

# **METRO TORONTO TOUCH FOOTBALL LEAGUE (M.T.T.F.L.)**

## **RULES**

**Last Updated: 2004**

**Revised 2024**

### Preface

This rulebook will be in effect for at least the next three years, 2004, 2005 & 2006 . There have been extensive upgrades and clarifications from previous years rules , so team reps and players are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these interpretations. Any future necessary upgrades or rule changes for these three years will be issued as addendums each year as appropriate, as these books will not be re-issued to existing teams. Please keep these books in a safe place, so that they are available to your team for the next three years. We would like to acknowledge several of the referees and resources that contributed to these upgrades/ clarifications .

(Revised August 2004)

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## Rule 1: Field and Equipment

- (a) The Field** – The standard field is 110 yards long and 65 yards wide with a maximum of 20-yard end zones at each end and a minimum of 10-yard end zones.

Where metric fields are used, the following equivalents will be in use:

- (i) 10 yards = 10 meters
- (ii) 25 yard line = 20 meter line
- (iii) 35 yard line = 30 meter line
- (iv) 45 yard line = 40 meter line

- (b) Boundaries** – The boundary of the playing field is defined as the inside of the sidelines, end zone sidelines, and dead ball lines. The ball is out of bounds when it touches these boundary lines.

- (c) Hash Marks** – Twenty-four yards in from each side line. The ball must be placed between the hash marks for all kick offs, scrimmage plays or when the offensive team scrimmages inside their own twenty-yard line, except on a convert attempt.

- (d) End Zone Marking** – The four intersections of the goal lines and sidelines, and the four intersections of the dead lines and the end zone sidelines, shall be marked by flexible markers which must be placed so that they are considered to be out of bounds.

- (e) Non-Regulation Field** – The distance between center field and each goal line must be equal; the minimum depth of the end zone must be ten yards. When the length or width of the field is less than regulation, due to running tracks, or other obstructions, a clear set of boundary lines shall be provided at least one yard inside the track, or obstruction. Prior to the start of the game, a discussion on field conditions and obstructions will be conducted with the captains that are satisfactory to both teams. [Rule 5]

- (f) Goal Post Pads** – Where goal posts exist on the playing field, the goal posts must be padded to prevent injury. Officials are not permitted to start a game if goal post pads are not available. [Rule 5 i]

- (g) The Ball** – Teams may use their own football or mutually agree to use one game ball. The ball or balls that are used shall be inflated to the prescribed air pressure, as indicated by vendor. The Referee shall use his discretion to rule on reasonableness of balls used. NFL ball is allowed. No alterations can be made to the natural surface of the ball. The Referee shall replace an altered ball and penalize the offending team for objectionable conduct.

- (h) The Kicking Tee** – The kicking tee must not raise the lowest part of the ball more than two inches off the ground. The penalty is illegal procedure. The kicking team must remove their kicking tee from the field after the play is dead. Failure to do so may result in an objectionable conduct penalty. [Rule 13]

- (i) Uniforms** – Team sweaters are recommended. If two teams are wearing similar sweater colours, the winner of the coin toss has the option to retain or change sweaters. Uniforms cannot contain equipment that would cause injury to other players; this includes inflexible padding. The player must leave the field for at least one play and cannot return until the equipment is removed. The team will be penalized for objectionable conduct.

## **(j) Player Equipment**

- (i) Players who use paste stick'em will receive a ten-yard, objectionable conduct penalty and must leave the field until it is removed. (Spray stick'em may be used)
- (ii) The Referee must remove any player who is wearing unacceptable equipment or shoes that could injure other players for at least one play and remove the equipment before returning. A player will be penalized for objectionable conduct for continuing to play with the equipment and will be ejected from the game.
- (iii) A player is permitted to wear an athletic support/protector, completely covered by clothing. Tape or bandages are permitted if they are non-abrasive or are of a non-hardening material in a wet or dry state. Only Quarterbacks are allowed to wear flak jackets. The wearing of sunglasses is allowed as long as, in the opinion of the referee, the glasses are not dangerous nor present an unsafe condition.
- (iv) No protective headgear of any kind is permitted. Knee and elbow guards must be flexible and contain no hard materials. Arm casts can be worn only to protect an injury and must be flexible and contain no hard materials in a wet or dry state. Knee braces may be worn but must be completely covered by pants or tensor bandages such that no part of the brace is exposed that allows a finger to be placed between any edge of the brace and the leg. Finger splints may be worn to protect an injury, but the finger splint must be appropriately padded.
- (v) Jewelry must be removed prior to the start of the game. If it is not possible to remove the jewelry, it must be covered up completely. Medical bracelets may be worn but they must be fastened securely so as not to cause injury.
- (vi) It is not mandatory for a player to wear cleated shoes but shoes with heels are not acceptable. Spikes or similar sharp pointed type shoes such as track spikes, metal baseball cleats or golf shoes are not permitted. If a cleated shoe is worn, there is no minimum or maximum number of cleats to be worn, but the cleats on the shoe must be part of the natural design of the shoe. No part of the cleat or sole may have an edge that could puncture a player's skin.
- (vii) The Referee will have the final decision as to the acceptability of equipment. [Rule 11]
- (viii) If a participant has incurred a wound that is bleeding or if there is enough blood on a participant's uniform to such extent that it may be transferred to another individual, the participant must leave the playing field until the problem is resolved to the satisfaction of the Referee.

## Rule 2: Team Members

- (a) **Players** -Each team must have six (6) players ready to play football no later than 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the game, or the game will be defaulted.

The maximum number of players on the field at any one time is six. The minimum number of players that a team is allowed on the field to continue a game is five. All six players are eligible to receive a pass. [Rule 5h]

- (b) **Substitutes** - Substitute players may enter the field only from their bench area and only when the ball is dead. They may not enter the field after the kicker begins the approach to kick the ball on a kick-off or after the offensive team breaks its huddle. A player who enters the field to communicate a play to a teammate must remain on the field for the next play. The penalty for violating these rules is illegal substitution.

A player leaving the field for a substitute or because of an injury must go directly to the team bench area, unless the Referee permits otherwise.

- (c) **Captains** - Team members identified to the officials before the game, during the coin toss, as spokesperson for offensive or defensive units of a team will be considered team captains. Each team is permitted a maximum of four captains. In case of injury or ejection, an alternate captain may be identified to the officials. Only any "on- field" player can call a team time-out.

Only a team captain is entitled to an explanation of the rules, including choices for penalty options, kickoffs and convert attempt options. Only a team captain is entitled to request a measurement or an equipment safety check. If a team does not have a captain on the field when the Referee wants to explain the penalty application on a given infraction, the Referee will take a time out and request that a captain come on the field. The options will be explained to the captain and a team time out will be charged. If that team does not have a time out left, then a delay of game penalty will be applied. [Rule 5]

- (d) **Coaches and Managers** - A coach or manager who is a player has no special rights while on the field, unless designated as a team captain. While off the field, a coach or manager must stay in the bench area or be penalized for objectionable conduct. [Rule 2]

- (e) **Team Bench Area** – The team benches should be on the same side of the field. They should be a minimum of five yards back from the sideline and between the twenty-five and forty-five yard lines .Players must stay in their bench area when off the field, or be penalized ten yards for objectionable conduct.

### Rule 3: Timing of Game

- (a) **Length of Game** – A game shall consist of approximately sixty-two (62) minutes playing time divided into four quarters of approximately fifteen (15) minutes each.
- (b) **Playing Time** – Time runs continuously for fifteen minutes in each quarter except for Referee approved time outs. After fifteen minutes have elapsed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters , the Referee shall notify both teams that there are three legal plays left in the half. If any team is unable or unwilling to start the fourth quarter of any game that team shall be responsible for paying both officials fees, unless mutually agreed by both teams not to continue to play.
- (c) **Three Play Rule** - The three (3) plays rule permits three (3) legal scrimmage plays rather than using a game clock. Kick offs or convert attempts will not count as one of the three legal scrimmage plays. After each play is completed the Referee will announce the number of legal scrimmage plays remaining in the quarter . [Rule 22]
- (d) **Terminating a Half** - The half may be terminated at any time when both teams agree, or at the Referee's discretion if neither team gains an advantage from stoppage.
- (e) **Notifying Captains** - The Referee will notify both team captains when there is approximately one minute remaining in the quarter . The Referee must tell a captain the exact amount of time remaining in a quarter when a captain requests playing time left.
- (f) **Timing** - The Referee shall be the official time keeper and shall be governed by the timing rules for playing time in a game. [Rule 11]
- (g) **Starting and Stopping the Clock** - Only the Referee may start or stop the game clock. [Rule 3]
- (h) **1st and 3rd Quarters** - At the beginning of the first quarter, the clock will not start until the Referee blows the whistle to signal the kicker to start the kick off. If one or more seconds remain on the clock after the play is whistled dead in the quarter, another play will be allowed. [Rule 11]
- (i) **2nd and 4th Quarters** - At the beginning of the second quarter, the clock will not start until the Referee blows the whistle to signal the offense to begin their 20 second huddle time count. If one or more seconds remain on the clock after a play is whistled dead, another play will be allowed

After the ball is declared dead at the end of a play, if approximately fourteen minutes have been played in any quarter before the Referee whistles in the next play, the Referee may inform each team's captain that there is less than a minute of playing time left before the three plays.[Rule 3]

- (j) **Rest Periods** - The timing of rest periods must be started by the Referee, only after the final legal play of a half is completed and the Referee has completed the necessary administration of penalties and points. The full rest period must be given before the team captains are called to discuss the kick off choices, unless both teams agree to shorten the rest period.

