



## BYF Flag Rules

**BYF**

**B**uilding our  
**Y**outh for the  
**F**uture

**Preparation is the Key to Success**



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# 2019 Barrington Broncos Youth Football Flag Rules

UPDATED September 21, 2021

**Introduction. Safety is the first objective of these rules. Equal participation is the second objective. Any ambiguity should be resolved in favor of achieving these objectives.**

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## I. GENERAL RULES

**A. Flag Vice-President.** The vice-president of the flag league has all necessary powers to enforce these rules, including penalizing teams and individuals appropriately.

**B. Park District and School Rules.** All players, coaches, parents, referees, field commissioners and all others must obey Barrington Park District and District 220 rules, with regard to all safety issues, including but not limited to warnings to leave the field due to dangerous weather.

**C. Field.** For the White, Black, and Red Division, games will be played on an 80-yard, standard width field. For the TUFFS Division, games will be played on a 40-yard, standard width field, with two 10-yard end zones.

**D. Practice.** Practice can begin on August 1, but not before August 1. From August 1 until kickoff weekend, practice is limited to 4 ½ hours per week. Starting the Monday after Kickoff weekend practice is limited to three hours per week, Sunday, 12:01 a.m.-Saturday 11:59 p.m. In addition, coaches can request that players appear at the field one hour before official games for additional practice.

**E. Referees and Field Commissioners.** A minimum of one referee and one field commissioner will be present at each non-play-off game. The field commissioner's primary objective is to promote and enforce safety rules and to act as a sounding board for student referees. The Field Commissioner does not have the authority to reverse official calls within the game, but is available to discuss the rulings as an unbiased witness and authority of the BYF Flag Rules. Field Commissioners do serve as the responsible party in overseeing that BYF Rules and Regulations are observed and retains the right to uphold BYF rules when it comes to section VIII, Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Coaches and Players. Referees and coaches must also follow the field commissioner's rulings on all safety issues. The role of the Field Commissioner is critical to the success of our program on game day. The Field Commissioner is the neutral party responsible for organizing the start of play, monitoring play during the game, handling dispute resolution, maintaining order on and around the field, and carrying out disciplinary action, when necessary. Consequently, **he must be an engaged observer at all times** and clearly distinguishable from coaches, referees and other observers in order to be easily identified by all parties and be positioned on offensive side of the ball, approximately 15 yards from line of scrimmage.

Specific duties and responsibilities of the Field Commissioner include:

## Game Prep

- The Field Commissioner should arrive for duty 15 minutes before his assigned game. He should have a copy of the rules, as well as mobile phone numbers for his Division Commissioner (TUFFS, White, Red or Black) with him in the event they are needed.
- Introductions should be made to the respective coaching staffs and a coin flip conducted to determine kicking and receiving teams, prior to taking the field, in order to keep the pace of play moving throughout the day.
- The visiting team calls the coin flip:
  - The winner decides if they want to kick (start on Defense) or receive (start on Offense) in the 1st half (the opposite will then apply in the 2nd half).
  - The loser decides which goal to defend.
  - The teams switch sides of the field to start the 2nd half.
- Field Commissioner should review copies of both team's lineups prior to kickoff, to ensure an even distribution of playing time in accordance with Rule II.A.
- Field Commissioner should take a picture of each game roster and send to the appropriate division commissioner to be tracked for enforcement of Rule II B.
- The Field Commissioner should ensure that each team has assigned parents to work the scoreboard/time clock and man the chain gang. Home team runs the clock, visiting team runs the chains. Introductions should be made to all parents volunteering for these duties.
- Explanation should be given to both coaching staffs regarding the No Tolerance Policy.
- Upon completion of the prior game, the Field Commissioner and head coaches should introduce themselves to the assigned referees for their game. Any questions/discussion regarding specific rules and the enforcement of those rules should occur at this time. Remember, referees are the authority on the field and should be the primary voice in these conversations. However, the Field Commission should be available for clarification, should the referees need assistance.
- Before kickoff, there should always be one final review of the No Tolerance Policy with both referees and head coaches present.

## Monitoring Play/Dispute Resolution

- The Field Commissioner **MUST** be visible and closely watching play at all times.
- He should make note of **RECURRING** rules infractions and inform referees during any break in play. Referees will miss a call now and then – they don't need to be reminded of it each time – Commissioner input of this type should usually come in the case of repeated misses requiring clarification of a specific rule.
- In the case of a rule violation affecting the safety of a player, the Field Commissioner should **IMMEDIATELY** point out the infraction to the head referee. At that point, the head referee has the option of calling a penalty or issuing a warning. At no point does a Field Commissioner take on the role of referee and assess penalties.
- During the course of play, each head coach will have one opportunity to call a team time out, if available, per half to address the Field Commissioner, in order to point out rules violations they feel are not being seen/enforced. Upon reviewing the complaint, the Field Commissioner will caucus with the referees and determine a course of action, if any.

- The Field Commissioner will then report back to the head coaches, thereby eliminating any interaction between the coaches and referees during the game. If the Field Commissioner determines that the issue was a valid issue, no time out will be assessed to the requesting team and the time out will be considered an official time out. If the Field Commissioner determines that the call was a non-issue and non-urgent, then the requesting team will be assessed a time out. A team may only request a time out for Field Commissioner review if they are in possession of a team time out at the time. Also, inside of 2 minutes in either half of the game, neither team may call for a time out for Field Commissioner review.
- At halftime, the Field Commissioner is expected to meet separately with each coaching staff, noting issues or complaints, and pass along relevant concerns to the referees.

