

FLAG RUGBY

League Rules



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1. COORDINATORS

An Event Coordinator (EC) is a player in the league who is already registered on a team for that specific season, who has agreed to help coordinate games and manage the field booking.

ROLES OF THE EC

- Arrive early, and act as the onsite contact
- Bring all required equipment and permits
- Update players with pre-game announcements
- Ensure that games start and end on time
- Record the scores and submit to the ESSC office

ROLES OF PLAYERS IN AN EC'D LEAGUE

- Record the game results on the score sheet after each game/match
- Help the EC set-up and take-down the equipment before and after the games are played

2. FIELD REQUIREMENTS

| League | Total # of Players Required on the Field | Minimum # of F Players Required on the Field | Maximum # of M/X Players Allowed on the Field |
|--------|--|--|---|
| 7 on 7 | 7 | 2 | 5 |

The ESSC welcomes people of all gender identity or expression. Minimum female player requirements are inclusive of *anyone* who identifies as a female (i.e. players who identify themselves as M and X will not count towards female player minimums).

3. DEFAULT MINIMUMS & SCORES

| Format | Minimum Players to Avoid Default | Default Score |
|--------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| All | 5 (1 Female Player) | 0-7 |

4. FORMAT & EQUIPMENT

GAME FORMAT

- Players should arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time
- Teams will play two matches per night against different opponents
- Each match will be 30-minutes in length:
 - Two 15-minute halves
 - 5-minute half-time

SCORING

- The goal of the game is to score more points than the opponent.
- Flag-Rugby is a non-contact form of Rugby where a “tackle” involves removing a “flag” attached to the ball carrier.
- Each side has six “flag removals” on a drive to score a “try”. If they fail, the ball is turned over.
- Points can be scored by scoring a “try”. A “try” is scored when the attacking player grounds the ball in the opposition’s in-goal area (behind the goal line).
- A try is analogous to a touchdown in American Football, with the major difference being that a “try” requires the ball be simultaneously touching the ground and an attacking player.
- To mitigate high scoring, a try is worth **1 point**.
- **Regular Season:** Ties are allowed
- **Playoffs:** Ties are not allowed:
 - An overtime period will be used to determine the winner
 - Teams will use any suitable means to determine who kicks or receives to start the overtime period
 - Each team will receive a possession or set of downs during the overtime period
 - Teams will play continuous overtime periods until the tie is broken

EQUIPMENT

- Metal cleats are not permitted in ESSC Flag Rugby Leagues
- Players should bring a light and dark shirt to each game
- The Event Coordinator will provide all of the flags and belts
 - Flags must be worn at the hips or sides of the body, and cannot be obscured by a shirt
- The Event Coordinator will provide the warm-up and game rugby balls

5. GAME PLAY

STARTING & RE-STARTING PLAY

SUBSTITUTIONS

- Substitutions can only be made in the following scenarios:
 - After a try
 - At half-time
 - To replace an injured player

START OF PLAY

- Teams can use any suitable means to determine which team has the choice of three privileges to start the first half:
 - The opportunity to receive the kick-off, or to kick-off
 - The choice of side
 - Defer selection until the second half
- If the winning team does not defer, the opposition must choose from the remaining options

- The opposition will then have first choice of privileges to open the second half
- If the winning team defers, the opposition must choose their privilege first, and the winning team will choose from the remaining options
- Each Kick-off must commence with a Drop-Kick.
 - Thus, a kick made by dropping the ball and kicking it concurrently as it hits the ground, or after it touches the ground.
 - Kick-off to begin the game, or after a try is scored, will take place from the center of the half way line.
 - After a try, the team who scored will kick-off to the opposing team. The team who was scored on will receive the ball
- From a kick-off, the ball must travel at least 10 yards down the field. The kicking team cannot take possession of the ball until it has been touched by the receiving team.
- The opposition must provide 5 meters of space once possession of the ball is established from the kick.

OFFENCE

ADVANCING THE BALL

- When the attacking team has the ball, they can advance the ball toward the opposition goal-line by running, kicking or passing the ball. The attacking player may only advance the ball if they have all of their flags on their belt.
- When a player passes to a teammate, the ball must move **backwards**. Forward passes are not permitted in Rugby and will result in a turnover.
 - When a player knocks the ball forward with their arms or hands towards the opposition and the ball hits the ground or a member of the opposing team this results in a knock-on. The opposing team will be rewarded with possession of the ball.
- An attacking player is permitted to kick the ball forwards. If a member of the attacking team gathers the ball after a kick, play resumes. If the defending team recovers a kicked ball, it results in a turnover. The ball may only be kicked from a players hands. It cannot be kicked while on the floor or in the air.
 - Teams are required to give 5 meters of space once possession of the ball is established from the kick.
- The attacking team has six “flag removals” on a drive to score a try. If they fail, the ball is turned over.
- Each time a flag is removed, the ball carrier stops, places the ball on the ground and rolls it backwards with the foot to a team-mate standing behind them. This is known as a Ruck ball.
 - Ball is considered live once the scrumhalf touches the ball off the ruck.
 - Please do not hold onto the ball while placing flags back in holders, in order for the play to progress.
- As the attacking team advances the ball, they want to advance beyond the goal-line before placing the ball on the ground to score a try, while retaining control of the ball. If control of the ball is lost while placing the ball, it will count as a turnover.
- If no try is scored after the 6th flag removal, the opposition gains possession from the location of the 6th flag removal, and they restart play with a Ruck ball.