The team captains must be told when there is one minute left in the rest period. A rest period will be taken between the halves .

#### Rule 4: Overtime - Convert Attempts

- (a) **Tied Game** - In the event of a tied game in which a winner must be declared, a series of convert attempts will be used to determine a winner.
- (b) **Declaring a Winner** - Each team will attempt three converts, alternating on offense and defense. Teams will attempt two-point converts from the 10 -yard line. The team with the most points after three attempts by each team will be declared the winner. If the teams are still tied after three attempts by each team, they will continue to run alternate sudden death converts until one team has more points .
- (c) **Coin Toss** - Team captains will meet at center field to conduct a coin toss. The captain of the home team during the regular game will call the toss. The winner of the toss shall choose to be the offense or the defense to begin the convert attempts .
- (d) **Time-Outs** - There shall be no time-outs for strategy. Each team shall have only one time-out during the convert attempts to check a rule application
- (e) **Rest periods** - There shall be a two minute rest period before the convert attempts begin. No rest periods will be allowed during the convert attempts.
- (f) **Penalties** - shall be applied as per the rules for regular converts attempts.[Rule 12]

#### Rule 5: Game Procedures

- (a) **Pre- Game Conference** – Proceed with the other official (s) to the center of the field, approximately five minutes prior to game time to discuss the captains' choices. Review with the captains any special arrangements, ground rules or unusual field markings.[Rule 1]
- (b) **Home Team** - If the schedule does not identify the home team, a coin toss will be held. The captain of the team winning the toss shall choose to be the home or visiting team.  
  
During playoff games, there will be no coin toss and the team ranked higher in the final standings will have the choice .
- (c) **Choice of Kick-off** – To begin the first half, the captain of the visiting team shall choose to kick-off, receive the kick-off or defend an end of the field. The captain of the home team shall then choose one of the two remaining choices .  
  
To start the second half, the captain of the home team shall choose to kick-off, receive the kick-off or defend an end of the field .The captain of the visiting team shall then choose one of the two remaining choices. Once the captain's choice has been given to the opposing captain by the Referee, the choice cannot be changed. [Rule 13]
- (d) **Start and End of Periods** - Each half will begin by a kick-off from the kicking team's 45 yard line. Each quarter will end after the completion of the three plays rule. At the start of the second and fourth quarters, the teams will change ends. The ball will be put into play by the team entitled to do so at the appropriate point determined by the end of the last play of the previous quarter. When a touchdown is scored on the final play of a period, the convert attempt must be completed before that period is considered completed. [Rule 3]

- (e) **Choice following a Score** - After a single point is scored, the non-scoring team must scrimmage from their 35 -yard line. After a safety touch, the scoring team has the option to scrimmage the ball from their 35-yard line, or have the non-scoring team kickoff from the non-scoring team 35-yard line. After a touchdown, the scoring team may try a convert attempt. After a convert the non-scoring team may choose to kick-off from their 45 -yard line, or have the scoring team kick-off from their 45-yard line. After a field goal, non-scoring team scrimmages from their 35-yard line or they can have scoring team kick-off from their 35-yard line. [Rule 12]
- (f) **Measuring for a "Completed Pass" or First Down** - The Referee is the sole judge as to whether a measurement is required in ruling on a "Completed Pass" or a first down being gained by the offense . The captain of either team may ask for a measurement but the Referee has the authority to ignore the request. [Rule 15]
- (g) **Obtaining First Down** - A team shall have three downs in which to achieve a first down by completing two forward passes. The ball must be thrown over the line of scrimmage to another player to constitute a forward pass. Each completion and run play must gain at least ten yards from the line of scrimmage in order to be credited as a "Completed Pass" . If on any down an offensive player is touched behind the line of scrimmage the next succeeding forward pass completion and run must gain ten yards plus the distance lost on that preceding down. If, however, a pass is caught short of the yards required for a "Completed Pass" credit the offensive team with yards gained on the play. This spot will become the new line of scrimmage and the team will require a minimum of ten yards from the new line of scrimmage in order to qualify for a "Completed Pass" on the remaining downs. [Rule 15]
- (h) **Delay of Game** – The game shall start promptly at the scheduled time. A team must have six players on the field at the scheduled time or be penalized for delaying the start of the game. Clock begins after the pre-game conference is complete. Time delay will be run off the clock as part of the first quarter of play. If a sixth player arrives within the fifteen minutes, the official will apply a delay of game penalty and allow the non offending team to reconsider their original "coin touch" choices because of a shortened first quarter. A team will forfeit the game by a score of 1-0, if they do not have six players on the field within fifteen minutes of the scheduled start of the game. When a team refuses to start or continue a game at the request of the Referee, it will be penalized ten yards for a delay of game. On the second request, the team will receive a loss of down penalty. On the third refusal, the team will forfeit the game by a score of 1-0 .If the non- forfeiting team is leading at the time of the forfeit, the score will stand. [Rule 2]
- (i) **NO GOALPOST PADS – Delay of Game** - A team will forfeit the game by a score of 1-0 if the team does not have goalpost pads at the field within fifteen minutes of the scheduled start time of the game. Time delay will be run off the clock as part of the first quarter. Team will receive a ten-yard delay of game penalty. [Rule 1]

## **Rule 6: In Bounds/ Out of Bounds**

- (a) **In Bounds** – When the ball or a player has not touched the boundary lines or a person or object that is out of bounds .
- (b) **Out of Bounds** - When a player or the ball touches the boundary lines, an object in the air, or a person or an object that touches the ground beyond the boundary lines .

## Rule 7: Control and Possession of the Ball

- (a) **Control of the Ball** – When a player has the ball firmly held in one or both hands, arms, or legs, or holds the ball firmly under the body without having the ball touch the ground. The grip on the ball must be firm enough to enable the player to stop the rotation of the ball and to exhibit influence over its direction.
- (b) **Possession of the Ball** - A team must have possession of the ball to score a touchdown, to punt or to earn a first down. When a team obtains possession from the opponents, they will be awarded a first down where the ball becomes dead. After being awarded a first down, a team keeps possession for three downs unless the opponents gain control of the ball, or either team is awarded a first down by penalty. During the three downs, the team in possession must continue to gain a first down to retain possession.
- (c) **Player Possession** - A player is considered to have possession of the ball if that player has control of the ball. A player must be awarded possession of the ball when the player had control of the ball but lost it due to contact by another player or impact with the ground or goal posts .
- (d) **Team Possession** - A team is considered to have possession of the ball when one of its players has possession of the ball or the team is awarded possession by the rules .

On the opening kick-off of each half, the kicking team is considered to be in possession of the ball. Once the ball is kicked off, the receiving team has possession. During the three downs, if the team in possession punts the ball, it automatically gives up possession unless the defense is guilty of contacting the punter or, the ball is considered to have never left the end zone. When a team considered to be in possession carries or throws the ball out of bounds, it shall retain possession, except after its third down is completed and a first down has not been A team loses possession when the opponents gain control of a free ball. Interceptions run out or scrimmaged at the ten-yard line the player is successful in getting out of shall be scrimmaged at the point where the gained .intercept a pass or in the end zone may be if not brought out. If the end zone, the ball player is touched. [Rule 14]

## Rule 8: The Touch

- (a) **Ball Carrier** - To prevent the ball carrier from advancing, an opponent must deliberately touch any part of the ball carrier's body or any part of the player's equipment simultaneously with one hand. If the ball is touched while in the ball is in the carrier's hands, the ball carrier will be considered touched. Touching the player with any other part of the defender's body such as the head, arm, shoulder, chest, leg or foot is not considered a touch; the ball carrier can still advance. Touches must be seen by the official to be considered a touch.[Rule 10]
- (b) **Ball Carrier on the Ground** - When a defender jumps over a fallen ball carrier in an obvious attempt to avoid a collision, a touch is awarded to the defense and the play is whistled dead. A one-hand touch is permitted the ball carrier is on the ground. When a ball carrier deliberately kneels to concede a touch or makes no effort to get up after falling, a touch will be awarded to the nearest defender .
- (c) **Quarterback/ Passer** - When the Quarterback or passer is attempting to pass the ball, the ball is considered to be in their hand until the ball has entirely left the passers hand.