### **Maintaining Order/Instituting Disciplinary Measures**

- In extreme situations, it may become necessary for the Field Commissioner to use his authority in order to shield players and/or referees from inappropriate behavior on the part of coaches and/or fans. In accordance with the No Tolerance Policy, there is to be NO game related interaction between referees and coaches or parents on the sideline. Should a coach or parent on the sideline address a referee in disputing or questioning a call, the Field Commissioner must move to stop that action. At his discretion, he may issue a reminder/warning or in the case of a more serious offense, an ejection from the game.
- In the case of a coach or adult on the sideline using profanity towards a child or referee, the Field Commissioner will immediately interrupt the game and remove the offending party from the area.
- Following a game in which a Field Commissioner is forced to offer a warning or ejection to any adult (coach or observer); he must contact his Division Commissioner and file a formal report.

### **F. Length of Games.**

#### **White, Black and Red Divisions.**

1. Games consist of two 26-minute halves. Clock will run continuously except:
  - A. During the game, the clock will stop:
    - While the coaches and officials assess physical mismatches (see Rule V.A.)
    - Injuries
    - Time-outs
  - B. In the last two (2) minutes of the game, the clock will also stop:
    - During a change of possession
    - When the ball carrier runs out of bounds
    - To walk off a penalty (clock restarts on the snap)
    - On an incomplete pass
    - If a team scores, the clock will stop after the touchdown or safety, and will restart on the kickoff after the ball is touched (P.A.T. is an untimed down)
2. There will be no overtime games prior to the semifinal playoff game.
3. The clock does not stop if a team is ahead by 23 or more points in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half.
4. If lead becomes <23 points, clock reverts to stopping at normal times

**TUFFS Division.** There will be two 20-minute running clock halves per game.

**G. Play Clock.** The length of time the offensive team has to snap the ball after the referees have spotted the ball will vary by division:

1. In the **TUFFS Division** there will be a 60-second play clock and the referee will issue a warning at 30 seconds;
2. In the **White Division** there will be a 35-second play clock and the referee will issue a warning at 20 seconds;
3. In the **Black division**, there will be a 35-second play clock, and the referee will issue a warning with 20 seconds remaining.
4. In the **Red division**, there will be a 30-second play clock, and the referee will issue a warning with 15 seconds remaining.
5. A delay of game cannot be called without a “time remaining” warning, appropriate for each division.

**H. Halftime.** Halftime will be five (5) minutes long.

**I. Time Outs.** Each team will be permitted two (2) timeouts per half, and timeouts will not carry over to the 2nd half. Timeouts are one (1) minute in length. No timeouts are allowed in Tuffs. If a timeout is called after a touchdown is scored, the clock will not restart until the ensuing kickoff after the ball is touched (P.A.T. is an untimed down).

**J. Charged Time Outs.** During the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> half, an offensive team which fails to snap the ball within the time allowed by Rule I.G (delay of game) shall be charged a time-out, and the clock stops until the ball is snapped; if the offensive team has no remaining time-outs, the failure to snap the ball within the time allowed by Rule I.G shall result in a 5-yard penalty.

**K. First Downs.** First downs will be achieved after the ball is advanced ten yards. Each team will have four downs to advance ten yards. (No First Downs for TUFFS. TUFFS play a maximum of four downs.)

#### **L. Scoring.**

**All Divisions.** Touchdowns shall be worth 6 points, P.A.T.s scored by running the football shall be worth one (1) point, P.A.T.s scored by passing the football and a safety shall be worth two (2) points. The two-point conversion must be thrown across the line of scrimmage as a forward pass, shuffle or overhand. Lateral passes, pitches or screen passes are not eligible for the two-point conversion and will only count toward one point on a successful P.A.T. attempt. The ball will be spotted on the 2-yard line for the P.A.T. attempt.

**TUFFS Division.** TUFFS games are played on a half field. The ball is placed at the 40-yard line going into the end zone. The offense is allowed four plays total to score. If there is no score, after four plays, the offense loses possession. There is no P.A.T. try. After possession ends (4 downs or a score), the defense assumes the ball back at the 40-yard line.

### **M. Penalties.**

- All penalties shall be five (5) yard penalties, except for Unsportsmanlike Conduct and Unnecessary Roughness (including illegal tackling, and flag tying/tucking), and potentially Pass Interference, as described below.
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct and Unnecessary Roughness penalties shall be fifteen (15) yard penalties, are marked off from the original line of scrimmage, and the down is replayed.
  - o If these penalties are called after a touchdown is scored, the opposing coach has the option to have the 15 yards enforced on the ensuing P.A.T., or on the kickoff.
- Penalty enforcement cannot result in the ball moving farther than half the distance to the goal line.
- On Pass Interference penalties, the ball will be placed at either the spot of the infraction, or a 5-yard penalty, whichever is greater. No loss of down will be charged.
- Except for false starts, the opposing coach has the option to decline all penalties.

**N. On-field Coaching.** Each White and TUFFS Division team will be permitted to have up to two coaches on the field during play to assist in calling plays and aligning players. Each Black and Red Division team will be limited to one coach on the field. Coaches on the field may only instruct players between plays. Once “Tips” is announced by the center, the coaches on the field may not yell out play development or instructions, e.g., “watch the pass, or reverse.” (A coach’s height and experience, relative to the players, provides a coach with an unfair advantage in observing fakes and reading play development). The “Tips” announcement applies to both huddle and no-huddle calling. However, even after the huddle has broken, coaches can always instruct their players about safety issues, e.g., reminding players not to rush on a punt. Also, coaches from both sides can and should request compliance with neutral zones and proper alignment, with their own players. **[Defensive Coaches must be 20 yards from the line of scrimmage - Avoid interfering with potential pass plays.]**

**O. Fumbles.** There will be no fumbles. Except as provided in Rules VI.B. and D., the play will be blown dead when the ball hits the ground. Except in the case of bad or dropped snaps, the ball will be spotted where it hits the ground. Bad or dropped snaps (including snaps which go over the quarterback’s head in the shotgun formation) will be spotted at the original line of scrimmage.

