

Our Lady of Lourdes

Flag Football

Goals and Rules

(Revised 8-24-11)

Goals:

- Teach Fundamentals of Football
- Teach the importance of teamwork
- Build Self-esteem
- Have Fun
- Encourage the kids to play several positions on both offense and defense

Summary of the rules:

- Every child plays at least 2 quarters per game
- Every player must wear a helmet and mouth piece
- 8 players on the field at any time
- Two coaches may be on the field at any time to assist in lining up and directing players
- 3 down linemen can rush on defense (teach the ends to penetrate and contain, NOT knife-in)
- 1 yard neutral zone
- Defensive Rush on the movement of the ball
- If a player scores twice then he will no longer be permitted to carry the ball that game

Don't

- Don't argue with or harass the officials
- Do not criticize or downgrade the players
- No fighting with other coaches or officials
- No un-sportsman like conduct

LEAGUE RULES:

I. Participating Schools:

Our Lady of Lourdes (St. Leonard)
Holy Spirit
Sacred Heart Model School
Saint Aloysius
St. Michael
Holy Trinity

- II. The League philosophy is to place emphasis on learning the game of football and good sportsmanship. Game scores are kept, but winning or losing is not important. All coaches, parents, and players are expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner and remember that the kids come first.
- III. To ensure parity and competitive play for all, individual teams should be formed with a mix of 1st and 2nd graders with varying skill levels (i.e., via skills assessment, etc.).
- IV. All games will begin with the two teams saying the Our Father at midfield.
- V. All games will end with teams and coaches shaking hands.

GAME RULES:

I. Playing Field

- A. The field is approximately 70 yards long, divided into six 10-yard zones with 5-yard end zones; and is 30 yards wide.
- B. The ball is placed in the middle of the field each down.
- C. A conversion line shall be marked 5 yards from the goal line.

II. Equipment

- A. Flags should be worn on the waist hanging freely down the hips in such a manner they may be easily pulled.
- B. Shirts **must** be tucked in.
- C. Pants or shorts **shall not** be colors of the flags worn.
- D. Each player must wear a mouthpiece.

III. Start of Game

- A. Winner of a coin toss will choose to kick or receive. The kicking team will choose an end. The ball will be placed at the 10-yard marker.

IV. Time

- A. The game will consist of four 10-minute quarters. There will be a 5 minute half and 2 minutes between each quarter. The clock will run continuously unless there is an injury. Once the time in the quarter has elapsed, the referee will inform the teams that there will be one more play barring a penalty or touchdown.
- B. Approximately 30 seconds are allowed to put the ball in plan. Delay of game will be called if teams are continually exceeding the 30 seconds in between plays.
- C. Coaches may align the players on the field. Up to two coaches are permitted on the field for each team.
- D. Each team will have three (3) 1 minute time outs per half (non-accumulative). A time out will stop the game clock. The referee may also stop the clock for coaches' conferences.
- E. There will be an officials time out at 2 minutes remaining in the game.

V. Scoring

- A. A touchdown is 6 points.
- B. A conversion from the 5-yard line will result in 1 point.
- C. A safety will result in 2 points. After a safety, the scoring team will become the offense at their 10-yard line.
- D. After any player scores 2 touch downs in a game he or she will not be permitted to carry the ball the remainder of that game. NOTE: Do not coach your players to run out of bounds intentionally near the goal line so as to keep them below the two-score limit. A player that has scored 2 touch downs is not precluded from playing quarter back so long as he **does not run the ball.**

VI. Punting

- A. On fourth down a team can elect to punt and the ball will be placed 20 yards down field (if the 20 yards places the ball in the end zone it will be an automatic touch back and placed at the 10-yard line.)

VII. Dead Ball

- A. Anytime the ball carrier touches the ground with any part of the body except hands and feet, the player is considered down and a dead ball results.
- B. Anytime the ball touches the ground during a run, a dead ball results. There are no fumbles.

- C. If the quarterback drops the ball on the snap, the down will be replayed from the line of scrimmage. If the snap is dropped on two consecutive plays, a loss of down will result.

VIII. First Downs

- A. In a series of four downs it is necessary that the ball be advanced into the next zone ahead of the zone where the ball was when the new series of downs began. Crossing this line constitutes a new set of downs. If a team loses yardage, the original first down line does not change.