- (d) **Punter** -When the ball carrier is the punter or another player who is attempting to punt the ball, the ball is considered to be still in the punter's hand until it has left the punter's foot.
- (e) **Ball Tipped, Muffed or Bobbled** - A tipped ball is one that is touched by one player then caught by the game player, a teammate, or an opponent. Muffed is the unsuccessful attempt to catch a lateral, kick off, punt or snapped ball with the ball being touched in the process. Bobbled ball occurs when a player attempting to catch a pass touches the ball, loses contact with the ball, and then catches the ball without the ball touching another player. [Rule 17]
- (f) **Illegal Touches** - While touching the ball carrier, any unreasonable shoves, swinging arm slaps and heavy-handed touches will be interpreted as unnecessary roughness and subject to a Personal Foul penalty. Touches in the neck and head area, unless unavoidable due to ball carrier crouching or falling, shall be interpreted as unnecessary roughness resulting in personal foul penalty. Personal fouls can be applied as live or dead ball fouls. [See Rule 21]
- (g) **Extension** – A ball carrier is not allowed to extend the ball with the arms in an effort to gain extra yards. This penalty is applied as a dead ball foul from the point of the torso of the ball carrier when the extension took place . It is applied as a minor objectionable conduct five-yard dead ball foul. [Rule 23]

## Rule 9: Live Ball/ Dead Ball

- (a) **Live Ball** – When the ball is considered to be in play. This begins when the ball is snapped or kicked off, after the referee has blown the whistle to indicate a play may begin, and continues until the ball is considered to be dead. A team cannot advance the ball or score unless the ball is live. [Rule 15]
- (b) **Free Ball** - A free ball is a live ball in the air that is not in a player's control and can be legally recovered and advanced by either team. The ball is considered to be free from the time it leaves a player's body until the instant it touches the ground.
- (c) **Loose Ball** - A live ball that is not in a player's control and can be legally recovered and advanced only by the team considered to be in possession. The ball is considered to be loose from the time the ball leaves the ground until it touches a player's body.
- (d) **Down The Ball**- This occurs when the defense controls a loose ball or knocks a loose or free ball to the ground. [Rule 1]
- (e) **Dead Ball** – When the ball is not playable by either team. The next point of scrimmage will be determined according to the dead ball rule below.**Dead Ball Conditions:**
  - i. **Out of Bounds** – When a player or the ball touches the boundary lines, an object in the air, or a person or object that touches the ground beyond the boundary lines.
  - ii. **Touch** - The ball is ruled dead when the ball carrier is touched/ concedes to be touched or is considered to be touched by the defender.
  - iii. **Score** - The ball is dead as soon as a score is made.
  - iv. **Goal Post Assembly** - The ball is dead when it touches the goal post assembly.

- v. **Pass** - The ball is dead when any thrown pass touches the ground, an official or goes out of bounds.
- vi. **Motionless Ball** - The ball is dead when it lies motionless for three seconds after being punted if receiving team makes no attempt to play the ball.
- vii. **Punt/ Place Kick** - The ball is dead after a punt when it touches the ground behind the line of scrimmage, behind the punter's goal line or any player of the punting team before first being touched by the receiving team.

The ball is dead after a punt when it touches the ground after being muffed in an offside direction by a punt receiver.

The ball is dead after any player of the punting team downs a punt. In all of these cases, a ball touching any person or object out of bounds shall be considered to have touched the ground.

After a muffed punt, when the player of the receiving team who last touched the ball is deliberately touched by an opponent, the ball is immediately dead if the ball is considered to be loose; if the ball is considered to be a free ball when the touch occurs, the ball becomes dead as soon as it touches the ground.

The ball is dead immediately after a punt on a convert attempt.

- viii. **Kick Off** - The ball is dead after a kick off when the kicking team downs the ball. After a muffed kick-off, the ball is immediately dead when the last player of the receiving team to touch the ball is touched by an opponent, if the ball is considered to be a loose ball; if the ball is considered to be a free ball when the touch occurs, the ball becomes dead as soon as it touches the ground.
- ix. **Dribbled Ball** - If a player accidentally or deliberately kicks the ball with the foot or leg without having had control of the ball in his hand it becomes an on side or off side pass and will remain live until the ball hits the ground. The ball is dead when a dribbled ball touches the ground or is caught by the dribbling team. [See Rule 10]
- x. **Snap** - The action of the Centre, at the beginning of the scrimmage play, in throwing the ball from its position on the ground, through the legs to the Quarterback. The ball is dead after a bad or muffed snap when the defense downs a loose ball or bats a free ball to the ground or touches the last player to touch the ball. The defense cannot stop the play on a bad snap by touching the center. [See Rule 15]
- xi. **Inadvertent Whistle** - When the whistle is blown inadvertently by an official, play will stand unless the Referee decides that the whistle affected the result of the play. The Referee will decide which team is adversely affected by the whistle; that team may choose to let the play stand when the whistle blew, or repeat the last play. If the Referee cannot decide which team is adversely affected, the play will be repeated. Any fouls that occur during the play and allowed to stand will be administered as they would be in a regular play situation. Dead ball fouls will be administered in all cases.
- xii. **Ball Touches Official** - When the ball touches an official it will be considered as the ball having touched the ground. Any forward pass that touches an official would be ruled an incomplete pass. The appropriate live ball/ dead ball rules will apply on any other play that touches an official.

xiii. **Diving** The ball is dead when the ball carrier violates the diving rule. This personal live or dead ball foul is considered to have occurred after the ball was dead. [Rule 21]

xiv. **Offside Pass** - The ball is dead immediately, when an offside pass is caught by the team that caused the offside pass. A pass deflected by the defense and caught by the offense is an offside pass.

## Rule 10: Placement of a Dead Ball

The placement of the dead ball is listed below:

- i. **Out of Bounds** - After going of bounds in the field of play, the ball will be placed at the furthest point of advance of the ball when it broke the plane of the boundary line. When the ball carrier goes out of bounds, the ball will be placed at its furthest point of advance when the ball carrier went out of bounds .[Rule 1]
- ii. **Touch** -After a touch, the ball will be placed at the furthest point of advance of the ball when the ball carrier was considered to be touched. On a bobbled ball touch or a tipped pass touch, the furthest advance of the ball is considered to be where the ball was caught or where the receiver was touched whichever is closest to the receiver! s dead line. If any of the above spots are in the end zone, the applicable scoring rule placement will apply. [Rule 8]
- iii. **Score** - After a score, the ball will be placed according to the appropriate scoring rule. [Rule 12]
- iv. **Goal Post Assembly** - After hitting the goal post assembly in flight on a kick off, the ball is placed on the receiving team's twenty-five yard line .

If the ball hits the goal post assembly on a kick off after touching the ground or a member of the receiving team, the ball is placed on the receiving team's ten-yard line.

If the ball hits the goal post assembly on a kick off after being touched by the kicking team, the ball is considered as being downed. After hitting the goal post assembly during a punt from the field of play the ball is placed on the receiving team's ten-yard line.

If a punt from the end zone hits the goal post assembly, a safety touch is awarded. [Rule 14]

When the ball hits the goal post assembly on any other play not described above, the ball is considered to have hit the ground in the end zone thus the appropriate ruling and placement will apply. [Rule 9]

After an incomplete pass during a legal forward pass, the ball will be placed at the last point of scrimmage .

Any other incomplete pass shall be ruled dead at one of the following spots, whichever is the closest spot to the passing team's dead line:

- i. where the first offside pass originated, even if the ball was deflected by the defense and caught by an offensive player
- ii. where the passing or non-passing team first touched the ball \_
- iii. where the ball touched the ground or went out of bounds [Rule 16a]

- v. **Motionless Ball**- The ball is dead when it lies motionless for three seconds, after being punted, and there is no attempt to recover the ball by either team. The ball will be placed at the spot it rested on the field of play, unless it is in the end zone.[Rule 9]
- vi. **Downed Ball**- After a loose ball is downed, it will be placed at the spot where the defense first touched the ball . After a free ball is downed, the ball will be placed according to the dead ball regulations for an incomplete pass with the offense considered being the passing team.[Rule 9]
- vii. **Muffed (Fumbled) Ball / Last Receiver Touched** - After a muffed ball is ruled dead because the last offensive player to touch the ball is touched, the ball will be placed at one of the following two spots at the option of the defense . The ball is placed where the defense deliberately touched that player, the previous line of scrimmage or the point where the fumble occurred.[Rule 15]
- viii. **Dribbled Ball**- After a dribbled ball is ruled dead, the ball will be placed at one of the three following spots, whichever spot is closest to the dead line of the dribbling team :
  - i. where the ball was first kicked
  - ii. where the ball touched the ground
  - iii. where the dribbling team touched the ball lastwhere the non-dribbling team first touched the ball [Rule 9]
- ix. **Diving** - The ball is dead when the ball carrier deliberately dives forward to gain extra yards or to avoid a touch. The ball will be placed at its furthest point of advance at the instant the dive began.[Rule 21]
- x. **Punt/ Place Kick** - After a place kick on a convert attempt, the ball will be placed at the appropriate kick off line .

After an untouched punt becomes dead behind the punter's line of scrimmage, the ball will be placed at the spot where it touched the ground in bounds or broke the plane of the boundary line .

### Rule 11: Time Outs

**Legal Time Out** – Any on field player can request the Referee to call a time out. Time outs can only be called during dead ball situations .

**Team Time Out** - Each team is allowed a maximum of three time outs per game. Violation of these rules shall be penalized for delay of game. There is one 60 -second time out per half, which if not used in the first half, cannot be carried over to the second half and an additional 60-second time out to be used at any time during the game.