**P. Laterals.** Lateral passes and pitches “can” be intercepted in Black & Red Divisions (not in TUFFS). White Division “intercepted” balls are considered an incomplete pass DURING THE REGULAR SEASON. This is to encourage passing during the player participation rotation. The play will be blown dead AFTER the ball carrier’s flag is pulled or a clear path to the end zone has been established. It results in a loss of down for the offense. White Division lateral passes and pitches “can” be intercepted in the Playoffs.

## **II. PLAYER PARTICIPATION, the Hallmark of our Program.**

**A. Equal Participation.** Equal participation is a core principle of the Barrington Youth Football Flag Program. Playing time must be divided as equally as possible. At a bare minimum, every player must be assigned one of ~~the~~ the 14-16-18-22 offensive or defensive positions during each half of the game (14 offensive and defensive positions in TUFFS, 22 in Red, 16-18



in Black & White), and a position on the kicking or receiving team. No player should be assigned a position for the entire game on offense, defense and special teams, while another player is assigned to play the bare minimum amount on offense or defense.

Coaches must prepare a position/playing chart in advance of each game to assure that playing time is distributed as equally as possible. Extra copies should be shared with the opposing coach and Field Commissioner before kickoff. The following illustration is provided to explain equal participation in a 8 active player rotation. Since there are 16 different positions (8) offensive and (8) defensive and two halves in each game, playing time should be divided as follows:

<u>Number of Players</u>	<u>8 players on the field per team at a time</u>
9	All 9 players should play <i>both ways</i> (a full-time offensive <i>and</i> defensive position) during one half of the game, and play either a full-time offensive or defensive position during the other half of the game. Five players would be able to play the entire game on offense and defense.
10	All 10 players should play both ways during one half of the game, and play either offense or defense during the other half of the game. Two players would be able to play the entire game on offense and defense.
11	All 11 players should play a full-time offensive or defensive position during each half of the game, and 10 players should play an additional offensive or defensive position during half the game.
12	All 12 players should play a full-time offensive or defensive position during each half of the game, and 8 players should play an additional offensive or defensive position during half the game.
13	All 13 players should play a full-time offensive or defensive position during each half of the game, and 6 players should play an additional offensive or defensive position during half the game.
14	All 14 players should play a full-time offensive or defensive position during each half of the game, and 4 players should play an additional offensive or defensive position during half the game.
15	All 15 players should play a full-time offensive or defensive position during each half of the game, and 2 players should play an additional offensive or defensive position during half the game.

The following illustration is provided to explain equal participation in the 9 player active rotation. Playing time should be divided as follows:

<u>Number of Players</u>	<u>9 players on the field per team at a time</u>
9	All 9 players should play <i>both ways</i> (a full-time offensive <i>and</i> defensive position).
10	All 10 players should play both ways during one half of the game, and play either offense or defense during the other half of the game. Six players would be able to play the entire game on offense and defense.
11	All 11 players should play a full-time offensive and defensive position during one half of the game. Three players would be able to play the entire game on offense and defense.
12	All 12 players should play a full-time offensive and defensive position during one half of the game. No player should play an entire game.
13	All 13 players should play a full-time offensive or defensive position during one half of the game, and 5 players should play an additional offensive or defensive position during half the game.

**B. Position Assignments and Rotation Generally.** Another key objective of the Barrington Youth Football Flag Program is to allow players to learn the fundamentals of football by gaining exposure to all aspects of the game. Consistent with this, all players should be assigned to, and given the opportunity to play, all offensive and defensive positions during the course of the regular season. Equal participation and position assignment should also extend to special teams with as many players as possible being given the opportunity to kick-off, punt and return kicks. Each player should be assigned to kick off at least once per half during the regular season. Each player should be assigned to each of the three (four Black & White division) ball carrier/ kickoff return spots, left, right and middle, at least one half during the regular season. In the event of an unplanned absence a coach should make their best effort to accommodate position assignments and rotations.

**C. Skill Position Assignments.** In the spirit of equal participation, every player will be required to play quarterback for at least one full half *and* running-back in the regular season for two halves. The quarterback must actually receive the center snap and have a real experience playing quarterback. (The quarterback must take the ball from the center. The center cannot hand the ball, or snap the ball to anyone except the quarterback.) Furthermore, each quarterback should have the opportunity to attempt one forward or lateral pass per game. Players who indicate that they are reluctant to play these positions must be actively encouraged to do so, and absent a written note from a player's parent, coaches must strictly adhere to this rule. (If your team has twelve players, or less, through the course of the regular season, each child should play quarterback for one half, and running back for two halves. By the end of the regular season, each child should have played an equal number of halves, except due to injury or absence.

**D. Position Chart.** Coaches are required to prepare, and exchange with the opposing team, a position chart which: (a) lists where each player (by name and number) will be playing during each half of the game, and (b) reflects as even a distribution of playing time as possible in accordance with Rule II.A. Coaches must select either their defense or offense to act as the kick off team or kick return team on the chart. Position charts will be reviewed by division commissioners after each game to provide guidance regarding the equal participation rule. An extra copy of the position chart will be given to the referee or field commissioner, to be turned over to the division commissioner. Players that are stricken from the position chart due to tardiness or projected absence but arrive later are allowed to play in the positions they were originally slotted for.

