

Sports Monster Flag Football Rules and Regulations:

SAMPLE OF GAME RULES TO LIVE BY:

Go-Deep 7v7, 8v8, 5v5 & 4v4 specific rules

These rules pertain specifically to Go-Deep 7v7 men's and 8v8 coed formats. See Universal Rules in the section immediately following this for additional info.

1. Field Dimensions: Go-Deep 7v7 and 8v8 leagues utilize a 60-yard playing field with two 10 yard end zones. Some locations may use 80-yard playing fields. Field width varies by location.

2. Minimum number of players to start: Matches may officially be played with a minimum of 5 men for 7v7 and 8v8. For coed, a minimum number of 5 players are required. Coed matches may be played with 5 men and 0 women with an automatic 3-possession format enforced. Note that all players must be on team's waiver/roster to be considered eligible.

3. Kickoffs: There are no kick-offs. The ball is automatically placed at the first cone to start a half or following a score.

4. Punting: Always done behind the line of scrimmage. On fourth down, offensive team **MUST** declare whether their intent is to "punt or play" - **NO FAKES!** A quick punt is allowed on third downs. Punts out of bounds will be spotted where the ball went out of bounds. No downfield blocking is allowed-players are to travel in a straight line & stop in position. No Wedge blocking or shifting down the field. Stop, put your arms in and elbow out and set something like a screen in "Basketball". Punting team will line up parallel with punter and may release on the snap of the ball. Punter **MUST** kick or throw the ball **IMMEDIATELY**.

5. Downed Contact: TOUCH: Two hand touch rules apply. Above the waist contact only. Referee will make all calls to confirm a stoppage of play with the whistle. **FLAG:** Flag must be grabbed cleanly for downed contact. No flag guarding (i.e. stiff-arming or diving) will be allowed and will result in a 10-yard penalty from the spot of the foul. If flag falls off during play, offensive player is down upon spot of flag--**it is up to you to make sure your equipment is on right!** If flag falls off before play starts, that player becomes an ineligible receiver and must put on flag to participate in play. **Referee will not stop time for player's flag problems.**

6. Snapping the ball: All plays **MUST** commence with the ball being snapped between the center's legs. **NO** side-arm snaps. **NO** center hand-offs. 5 yard penalty for infraction.

7. Rushing the QB: When, Where, How? Players may rush when Rush Count (**1 MONSTER, 2 MONSTER, 3 MONSTER, RUSH!**) is completed by referee. Any play with offensive players lined up in the backfield, players in motion or miscues from the Center / QB with a bad snap (Bounced / out of reach / Dropped) results in an immediate rush. Ref will yell: "Rush! Rush!"

Rush!” Defensive players that rush may not use their hands to throw a player to the ground. Defensive team may rush **as many** players as they like, after rush count is completed. QB can move around in the pocket without an immediate rush until Rush Count is completed. If QB moves around in pocket immediately, rush is at discretion of officials.

8. Eligible Receivers: All players are eligible to receive a pass. The center is eligible only if they **immediately** move past the line of scrimmage upon snapping the ball. Any blockers who stay to defend and do not cross the line of scrimmage, are NOT eligible for receiving passes at any time during that play.

9. First Downs: Fields will be set-up w/ (2) cones, 20-yards apart between each Goal-Line cone for fields set at 60 yards; fields will be set w/ (4) cones, 20-yards apart between each goal-line cone for fields set at 100 yards. 1st Downs will be rewarded for each cone that is crossed, by the offense.

10. Blocking: Teams may have as many blockers on the line of scrimmage as they wish.

Coed: blockers MUST have hands behind back to block. Men’s: Blockers may use open hand to block.

Holding is not allowed. Offensive holding: 10-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage.

Defensive holding: automatic 1st down with the ball being advanced to the next cone.

Illegal downfield blocking will be considered the same as holding with the above penalty.

Obviously, football is a physical sport and while your SMC referee will make every effort to call blocking, some calls will be missed. If there is someone who is a consistent blocking offender, please notify the referee for special attention to that player's play.

11. Pass Completion: A completed pass will be counted with one foot inbounds with full possession of the ball.

12. Run Plays: Allowed-all players eligible. Automatic rush is allowed by defense.

13. Time Outs: Each team is allowed one time out per half, which will stop the clock. (You can't carry them over from the 1st to 2nd half.) In playoffs, there is 1 time-out per team for overtime.