Each team's captain will be told when 15 seconds remains in the team time out. Teams may shorten the one minute time period if they both agree. After the team time out, all offensive players must return to the huddle.

Violation of this rule shall penalize the offending team for illegal procedure .[Rule 15]

The Referee must stop the clock immediately when a team is granted a time out. If the time out is one of the team's three legal time outs, the clock will not start until the snap of the ball on the subsequent play.

If the subsequent play is a convert attempt, the clock will not start until the kick off.

If the subsequent play is a kick off, the clock will not start until a player on the receiving team touches the ball.

If the ball goes out of bounds on the kick off, the clock will start on the snap of the ball on the subsequent play or, if it is re-kicked, when any on-field player touches the ball after the kick off.

If the ball hits the goal post without being touched by a player, the clock will start on the snap of the ball on the subsequent play.

No team is permitted to call two consecutive time outs without a play occurring between the time outs

If the time out is for an equipment safety check, a check on a rule application, or an illegal team time out, the Referee will administer the appropriate ruling and/or penalty, and then start the clock after the next play is whistled in.

### **Team Time Out Procedures**

- i) When a time out request is for team strategy, the team time out rules and regulations will be applied. If the Referee is aware that the team has already used its allotted time out for team strategy, the Referee must inform the captain of the situation but must not stop the clock while doing so.
- ii) If a team has requested and inadvertently been granted an illegal time out for team strategy, the Referee must inform the team captain immediately, apply a delay-of-game penalty, whistle the next play in, and then start the clock.
- iii) When asked by a team captain, the Referee must inform the captain if the team has already used its time outs for team strategy.
- iv) For an equipment check, the Referee will check the equipment, apply the appropriate ruling, whistle the next play in, and then start the clock.
- v) Time outs used to check the proper application of a rule will be charged as a team time out if the rule was properly applied and the team will be charged with a ten-yard delay of game penalty. If the captain disagrees with the ruling, the Referee should consult the rulebook .If the rule was not properly applied, the Referee will correct the application, and the time out will be charged as an official's time out. When the correct rule or penalty is applied, the Referee will whistle time in, then start the clock.
- vi) Teams cannot use a time out to question an official's judgement calls. Violation of this rule will be penalized by charging the team with a team time out and a delay of game penalty of ten yards.
- vii) When a team is charged with an illegal team time out in a game, they will be penalized for delay of game. [Rule 5h]

**Measurements** - The Referee must stop the clock as soon as he decides to take a measurement for a "Completed Pass" and/or a first down.

**Delay of Game** - The clock must be stopped immediately when the Referee decides to apply a delay of game penalty. [Rule 5]

**Injury Time Out** - Only the Referee can call an official's time out to allow a team to attend to an injured player. If the time out is called by the Referee, the injured player must be removed from the field for at least one play. The Referee has full authority to delay the game until the injured player is safely removed from the field. Unnecessary delay in removing the player shall be penalized for delay of game.

**Kick Off** - The clock must be stopped when the wind blows the ball off the kicking tee.

**Safety Touch** - The clock must be stopped immediately when the Referee awards a safety touch. The clock will start when the receiving team touches the ball .

**Official's Time Out** - Only the Referee is authorized to declare an official's time out. The Referee must call an official's time out during an injury or a measurement, when a captain requests a legal team time out or an equipment safety check, when a team is penalized for delay of game, or when a legal safety touch is awarded. At all other dead-ball times, the Referee has the authority to call an official's time out.

### Timing Procedures

If a delay of game penalty – the clock was stopped when the delay of game penalty was applied and the clock starts when the ball is snapped or kicked off. [Rule 5]

Team time out clock will start on the snap of the ball on the subsequent play.

Team time out, after a touchdown is scored - clock will start when any on-field player touches the ball after kick off. If the ball goes out of bounds on the kick off without being touched, the clock will start on the snap of the ball on the subsequent play or, if it is re-kicked, when any on-field player touches the ball after kick off. If the ball hits the goal post without being touched by a player, the clock will start on the snap of the ball on the subsequent play.

After a safety touch is scored - If the subsequent play is a kick off, the above rules for kickoffs apply. If the subsequent play is a scrimmage play, the clock will start on the snap of the ball.

Time-count violation clock will start on the snap of the ball on the subsequent play.

### Rule 12: Scoring

- (a) **Declaring a Winner** - The team scoring the most points during regulation time is declared the winner. If the teams are tied after regulation time and a winner must be declared, the team scoring the most points during the overtime game is declared the winner. [Rule 4]
- (b) **Ball in the End Zone** - The ball is considered to be in the end zone when any part of the ball is on or over the ground in the end zone. Once the ball is in the end zone it is considered to be still in the end zone until it is brought entirely out of the end zone into the field of play.
- (c) **Touchdown** - A team scoring a touchdown is awarded six points and an optional convert attempt. A touchdown is scored when a player has possession of the ball in the opponent's end zone. The ball is considered to be in the end zone when any part of the ball touches or crosses the plane of the goal line.

After the touchdown or convert attempt, the non-scoring team may elect to have the scoring team kick off from their own forty five-yard line or the non-scoring team may elect to kick off from their own forty five yard line. [Rule 5]

- (d) **Safety Touch** - A team scoring a safety touch is awarded two points. A safety touch is awarded to a team when the offense causes the ball to go into their own end zone and the play is ruled dead with any part of the ball in the end zone.

A safety touch is not awarded when a player's momentum, while intercepting a pass in the field of play, causes the ball to be brought into the end zone where it is eventually ruled dead; the intercepting team shall be awarded a first down at the point of interception.

After a safety touch, the scoring team can choose one of three options: to have the non-scoring team kick off from the non-scoring team's thirty five yard line, to scrimmage the ball, first and ten, from their own thirty five yard line or to kick off from their own thirty five yard line.[Rule 5]

- (e) **Single Point Rouge** - A team scoring a single point or rouge is awarded one point . A single point is scored when a team legally kicks the ball into the opponent' s end zone and the ball is not brought out of the end zone.

For a single point to be scored on a kick off, the ball must land in the field of play in the end zone or touched by a receiving team player prior to going out of bounds. After a single point is scored, the non-scoring team will scrimmage the ball, first and ten, from their own thirty-five yard line. [Rule 5]

- (f) **Single Point Rouge Not Awarded** - A single point is not awarded when a kick-off or a punt from the field of play touches the goal post assembly before touching a player. A single point is not awarded when a pass is intercepted in the end zone; the intercepting team will be awarded a first down on their ten-yard line if they do not get the ball out of the end zone legally.

- (g) **Field Goal** - A team scoring a field goal is awarded three points. A field goal is scored by a place kick (except on a kick off) when the ball, after being kicked, and without again touching the ground, goes over the crossbar, and between the goal posts (or goal post assisted) of the opponents' goal, regardless of whether it touched the goal post assembly if the ball successfully goes through the uprights.

If the ball does not successfully continue over the uprights after touching the goal post, the play is whistled dead. [Rule 1]

After a field goal is scored, the non-scoring team may elect to have the scoring team kick off from their thirty five yard line or may elect to scrimmage the ball, first and ten, from their own thirty five yard line. [Rule 5]

Teams may use a piece of wood or rubber pad less than two inches thick to rest ball on during a field goal attempt. [Rule 2]

On a field goal attempt, if the ball strikes the goal post assembly, but still goes over the crossbar and between the uprights, the score shall count.

If the ball strikes the goalpost assembly, but does not go over the crossbar and between the uprights, the ball is whistled dead immediately and the non-kicking team shall put the ball into play at the hash marks on the 10 -yard line. [Rule 14]

A missed field goal attempt that does not hit the uprights, shall be considered a punt and respective rules apply. [Rule 14]

### (h) Convert

After scoring a touchdown, the scoring team may attempt a convert from the ten-yard line.

Convert Attempt - Kick for 1 point.

Convert Attempt - Throw for 2 points.

All rules for a scrimmage or pass apply to a convert attempt .After scoring a touchdown, the offence has the option of attempting a convert from the 10-yard line of team scored upon. The convert may be scored by a forward pass or placement.

The defensive team may rush after 4 seconds or if the ball is fumbled. Placing the ball on the ground for a kick attempt does not constitute a fumble. [Rule 15]

If offensive team commits an infraction during a convert attempt and the attempt was successful, disallow score, apply penalty, and permit offensive team to repeat attempt. If attempt was not successful/ penalty is declined if infraction was for other than rough play or unnecessary roughness.

Teams may use a piece of wood or rubber pad (approved by the Referee) less than two inches thick to rest ball on during a convert kick attempt.

If defensive team commits an infraction and the attempt was not successful, the defensive team shall be penalized the normal penalty up to a maximum of half the distance to the goal line, with the attempt repeated by offensive team.

If attempt was successful and the penalty was any Player Conduct Foul, the penalty shall be applied on the subsequent kick-off .If either team commits a Player Conduct Foul after the convert attempt the penalty shall be applied on the subsequent kick-off .