**E. TUFFS Division.** Every child must play quarterback and a running back position at least one half of one game for each position. (THIS IS THE MINIMUM AMOUNT and we encourage you all to get all of your players ample playing time at the skill positions. This is what TUFFS is all about.) If during a game a child starts a position on the field, but resists playing, coaches are to encourage the child to continue. If unsuccessful, a TUFFS coach may replace this child with a player from the team that is not currently on the field.

**F. Substitute Player Rules.** In the regular season, you may seek a substitute player only if you are not able to field a full lineup (Example: 8 players, in an 8-player division). You may only select a substitute player from your own division (this is to maintain safety for the kids). You may only select players from the approved list of players provided by the Division Commissioner. The substitute player may not play an offensive skill position and/or pass, carry, catch or kick the football. The substitute player must play safety on defense. *The substitute player cannot play more halves than regular team members.* Teams can play with one less player than a full lineup, otherwise they must forfeit. (Example: The game could then be played, 7 players against 8 players). No substitutes are allowed in the playoffs.

### III. OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE ALIGNMENTS AND FORMATIONS.

#### White, Black and Red Divisions.

**A. Number of Players and Player Stances.** Each team will have the appropriate number of players (7, 8, 9, 10 or 11) on the field at the same time. With the exception of the offensive center, all players must be aligned in a two-point stance when the ball is snapped.

**B. General Offensive Alignment and Formation.** Five players must form the offensive line as follows, left to right: (1) left tackle/end, (2) left guard, (3) center, (4) right guard, (5) right tackle/end. Unbalanced lines are not permitted (center must have 2 linemen on either side of them). These five players must line up along the offensive line of scrimmage. Splits between these five players must be “airplane” (“fingertip to fingertip”) splits (no wider & no closer). Teams are then comprised of the following skill players, based on the number of players in their division: 1 quarterback (QB), 2 running backs (RB), 0-3 wide receivers (WR).

i. Running backs (RB) must line up a minimum of 1 yard off the line. They may line up anywhere (backfield, next to tackle, etc).

ii. Wide receivers (WR) must be split at least 5 yards from either tackle/end at the snap of the ball and line up a minimum of 1 yard off the line of scrimmage.

iii. The quarterback (QB) must be lined up behind the center. After an appropriate split is established, the center can side snap the ball to the quarterback. All snaps must be handled by the quarterback first, regardless of how the ball is snapped.

#### C. General Defensive Alignment and Formation.

- Teams must have four (4) players line up along the defensive line of scrimmage (this includes 9, 10, and 11 player rosters).
- Defensive players positioned on the line of scrimmage must allow a 1-yard neutral zone.
- Defensive linemen must be positioned with their **inside** shoulder aligned with the **outside** shoulder of the opposing offensive linemen.
- The remaining defensive players, including cornerbacks, must be at least 3 yards off the line of scrimmage.
- If the defense repeatedly violates the outside shoulder or 3-yard rules above after being warned by the referee, this is an illegal formation penalty, to be enforced after the play is run, with the coach getting the choice to accept the penalty or take the result of the play.

**1. Players eligible for immediate rush.** Only the four defensive players lined up along the defensive line of scrimmage may immediately cross the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

**2. Players eligible for a delayed rush.** No immediate rush (i.e. no blitzing) is permitted by the defensive players who are lined up beyond or off the defensive line of scrimmage. These players may not cross the line of scrimmage until: (a) the quarterback runs outside the pocket (outside the location where the offensive linemen who were aligned fingertip to fingertip were positioned when the play began); and/or (b) the quarterback hands off, pitches or throws the ball to another offensive player. For purposes of this rule, a fake hand-off or pitch shall be treated as a hand-off or pitch.

**D. Eligible Offensive Ball Carriers and Receivers.** With the exception of the offensive center and guards, all offensive players are eligible to receive the ball in a pass.

**1. Players eligible for a handoff/pitch to carry the ball.**

- In all divisions, running backs are eligible for handoff/pitches to carry the ball, and can go in motion.
- In 8-player lineup divisions, the tackle/end can receive a forward pass, handoff or pitch.
- In 9-player lineup divisions, the tackle/end can receive a forward pass but is **not eligible** for a handoff/pitch to carry the ball. The wide receiver is the extra skill player in the 9-player lineup that can receive a handoff/pitch to carry the ball. The wide receiver can go in motion, but cannot be closer than 5 yards from the end of the line of scrimmage on the snap.
- In 10/11-player lineup divisions, the tackle/end is ineligible. The 3 wide receivers can receive a forward pass, handoff or pitch.
- In all divisions, only one player can be motion at a time.

**E. TUFFS Division.** Each team will field 7 players and two coaches on the field at a time during game play. There will be 4 players on the line and 3 in the backfield. There is no center position or center snap for quarterback. Tackles are eligible for passes. Quarterback will start 3 yards behind the line of scrimmage, positioned behind the vacant center position. This is where he will start his cadence. The quarterback cannot go into motion until cadence is complete.

#### **IV. BLOCKING, “TACKLING” AND RUNNING.**

**A. Offensive Blocking.** Blocking will be permitted above the waist and below the shoulders with open hands only. Hands must be open with thumbs up for all blocking. Blockers must keep their hands within the defender’s torso, no higher than the shoulders or lower than the waist. Offensive players may not use their elbows, forearms or shoulders to initiate contact with a defensive player. Blockers may not leave their feet to throw a block. **Downfield blocking and blind-sided defender blocking including “Crack Backs” should be limited to screening the defender; the blocker may use his or her hands to help fend off the defender, but shall not forcefully extend his or her arms to “explode” into the defender.**

**B. “Tackling.”** A play will be ruled over when a defensive player pulls the flag of the offensive player with possession of the ball or the ball carrier’s flag falls off of its own accord. The spot of the ball is determined by the location of the ball when the flag is pulled. The defensive player must play the flag rather than the man. Running or pushing a ball carrier out of bounds is prohibited. No defensive player shall hold, push or run through the ball carrier. Any action against the runner other than merely pulling his flag shall be deemed Unnecessary Roughness. A defensive player shall not deliberately pull an offensive player’s flag unless that offensive player has possession of the ball; doing so shall be ruled Unsportsmanlike Conduct by the offending defensive player. The defender cannot “strip” the ball from the ball carrier or otherwise attempt to cause a fumble. If the defense causes a fumble by making contact with a ball carrier, no change of possession will result from the fumble even though the defense gains possession of the ball before the ball makes contact with the ground.