14. Running Clock: Game clock will run two 20 minute halves. There is a 2 minute half time. **Upon the two minute warning** – clock stops and game clock will then stop only in the last two minutes of the game under the following circumstances: 1. **First Down** - (Clock starts after spot of the ball) 2. **Running out of bounds** - (Clock starts after spot of the ball) 3. **Touchdown**- (clock does not run during the extra point or change of possession) 4. **Official or team time out.**

NOTES: Clock DOES NOT stop if there is a 16 point differential. Clock also DOES NOT stop on incomplete passes UNLESS it is the referee's opinion that an uncatchable deep pass was thrown to run out the clock. If that call is made, the clock stops and there is a 10 yard penalty. Your SMC referee will keep official time.

Time will be announced throughout the game and at your request during a stoppage of play. On an offensive penalty in the last two minutes of each half, the clock will be stopped to set the ball and then will be re-started. On a defensive penalty within two minutes of each half, the clock will be stopped and will not re-start until the ball is snapped.

15. Girl Plays: COED: One run or pass play must go a girl's way, every 4th play. A pass does not have to be completed, but it must be attempted--attempts are at the referee's discretion. A clear infraction would be a 5'2" gal standing in front of a 6'4" guy with the pass thrown 3 feet above the guy's head. Uhhhhhhh no, that is NOT a "Girl Play" and would be penalized.

Girls must run the ball, throw the ball or catch (see above) the ball. No immediate hand-offs count. Please keep the integrity of the game by being honest with this rule. Give the ball to the girls, too, boys! Teams that do not utilize their female players typically do not win championships.

16. Gender Ratio: COED: SMC coed 8v8 football leagues are set up for 5 men and 3 women on the field for each team. If male players are missing, a team may opt to field more than 3 women. If female players are missing during the regular season, it is up to the discretion of the opposing team whether more than five men will be allowed. If asked for a SMC ruling, the answer will be NO. Once agreed upon, the decision is binding for the remainder of the game. No women = Canadian Rules (three (3) downs/possession) Five Men on the field-game is legitimate.

Universal Rules of the game (apply to all Sports Monster Go-Deep leagues)

1. Player Eligibility: All players **MUST** sign the League's Liability Waiver to play in any SMC league. Failure or refusal to sign SMC liability waiver form shall result in the player not being allowed to participate in league. Any player found to be playing without signing the liability waiver shall be immediately suspended from that match and may only return to play upon signing the liability waiver following that match. There are **NO** exceptions for failure to agree to waive liability. Player must also be sure to sign the appropriate team's waiver or could be ruled ineligible. Waiver forms are available at the field or information table. Note: Your team's waiver of liability form is the actual team roster. Submitted registration rosters are not considered official until each player has signed the waiver of liability and participated in league play. All players must be **19 years** of age or older - picture ID's must be produced upon request of referee or league official. Failure to produce accurate picture ID upon request shall result in removal of player from match play until such time as proof of age/identity can be verified. To be eligible for playoffs, all players must have participated in a minimum of two week's matches.

2. Starting the Game: Games are to be started no later than 10 minutes into the hour. A practice ball may be available for warm-up, so arrive early and get warmed up. Game warm-up is at the discretion of both teams as long as the game begins within the 10-minute limit. A one-touchdown penalty will be assessed by Go-Deep for each +5 minutes. Initial receiving team is determined by a coin flip with winning-team determining preference of ball or side. Sides will alternate at halftime. Time will be started at five minutes after official game time and will run regardless of whether game started on time.

It is the referees' job to get a game going, even if it is a scrimmage. If enough players do arrive when a scrimmage is running, the referees are to stop the scrimmage and start the game, less whatever time has elapsed, add penalty points and play. See below for forfeits.

3. Forfeits: All around bad news and offending teams shall be noodle-whipped the following week. A game forfeit will automatically score the offending team in the standings as **-3 standing points, 0-1 game, and 0-50 points**. Although SMC does not have any monetary forfeit penalties, any team that forfeits three regular season matches for any reason shall automatically be removed from playoff contention.

Forfeited points will start to be declared if there are less than the required number of rostered/registered players available to start the match. Seven forfeit points will be awarded for every of the following time limits: 11 minutes after scheduled game time = 7 points 16 minutes after scheduled game time = total of 14 points 21 minutes after scheduled game time = forfeit
If a team does have less than the required number of players, your SMC referee will get everyone playing a scrimmage starting 10 minutes into the hour. As late players arrive, it is up to the short-

staffed team captain to let the referee know when they have enough to play so that the game may immediately be started. In such cases, accumulated forfeited points shall be the announced starting score and actual time played may be shortened and still be considered a legal game. In addition, such games shall end exactly as originally scheduled.

