation – the QB and Center may not start a play without flags.

Impeding the rush (the offensive players must avoid the rusher).

Flag Guarding (players must avoid the defender if they are set).

Delay of game (all delay of game penalties will stop the clock).

Pass interference (illegal pick, pushing off defender).

Blocking-Players must not block downfield, they may only screen block in the backfield with their hands behind their back (no blocking with hands or arms).

Excessive contact if the official feels it was intentional or with intent to harm the player will be ejected from the game.

All offensive penalties are 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down except flag guarding which is a spot foul and the pre-snap penalties mentioned above.

## **Sportsmanship/Roughing**

Trash talking will not be tolerated. The official has the right to determine language that is offensive. (Trash talking is language that may be considered offensive to the official, opposing team or spectators). The official may eject players from the game for trash talking. \*Cussing is not permitted\* and will receive a 15-yard penalty.

If the official witnesses any act of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, or any other unsportsmanlike act then the game will be stopped. The player(s) will be ejected from the game. Only the team captain(s) may address the officials in regard to the rules and calls. (Captains must call timeout to challenge a call or rule).

We will also not tolerate any unsportsmanlike words or actions from spectators. It will be at the tournament director and official's discretion of removal of the spectator. If the spectator or spectators are asked to leave and refuse, we will then disqualify the team they are with.

## **Overtime Extra Point Shoot Out**

A coin flip determines first possession. Each team has one possession in overtime. They may elect to go for one or two points. If score is still tied both teams will have one play from the 5-yard line to gain as much yardage as possible. Team with the most yardage will win. An additional coin toss determines who goes first.

## **Attire**

Players may NOT have pockets. Players may NOT have taped pockets. Players may have shorts with pockets if they have been professionally sewn or if they have zippers and the zippers remained zipped up. Teams also must have the same color shirts and have an alternative color (one dark color/one light color). They do not have to be official uniforms. If both teams are wearing the same color, there will be a coin toss, and the losing team will need to change into a different color. Teams must have Sonic Flag-a-Tag flags or Youth NFL Flags that have never been altered (cut, taped, etc.). The flags cannot be the same color as a player's shorts. All players must start game with flags (offense/defense). \*If male players are wearing tights/football pants shorts must be worn over them. Mouth guards are optional, but strongly encouraged.