The objective of a defender rushing the passer should be to pull the passer's flags. Any attempt by the defender to deter, "block" or "bat" down a pass which results in above-the-shoulders contact or contact to the passer's arm, between the defender and the passer, will result in an automatic Unnecessary Roughness penalty.

**C. Defensive Line Play.** The defensive players lined up along the line of scrimmage eligible to immediately rush may not initiate contact with the center or cross the line of scrimmage through the splits between the offensive center and guards (the "A" gap). (This rule does not prohibit the defensive tackles from electing not to cross the line of scrimmage and instead electing to move laterally into the gap between the center and guards along the defensive line of scrimmage). Players eligible to rush may spin or use their hands to attempt to avoid a blocker while rushing, but may not use forearms, straight arms, elbows or head slaps to rush. Defensive players shall not attempt to "bull rush" or run through an offensive blocker.

**D. Ball Carriers.** The ball carrier may not attempt to "run through" a defensive player. Rather, the ball carrier must attempt to evade the tackler. Spinning will be allowed, as will jumping in order to change direction or before proceeding out of bounds. However, jumping over a defender is not allowed at any time, nor is head first diving. Should either of these actions occur, the ball carrier will be deemed down at the spot of the foul. During the normal course of play, the ball carrier will be deemed down at the spot where the ball was located at the time that his or her flag was pulled or fell off. A player whose flags have fallen off or been pulled before he gains possession of the ball will be down at the spot where the player first gains possession of the ball. If a player without a flag handles the ball, it becomes dead immediately at the spot that the player gains possession. No stiff-arming, hand slapping, flag guarding or other attempts to interfere with the defensive player's right to grab the flag are allowed - if called, the ball will be spotted where the infraction occurred as if the flag was pulled, and the down is considered over (no additional penalty).

**E. Center Snap to Quarterback.** In all Divisions the offensive line must be "set" for one second prior to the snap. In the TUFFS and White Division, the quarterback must give an audible "set" instruction. In the White, Black and Red Division, at the start of every play by the offensive team, the center snap must be first exchanged with the quarterback before being delivered to another eligible player. There will be no exceptions to this rule. In all divisions, plays involving the "wrong ball" and foreign matter on the ball are banned, and will result in an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty.

**F. Offensive Player Involvement.** In all Divisions the quarterback is the first eligible player to advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. Other skill players are also allowed to advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage once they obtain it from the quarterback. In order to promote player involvement, no player may advance the ball from the line of scrimmage more than 3 consecutive times (resets after each offensive series). If a player advances the ball a 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive time, the play should be completed. The result of the play will be no gain and a loss of down.

## V. AVOIDING PHYSICAL MISMATCHES.

**A. Initial Realignment of Defensive Players.** After the teams have aligned at the line of scrimmage for each team's first offensive play of the half, the coaches shall assess whether there are any clear physical mismatches along the line of scrimmage (due to the relative weight and size of the offensive guards and defensive tackles lined up across from one another and the offensive tackles and defensive ends lined up across from one another). If a clear physical mismatch is identified, reasonable efforts shall be undertaken to avoid the mismatch by taking one or both of the following corrective actions: (1) rotating the defensive players assigned to the same positions (i.e. by first rotating the left and right defensive tackles and/or left and right defensive ends), and (2) adjusting the positions of the defensive players along the line of scrimmage (i.e. by moving a player or players from tackle to end). If the coaches cannot agree on how best to avoid physical mismatches, the referees shall decide. Once any physical mismatches along the line of scrimmage have been addressed in this manner, the defensive coach shall be given the opportunity, before the first offensive play, to realign the defensive players assigned to positions beyond the line of scrimmage. Once the first offensive play is run, however, the defensive players shall remain in their reassigned positions for the remainder of the half.

**B. No Situational Substitutions.** After the first offensive play of each half, players may not be removed from the game or reassigned to a different position during the game except for a disciplinary reason or due to injury. Missing an assignment and/or failing to make a play does not constitute a disciplinary reason for removing and/or reassigning a player. If substitutions are necessary for these reasons, every effort should be made to avoid creating a physical mismatch. The penalty for a situational substitution will be a 15-yard Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty.

## VI. SPECIAL TEAMS PLAY.

### A. Kick-offs.

#### **White, Black and Red Divisions.**

- In the Black and Red divisions, kickoffs shall be from the kicking team's 30-yard line.
- In the White division, kickoffs are from the kicking team's 35-yard line.  
(These yard lines will apply too in all divisions after a defensive safety score).
- A team leading by more than 16 points is required to kick off from 10 yards deeper than normally required.
- The ball must be kicked 10 yards or is to be kicked over without penalty.
- If a ball is kicked out of bounds, but does travel 10 yards, the receiving team has a choice of: (a) a re-kick starting 5 yards back of the last kick, or (b) taking the ball at the point where it went out of bounds.
- The kick-off receiving team is the only team that can recover and advance the ball. No on-side kicks are allowed.
- Kickoffs should occur within 1 minute of the result of the extra point try.

In the regular season, each player must be assigned at least one half as kicker, and three halves as kickoff return back.