4. Play Clock: Offensive team has 30 seconds to snap the ball once the line of scrimmage has been marked and/or when ball is back in huddle (whichever is first). In games that are 30 minutes or less, a 20 second play clock will be used. This time will be kept by the referee and will only be announced if time has elapsed. A penalty of five yards will be assessed for not getting plays off in time. Play is called dead for Delay of Game. If Defense is off sides, the play continues. The offense can then determine to accept or decline the penalty. Following a touchdown, the scoring team has **one minute** to line up for the kickoff. A 5-yard penalty will result and the clock will be stopped for delay of game.

5. Scoring: A touchdown (TD) will count as six (6) points. A safety will count as two (2) points. Field goals (where available) will count as three (3) points. Intercepted or recovered fumbles of extra point attempts returned for score will count as two (2) points for the defense. For **Extra Point Conversions:**

MENS: An extra point KICKED from the three yard line will add **one** point. An extra point “play” from the three yard line will add **one** point. An extra point “play” from the 10-yard line will add **two** points.

COED: An extra point KICKED from the three yard line will add **one** point. An extra point “play” from the three yard line will add **one** point. An extra point executed from the same spot with a female participant (QB, receiver, rusher) will add **two** points. . An extra point “play” from the 10-yard line will add **two** points. An extra point executed from the same spot with a female participant (QB, receiver, rusher) will add **three** points.

Game Scoring: Games are won by a one-point advantage. The referee, following each score, or at half time, or at request of team captain announces scores.

Ties: Tie games will be scored as such during the regular season. Contact your SMC rep with any game scoring or recording questions. Weekly summaries will show team standings by games and total points scored.

6. Field Boundaries: Lines or cone markers indicate out of bounds. Referee will make judgment calls for the spot of the ball. Remember a line is the distance **BETWEEN** two points.

Substitution Policy During the regular season, teams may bring as many subs as they need each week. All subs **MUST** fill out the team waiver prior to playing. Any sub playing more than one

match MUST be added to the team roster with payment. Failure to register a new sub will result in that player not being allowed to play.

Substitutes from other Go-Deep football teams are allowed and encouraged. Opposing team may not challenge a Sports Monster substitute. However, teams may ONLY pick-up the number of subs needed to fill a full team. There can be no players on the sidelines. If regular rostered players arrive late, league subs are to be removed at the next change of possession.

Opposing team may challenge suspected ineligible substitute to Go-Deep rep, but this must be done before game begins. **There is ONE intra (meaning from another same day) league sub allowed for playoffs.**

NO OUTSIDE SUBSTITUTES ARE ALLOWED IN THE PLAYOFFS. You must play with your registered players in the playoffs. Registered players will be defined as those on the waiver by the sixth week and listed on the online roster. Players who have attended at least two (2) regular season games will be considered regular roster/registered players and the team must be in compliance for online roster and waiver information. There is only one exception: If you know that you will be unable to complete the season, notify Sports Monster at least one week prior to the playoffs. Upon approval, your substitute may take your place and may not successfully be challenged by opposing captain. A forfeit will automatically score the offending team as 50-0 loss. **NO LEAGUE SUBSTITUTIONS ARE ALLOWED IN SEMI-FINAL OR FINAL MATCH--YOU MUST PLAY WITH YOUR REGISTERED PLAYERS.**

7. Good Sportsmanship: Please observe the rules of good sportsmanship during your time with us. SMC understands that competition can generate strong emotions, however your emotions/actions must not affect the enjoyment/comfort/safety of any of our other participants. Foul language is not acceptable whether you are playing in Park District, private venues or various school facilities. It is imperative that your language be a reflection of civility and good sportsmanship. Taunting opponents is not acceptable. Tantrums (throwing objects, yelling) are not acceptable.

Opposing team may call time out and approach the SMC ref for consideration if they feel that bad sportsmanship is being displayed by one or more of the opposing team. At the discretion of the SMC ref, any displays of bad sportsmanship will result in the following penalties:

By Team: 1st = warning, 2nd = 10 yd. penalty, 3rd = TD penalty, 4th = game forfeit. **By**

Individual: 1st = warning, 2nd = banished to sidelines in shame for the remainder of the half or game if in 2nd half-plus 10 yard penalty. 3rd = Definite 2 week suspension and possible league expulsion pending League review.

