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**Joy Full Zone Sports & Play RULES adheres to NFL Flag Football Rules**

**with some adjustments.**

**“Where learning FUNdamentals results in Friendships formed and Families joined all while having FUN” #StayJoyFull**

**The Coin Toss**

1. The Home Team players will call the coin toss. The team winning the toss

will have a choice of options for the first half. These are:

Choose whether the team will start on offense or defense

Choose the goal the team will defend.

2. The team that loses the coin toss will have the remaining choice.

3. The team that did not receive the ball the first half will receive the ball in

the second half.

4. Teams will switch sides for the start of the 2nd half.

**Equipment**

1. Players must tuck their Jerseys into shorts/pants at all times.

2. Players wearing shorts or sweatpants with pockets must be taped.

3. Players must remove all jewelry deemed hazardous by the officials.

4. Players may not wear shoulder or hip pads.

5. Players may not hang towels from their waist.

6. All players must wear sneakers or cleats.

7. Metal cleats are prohibited.

8. Players are encouraged to wear googles or sports glasses with straps,

however metal frames should be avoided unless you have the commissioners

approval.

9. All players must play at least 10 minutes per game.

10. All players must use a mouth piece. If a team has players missing

mouth pieces, the team will have an opportunity to them from League

Administrators. If League Administrators do not have mouth pieces, the

team will lose a timeout but the child may play in the game.

11. Home team wears dark jerseys.

12. Away team wears light jerseys.

**Schedule**

1. Requests for schedule changes must be sent to the League

Commissioners no later than the Monday night prior to the scheduled

game. However, there are no guarantees that requests will be

accommodated.

2. Requests for schedule changes may only be made by the head coach.

3. Requests from parents will not be accepted.

4. Our goal is to confirm any schedule changes by Wednesday each week.

5. In the event a team has less than four players, there is a five minute

grace period with no penalty. At the end of the five minute grace period,

the team missing its players must begin to use their three time outs.

After 10 minutes, the game clock will start and the team with its

compliment of players is awarded 6 points.

After 15 minutes, if the team is still missing its players, the game will result in a forfeit. A scrimmage or practice may take place until 5 minutes prior to the next scheduled

game.

**Timing:**

1. Games are 50 minutes running time (25 minutes each half).

2. **First half** - at the 1 minute warning the clock stops and does not start

until the snap. The clock will then run as a Pro Clock meaning it stops at

change of possession, incomplete passes, out of bounds and penalties.

Offensive penalties occurring under 1 minute will result in a 10 second

run off unless the offense uses a time out. If the clock is not running at

the time of the penalty, there is no runoff.

3. **Second Half** - at the 1 minute warning the clock stops and does not

start until the snap. The clock will then run as a Pro Clock meaning it

stops at change of possession, incomplete passes, out of bounds and

penalties. Offensive penalties occurring under 1 minute will result in a

10 second run off unless the offense uses a time out. If the clock is not

running at the time of the penalty, there is no runoff.

4. Each team gets three (3) time outs per half.

5. Halftime is 4 minutes long (Teams change sides of the field).

6. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball.

*7.* The Quarterback has seven (**7**) seconds to throw a pass **except** on fourth

down, or if the offensive team is frozen or attempts a U-Point conversion

(**12U only**).

8. On fourth down, frozen or U-Point attempts, the QB has only five [**5**]

seconds to throw a pass.

9. If a pass is not thrown within the allotted time, the play is dead and

there is a loss of down. Under 1 minute, the play clock continues to run

unless it is a change of possession or a time out is called.

10. Referees must be consistent and announce the count loudly and in

the same manner for both teams. Referees must say 5 or 7 before

whistling the play dead. If the event the ball is still in possession of the

QB after the Referee has said 5 or 7, the play is over regardless whether

the referee has whistled the play dead.

11. Once a ball is handed off, the seven (**7**) second rule is no longer in

effect.

12. **There are no handoffs allowed on fourth down, or when a team**

**is frozen or during U-Point attempts (12U).**

13. In the event of an injury, the clock and play clock will stop and

restart after the injured player is off the field and the referee sets the ball

for play. The injured player must remain out for at least **one** play.

14. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion at any point during

the game.

15. There is no overtime in the regular season. Games may end in a

tie.

16. Overtime is for the playoffs only and is in a format similar to

college. Meaning there is a 2nd coin flip that the home team calls.

The winner of the coin flip decides whether they want to start on offense or

defense.

The other team decides which side of the field they want to begin on offense or defend. Teams will not rotate to the other side of the field.

There is no game clock, only a 30 second play clock.

Each team will have 1 time out and four downs to score from their own 10 yard line per

overtime period.

Offensive teams may elect to run or pass until they enter the no run zone or on fourth down.

Defensive teams may blitz anytime the offensive team is not frozen.

If the Offense teams scores a touchdown, they can decide whether to go for one or two. If the score is tied after an OT period, the two teams will move to the next overtime

until a winner is declared.

17. There is no U-Point attempt allowed in overtime.

**During the Game**

1. Referees will supply game balls that must be used by both teams.

In 6U and 8U division, the official game ball will be a pee wee size

NFL Flag ball.

In 10U and 12U, the official game ball will be a junior size ball.

In the event the Referee does not have an official game ball, home

team will supply the ball so long as it is the same size as the official game ball.

2. The Referee will set the football in the center of the field. The ball may

only be moved due to poor field conditions. Teams may not move the ball

to the sidelines or it will result in an offensive penalty.

3. The football must be snapped between the legs (**Except in the 6U**

**Division**) to start play.

4. Silent snaps are prohibited and will result in a penalty.

5. Any player lined up behind the Center may call hike. However, **only one**

**player may have his/her hands under the Center for the snap**.

6. Only the Center is required to be on the Line of Scrimmage. Teams may

use any formation.

7. No hand-offs to Center on the first play. However, the Center may receive

a hand-off as part of a reverse as long as the handoff occurs behind the

Line of Scrimmage.

8. Players may not perform cartwheels or other moves not typical in a

football game or it will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.

9. In the event a snap is dropped or hits the ground, the referee must

whistle the play dead. The play results in a loss of down and the ball is

placed at the Line of Scrimmage. A safety can only result if the ball is

snapped outside of the end zone. Under 1 minute, the clock continues to

run on a bad snap unless a time out is used.

10. There is no blocking allowed at any time anywhere on the field.

11. There are **NO** pick plays.

12. Any player who starts a play without flags is down where he or she is

contacted or touched by a defensive player. No flag pull is required.

13. There are no fumbles or strip sacks.

14. Ball is spotted where the ball-carrier’s hips were at the time of the

fumble.

15. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:

*Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew down or replay the down*

*from the original Line of Scrimmage*.

16. Teams must have a minimum of four (4) players on the field.

17. If an offensive team decides to attempt a fourth down play and is

unsuccessful, the defensive team takes over at the spot where the fourth

down play ends.

\*\***Please Note**\*\* - Neither the play clock or game clock stops while an offensive

team decides what to do on fourth down unless a team calls a time out. If an

offensive team does not snap the ball or declare prior to the play clock

**expiring**, it will result in a loss of down and the defensive team will obtain the

ball at the Line of Scrimmage.

If an Offensive team lines up on the field in formation on fourth down, then

decides it does not want to run a play, the offensive team must use a time out

or it will result in a penalty, loss of down and the defensive team will obtain the

ball at the Line of Scrimmage.

In the **12U**, an Offensive team may attempt a U-Point conversion (discussed

later) on any down.

**Scoring**

Touchdown: 6pts

Extra point: 1pt (play from 5-yard line) or 2pts (played from 10-yard line)

Any Defensive Score on Extra Point Attempt = 2 points

Safety: 2 points

U-Point: 3 points (U12)

Defensive U-Point Interception = 2 points (U12)

Once an Offensive team lines up to convert a one or two point attempt, it must

remain with that decision unless a time out is called. In the event there is an

offensive or defensive penalty called, teams must remain with their initial

choice.