The offense will be awarded a repeated attempt except when the offense commits pass interference in the target zone; the offense commits illegal re-entry; the offense commits an offside pass outside the end zone; a foul by either team occurs after the ball is considered dead.

When the defense commits pass interference in the target area in the end zone, the offense will be awarded their convert.

Dead ball penalties must be applied on the subsequent kick-off unless the convert attempt is repeated; in these cases the non-penalized team can choose to apply the penalty on the convert or the kick-off

### Rule 13: Kick-Off

**Kickoff Procedure** - At the start of each half, or as stated in the scoring rules, a team will kick off from their own forty-fiveyard line or, if it is a non-regulation field, ten yards back from the centerline. When the official blows the whistle to signal the kick off, the kicking

team has twenty seconds to kick the ball or be penalized ten yards for delay of game. This procedure is also used following a touchdown if a team elects to receive a kick off.

**Kicking Tee** - The ball is normally kicked off from a tee, which cannot raise the lowest part of the ball more than two inches of the ground. If the team does not use a tee, the ball can be held on the ground by a member of the kicking team. The ball must be placed between the hash marks (24 yards in from the sidelines). [Rule I]

**Players During Kick Off** – On a kick off all players of the receiving team must be at least twenty yards from the kick off line at the time the ball is kicked. Members of the kicking team must be behind the kick-off line until the ball is kicked. Failure to do so will result in a five-yard illegal procedure penalty.

**Legal Kick Off** – To be a legal kick off, the ball must travel twenty yards towards the receiving team's dead ball line before it is touched by a member of the kicking team. It is an illegal procedure penalty if a member of the kicking team prior to traveling twenty yards downfield touches the ball, or if it does not travel twenty yards downfield, unless it is touched first by a member of the receiving team. Receiving team has the option to scrimmage at the point the ball was touched by the defense or have the team re-kick for illegal procedure.

**Downing the Ball** – Members of the kicking team can touch the ball or down it, after it travels twenty yards and before it is touched by a member of the receiving team. The kicking team does not have to "give yards" on a kick off. The kicking team cannot normally recover their own kick unless it first touches a member of the receiving team, goes in the air and is caught by a member of the kicking team prior to the ball touching the ground.

### **Kick-off Regulations and Penalties**

If the ball goes out of bounds on a kick off, it is a five-yard illegal procedure penalty against the kicking team. The receiving team has the option to have the ball re-kicked at the point five yards back from the point of the last kick, or to take possession of the ball at the point it went out of bounds adding 10 yards and no closer than their 45 yard line.

If the ball travels over the receiving team's dead ball line in the air, no points awarded and the receiving team will scrimmage first and ten from their own ten-yard line. If the ball hits an official on the field of play, rolls and hits the goal post, the ball is dead as soon as it hits the goal post . The receiving team will scrimmage, first and ten, at their own ten-yard line. The ball striking an official is the same as the ball hitting the ground. [Rule 9]

### **Kicking Definitions**

- i. A dribbled ball occurs when a player deliberately or accidentally kicks the ball with the foot or leg without having had control of the ball in the hand. [Rule 9]
- ii. A legal place kick is made when the ball is kicked while resting on a kicking tee or held on the ground by a player of the same team during a kick off. [Rule I]
- iii. A legal place kick is also made when the ball is kicked while resting on a rubber pad or a piece of wood or held by a player of the same team during a convert or field goal attempt. [Rule 12]

- iv. A legal punt is made when a ball is deliberately dropped and kick with the foot before it touches the ground. Control of the ball must have been gained before the ball was dropped .When a player attempts to punt and the ball strikes any part of the punter's body, this shall be considered a legal punt.
- v. A return punt is a punt that is made by a player after receiving a punt from an opponent.
- vi. A quick kick is a kick from scrimmage where the kicker does not take the normal kicking position.

### Rule 14: Punts and Field Goals

- (a) **Punts** - Any player may punt the ball. After a snap, the ball can be punted at any time during a live ball except during a convert attempt, after a completed pass or after an interception. A punt cannot be used to replace a kick off or a snap; this is illegal procedure. A punt during a convert attempt will be ruled dead immediately when the ball is punted and considered as an incomplete pass. A punt after a completed pass or an interception will be ruled dead immediately when the ball is punted. The punting team will give up possession of the ball and be penalized for objectionable conduct. A drop kick is not a legal punt. When a player attempts to punt and the ball strikes any part of the punter's body, this shall be considered a punt and all rules of a punt shall apply. If the punter misses the ball entirely, this is considered to be an offside pass.
- (b) **Dribbled Ball** A player who does not have possession of the ball cannot punt the ball. When a player accidentally or deliberately touches the ball with the foot or leg without having had control of the ball in the hand, this is a dribbled ball.
- (c) The ball becomes an on-side or offside pass depending on its direction and will remain live until it hits the ground; the dead ball rules for a dribbled ball will apply. [Rule 9]
- (d) **Possession after a Punt** When the ball is punted, the punting team automatically loses possession to the opponents unless the punt is blocked or is considered to have never left the end zone. [Rule 7]
- (e) **Punt Reception** - Any player of the punt receiving team can catch a punt and advance if that player stayed in bounds during the entire play; violation of this rule is an illegal re-entry penalty. [Rule 20]
- (f) **Restraining Zone** - After a punt, players of the punting team cannot touch the ball or cannot be touched by the ball before the opponent 's touch the ball. After a punt, all players of the punting team must be at least five yards away from the ball (restraining zone) when an opponent first touches the ball. Violation of these rules is a "no-yards/ restraining zone" penalty assessed against the punting team from the point where the ball was first touched, or option. If in the opinion of the Referee, players from the punting team attempted to leave the restraining zone and these players had no effect on the play, the penalty shall be reduced to a "MINOR" NO YARDS penalty (5 yards). [Rule 14]
- (g) **Recovery of a Muffed Punt Reception** - When a punt receiver muffs the ball, the ball is free to both teams until it touches the ground; if the punting team had violated the no-yards rule, they cannot be awarded the ball. When the punt receiver muffs the ball in an offside direction, the ball is dead when it touches the ground. When the punt receiver muffs the ball in an on-side direction the ball is still live after it touches the ground. The punting team can down the ball when it is loose; they can catch and advance the ball when it is a free ball. The receiving team can catch and advance a loose ball or a free ball.

- (h) **Deflected Punt** - A deflected punt is a punt that touches any player immediately after being punted but continues to travel in a direction away from the punter's dead line

A punt deflected by any player will be considered as not having been touched at all as it continues forward.

A deflected punt is dead when it touches the ground behind the line of scrimmage or behind the punter's goal line.

- (i) **Blocked Punt** – A punt is considered to be blocked by the opposing team when any player of that team strikes the ball and the ball travels in the direction of, or parallel to, the punting team's dead ball line and hits the ground or is touched by a player of the punting team. The play is ruled dead and the non-punting team will take possession of the ball at the point the ball was blocked and not where it hits the ground. [Rule 7]
- (j) **Possession after a Blocked Punt** - After a punt is blocked in the field of play, the ball remains in the possession of the non-punting team until they lose possession. After a punt is blocked in the end zone, the ball is considered to be in the possession of the punting team until they lose possession. [Rule 14]
- (k) **On a kick-off or punt**, if the ball becomes dead in possession of a team in its end zone, or is downed, or goes out of bounds in the end zone as a result of the ball having been propelled into the end zone by the opponent, a single point is scored.
- (l) **A safety touch** is scored when the ball becomes dead in the possession of a team in its own goal area, or touches or crosses the dead-line or a side-line-in-goal as a result of the ball having been carried, passed, kicked or fumbled from the field of play into the goal area by the team scored against, or as a direct result of a kick from scrimmage having been blocked in the end zone. After a safety touch, the team scored against shall kick-off from its own 35-yard line, or scoring team can scrimmage from their 35-yard line. [Rule 5]
- (m) **If the ball strikes** the goal post assembly in flight on a field goal attempt but fails to proceed through the uprights, the ball shall be declared dead immediately and shall be awarded to the receiving team at its 10 yard line. [Rule 1 and Rule 12]
- (n) **After hitting the goal post assembly** during a punt from the field of play, the ball is placed on the receiving team's ten-yard line. [Rule 1]
- (o) **If a punt from the end zone** hits the goal post assembly, the non-punting team will be awarded a safety-touch. Team scored upon must kick-off from their own thirty five yard line, or scoring team can choose to scrimmage from own their own thirty five yard line. [Rule 1]
- (p) **When the ball hits** the goal post assembly on any other play that is not described above, the ball is considered to have hit the ground in the end zone thus the appropriate ruling and placement will apply. [Rule 1]
- (q) **After a pass has been completed** over the line of scrimmage, the ball cannot be punted. The infraction is whistled dead immediately and the punting team will receive a ten-yard objectionable conduct penalty from the point where the ball was punted. The receiving team will be awarded possession of the ball ten yards from the point where the ball was punted. [Rule 171]

- (r) **On any kick from scrimmage** (punt or field goal attempt) no player for the kicking team may touch the ball unless the ball is touched first by a member of the receiving team. The punting team will be penalized ten yards from point of infraction or option. [Rule 14]
- (s) **After a punt**, all players of the punting team must be at least five yards away from the ball when an opponent first touches the ball. Violation of these rules is a "no-yards" ten-yard penalty or option against the punting team from the point where the ball was first touched. If the offending player (s) did not affect the play in any way, the "no-yards" penalty can be applied as a five yard "minor" penalty. [Rule 14]

## **Rule 15: Scrimmage**

- (a) **Scrimmage Procedures** - To begin a play other than kick-off, the ball must be snapped by the offensive Center from the point of scrimmage to the Quarterback. The official will determine the line of scrimmage. The ball must be placed between the hash marks (24 yards in from the sidelines). [See Rule 1c]
- (b) **The Ball** – The officials will mark the point of scrimmage. The offensive team may take the ball into the huddle to clean it or keep it dry
- (c) **The Huddle**
  - (i) The offensive team must huddle after any time out, change of possession or change of ends except on a kickoff, otherwise, a huddle is not necessary. Violation of this rule is illegal procedure.
  - (ii) The play will be stopped only by the Referee(s) whistle. When the offensive team is back in their huddle, he may blow his whistle to indicate that the offensive team has 20 seconds in which to put the ball in play.