Any physical altercation (hard fouls, rabble rousing, etc) will result in an automatic game ejection and a two game suspension. Sports Monster has a **zero tolerance policy** for fighting. The League will expel players involved in a fight and no refunds will be provided. Teams are responsible for their players' actions and failure for any player to follow the referee's immediate ruling may result in team penalties.

Any physical contact with referee will result in immediate league expulsion and offending player may be subject to legal action.

8. Pass Interference: Contact with the receiving teams player prior to the ball's arrival will result in an automatic penalty with the ball marked at the point of infraction unless the pass is less than the penalty: meaning--if a pass exceeds ten yards and there is pass interference, the penalty is marked at the spot of foul with automatic first down--if pass interference is called less than ten yards from line of scrimmage, the penalty is marked 10 yards from line of scrimmage with automatic first down. Pass interference in the end zone will result in a new first down on the one-yard line. Offensive pass interference will result in a 10-yard penalty from the line of scrimmage.

9. Fumbles: All fumbles are dead balls. **No Stripping** (Attempting to strip the ball will be penalized (5) yards)--If there is a defensive team player contacting the offensive player and a fumble results, the ball will be considered downed by contact and the fumble may not be advanced and the offensive team will retain possession.

10. Referees: Referees are paid directly from the league as part of your league fee. Any referee asking for payment should be reported to your local office immediately.

Players should expect SMC referees to be in appropriate attire, clearly announce down, score, whistle penalties and provide rush count (when applicable). SMC referees are also expected to be actively moving on the field to keep the game going quickly. SMC referees are there to make the game run as smoothly and error-free as possible. Obviously, no one is perfect and there may be occasion to question an individual call if the referee has not already offered an explanation. The only person allowed to openly question a referee's call is that **team's captain**.

The key word here is "question." Question does not mean challenge, criticize or demean in any way the referee's call. All questions shall be civil (be aware of your tone of voice) and solely for an explanation of a call. As many games are fast paced and/or the ball is still in play when a call is made, it may not be possible for a referee to provide a complete explanation immediately and patience must be expected. Should any other person other than the captain question the referee during a game, a ruling of bad sportsmanship will be applied (see above). Whether you agree or not, the referee's judgment is the final word during the game and an appeal may be filed with the SMC office following the game. If you have an ongoing problem with an umpire/referee, please call the SMC rep immediately at the phone number listed at the end of the rulebook. Referees are not on the field to be the subject of abuse and are to be treated as you would want to be treated if you were in their position. SMC views any abusive language or physical action against a referee to be beyond the boundaries of sportsmanship and separate penalties for infractions will be enforced with the possibility of additional league sanctions to offending players or teams: a) Any foul or abusive language directed at the referee shall result in game ejection. b) Any foul or abusive language expressed within earshot of the referee regarding his/her calls will result in an automatic warning. A second offense shall result in game ejection. c) Any physical altercation with the referee shall result in league expulsion and possible legal action. Throwing equipment at or bumping into the referee is included in this rule. Pre-game, halftime and post-game are all considered to be part of your scheduled league play. So keep it zipped and you won't get zapped out of the game. In the unlikely event a referee is not in attendance for a regular season match and the field is set-up for play, it is expected that teams will play the match under courtesy self-calls and report the score and situation to the SMC office or onsite manager.

11. Playoffs: Some SMC leagues do not offer playoffs, although most do. Unless otherwise noted on your schedule, all teams make the playoffs. Overall winning team will be determined by regular season record. The winning team will be that team with the highest total standing points. In the case of a tie, game scores will be compared via a positive point scored differential. If still tied at positive point scored differential, the team that scored the most points in head-to-head games will break the tie.

Playoff format will be single game elimination, unless otherwise noted. Playoff games will be bracketed by the first place team playing the last place team in the first round, etc. As playoff matches must have a winner, some matches may run into overtime. Your referees should notify you if the previous match is running late for this reason. Any playoff matches that do go into overtime shall be played using NCAA rules with matching possessions set from approximately the 20-yard line. Each team shall be given equal opportunities to score and this will continue until there is a winner. The team that scores more points on its possession shall be declared the winner.