If an Offensive team is called for two consecutive penalties on the same extra

point attempt, it will result in a Loss of Attempt and change of Possession.

If a team is up by more than 21 points, it has only three (3) downs to get a first

down or touchdown.

**If a team is up by more than 21 points and intercepts the ball, there is no**

**run back. The team takes possession at their own 5 yard line.**

A team winning by more than 21 points may not blitz**.** However, the losing

team may always blitz.

If a team is losing by more than 21pts in the second half with 4 minutes or less

remaining, when the losing team finishes their offensive possession, the game

is over unless they score.

**Running**

1. The ball is spotted where the runner’s hips are when the flag is pulled, not

where the ball carrier has the ball. Forward progress will be measured by the

player’s hip.

In the event a runner loses his/her flags, the Referee must whistle the

play dead where contact or touch is made by a defensive player.

In the event a runner has their flags off their hips, or covered by their

uniform, the Referee in his/her discretion may whistle the play dead

where contact or touch is made by a defensive player.

2. The Quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap. Any player

except the Center may receive a direct snap.

a. Only direct handoffs behind the Line of Scrimmage are permitted.

Handoffs may be in front, behind or to the side of the offensive player

handing off, but must be behind the Line of Scrimmage. The Offense

may use multiple handoffs.

b. In the 8U Division only, the QB may run after a defensive player crosses

the Line of Scrimmage on a blitz. A QB in the 8U Division may not run

without being rushed.

c. In the 8U Division only, the QB may pitch the ball to another offensive

player behind the Line of Scrimmage.

d. Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the

Line of Scrimmage.

e. The “Center Sneak” play is not allowed. The QB is not allowed to hand

off to the center on the first handoff of the play.

f. Only one player may have his/her hand under the Center.

3. Absolutely **NO** laterals in any of the divisions.

4. **No-Run Zones** are located five (5) yards before each end zone and five (5)

yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, powerrunning

situations. Teams are **not** allowed to run in these zones if the

subsequent line is LIVE. (*Reminder: Each offensive team approaches only TWO*

*No-run Zones on each drive -- one five (5) yards from the midfield Line-to-Gain*

*and one five (5) yards from the goal line to score a TD. A play fake or an offensive*

*player touching the ball is not considered a hand-off.*

5. All defensive players are eligible to rush once the ball has been handed-off.

6. Runners may not charge, hurdle, leap or dive to advance the ball. Charging,

hurdling, leaping, and diving to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.

Spinning and juking are allowed as long as the player is in control and not

lowering his/her shoulders, hands, or head. Lowering of the shoulder, hands,

or head is considered flag guarding.

7. Runners may protect themselves if there is a clear indication that he/she

has done so to avoid collision with another player, without a penalty enforced

against the offensive player.

8. No blocking or “screening” is allowed at any time.

9. Offensive players without the ball must stop their motion once the ballcarrier

has crossed the Line of Scrimmage. Running in the same area with the

ball-carrier will result in a penalty except if the QB has the ball behind the Line

of Scrimmage.

10. Flag Obstruction –Deliberately obstructed flags is considered flag guarding.

Players may not wear the same color shorts as their flags.

**Passing**

**In the 6U Division, a coach is the QB during the first half of the game.**

1. All passes must be from behind the Line of Scrimmage, thrown forward, and

received beyond the Line of Scrimmage. Underhanded passes are allowed in all

divisions.

a. The Quarterback may make a legal pass until his/her entire body is

passed the Line of Scrimmage.

b. Passes that do not cross the Line of Scrimmage, whether received or

not are considered illegal forward passes and will result in a 5 yard

penalty and loss of down. If this foul occurs in the end zone, the play

will result in a safety. (***Only exception to the intentional grounding***

***penalty, is if a QB is outside of the end zone and spikes the ball***

***with under 1 minute to stop the clock)***

c. The Quarterback may throw the ball away without penalty to avoid a

sack (including from the players own end zone) as long as the pass

crosses the Line of Scrimmage. Under 1 minute, the clock will stop on

an incomplete pass.

d. If a pass is blocked by a defender and then caught by the QB, the QB

may run with the ball. However, the QB cannot make another throw.