**TUFFS Division.** The winner of a coin toss will decide which team starts on offense first. There are no kickoffs in TUFFS.

**B. Kick-off Returns.** The receiving team lines up no closer than 10 yards from the spot of the kickoff. For safety reasons (to prevent collisions), short kicks muffed by front line receiving team players will be blown dead. If the return is muffed by a down field returner, however, and the official believes that the returner can pick up the ball and safely return it, the official may allow the player to do so without blowing the play dead. Officials have the sole discretion to blow the play dead or allow play to continue, and the official's decision shall not be questioned.

**C. Punts.** The quarterback for each half must be assigned as punter. Punt attempts will be allowed without a defensive rush and without any attempt to block the punt at the line of scrimmage. In order to negate a defensive rush, the offensive team must announce before the snap that it intends to punt. Once a team has announced its intention to punt, it must punt; no fake punts are permitted. If the snap is fumbled by the punter, he may pick up the ball and punt it. The punt receiving team must keep their four (4) defensive linemen on the line of scrimmage - the remaining defensive players may be positioned at the coach's discretion to field the punt.

**D. Punt Returns.** If the return is muffed by a down field returner and the official believes that the returner can pick up the ball and safely return it, the official may allow the player to do so without blowing the play dead. Officials have the sole discretion to blow the play dead or allow play to continue, and the official's decision shall not be questioned.

**E. Kicking P.A.T.s and Field Goals.** To avoid injuries and to allow maximum participation by the players on the field, no P.A.T. kicks and/or field goal attempts shall be permitted. Teams must seek to score a P.A.T. by running an offensive play.

## **VII. EQUIPMENT.**

**A. Flags.** Each player must have all flags on the belt on the outside of his or her jersey. Generally, a ball carrier will be deemed down at the line of scrimmage on a run play, and at the point of reception on a pass/punt/kickoff play, if his flags and belt are not visible e.g., if a jersey is hiding a belt/flag, a flag is missing from the belt, or other equipment malfunction. If the referee sees the belt become hidden during the course of a play, he can deem the ball carrier down at the point where a defender had a chance to grab the flag.

**B. Mouthpiece, Knee Pads and Protective Cups.** All players must wear a mouthpiece during practice and games. All other protective gear is optional. Knee pads for games are highly recommended.



**C. Game Balls.** Official size for each division:

- \* Red Division (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade) - YOUTH
- \* Black Division (4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade) - JUNIOR
- \* White Division (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) - PEE WEE
- \* TUFFS Division (K & 1<sup>st</sup> grade) - Foam Ball

**VIII. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT BY COACHES AND PLAYERS.**

**A. Interaction with Officials.** There shall be NO game-related comments addressed: (1) by coaches and/or parents to referees, and (2) between opposing coaches. Generally, coaches should raise any questions or concerns they have relating to rule interpretation and enforcement with the Field Commissioner before the game, or at half-time. During the course of play, the head coach will have one opportunity during each half to utilize a remaining time-out to address a rule interpretation/enforcement issue with the Field Commissioner. A team which already has utilized all of its time-outs, however, may not call time-out to address a rule interpretation/enforcement issue with the Field Commissioner, and neither team may do so within the last two minutes of either half.

If the Field Commissioner, after conferring privately with the referees, determines that the matter raised by the coach calling the time out was a valid one, no time out will be assessed against the team requesting the time-out, and the time-out will be considered an official's time out. If the Field Commissioner determines that the matter raised by the coach does not: (1) concern a player safety issue, (2) relate to a reoccurring enforcement issue, and/or (3) relate to legitimate rule interpretation issue, the team calling the time-out will be charged with a team time-out. If a referee and field commissioner determine that a coach or a parent is objecting to a call or decision, then the referee and field commissioner will penalize that team for Unsportsmanlike Conduct. The referee and field commissioner will also determine if that coach or parent should be ejected from the game. No advanced warning is necessary. Any coach or parent who is ejected from the game for Unsportsmanlike Conduct shall leave the playing area immediately. The Field Commissioner will then report back to the head coaches, thereby eliminating any intersection between the coaches and referees during the game. The flag vice-president can enforce a zero tolerance rule for violators of this section, including immediate ejection and subsequent suspension from coaching in the league.

**B. Trash Talking.** Offensive comments to officials, players, coaches, teams or spectators will not be tolerated. Officials have the sole right to determine what constitutes offensive language or trash talking. The referee and field commissioner will give one warning, before ejecting the offending coach, player or spectator from the game.

**C. Unnecessary Roughness or Force.** The objective of a defender rushing the passer should be to pull the passer's flags. Any attempt by the defender to deter, "block" or "bat" down a pass which results in above-the-shoulders contact *or contact to the passer's arm*, between the defender and the passer, will result in an automatic Unnecessary Roughness penalty. Tacklers, blockers and runners should not use more force than is necessary for the success of the play. A screen block in the open field should be used, instead of a block that knocks an opponent to the ground. The inevitable result of a tackle should not be that a runner is pushed to the ground. Tacklers should not be pushed to the ground by runners, because a runner runs through a tackler. Whether the degree of force or roughness was unnecessary or excessive will be determined by the officials. The penalty for Unnecessary Roughness or force is 15 yards (or, if the violation occurs within the 15-yard line, half the distance to the goal line) from: 1) the line of scrimmage; 2) placement of the ball at the time of infraction; or 3) the point of infraction. The choice of these three options should put the offending team at the greatest disadvantage. A violation by the defensive team will also result in an automatic first down. A violation by the offensive team will also result in a loss of down. A player assessed with two Unnecessary Roughness penalties will be required to leave the game for the rest of that half. A player assessed a third Unnecessary Roughness penalty, will be required to sit out for the duration of the game. The Commissioner will be notified and other action may be taken with respect to the player or the player's coach as deemed necessary. Coaches are obligated to teach proper play for flag football.