KICK-OFFS

- Occur to start each half, and after a scoring play (try)
- Teams will always kick-off from their center of the halfway line
- All kickoffs must be a drop-kick. Thus, a kick made by dropping the ball and kicking it concurrently as it hits the ground, or after it touches the ground.
- No player may pass the line of scrimmage until the kicker has made contact with the ball
- If the kickoff goes directly out of bounds without bouncing, the receiving team will start with the ball from where the kick was taken.
 - If the kickoff bounces and goes out of bounds, the receiving team will get possession of the ball from where it went out of bounds.
- If the ball travels out-of-bounds through the opponent's in-goal area:
 - The result is a touchback and the receiving team will start possession on the 10-yard line
 - No single-point is awarded to the kicking team for a touchback
 - From a kick-off, the ball must travel at least 10 yards down the field. The kicking team cannot take possession of the ball until it has been touched by the receiving team.

OFFENSIVE FOULS

- Fouls are non-malicious physical infractions that occur during gameplay. Players are expected to call fouls committed by themselves or their team
- All ESSC Flag Rugby Leagues are non-contact
- Blocking by the offence is never permitted. Pick-plays are not permitted by the offensive team
- The ball carrier must not attempt to fend off a defender attempting to remove their flag. Additionally, players cannot protect their flags with their hands, elbows, or the ball.
- The onus is on the ball carrier to avoid contact with a defender.
- If a ball carrier drops the ball and knocks it forward (knock-on), this results in a turnover.
- If a ball is passed in a forward direction, this results in a turnover.
- If a player repeatedly and deliberately makes contact with the other team, they must be removed from the game.
- An attacking player is "offside" if they are in front of the player in possession of the ball from their own team.

DEFENCE

PULLING FLAGS

- A player is considered "tackled" in the following scenarios:
 - One or more of the flags from their belt is pulled
 - The player touches the field with their body (from their knee up)
 - Hands are excluded, it is okay to touch the field with hands
 - If a player steps out of bounds, it is considered a turnover and possession goes to the opposition
- If a player inadvertently loses a flag during a play:

- The play is dead at the spot of the lost flag, if the player was carrying the ball
 - Play continues if the player was not the ball carrier, or intended receiver
- When a flag is removed, the defender must hold it in their where the tag was made, drop it at that point and prepare for the next phase. The attacking team must return to the spot where the flag was removed and conduct their Ruck ball.
- When the attacking team begins their Ruck ball, the defending team must be at least 5 meters back from the ruck ball.
- If the attacking team fails to score within 6 flag removals, the defending team will take possession of the ball and become the attacking team.
- The defending team is allowed to advance on their opposition the moment the ball begins to roll.

DEFENSIVE FOULS

- Fouls are non-malicious physical infractions that occur during gameplay. Players are expected to call fouls committed by themselves or their team.
- The defensive team may not deliberately impede an attacking player without the ball.
- A defending player may not hold onto an attacker or deliberately make contact with an attacking player. Traditional Rugby tackles are not permitted. If a defending player does so, they must be removed from the game immediately.
- A defender may not claim that they removed a flag without physically removing the flag.
- A defender may not throw a flag after removal.
- A defender may not interfere with a Ruck ball.
- A defender may not remove the flag of an attacking player without the ball.
- A defending player is considered “offside” if they are not back the required distance from a Ruck ball.

FOULS

Fouls are non-malicious physical infractions that occur during gameplay. Players are expected to call fouls committed by themselves or their team.

- If a foul is called, the play is halted:
 - A defensive foul will result in the following choices for the offensive team:
 - Continue playing as you were (advantage)
 - Begin play from the spot where the foul occurred. The six-flag counter will reset from that point.
 - An offensive foul will result in the following choices for the defensive team:
 - Accept – Defending team takes possession and becomes attacking team
 - Decline – Play continues as it was
- **If there is ever a disagreement over a foul call, replay from the spot of the previous flag removal.**
- **If a player is playing aggressively or intentionally making contact with an opponent, they must be removed from the game by their captain.**