



## General rules for flag rugby play

### DIVISIONS

Minis: age 7-10

Juniors: age 10-13 (will use the rules of Advanced Rookie rugby)

Players may play up if coaches feel that it is safe, fair and in the player's best interest.

### PRIMARY PURPOSE

Use the ball in open play. Foster basic rugby skills such as passing, support, defense and running with and without the ball.

### TACTICAL PURPOSE

Possession, support, continuity, go forward, and pressure

### BALL SIZE

3 (mini) or 4 (junior)

### PLAYING TIME

**Mini:** (2) ten Minute halves

**Juniors:** (2) 15 Minute halves

### SCORING

A try is worth one point. (no conversions at this level)

### PLAYING AREA

**Mini:** 60m long x 30m wide

**Juniors:** 60m long x 40m wide

**Team Make up:**

**Minis:** will play 5 v 5 or if agreed upon by coaches 6 v 6

**Juniors:** will play 7 v 7

**FLAGS**

All players wear a FLAG belt around their waist with (2) flags attached to it by Velcro positioned over each hip and in middle of back. FLAG belts are to be securely fastened. FLAG belts are to be worn outside of shirts and not obscured in any way. Referees are to be watchful for flags being wrapped around the belt preventing them from being pulled off. Player's shirts should be tucked into their shorts to make it easier for the flags to be seen and so the flags are not obscured in any way.

If a player does not have (2) flags on their belt they will be penalized if they become a ball carrier or if they flag an opponent and a free pass or tap and go will be awarded to the non-offending team at the place of infringement.

The referee will indicate that a flag has been pulled by yelling "tackle" NOTE: The defense can help itself by yelling flag and holding the flag up when they pull a flag. This will help the referee to see the pulled flag. The ball carrier will have (2) steps / (2) seconds to pass the ball. They may then re attach the flag and rejoin the game.

**FLAGGING**

A flagging is the removal of one of the (2) flags from the ball carrier's belt. Only the ball carrier can be flagged. The ball carrier can run and dodge potential flaggers but cannot fend them off using their hands or the ball and cannot guard or shield their flags in any way. The ball cannot be pulled out of the ball carrier's hands at any time.

**PENALTY**

The non-offending team will receive a restart (Minis- free pass or Juniors- tap and go) from the site of the infraction.

**PASSING**

The ball can only be passed sideways or backwards through the air, not handed to another player. If the ball is handed to another player or passed or knocked forwards (toward the opponents' goal line) then the offending team will receive a re-start or scrum unless advantage occurs to the non-offending side.

First person to pass the ball cannot score, there must be at least (1) other pass made before a try can be scored.

**RESTARTS**

- a) Used to start a game or half, after a score, penalty, infraction or loss of possession by flags.

**Minis:** It is a free pass for all restarts. It will be taken within (3) step and (3) seconds of a flag pull or at the mark indicated by the referee. All Free pass are taken at least (1) meter in bounds and (5) m from try line

**Juniors:** 1) flag pull- free pass (taken within 2 seconds)

2) Start of a half or after a score- a punt from mid field. NOTE: team trailing in points will receive kick off to start second half regardless of which team received 1<sup>st</sup> half. The kick must travel (7)m and is live.

3) Minor infraction (knock on or forward pass)- Scrum. A scrum shall consist of (2) props and a hooker and will be un- contested. Defensive backline will be required to be (5) m back.

4) Penalty- (Off sides, obstruction, Holding, pushing, diving or any unsafe play)- Either a tap and go or a punt into touch. If punted **directly** into touch the kicking team will throw in at the resulting line-out.

5) Line out- When a ball carrier steps into touch or a player in touch touches the ball a lineout will be awarded to the non- offending team. The lineout will consist of (1) thrower and (2) players in the line. It will be un- opposed. The defense cannot intercept the throw in. backlines will be at least 7 m for the lineout mark.

FREE PASS - The player must start with the ball in both hands and, when instructed by the referee who will call "PLAY", pass the ball backwards through the air to a member of their team.

TAP AND GO - The referee will mark where the ball is to start. The referee will say "Play", the player can tap the ball through the mark and begin running with the ball.

If an infringement takes place in the in goal area or the ball goes into touch over the goal line then the free pass must be awarded to the non-offending side 5 meters from the goal line. This gives more space for both attacking and defending teams to play in.

After a score the offense will re-start the game without delay. If a delay occurs the referee will give a warning and if play still does not restart a penalty shall be awarded to the receiving side at mid field. Minis will be given more time to organize for a restart.

## SCORING

- a) A try is scored when the ball carrier grounds the ball on the in goal area line or in the in goal area using with downward pressure. The player **must not** dive to ground the ball.

b) At least (1) pass must be made for a try to be scored.

c) Players may not “bull” or push their way into the try zone

c) If an infringement takes place in the in goal area or the ball goes into touch over the goal line then the offending team receives a penalty and the game is restarted 5 meters from the goal line.

This gives more space for both attacking and defending teams to play in.

d) After a score the offense will re-start the game without delay. If a delay occurs the referee will give a warning and if play still does not restart a penalty shall be awarded to the receiving side at mid field. Minis will be given more time to organize for a restart.