IX. Players

- A. Each team will field 8 players for the game. If a team has more than 8 players, players must rotate. If a team has fewer than 8 players, the opposing team must field the lower number of players.

X. Positions

A. Offensive Play

1. The offense must begin each play with a center and two (2) guards on the line (down linemen). The four eligible receivers can be positioned anywhere behind the line of scrimmage. A sample alignment would consist of: two (2) wideouts (receivers), a quarterback, and two (2) running backs or an option running back and tight end.
 - a. The center and guards (down offensive linemen) are ineligible receivers and cannot go down field unless the ball is thrown or handed off. They may not carry the ball or receive a pass.
 - b. If the ball is in the hands of a ball carrier they may not straight arm or protect their flag with hands or arms. A ball carrier must also run in an upright position and will be penalized if they duck their head and plow forward.
 - c. If a player unintentionally loses a flag, the ball is dead at the spot of the dropped flag.
 - d. All players must have a flag belt at the beginning of a play.
 - e. All players can block on any given play. Blockers need to be in an upright position and cannot extend their hands to block (players must shift as in basketball to screen the defensive player). Arms must be kept in tight to the body and players are allowed to block at shoulder level.
 - f. The quarterback will begin the play by giving a verbal signal to signal the snap from the center (No silent snaps).

B. Defensive Play

1. The defense has the option of using the formation of their choice, as long as at least three players begin on the line of scrimmage (1 yard back from the offensive line). These three players (down linemen) must align head to head with the offensive down linemen. A recommended defense would consist of a nose guard (over the center), two guards and two ends (outside the offensive guards), two defensive backs (matched with wide outs) and a line backer (back from line 5 feet in the middle of the field).
 1. The defensive rush is limited to a maximum of 3 players (down linemen)
 2. All defensive players must line up at least 1 yard off the ball creating a neutral zone.
 - a. The objective is to teach the Defensive players to rush on the balls movement, while at the same time allowing the offense the ability to begin to develop a play.
 3. A player is allowed to use his hands as long as he/she does not hold, throw down, or violently come through a player. At no time can a defensive lineman leave his/her feet to get through the line.
 4. A player attempting to remove a flag may leave his feet.
 5. Interceptions may be advanced by the defense.

XI. Penalties

A. Penalty Enforcement

1. If a penalty by the defense occurs during a run, the offense can decline the penalty and take the play, or choose to enforce the penalty from the original line of scrimmage. A penalty by the offense during a play, can either be declined (defense accepting the result of the play), or choose to enforce the penalty from the original line of scrimmage.
2. During a loose ball, a pass or fumble, the penalty will be marked off from the previous spot.
3. If the offense commits a foul behind the line of scrimmage, the penalty is marked off from the spot of the foul.
4. If the defense commits a penalty on the announced last play of the quarter – the offensive team will get to run one more play.

B. Defensive Pass Interference

1. Contact with an eligible receiver past the line of scrimmage will result in a 10-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage and will be an automatic first down.
2. If the interference is flagrant, the defensive unit may be penalized an additional 5 yards.

3. If the interference occurs in the end zone the ball will be placed at the five-yard line and the offensive unit will be granted an automatic first down.

C. Three Yard Penalties (From Scrimmage)

Any of the following infractions will result in a three-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage.

1. All players must begin the play with flags.
2. Delay of game.
3. Encroachment (defensive player coming into one yard neutral zone or rushing before quarterback has received ball.)
4. False start or illegal act by the snapper.
5. Less than three offensive players on the line at the snap.
6. More than one player in motion on the offense.
7. Illegal forward pass by the offense or defense (if offensive, the down counts and penalty is marked from line of scrimmage).

D. Eight Yard Penalties

Any of the following infractions will result in an eight yard penalty from the line of scrimmage except tackling which would be marked from point of infraction.

1. Illegal block and charging
2. A ball carrier stiff arming or protecting his/her flag
3. Tackling (judgement call by the official)
 - a. A tackle will be called if the official believes a player was knocked down without the defensive player pulling the flag prior to the point of contact
 - b. If the offensive player initiates the contact, a tackle will not be called.
 - c. A defensive player is not allowed to bump another player out of bounds.
4. Illegal use of hands
5. Unsportsmanlike conduct
6. Roughing the passer or ball carrier (automatic first down)
7. Attempting to hurdle a player on his/her feet

E. The ball will be placed half the distance to the goal line if marking the penalty off would place the ball in the end zone.

