

# FLAG FOOTBALL

## Tournament Rules



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## 1. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

The Sport & Social Club (SSC) rents all outdoor fields from the City of Edmonton Parks and Recreation Department. As tenants, players must respect the standards and rules of each facility:

- Please refer to the Google Map for parking information; please do not park in restricted areas.
- Alcohol consumption and smoking is prohibited on any outdoor field or surrounding parking lots.
- Public urination on City fields will not be tolerated.
- All public by-laws apply when using a field, including: excessive noise, offensive language, littering, etc.
- Be respectful to homeowners, community residents or anyone else who is sharing the surrounding area.
- Players are responsible for all property damage that results from their actions, including vehicles.

**Facility Complaint Policy: Any player who causes the SSC to receive an official complaint regarding a facility is subject to a \$100 fine and possible suspension from the tournament and leagues.**

### Equipment

- The SSC Coordinators will provide all the necessary equipment for game play. This will include game balls, flags, belts, field markers, kicking tees, line of scrimmage markers, and scoreboards.
- Opposing teams should have flags of contrasting colours. Flags MUST be worn at hips/sides and shirts cannot hang over the flags (i.e. tuck your shirt into your shorts/pants).
- Players are not permitted to wear metal cleats.
- All players are to bring a light and dark shirt to each game. You may wear a team colour, but you still need to bring an opposite coloured shirt in the event that your opponent wears a similar team colour.
- A player cannot wear anything that is potentially dangerous to another player. This includes earrings, hairclips, rings, and other jewelry.

## 2. SPORTSMANSHIP

**The SSC encourages a 'fun-first, winning-second' attitude in all tournaments. All players are expected to abide by the SSC sportsmanship policies, including:**

- Controlling emotions and actions at all times.
- Treating the facility, equipment, staff, other players, and coordinators with courtesy and respect.
- Avoiding retaliation under any circumstance.
- Providing feedback in a constructive manner to the SSC Coordinator and being open to feedback from the SSC Coordinator.

### ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

The SSC will remove players from a game if they are involved with any of the following acts:

- Swearing directly at another player, SSC staff, or anyone else present.
- Displaying disrespectful or threatening behavior.

- Intentionally pushing, shoving or making physical contact with another player.
- Making comments to instigate an altercation with another player.

In addition to being dismissed from the game, the player(s) or team may be removed from the tournament with no refund and future league suspensions may be issued.

#### REPORTING SPORTSMANSHIP CONCERNS

- If during the game there is a concern with the other team, the issue should be addressed respectfully with the opposing team captain at the appropriate time (during play on the sidelines or breaks in the game).
- If the issue still seems unresolved at the end of the game, captains should further discuss the issue with the SSC staff and opposing team captain.

#### EXPECTATIONS OF PLAYERS

- Flag Football can be an intense and physical sport however, SSC Flag Football must be played in a fun, non-threatening environment.
- Players should promote fun and safety throughout the game:
  - Let the SSC Coordinator know if you are enjoying an opponent, congratulate your opponent on fun and fair play throughout the game.
  - Teams are expected to cheer for their opponents at the end of a game.
- Players that are concerned about a player on the opposing team are required to talk to their team captain so he/she can address the issue with the SSC Coordinator at the appropriate time.
- Players are expected to act in a respectful manner if approached by an SSC Coordinator or an opposing team captain regarding their style of play and to make any requested changes.
- At any time, the SSC Coordinator may request your name or a name of someone on your team to record on the game report sheet. Providing a false name to the SSC Coordinator is a serious offence and will result in suspension from the SSC.

### 3. ROSTERS

Format	Ideal Roster Size (F) = Female	Total # of Players Required on the Field	Total # of Females Required on the Field
5 on 5	10-12 (4 F)	5	2

- All players on the roster must have accepted their MySSC invite prior to the tournament.
- When competing in semi-finals and finals, all players on the field must have played at least 1 game with the team during the round robin.
- The minimum number of players required in order to avoid a default is 4, including at least 1 female (a female goalkeeper does not count as the 1 female).

## 4. TOURNAMENT SPECIFIC RULES

### GAME FORMAT

#### ROUND ROBIN

- Game times will include a warm-up and half-time.
- Ties are allowed in round robin games.

#### PLAYOFFS

- Game times will include a warm-up and half-time.
- Ties are not allowed in playoff games.
  - Extra time will be built into the scheduled field time for sudden death.
  - Each team will get another set of downs in a sudden death fashion until a winner is declared. Teams will toss a coin to determine who is receiving first. The team who wins the toss gets the choice to kick or receive.

### GENERAL PLAY

#### STARTING AND RESTARTING

- 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 kickoff, 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
  - The winning team will then have first choice of privileges to open the second half

#### LINE OF SCRIMMAGE RULES

- The ball should always be centered on the field to start a down
- The offensive team will consist of a quarterback and four receivers
- The quarterback can snap the ball themselves, or take a shotgun snap from a teammate
- The offensive team has 4-downs, or plays from the line of scrimmage, in which to score
  - There are no first-downs in Flag Football
  - If the offensive team does not score during their 4-downs, the result is a turnover
- **The offensive team must put the ball into play within 30 seconds of starting their huddle**
- **A female player must be an integral part of the play in at least one down during the series:**
  - The following scenarios count as an integral part of the play:
    - Playing quarterback on a forward passing play

- Being the intended receiver on a passing play
- Receiving a lateral on a play
- Punting the ball on 4<sup>th</sup> down
- If a team scores during the first, second, or third play of the series, the score counts, regardless of whether a female was an integral part of the play
- If a team finishes a series and a female was not used as an integral part of the play during any single down, possession will be awarded to the opposition at the third-down line of scrimmage