2. If the Quarterback is standing in the end zone with the ball when the play is

whistled dead because he/she did not throw it in the allotted time, the play

results in a loss of down and ball is placed on the 1 yard Line. There is **no**

safety.

If the defense pulls the flag of a QB or an offensive player in the end zone, the

play will result in a safety.

3. Interceptions on any down can be returned for a touchdown except during a

U-Point attempt.

**Receiving**

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the Quarterback if the ball

has been handed off to another player behind the Line of Scrimmage).

2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to

the Line of Scrimmage and no motion is permitted toward the Line of

Scrimmage. A player can be in motion during the snap, but must set if they

turn to Line of Scrimmage.

3. A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive

player, possession is awarded to the offense. The defense may not strip the ball

from an offensive player. Defensive players can only intercept and deflect the

ball prior to a catch. Stripping results in a 10 yard penalty and an automatic

first down.

5. If a player has 1 or no flags when receiving the ball, the ball is spotted where

the player is touched or contacted by a defender.

**Rushing the Passer**

**NOTE**: **There is no rush (blitz) in the 6U Divisions.**

The defense may rush (blitz) the passer every down except 4th

down or when a team is frozen.

There is no rush (blitz) during a U-Point attempt in 12U.

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of ten (10) yards from

the Line of Scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can

rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the

Line of Scrimmage.

2. Once the ball is handed off, the ten-yard rule no longer is in effect and all

defenders may cross the line of scrimmage.

3. The Referee is the Rush Line and will be ten (10) yards from the Line of

Scrimmage. **Offensive Teams cannot snap the ball until the Referee is set.**

Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official

on every play.

a. A legal rush is:

i. Any rush from a point ten (10) yards from the defensive line

of scrimmage.

ii. A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been

handed off by the quarterback.

ii. If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 10-yard

area), they may return to the rush line, reset, and then

legally rush the quarterback.

iii. If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed

off before he/she crosses the line of scrimmage, he/she may

legally rush the ball carrier

b. A penalty may be called if:

i. The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and **crosses**

the Line of Scrimmage before a handoff or pass – Illegal Rush

(5 yards from LOS and Automatic First Down). Defensive

players may fake a blitz without penalty.

ii. Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the

ball is snapped – Offside (+5 yards from LOS and Automatic

First Down).

ii. Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line who

crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or

handed off – Illegal Rush (+5 yards from LOS and Automatic

First Down).

e. Special circumstances:

i. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback.

ii. Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the

play.

4. Players rushing the Quarterback may attempt to block a pass. However, no

contact can be made with the quarterback. A defensive player **making any**

**contact** with the Quarterback (legs, arms, shoulders, hands) will result in a

roughing the passer penalty and an automatic first down.

5. If the offensive player intentionally impedes the rusher it will result in an

Impeding the Rusher penalty (5 yards from LOS and Loss of Down) regardless

of where the rusher(s) line up. **Exception: If the offensive player DOES NOT**

**MOVE after the snap, then it is the rusher’s responsibility to go around**

**the offensive player and to avoid contact**.

6. Again a sack occurs if the Quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of

scrimmage. The ball is placed where the Quarterback’s hips are when the flag

is pulled. The clock continues to run under a minute unless a time out is used.

A safety is awarded only if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone

by a flag pull. If a QB throws a pass beyond the LOS to avoid a sack in the end

zone or anywhere else on the field there is no safety or intentional grounding.

The pass is incomplete and the clock will only stop under 1 minute.

**Dead Balls**

**The referee must whistle the play dead if any of the following happens:**

1. -Ball carrier’s flag is pulled.

2. -Ball carrier’s flag falls off and is contacted by a defensive player.

3. -Ball carrier steps out of bounds.

4. -Ball carrier’s knee hits the ground (Ball is spotted where the player’s

hips were at the time the knee hits the ground).

5. -Touchdown or safety is scored.