Once the huddle is broken, no substitution may be made.

Penalty - Failure to put ball in play within 20 seconds results in a 5 yard penalty and down over.

Second consecutive infraction results in a deliberate delay of game.

Penalty - 10 yards and down over. Third infraction results in a loss of the ball with a change of possession.
- (d) **Sleeper Play**" Sleeper plays are ILLEGAL. Any violation of these rules is illegal procedure. A sleeper play is defined as an attempt, by the offence, to deceive the opposition by:
  - (i) players not huddling after a substitution
  - (ii) having a player scrimmage in close proximity of his own players bench, without having been in the huddle prior to the play.

Penalty - 5 yards from point of last scrimmage or option.
- (e) **The Snap** - The offensive Center must take a position facing the defense with the feet straddling the point of scrimmage. The ball must be snapped off the ground and between the

legs in one motion in the direction from toe to heel. Any player who snaps the ball shall be considered as the Center.

Before the ball can be snapped, it must be set on the ground or the scrimmage bag. The ball must be set within one foot on either side of the scrimmage bag but never ahead of it. When the officials have placed the ball on the ground, the Center can pick the ball up once, adjust it as necessary, and then set it.

When the offense takes the ball into the huddle, after the Center touches the ball to the ground the ball is considered live as soon as the ball is lifted off the ground and the official will begin the "steamboat" count. After the ball is set on the ground, the Center cannot move the ball or the body in such a manner that will draw the defense offside. Violation of any of the snap rules will be penalized for illegal procedure.

A poor snap that has the ball hit the ground in front of the quarterback or goes over the quarterback's head without being touched is a loose ball to the offense and touching the center or the quarterback will not end the play.

If the ball is snapped before the Referee has whistled the play in, the ball is still considered to be dead. The Referee will stop any further play by a whistle then restart the snap without allowing a huddle. The clock will continue to run.

- (f) **Goal Line** - The line of scrimmage cannot be closer than one yard to the goal line.
- (g) **Offensive Team** - At the point of time when the ball is snapped, all offensive players must be behind the line of scrimmage. The penalty for this offside infraction is down repeated, five yards back or option. If the passer or any other offensive player crosses the line of scrimmage with the ball, the play will be whistled dead immediately and the offense will be given a loss of down penalty.
- (h) **Defensive Team** – The defensive team must line up no closer than one yard from the line of scrimmage. The defensive team must allow at least four seconds to elapse from the time the ball is snapped, passed, punted or place kicked before crossing the line of scrimmage. If the offensive player has not yet thrown the ball, punted the ball or place kicked the ball, the defensive team may attempt to touch him or block the pass.

The defensive team may rush as soon as the Quarterback loses possession of the ball by fumbling or handing off to a teammate behind the line of scrimmage or immediately after a muffed snap.

The penalty for failure to allow four seconds to elapse or give one-yard will be down repeated five yards forward or option.

The Referee shall be the sole judge as to whether or not the four-second rule has been violated. Referee will count aloud using one steamboat, etc. Rush after you hear the "T" in boat, or after a muffed snap, when referee will stop counting steamboats.

- (i) **Completed Pass" and Penalties** If a team commits a live ball foul (except target pass interference) on a scrimmage play prior to gaining a "Completed" pass, the penalty shall be applied from the point of last scrimmage with down repeated. Should the penalty be ten yards or greater against the defensive team, the result would be a "Completed Pass" and down repeated for the offensive team; therefore, two consecutive ten yard penalties against

a defensive team would give the offensive team a first down (two "Completed Passes") without attaining a reception.

NOTE: Ten yard penalty = 1 "Completed Pass" if against the defense and accepted, and if the first down is being repeated, this would result in first down with one completion needed for another first down

- (j) **Unfair Tactics** The defender must be at least three yards from the Center at the time of the snap if the defender intends to assume a stationary position in front of the Center. Violation of this rule results in a five-yard illegal procedure penalty and down repeated or option
- (k) **Goal Posts** - When the line of scrimmage is inside the offensive team's twenty-yard line and goal posts are on the field, the next point of scrimmage must be on the hash mark closest to the point where the ball became dead on the previous play.

When the line of scrimmage is inside the defensive team's five-yard line and goal posts are on the field, the next point of scrimmage must be on the hash mark closest to the point where the ball became dead on the previous play. This rule does not apply on a convert attempt .

- (l) **Adverse Field Conditions** – When field conditions are poor due to inclement weather or other reasons, the Referee shall change the normal point of scrimmage to a spot where better field conditions exist. The new point of scrimmage must not be outside the hash marks and must not put either team in a more disadvantaged position than the situation that existed before the original-point of scrimmage had been removed.

### Rule 16: Forward Pass

- (a) **Pass** - A ball thrown, handed, dropped, knocked or batted by a player in any direction or that bounces off a player in any direction.
- (b) **Hand Off Pass** – When the ball is handed in any direction, not thrown, from one player to another; both players must be touching the ball simultaneously. Any hand off pass in a forward direction is penalized for an offside pass and the play whistled dead.
- (c) **Onside Pass** – When the ball is thrown, handed, dropped, knocked, batted, or propelled in any manner (including bouncing of the body) by a player parallel to, or in the direction of that player's dead line during a scrimmage play or on a kick off. The officials will indicate by the appropriate hand signals if a pass is onside or not onside.
- (d) **Offside Pass** – Any pass that goes in the direction of the opponent's dead line. On any offside pass, the ball will come back to the point from where the pass was initiated.

The play is whistled dead as soon as the ball is caught, regardless of how it was propelled, even if propelled by a defensive player and caught by another offensive player. An offside pass is legal when the player who caused the offside pass catches it, but such an offside pass is subject to the bobbled ball rules. An offside pass can be caught and advanced by a teammate when the ball is considered loose and that teammate is considered to be on side.

A kickoff or punt is not subject to the offside pass rule until any player touches the ball.

- (e) **Forward Pass** – When the ball is thrown by any offensive player from behind the line of scrimmage deliberately toward the opponent's dead line. A forward pass is legal when it is the first pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage to a receiver over the line of scrimmage. A forward pass cannot be thrown during a kick-off. For the purposes of determining a legal forward pass, if one foot of the ball carrier or passer is over the line of scrimmage, the ball is considered to be over the line of scrimmage. The ball must be thrown over the line of scrimmage to a teammate to qualify as a forward pass. Any offensive player crossing the line of scrimmage with the ball will result in the play being whistled dead and a loss of down with no option. A ball touched by a defensive player before it crosses the line of scrimmage and recovered by the passer before touching the ground shall be ruled dead and a loss of down with no option. A player must be in control of the ball after catching the ball with at least one foot being in bounds before going out-of-bounds after a catch.

### **Rule 17: Complete/ Incomplete Passes**

- (a) **Receivers** - All players on the offensive and defensive teams are eligible receivers.
- (b) **Complete Pass** Any pass that is caught in bounds prior to the ball becoming dead. When an opponent causes the receiver to land out of bounds and, in the judgment of the officials, the receiver would have touched the ground in bounds without the opponent's action, the receiver will be considered to have landed in bounds.
- (c) **Complete Pass Awarded** - When a receiver gets control of the ball even for an instant, then loses control because of bodily contact caused by an opponent, the receiver will be awarded a completed pass, and the opponent will be awarded a touch at the spot of the bodily contact. A pass is completed to a receiver when an opponent is penalized for pass interference in the target area. [Rule 18]
- (d) **Simultaneous Possession** – When players of opposing teams legally obtain possession of the ball at the same time. A completed pass caught simultaneously by players on opposite teams shall be awarded to the player whose team had possession before the pass was caught simultaneously.
- (e) **Tipped Pass** – A pass that is touched by one player then caught by the same player, a teammate, or an opponent and can be either an on-side or off-side pass. A pass tipped by one offensive player, touched by a defensive player and caught by another offensive player will be ruled an offside pass, the play whistled dead and the ball brought back to where the first offensive player touched the ball. The offside rule applies. [Rule 8 or Rule 16]
- (f) **Bobbed Pass** When a player attempting to complete a pass touches the ball, loses contact with the ball, and then catches the ball without the ball touching another player. A player who bobbles the ball and is touched while bobbling the ball will be considered to be touched if and when the player finally gains possession of the ball. The ball will come to the point where the opponent first touched the receiver. When a ball carrier deliberately throws the ball into the air, then catches it to avoid being touched with the ball, the ball is dead immediately, and the opponents will be awarded a touch where the ball carrier first released the ball. [Rule 8]
- (g) **Intercepted Pass** – When a player's intended pass to a teammate is caught by an opponent.
- (h) **Incomplete Pass** – A pass which touches the ground, official or goal post assembly or goes out of bounds prior to being caught.