If the defense is not ready and the referee has said “Play”, then the offense may begin with the ball.

### **ADVANTAGE**

The referee may not call a penalty if offence provides the non- offending team an advantage.

This keeps the play going and reduces the number of restarts.

### **OFFSIDE IN GENERAL PLAY**

Offside only occurs at the time of the flag pull where the offside line runs through the center of the ball.

When a flag pull is made, all players from the flagger’s team must attempt to retire toward their own goal line until they are behind the ball. If a player, in an offside position, intercepts, prevents or slows down a pass from the flagged player to a teammate, his/her team will receive a penalty.

A player can, however, run from an onside position to intercept a floated pass before it reaches the intended receiver.

A defensive player is not offside if they are chasing the ball carrier and are behind them when pulling flags or are just running.

The offensive player with the ball must be able to pass through the passing lanes without having defenders standing in the lanes.

The offensive ball carrier must not throw the ball at the defender, who is standing in the passing lane, if the other passing lane is clear and there is a chance to pass the ball to

### **INTERCEPTIONS**

There are no interceptions between restart and 1<sup>st</sup> receiver. Retiring defenders must not interfere with the restart. This is done to discourage the defender from being off sided and encourage the offense to pass.

The offensive player with the ball must be able to pass through the passing lanes without having defenders standing in the lanes.

A player can, however, run from an onside position to intercept a floated pass after 1<sup>st</sup> receiver, before it reaches the intended receiver

## **OBSTRUCTION**

a) The ball carrier can run and dodge potential flaggers but cannot fend them off using their hands or the ball and cannot guard or shield their flags in any way.

(b) Similarly, the ball carrier must not **deliberately** make contact with an opponent.

(c) If such contact is made the game must be stopped, the offender spoken to, reminded of the noncontact rules of flag and his/her team will receive a penalty.

(d) If the ball is pulled from the ball carrier's grasp, the offending team will receive a penalty.

(e) Juniors only – The ball carrier can run behind their own players as long as it does not impede the defenders from getting to the ball carrier and flag. If the ball carrier does go behind their own players and the referee determines that the defender was impeded, then blocking will be called, which will result in a turn over to the non-offending side.

Minis – The ball carrier must not run behind his own players as to hinder the defense from attempting to pull their flag. This will result in a penalty.

## **ACTIONS BY THE FLAGGER**

a) When a FLAG is made, the flagger must stop running, hold the FLAG above their head and shout, "FLAG". At this stage the referee must shout, "Tackle PASS".

b) Once the ball has been passed, the flagger must hand back the FLAG to the player and cannot rejoin the match until this has been done. If a flagger continues to play and influences the match with an opponent's flag in their hand, or throws it to the ground, his/her team will receive a penalty and a free pass will be awarded to the non-offending side at the place of infringement.

## **ACTIONS OF THE BALL CARRIER**

a) When the ball carrier is flagged the ball must be passed to a teammate within (2) seconds, the ball carrier must attempt to stop as soon as possible; within 2 strides is a reasonable guide for referees, but the ball can be passed in the act of stopping.

b) After the ball has been passed, the player must go to the flagger, retrieve their flag and place it back on their belt before rejoining play. If the player continues to play and influences the game without collecting their flag, their team will receive a penalty.

c) If the ball carrier enters the end-zone with all flags on they must touch the ball down as quickly as possible even if their flag gets pulled in the end-zone. If the ball carrier is in the end zone and has their flag pulled, but does not touch the ball down within 3 seconds then it a turn over.

d) If the ball carrier dives to ground to score a try it will be disallowed and his/her team will receive a penalty. The restart will be side 5 meters out from the goal line.

e) The ball carrier must not spin or protect the flags with their hand or ball.

f) A try is scored when the ball carrier places the ball on the goal line area or in the goal line area.

g) Players can jump to catch the ball. They cannot jump to avoid being flagged, this would result in a penalty. A jump is when two feet leave the ground and the player has the ball in his hand.

### **BALL ON THE GROUND**

a) If the ball goes to ground, players must not dive to the floor to recover the ball, otherwise their team will receive a penalty.

**Juniors** -may pick the ball up

**Minis** - first team to touch the ball will receive a free pass.

b) If the ball was lost forward, the offensive team will receive a penalty if they pick it up. This is called a "Knock On".

c) If the ball is passed other than forward and goes to ground play will continue and either side may pick up the ball (junior) or a free pass will be awarded to the first team to touch it.

### **NO CONTACT**

The only contact allowed between the two teams is the removal of a FLAG from the belt of the ball carrier. Any other type of contact on the ball carrier, such as shirt pulling, running in front of the ball carrier, forcing the ball carrier into touch by contact such as pushing is not allowed.

The offending team will receive a penalty.

1 – the player who creates the contact will be penalized and the non-offending side will get the re-start

2 – a trip is a form of contact. If a player is tripped it is an infraction.

### **CONDUCT**

Players are to be kind and courteous when playing flag rugby. Aggressive behavior, rude language, and rudely questioning the referee will result in a penalty or, at the referee's discretion, ejection from the game. Each penalty from this type of behavior will result in a (7) meter penalty. If the penalty is near the offending team's goal area a penalty try can be awarded.