12. Equipment: SMC will provide footballs, referees and equipment for game play.

It seems that most teams like playing with their own balls. If both teams want to use their own regulation weight/size ball on offense, it is their responsibility to make the change. No junior, Nerf or Women's (unless it is a women's league OR a woman is quarterback). **NOTE: No extra time will be given for switching balls.** So if you are farting around on the sidelines looking around for it, too bad. And if referee feels this is a delaying tactic during the last two minutes of either half, the clock will be stopped and a 10 yard penalty shall be assessed.

13. Attire: Shoes, shirts & shorts (or sweats) required. Please note that shorts or pants with pockets are strongly discouraged. Buy some cheap shorts to avoid thumbs getting caught in your nether regions –ouch...or cheap action! Football only athletic footwear is recommended. No metal cleats are allowed. Molded and screw-in rubber cleats are fine.

No Baseball caps allowed during the game (forward or backward). We **STRONGLY** recommend all players wear a protective mouthpiece at all times during a game.

Same color shirts are required. This means if you are green, everyone wears green and not a Skittles rainbow of shirts. Ain't nobody got time for that! No numbers required. Bring a white tee shirt in case your opponent is wearing a color similar to yours. HOME team always has uniform priority as they registered before the VISITING team.

Shirts **MUST** be tucked in for flag football. Any shirts hanging over or covering the flag belt shall be immediately called for flag guarding.

14. T-Shirts: Seasonal tee shirts may or may not be included in your SMC league. Check with your local office if they are part of your league. If so, they are normally available towards the end of the season.

15. Prizes: There will be prizes for the winning team. Future registration coupons, sponsored bar tabs, championship t-shirts, or trophies.

16. Alcohol: It is strictly forbidden to bring alcoholic beverages onto/into any SMC site. If spotted, you will be asked to remove your stash. Failure to do so will subject you to league

sanctions and possible police involvement if you are playing in public areas. If a player, in the judgment of the SMC referee, is intoxicated they will be removed from the game and receive a warning. A second offense will result in league expulsion.

17. Challenges: SMC will not consider challenges if they are based solely on a decision involving the accuracy or judgment on the part of a referee pertaining to called plays. SMC does offer a two level challenge format available following a match regarding strong disagreement regarding a referee's ruling resulting in specific sanction(s) or player eligibility:

1) Contact your local SMC office's manager for your Sport to address your challenge. In some cases, this person may be the local market manager. Any verbal challenge must be accompanied with a written challenge outlining the team/player's position and circumstances to be formally considered. This written challenge may be sent via e-mail for expediency. If you do not receive confirmation of receipt within 24 hours, it was not received. Please allow for 2-3 business days for information from all parties to be processed and a ruling to be determined.

2) If you are not satisfied with the challenged ruling, you may contact that office's general manager and re-submit your challenge. You will again need to allow 2-3 business days for information from all parties to be processed and a ruling to be determined. As it is possible that a sanction may be reduced, it is also possible that a sanction may be increased upon review of the challenged situation. Upon issuing any challenge, it is understood that the challenging party will abide by the final league ruling.

Because many rulings and sanctions are time sensitive, it is important that any challenges involving a ruling or suspension be officially recorded in writing within 48 hours of the initial on-site ruling. Failure to do so can impact the ability of a final ruling being issued before the sanction occurs. Once a time sensitive sanction has already been enforced (example: one week suspension ruling and next week's game has already occurred with player sitting out), there may be no recourse for overturning the original ruling except for general clarification.

In cases where a general ruling is challenged solely for clarification, there is no deadline for submission.

18. Other Rules: SMC utilizes most NCAA/NFL rules for penalties and yardage except as listed above. If there are questions about penalties, yardage, etc., please have your captain immediately address the referees with your concern. If you have specific rules questions, ask your referee, or call your SMC office for clarification.

19. Have Fun: This is your leisure time so please enjoy it. You're not playing for money, only the pride and prestige a Sports Monster championship brings and the adoration of thousands of residents wishing they were you, a Sports Monster.

These rules have been updated as of 04/11/19 and shall remain in effect until such time as another update is required.

Thank you for choosing Sports Monster! We appreciate your business very much. Please let us know what we are doing well that you like and what we can do to improve for next season because as a fellow Sports Monster, this is your league and we want to see a lot more of you in the future. Please call or e-mail us with any questions, comments or suggestions. Enjoy your season with us! E-mail us at info@sportsmonster.net – be sure to include your name and league location with any feedback