- (i) **Blocked or Deflected Forward Pass** - A forward pass that is blocked by a Rusher is considered to be an incomplete forward pass when it hits the ground. If the ball is caught, the appropriate off-side/ on-side pass rules apply. The offense cannot throw a second forward pass; this will be ruled an offside pass. A deflected forward pass IS ruled a regular forward pass playable by both teams. A forward pass deflected by the any defensive player will be considered as not having been touched at all.
- (j) **Deliberate Grounding of a Pass** - When the passer deliberately throws a pass to an area where there is no receiver in an obvious attempt to avoid a loss of yards, the team will be penalized for grounding the ball. The penalty is a loss of down at the point the ball was thrown.
- (k) **Forward Pass vs. Dropped Ball** - When the passer attempts a forward pass and loses control of the ball after starting the passing arm in a forward motion and following through with the intended pass motion, the ball is dead when it hits the ground and the play is considered to be an incomplete forward pass. If the forward motion of the throwing arm had not started when control of the ball was lost, the play is considered an on-side or offside pass.
- (l) **Pass and Punt** – After a pass has been completed over the line of scrimmage, the ball cannot be punted. The play will be whistled dead immediately and the punting team will be penalized for objectionable conduct. The penalty will be ten yards from the point where the ball was punted. The non-offending team will scrimmage, first and ten. [Rule 14]

### Rule 18: Pass Interference

- (a) **Pass Interference** Pass interference is defined as one player taking away the positional advantage of another player.
- (b) **Target Area/ Remote Area** - Pass interference in the target area can only apply when the pass is in the air and the player who had positional advantage had a reasonable chance of getting to the arrival point of the ball.

When these two conditions do not apply, any pass interference that occurs will be considered to have occurred in the remote area.

- (c) **Pass Interference Criteria** - In deciding whether or not pass interference has occurred the officials will consider all the criteria described in the pass interference rules that are listed below:
  - i) **Contact** - A player has committed bodily contact when that player makes contact with an opponent and moves the opponent off stride or away from the opponents intended direction or position. Contact between opponents is legal provided that the contact results from a simultaneous and legitimate attempt to play the ball and occurs at the arrival point of the pass; this contact is legal only when each player is intent on playing the ball and each player is in an equally favorable position to play the ball. When contact occurs without moving the opponent off stride or away from the opponent's intended direction or position, pass Interference has not occurred since this is regarded as incidental contact.
  - ii) **Path to the Ball** - All players have an equal right to a direct path to the arrival point of the ball. A player cannot step into the intended and declared path of an opponent, causing the opponent to slow down or change direction.

A player who is taking a path or a position on the field in order to catch a pass or defend against a pass has a right to that path or position unless an opponent has already taken it. A player who takes an opponent's established path or position using bodily contact is guilty of pass interference.

When two opponents cross paths and make contact, the player who had clearly declared the intended path the first time has the right to that path; the opponent is guilty of pass interference unless the contact was incidental. If the officials cannot determine who declared their path first, pass interference has not occurred. When opponents get their feet tangled up while running their respective paths causing one player to lose balance, a pass interference penalty is not automatic.

The relevant positions and intended paths of the players must be taken into account. In all the above cases, the player who is in the advantageous position to play the ball must continue to display intent to reach the arrival point of the ball. Otherwise, any contact by the opponent in a sincere effort to reach the arrival point of the ball will not be considered pass interference. Any deliberate attempt to block the opponent from reaching the arrival point of the ball is pass interference.

- iii) **Pick Play** – When a player steps into the intended and declared path of an opponent, causing the opponent to slow down or change direction. An offensive player cannot prevent a defensive player from pursuing another offensive player by impeding that defensive player's direct path to the teammate. The defensive player must be moving towards the second offensive player to be considered as pursuing that player. If the first offensive player is playing the ball, that player cannot be considered as impeding the defensive player from pursuing the second offensive player. Violation of this rule will be pass interference of ten yards in the remote area.
- iv) **Stationary Position** - A defensive player who has maintained a stationary position since the ball was snapped shall not be penalized for pass interference if run into by an opponent. If the defensive player takes a stationary position after the ball is snapped, this position cannot be in a path already taken by an opponent. [See Rule 19]
- v) **Playing the Ball** - A player must be facing the ball as it arrives in the target area to be considered playing the ball. When the ball strikes a player who is not playing the ball and is impeding an opponent's approach to the ball will be called for pass interference in the target area. The opponent must be moving towards the ball to be considered impeded.
- vi) **Screening** – When any player, who is not playing the ball, extends the arms or waves a hand in an attempt to distract a receiver or block the vision of the receiver or to touch the ball, that player is considered to have committed pass interference in the remote area. If the ball is touched or if the receiver's direct line of vision is blocked, it is considered to be pass interference in the target area.
- vii) **Non-Catchable Pass** If pass interference occurs and the official rules that the ball would not have been caught without the interference then the pass interference is considered to be in the remote area rather than the target area. [Rule 18]
- viii) **Pass Interference Penalty** – Both offensive and defensive players can be called for pass interference.

If the defense commits pass interference in the target area, the offense is awarded the ball at the point of the infraction and a first or repeat the down ten yards in advance of the point of last scrimmage.

If the offense commits pass interference in the target area, the defense can choose to declare the play an incomplete pass or take possession at the point of the foul.

If either team commits remote area pass interference, the penalty is down repeated, ten yards from the point of last scrimmage or option.

### Rule 19: Interference

- (a) **Offensive interference** – Blocking or holding will result in a ten-yard penalty from line of scrimmage and down repeated or option.
- (b) **Defensive interference** - Blocking or holding will result in a ten-yard penalty from line of scrimmage and down repeated or option.
- (c) **Goal Posts** Players are not allowed to use the goal posts to push off or to change their direction. The penalty for illegal use of goal posts is ten yards from line of scrimmage or option. [Rule 20]

#### (d) **Stationary Positioning (Interference)**

- i) If the center is in a position directly opposite instant the Center, the inside three yards of the scrimmage line, the ball is snapped, the Center shall not be penalized if he makes other than incidental contact with the opponent. If the center is in a position directly opposite the Center, at least three yards from the line of scrimmage, the Center can be penalized if he makes other than incidental contact with the opponent. [Rule 15]
- ii) If the center is in a position not directly opposite the Center the instant the ball is snapped, the Center could be penalized if he makes other than incidental contact with the opponent. [Rule 15]
- iii) If, in the opinion of the official, a player assumes a stationary position for the purpose of deliberately drawing an interference penalty, no such penalty shall be called against the opponent but may be called against the player assuming the stationary position.

No penalty shall be called if a player assumed a stationary position in a clear effort to avoid interfering with an opponent.

A player may cut across the path of an opponent without incurring a penalty if, in the opinion of the official, the opponent's progress was not impeded.

### Rule 20: Illegal Acts (For penalty application Rule 22)

- (a) **Use of Hands** – Any contact with the hands that is made by a player on an opposing player, which clearly detains the latter from playing the position desired. Players cannot use the goal posts with their hands or arms to push off or to change their direction.

Violation of these rules is illegal use of hands.

Players may touch an opponent to feel their relative position as long as the opponent is not impeded or redirected.

Players may touch the goal posts with their hands if such touching does not help them change their direction. [Rule 8 and Rule 21]

- (b) Obstruction – When a player impedes an opponent's approach path to the ball, the ball carrier or the intended receiver, with or without contacting the opponent.

A player may assume a stationary position if the intent is obviously to avoid obstructing an opponent. A player may cut across the path of an opponent if the opponent's progress is not impeded or redirected. Violation of these rules is an obstruction penalty.

During a kick off or punt, players of the receiving team may take a stationary position, if the obvious intent is not to obstruct the opponent's path to the ball carrier.

When the ball carrier uses stationary teammates as a means of blocking the opponent from getting to the ball carrier, such stationary teammates are not to be penalized for obstruction unless they move from their spot. [See Rule I]

- (c) Illegal Re-Entry - A player is not permitted to leave the field of play during a play, return to the field of play, and then participate in the play. The penalty is ten yards for illegal reentry. A player who is pushed out of bounds by an opponent or goes out of bounds as a result of a slippery field is not considered to have gone out of bounds unless that player makes no immediate effort to get back in bounds.

By the offense on a kick off, the penalty is applied at the spot the ball was held when the infraction took place.