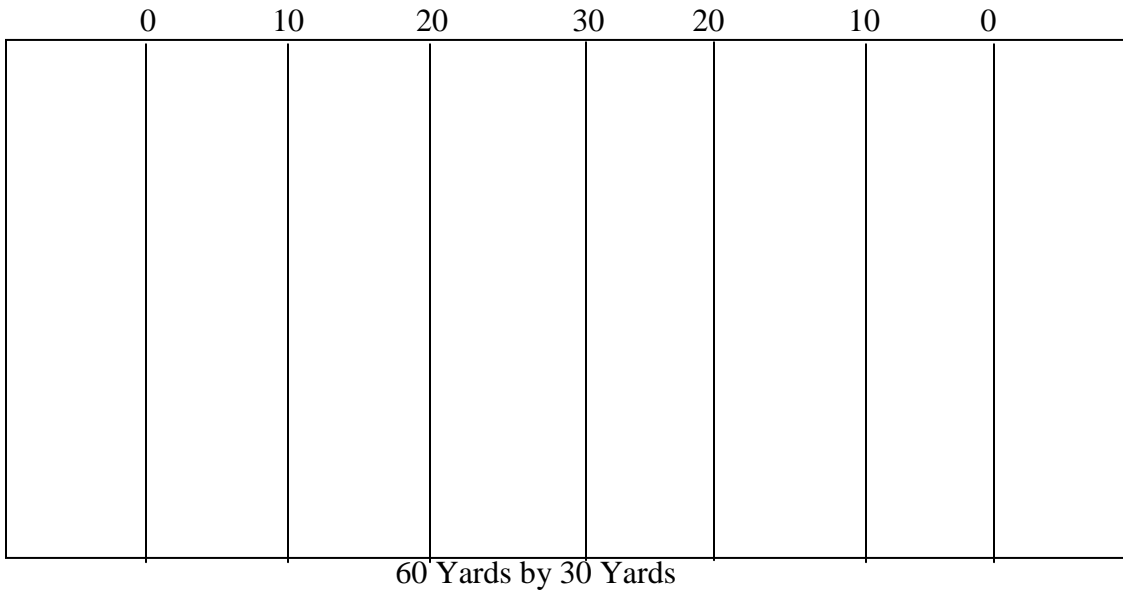
F. Double and Multiple Fouls

1. Multiple fouls against one team, only one may be enforced; the opposing teams option.
2. If both teams commit a foul then the down will be replayed.

XII. Minimal Player Requirements

- A. Each player must play 2 full quarters (unless there is an injury). Depending on the number of players present, some kids may play 3 or 4 quarters.
- B. Coaches are encouraged to involve all players in all aspects of the game.

XIII. The Playing Field



XIV. Game Times

- A. All games will be played on Sunday afternoons. Game times will be 1:15 PM, 2:30 PM and 3:45 PM.
- B. If a game is cancelled due to bad weather (doubtful unless due to lightning), a makeup game may be rescheduled. The flag football coordinator will make the decision concerning the cancellation and makeup.

XV. OLOL Flag Football Clinic Policy on Inappropriate Behavior (October 2009)

- A. Excessively aggressive and/or inappropriate behavior by any coach or spectator will be initially dealt with by the referee, who will stop the game and give a verbal warning (the most common example is excessive yelling at players or the referee.) The warning will given in the following manner:
 1. The referee will blow his whistle and stop the game
 2. The referee will issue a verbal warning which will conclude with the following: “If this continues, I will have to call the game and ask you to leave the parish grounds.”
 3. If the behavior is not immediately corrected or recurs, the referee will blow his whistle, end the game, and proceed to the concession stand and summons the adult OLOL representative on duty, who will then assume

responsibility for the situation. The adult will ask the individual to leave parish grounds.

- B. Any coach or parent asked to leave the parish grounds under this policy will be banned from any future participation in the OLOL flag football clinic.
- C. Parish Flag Football Coordinators will be asked to you get confirmation from each of their coaches and assistant coaches that they have read and understand the rule. They will then respond back with verbal confirmation to this effect to the OLOL Flag Football Coordinator. This confirmation will be repeated with each season to ensure all new coaches understand and adhere to this policy. **The intention of this policy is to prevent any inappropriate behavior from occurring.**