6. -There are no fumbles. No recovery of a “fumble” is necessary or should

be attempted. The ball is spotted where the player’s hips were at the time

he/she loses control of the ball with the Offense keeping possession.

**Penalties**

1. The referee will call all penalties.

2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of

play.

3. All penalties will be assessed from the Line of Scrimmage, except as noted

(spot fouls).

4. Only the head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification

and interpretations.

5. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

6. Penalties are assessed Live Ball then Dead Ball. Live Ball penalties must be

assessed before play is considered complete.

7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the

penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

**Sportsmanship/Taunting**

There no camera or video phone replay reviews by officials. Please do not

approach or allow parents to approach the referee during or after the game

showing them video of a blown call.

If the field monitors or referees witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap

shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, in addition to a penalty, the game

will be stopped and the players will be ejected from the game.

Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that

may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams or spectators.)

If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the

player or players will be ejected from the game.

Coaches, Parents or spectators who are ejected from the field, will be

responsible for paying a fine and volunteering to clean and set-up the field.

Coaches and parents must remain outside of the 10 yard line and at least 3

yards from the out of bounds. Strollers should be a minimum of 5 yards from

the sidelines.

Parents may remain on the same sideline as their children.

**SPOT FOULS**

**Defensive**

Pass Interference Spot Foul

Automatic First Down (AFD)

Holding Spot Foul + 5 yards & AFD

Stripping Spot Foul + 10 yards & AFD

Defensive Unnecessary Roughness Spot Foul + 10 yards & AFD

**Offensive**

Holding -5 yards & Loss of Down (LOD)

Screening, blocking, running with the ball carrier -5 yards & LOD

Charging into Defensive Player -5 yards & LOD

Flag Guarding -5 yards & LOD

Offensive Unnecessary Roughness -10 yards & LOD

**Defensive Penalties**

Offside + 5 yards from Line of

Scrimmage (LOS) & AFD

Illegal Rush + 5 yards from LOS & AFD

Illegal Flag Pull + 5 yards from LOS & AFD

Taunting + 5 yards from LOS & AFD

Too Many Players on Field + 5 yards from LOS & AFD

Roughing the Passer + 10 yards from LOS & AFD

Unsportsmanlike Conduct + 10 yards from LOS & AFD

**Offensive Penalties**

Offside/False Start - 5 yards from LOS &

LOD

Illegal Rush - 5 yards from LOS &

LOD

Illegal Motion - 5 yards from LOS &

LOD

Too Many Players of Field - 5 yards from LOS & LOD

Delay of Game - 5 yards from LOS &

LOD

Impeding the rusher - 5 yards from LOS &

LOD

Illegal Forward Pass - 5 yards from LOS &

LOD

Taunting - 5 yards from LOS &

LOD

Offensive Pass Interference/Illegal Pick - 10 yards from LOS & LOD

Unsportsmanlike Conduct - 10 yards from LOS & LOD

**Throw Offs**

**No Throw Offs in the U6 and U8 Divisions**.

During each half, there will be a throw off. The clocks starts when the

offensive team catches the ball. The clock does start on a touchback or penalty.

The throw off will consist of 5 defensive players on the throw off vs 2

offensive players.

The Thrower will start on the 25 yard line (15 yard line 12U Division) and the

remaining players will begin on the 15yrd line. The thrower should stand in the

middle of the field. Teams must attempt the throw off and cannot declare that

they want to throw the ball out of bounds.

Any ball that hits the end zone will result in a touchback and the

offensive team will start at the 5 yard line.

**If the throwing team throws the ball out of bounds, it is a penalty**

**and the receiving team will start at their own 15 yard line**.

Each player on the receiving team should cover a side. Remember only 2

players can be out on the field. Once a player receives the ball, the other player

can receive a handoff, but may not block. You can pick up the ball on a

bounce but if a player drops the ball then the referee must whistle the play

dead.

The throw off is designed to get more playing time for every player. This

can be called special teams. In the playoff, Coaches will have the option, but

are strongly encouraged to keep the format.

LOS – Line of Scrimmage

AFD - Automatic First Down

LOD – Loss of Down