By the offense on a scrimmage play; if a "Completed Pass" or first down was not made, the penalty is applied at the point of last scrimmage, down repeated. If a "Completed Pass" or first down was made prior to the infraction, the penalty is applied at the point of foul, and the down is not repeated.

By the offense on a convert, no score is allowed and no repeated attempt is given.

By the defense on a kick off, the penalty is applied at the spot the ball was held when the infraction took place.

By the defense on a scrimmage play, the offense has the option to apply the penalty at the point of last scrimmage with the down repeated or at the point the ball was held at the time of the infraction and downs continue.

By the defense on a convert attempt, if the foul occurred in the end zone, the point or points are awarded. If the foul occurred in the field of play, the penalty is applied at the point of last scrimmage and a repeat attempt is given.

If the foul occurs after a change of possession on a scrimmage play, the penalty is applied at the spot the ball was held at the time of the infraction.

On any play, if a score would have been made without the illegal re-entry, then the score is awarded.

(d) Illegal Participation - If a defensive player illegally enters the field while a play is in progress and affects the outcome of the play, the opponents will be awarded a touchdown and the player will be ejected from the game. If a fan illegally participates in the game and a touchdown would have been scored without the participation, then the touchdown must be awarded. If the fan did not affect the outcome of the play, the team has the option to repeat the play from the point of the last scrimmage.

### **Rule 21: Player Conduct**

#### (a) Major Foul

These are acts that threaten the safety of participants and will result in an EJECTION of the player responsible. They include : deliberate tripping of an opponent; striking or attempting to strike an opponent; any attempt to injure a participant in the game.

Major fouls are twenty-five yards and are considered to be live or dead ball fouls at the option of the non-offending team.

A MAJOR FOUL carries an AUTOMATIC SIX GAME suspension for anyone ejected from a game for any of the above. The Executive will review with the Referee- in-Chief, the game officials' written report as to the severity of infraction and if it warrants additional penalties. The TEAM will also be put on "PROBATION" for the remainder of the season and subject to expulsion from the League if major fouls re-occurs

#### (b) Personal Foul – 15 Yards

These fouls are acts of roughness or unfair play. Players must control their momentum and try to avoid collisions with opponents . A shove, a heavy handed slap or a swinging arm slap when touching the ball carrier shall be considered a personal foul. The defender/ rusher will be called for a Personal Foul if they raise any or both arms and move or swing them towards the Quarterback making ANY kind of contact above the Quarterback's shoulders while the Quarterback is attempting to make a pass.

Personal fouls are fifteen yards and can be live or dead ball fouls at the option of the non-offending team. [Rule 8]

(c) Personal Foul – 5 Yards – Incidental Head Touch ( Dead Ball Foul) A touch in the neck, head and face areas shall be interpreted as a personal foul unless the ball carrier had bent over, crouched or fallen down while the attempt to touch was being made by the opponent. If the action is considered to be incidental, the official shall apply the penalty as a minor personal foul.

#### **(d) Objectionable Conduct**

The following actions are considered to be objectionable conduct fouls: the use of profane language, taunting opposing players, demeaning remarks made to opposing players, persistent arguments to officials, deliberately delaying the game, faking an injury, or any action which brings disrepute to the game.

Objectionable conduct fouls will be penalized ten yards and are always applied as dead ball fouls with no options other than refusing the penalty yardage.

Persistence of above conduct could result in expulsion from the game and possible suspension by League Executive upon review of the referee's report.

**Player Ejection/ Game Forfeit** - An ejected player or team member must stay in the bench area and refrain from berating players, officials and fans. When an ejected player or team member violates these rules, that person must leave the park.

If the ejected individual does not leave the park within three minutes, or returns to the park during the game, the Referee must award the game to the opponents; the Referee must take an official's time out while carrying out these procedures.

The referee may terminate a game at any time if, in his opinion, any players, fans, or referee's safety is at risk.

**Diving** - The ball carrier is not allowed to dive with the ball in order to gain extra yards. This will be considered a fifteen-yard personal foul and is applied as a live or dead ball foul from the point where the dive began. [Rule 1]

## **Rule 22: Application of Penalties**

- (a) A penalty can be refused by the non-offending team. However, if there is an ejection given by the Referee, that player must leave the game. For major fouls, personal fouls and objectionable conduct penalties, the player's name must be recorded on the game sheet as having committed that foul. Any distance penalty associated with an ejection or personal conduct fouls can be refused.
- (b) If the non-offending team refuses a penalty, the play stands and downs continue. If the penalty is accepted, the official will explain the options to the non-offending team's captain. Once a team has given its choice to the official, it cannot change it. If they have been given the wrong options by the official, they must appeal to the official, prior to the ball being put into play on the next down or kick off.
- (c) If a team commits two or more live ball fouls during the same play, the non-offending team can only accept to apply one of the fouls as a live ball foul. However, the non-offending team may have an option to apply one or more of the live ball fouls as a dead ball foul.
- (d) If there is more than one dead ball foul called against the same team during one play, all fouls can be applied. If each team commits a dead ball foul on the same play, only the difference in yardage will be applied.
- (e) The application of a penalty will not result in the ball being placed closer than the one-yard line. When a single fixed distance penalty is applied inside the opposing team's thirty-yard line, the ball cannot be brought more than half the distance to the goal line. If the fixed distance penalty is applied from outside the opposing team's thirty-yard line, the ball cannot be brought closer than the fifteen-yard line. If the normal penalty yardage were applied and the ball would have reached the goal line due to the penalty, a "Complete" pass or first down will be awarded to the offense.
- (f) On a third down play, the offense cannot be awarded a first down by the application of a dead ball foul. Possession changes to the defense and the penalty is then applied.

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- (g) If the defense commits a live ball foul that results in a "Complete" pass or a first down being awarded by the application of the penalty yardage, the first down cannot be taken away if the offense commits a dead ball foul on the play. The "Complete" pass or first down would be awarded and the penalty yardage for the dead ball foul would be then applied. It would be a "Complete" pass or first down and ten after the application of the dead ball foul .
- (h) If a team commits a dead ball foul that occurs on a touchdown or a convert attempt, the non-offending team has the option to apply the penalty on a convert attempt or the repeated convert attempt, if there is one, or on the subsequent kick off.
- (i) If a team accepts a live ball foul that occurs on the last play of the quarter (other than an offside pass or obstruction after a first down is gained) , there will be one more play given to the team that has possession. Dead ball fouls that occur on the last play of a quarter will be applied in the next quarter.
- (j) If a live ball foul occurs when the three plays rule is in effect, the following rules apply. If the penalty is declined, the play will count as one of the three plays. If the foul is obstruction by the offense after the first down or 'Complete Pass' was gained, obstruction by the defense following an interception, or an offside pass after a first down or "Complete Pass" the play will count as one of the three plays. If the penalty is accepted, the penalty will be applied and the play will count as one of the three plays, even when it is the last of the three plays. If any other live -ball penalty is accepted, the penalty will be applied and the play will not count as one of the three plays. [See Rule 3c]
- (k) Fixed distance penalties are applied in the following manner unless a previous rule states otherwise:
- I. If the foul occurs before the ball is put into play, as the ball is put into play or before a "Completed Pass" or first down is gained, the penalty will be applied at the point the ball was last put into play and the down will be repeated.
  - II. If the foul occurs after a "Completed Pass" or first down has been gained, the penalty will be applied from the spot the ball was held at the time of the infraction. The offense will be awarded a "Completed Pass" or a first down or option.
  - III. If a foul is committed after the offense loses possession of the ball, the penalty will be applied from the spot the ball was held at the time of the infraction. A first down will be awarded to the team that has possession of the ball. If the penalty was called when the ball was in the air as a result of a kick off or punt, the penalty will be applied at the point the ball is first touched by the receiving team.

### Rule 23: Distance Penalties

(a) Fixed Distance Penalties In addition to any other penalties described in the rules, the following penalties of a fixed distance will be applied from the appropriate spot .

Distance	Foul
5 yards	Time Count Violation Illegal Procedure

	Offside
	Minor Personal Foul (Dead Ball) ( incidental head touch)
	Minor Objectionable Conduct (Dead Ball) (extension)
	Minor No-yards/ Restraining Zone
10 yards	Delay of Game
	Illegal Re- entry
	Illegal Substitution
	No Yards/ Restraining Zone
	Objectionable Conduct (Dead Ball)
	Obstruction
	Interference
15 yards	Personal Foul
25 yards	Major Foul
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AUTOMATIC six (6) game suspension</li> <li>- GAME EJECTION</li> <li>- OFFICIAL'S REPORT</li> </ul>

(b) Variable-DI stance Penalties In addition to any other penalties described in the rules, the following penalties of variable distances will be applied.

Foul	Penalty
Illegal Participation	A touchdown can be awarded if a team player or a fan is involved.  [Rule 20]

## MTTFL Rules

### Offside Pass

The ball is brought back to the spot where the offside pass began regardless if the ball is touched by a defensive player in between.

[Rule 16]

### Target Pass Interference

The ball is awarded to the nonpenalized team at the spot where the foul occurred.

[Rule 18]

### Illegal Re-Entry

A player is not permitted to leave the field of play during a play, return to the field of play, and then participate in the play.

[Rule 2 ]