## **IX. SPECIAL PLAYOFF RULES**

**A. Playoff Player Participation Rules.** The player participation rules set forth in II.A. shall continue to apply in the playoffs (i.e. - all players must sit out once before any player sits out twice). The rules relating to position assignment, rotation and skill positions are modified as set forth herein. Except in the event of a tie-breaker, a player cannot play a specific skill position (QB, RB, WR) for more than one half of a game (teams utilize two RB's in 8-player lineup divisions, there is no WR, and thus a player can only play the RB position once). While a player cannot play the same skill position throughout the game, he or she can play two different skill positions during one specific game. Players may be assigned the same non-skill position throughout the game. Teams are permitted to follow the same rotation of players throughout the playoffs. The Player Rotation Forms must be exchanged with the Head Coaches as well as the Field Commissioner. Once this form has been exchanged no changes will be allowed for that game. All players must play a minimum of one half on Offense and one half on Defense.

**B. Special Teams.** Each team must designate if the Offense or the Defense will be the Kick Off or Kick Off Return team. There will be no substitutions allowed on any Special teams. The Punting Team will be the Offense on the field and the Punt Return Team will be the Defense on the field.

### **I. Punting:**

- A. The punter may be chosen from any of the offensive players.
- B. The ball must be punted before the play clock expires, as described in Rule I.G (delay of game) and Rule I.J.

### **II. Kickoffs:**

A. The referee will start a 1-minute kickoff play clock after the P.A.T. play ends. If the ball is not kicked by 1 min (whether due to either the kicking or receiving team not being ready), the game clock will stop, and will not restart until the ball is kicked.

B. If the ball is not kicked 10 yards, the receiving team has a choice of a) re-kick (the clock will stop until the re-kick), or b) taking the ball at the spot where it ended or was picked up by the receiving team.

C. If the ball is kicked out of bounds, but does travel 10 yards, and the receiving team chooses to re-kick as described in Rule VI.A, the clock will stop until the re-kick.

**C. No Substitutions.**

In the playoffs there are no substitutions. A team may play with 1 less person (eg. 7 on 8) if they so choose. 2 less will result in a forfeit.

**D. Penalties.** Field Commissioner is empowered to call 2 penalties:

(1) Unnecessary Roughness

(2) Talking To /Questioning Call of Referees

- 5 yds. for 1st offense. 15 yds. for subsequent offenses.

\*\*\* Field Commissioners may not serve in the same division they coach or in a game in which they have a child playing.

**E. Tie Breaker.** In the semifinals and Super Bowl, a modified “Kansas City Tie Breaker” system will be used in the event the score is tied at the end of regulation. Note that equal playing time rules do not apply for the tie-breaker, but no substitutions, nor position changes can occur once the offense or defense is set on the field, unless due to injury.

Under this format, the winner of the overtime coin toss chooses offense or defense, and the team losing the toss chooses the end zone to defend. Each team is given 4 downs starting on the 10 yard line to score (using the same end zone). No field goals may be attempted in the tie-breaker. Extra points will count in the total points scored on a possession after a touchdown. The number of downs used to score has no effect.

If the score is still tied after each team's set of downs, the ball will be placed at mid-field. The winner of the coin toss will have the ball first and choose their direction. In the absence of a score by the team winning the toss, each team will get 4 downs to gain as much positive yardage (or the least negative yardage) as possible. If a turnover occurs, that team's overtime is completed with the yardage computed at the time of the turnover (i.e. an interception will be placed at the line of scrimmage where the play started). There will be no first downs. All penalties are assessed whether they result in positive or negative yards. Each team must attempt 4 plays, unless a turnover occurs or a team scores a touchdown. If a touchdown is scored, the game will end immediately upon the score. If no touchdown is scored and four downs have occurred, the line of scrimmage for the opposing team's offensive series will begin where the ball was played at the end of the prior series. The winner will be designated as whichever side of the 40 the ball ends up on after each team has had their four plays.

## **Addendum A. GAME CLOCK / SCORE BOARD OPERATIONS**

### **Barrington Youth Football, Inc**

P.O. Box 3003 - Barrington, IL - 60011-3003 - 847-289-4470 - [www.barringtonbroncos.org](http://www.barringtonbroncos.org)

\* Suggested Updates & Comments to [flag@barringtonbroncos.com](mailto:flag@barringtonbroncos.com)

### **A.1 Beese Fields - East & West.**

--- Fair-Play #MP 96 Controller - <http://www.fair-play.com>

**\* If chirping sound when entering any command, re-enter command from beginning.**

- 1. Set Clock** (Clock must be stopped, to "Set Clock" <See bottom row, far right>)
  - i. Select "SET CLOCK"** - Top row, middle
  - ii. Enter "0600" on keypad** (6 Minute example; 4 digits are required to be entered)
    - a. Flag = 26 Min/Half** (White, Black, & Red Divisions 7-13 yrs. old)
    - b. TUFFS = 20 Min/Half** (5-6 yrs. old)
  - iii. Select "Enter"**
- 2. Run Clock**
  - i. Push the "TIME IN" switch** to start/stop clock - Bottom row, far right
    - a. Push top of switch to RUN**
    - b. Push bottom of switch to STOP**
- 3. Update Score**
  - i. Select "HOME SCORE"** - Bottom row, middle (Also "VISITOR SCORE")
  - ii. Enter "18" on keypad** (Example: 18 points)
  - iii. Select "ENTER"** - Bottom, right corner of keypad
- 4. Update Half**
  - i. Select "QTR PERIOD HALF"** - Top row, far right
  - ii. Enter "2" on keypad** (Ex: 2nd half)
  - iii. Select "Enter"** - Bottom, right corner of keypad
- 5. Update Down**
  - i. Select "Down"** - 3rd row down, far left (repeat to increment +1)
  - ii. Enter "2" on keypad** (Ex: 2nd down)
  - iii. Select "Enter"** - Bottom, right corner of keypad
- 6. Yards To Go** (Tackle Only)
  - i. Select "To Go H.SOG"**
  - ii. Enter "8" on keypad** (Ex: 8 yards to go for 1st down)
  - iii. Select "Enter"**
- 7. Update Ball Possession**
  - i. Select "NX. POSS. POSS. SERVICE"** - 2nd row from top, middle
    - a. Select again to change possession to other team**
- 8. Horn**
  - i. Automatically sounds when clock reaches 0:00.** (Black, square on bottom, right)

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**A.2 Portable Clocks - Langendorf, South Barrington, & Lower Beese.**

--- Fair-Play #MP 50 Controller - <http://www.fair-play.com>

1. **Set Clock** (Clock must be stopped, to “Set Clock” <See bottom row, far right>)
  - i. **Select “CLOCK SET”** - Top row, middle
  - ii. **Enter “0600” on keypad** (6 Minute example; 4 digits are required to be entered)
    - a. Flag = 26 Min/Half (White, Black, & Red Divisions 7-13 yrs. old)
    - b. TUFFS = 20 Min/Half (5-6 yrs. old)
  - iii. **Select “Enter”** - Bottom, right corner of keypad
  
2. **Run Clock**
  - i. **Push the “TIME IN” switch** to start/stop clock - Bottom row, far right
    - a. Push top of switch to RUN
    - b. **Push bottom of switch to STOP**
    - c.
  
3. **Update Score**
  - i. **Select “HOME SCORE”** - Bottom row, middle (Also “VISITOR SCORE”)
  - ii. **Enter “18” on keypad** (Example: 18 points)
  - iii. **Select “ENTER”** - Bottom, right corner of keypad
  
4. **Update Half**
  - i. **Select “QTR PERIOD”** - Top row, middle
  - ii. **Enter “2” on keypad** (Ex: 2nd half)
  - iii. **Select “Enter”** - Bottom, right corner of keypad
  
5. **Horn**
  - i. **Automatically sounds when clock reaches 0:00.** (Black, square on bottom, right)

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**A.3 Barrington High School**

--- White Way Sign Sports #WS3000 Controller - <http://www.whiteway.com>

1. **“Local Timer Enable”** (Top section, center) **must be lit for scoreboard to work!**
2. **Set Clock** (Clock must be stopped, to “Set Clock” <See bottom section, far right>)
  - i. **Enter “600” on keypad** (6 Minute example)
    - a. Flag = 26 Min/Half (White, Black, & Red Divisions 7-13 yrs. old)
    - b. TUFFS = 20 Min/Half (5-6 yrs. old)
  - ii. **Select “Enter”**
  - iii. **Select “Set Time”** - Top section, under “Time Clock”
3. **Run Clock**
  - i. **Push the “Time On/Off”** to start/stop clock - Bottom section, far right
4. **Update Score**
  - i. **Enter “18” on keypad** (Example: 18 points)
  - ii. **Select “Set/Inc”** - Top Section, under “HOME” (Also use “GUEST”)
5. **Update Half**
  - i. **Enter “2” on keypad** (Ex: 2nd half)
  - ii. **Select “Enter”**
  - iii. **Select “Set/Inc”** - Bottom section, far right under “Quarter” (repeat increments +1)
6. **Update Down**
  - i. **Enter “2” on keypad** (Ex: 2nd down)
  - ii. **Select “Down”** - Bottom section, far left, under “Down” (repeat to increment +1)
7. **Update Ball Possession** (Auto-resets to 1st & 10)
  - i. **Select “Ball Possession ON/OFF”** - Bottom row, middle, under “HOME” or “GUEST”
  - ii. If select “HOME” or “GUEST”, twice in a row, this function turns off
8. **Update Yards-To-First-Down**
  - i. **Enter “7” on keypad** (7 yards to First Down)
  - ii. **Select “Set/Inc”** - Bottom row, left, under “YDS TO GO” (Also use “Set/Dec”)
    - a. Can also select “Set/Inc” & “Set Dec” to change +/- 1.

#### **A.4 Game Clock Operation Guidelines**

- 1. TUFFS (5-6 yrs. old) = 20 Minutes/Half**
  - i. Continuously running clock does not stop until Half-time and end of game**
  
- 2. White, Black, & Red Divisions (7-13 yrs. old) = 26 Minutes/Half**
  - i. Referees will direct Clock Operator to Stop/Start Game Clock**
  
  - ii. Continuously running clock until final 2 minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> half, except stops for...**
    - a. Physical Mismatch Assess (Rule V.A.) - Begin offensive Series/Team/Half**
    - b. Injuries**
    - c. Time-Outs**
    - d. Failure to kick off in under 1 minute (playoffs)**
  
  - iii. During final 2 minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> half, clock additionally stops for...**
    - a. Change of Possession**
      - i. If a team fails to convert a 4<sup>th</sup> down, or**
      - ii. Interception (Red/Black regular season & playoffs, White playoffs)**
      - iii. Scoring play (clock stops at score (TD, safety) until kickoff is touched. P.A.T. is untimed.**
    - b. Ball carrier runs out of bounds**
    - c. Walking off a penalty by referee (clock restarts on the snap)**
    - d. Incomplete Pass**
  
  - iv. No overtime games prior to the semifinal playoff game**