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## SUBSTITUTIONS

- Substitutions can only be made in the following scenarios:
  - Before the start of an offensive or defensive series
  - Between plays within a given series
  - After a touchdown, convert, or scoring play
  - At half-time
  - To replace an injured player

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## SCORING

- There are two methods of scoring points: a touchdown or converting a touchdown.
  - **Touchdown:** When the offensive team advances the ball (in bounds) into the opposition's end zone via a running or passing play, they have scored a touchdown and are awarded 6 points. A touchdown is immediately followed by one additional scrimmage play where the offence attempts to 'convert' the touchdown for additional points.
  - **Convert:** The convert play is always a running/passing play. the object of the convert is to advance the ball into the opposition's end zone for extra points. If the convert play is successful in scoring, 1 point is awarded for a play originating from the 5-yard line, 2 points are awarded for a play originating from the 10-yard line. The offence chooses which point total to attempt.
    - If the defensive team intercepts the convert and runs the ball back to the other end-zone, the team will score as many points as the opposing team was attempting (1 or 2 points). If the defensive team picks off the convert attempt and is flagged before reaching the end-zone, play is dead and the kick off process would follow.
    - After the convert play has been concluded, the scoring team will kick-off to the non-scoring team.

## OFFENSE

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### PASSING

- A forward pass may not be thrown if the ball has been advanced beyond the line of scrimmage
- For a forward pass, underhand pitches are allowed
- Only one forward pass may be thrown on each play

- Teams are permitted an unlimited number of laterals (sideways or backwards passes) on any given play
  - Teams cannot run the ball past the line of scrimmage following a lateral, unless the defensive team has rushed the quarterback following a 5-steamboat count

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## RECEIVING

- All players on the field are considered eligible receivers
- When making a catch, the first point of contact with the ground determines whether the catch is complete:
  - If the ball makes contact with the ground before the receiver has control, it is an incomplete pass
  - If the receiver is touching the boundary line, or is out-of-bounds at first point of contact, the catch does not count (unless contact from a defender forced the receiver out of bounds in mid-air)
  - If the receiver touches inside of the boundary line but is carried out-of-bounds by their momentum, the catch is good
  - The receiver only needs one foot planted in-bounds while possessing the disc for it to be a completion
  - A receiver is 'down' at the spot where their flag is pulled
    - A receiver must be entirely in the end-zone before being flagged for the score to count
- A receiver is allowed to bobble the ball before making a catch, but cannot use controlled bobbling to advance the ball forwards up the field of play
- **There are no fumbles in ESSC Flag Football Tournaments**
  - If a player drops the football after gaining full possession, the play is immediately dead (down is complete) at that spot and the offence retains possession

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## KICK-OFFS

- Occur to start each half, and after a scoring play (touchdown or convert)
- Kickers are allowed to use the kicking tee
- Teams will always kick-off from their own 10-yard line
- No player may pass the line of scrimmage until the kicker has made contact with the football
- If the ball travels out-of-bounds prior to reaching the opponent's end-zone, the receiving team can:
  - Request a re-kick
  - Take possession of the ball 5-yards up from where it crossed the boundary line
- If the ball travels out-of-bounds through the opponent's end-zone:
  - 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
- Laterals are permitted on kick-off returns
- **Loose Balls:**
  - The kicking team must give the receiving team a 5-yard radius to recover the ball



- Once the ball has been touched by the receiving team, the 5-yard rule is no longer in effect
- Once a kick-off is touched by the receiving team, only the player who first touched the ball may return the kick-off or attempt to advance the ball
- The kicking team cannot recover a kick, even if the ball was touched by the receiving team

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## PUNTING

- A team can only punt on the 4<sup>th</sup> down
  - **There are no fake-punts in ESSC Tournaments**
- No player may pass the line of scrimmage until the kicker has made contact with the football
- Defensive teams cannot block a punt
- If the ball travels out-of-bounds prior to reaching the opponent's end-zone, the receiving team will take possession of the ball from where it crossed the boundary line
- If the ball travels out-of-bounds through the opponent's end-zone:
  - 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
- The punting team can down a punt
  - If the receiving team has not yet made a play on the ball, the punting team can touch the ball to down the ball at that spot
  - The kicking team cannot gain possession or recover a punt, even if the ball was touched by a member of the receiving team

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## BLOCKING AND PICK-PLAYS

- All ESSC Flag Football Tournaments are non-contact
- Blocking by the offence is never permitted (line of scrimmage, post-reception, on a kick-off or punt returns)
  - The ball carrier is permitted to use stationary teammates as blocks, as long as they were ahead of the ball carrier to start the play, and are not moving while blocking
- Pick-plays are not permitted by the offensive team
  - For a play to be considered a 'pick' an imminent collision or physical contact must have occurred
  - Crossing patterns are permitted by receivers as long as no contact is made with the defenders

## DEFENCE

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### STEAMBOAT COUNTING

- The defensive team will count steamboats
  - 1 steamboat = 1 second
  - The count always starts at 1-steamboat, even if the defensive team forgot to start counting earlier

- The defensive team is allowed to rush the quarterback after 5-steamboats:
  - Once the defensive team crosses the line of scrimmage, the quarterback is allowed to run the ball
- If not rushed by the defensive team, the offensive team has a 10-steamboat count to make a play
  - If the offensive team has not initiated a pass when the count reaches 10, the play is dead

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## PULLING FLAGS

- A player is considered “down” 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
  - The player steps out-of-bounds
- 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
  - The play is dead at the spot of the reception, if a receiver catches a pass after losing the flag
  - Play continues if the player was not the ball carrier, or intended receiver
- If a player is flagged down in their own end-zone
  - The offence retains possession and the line of scrimmage is moved to the one-yard line
    - **There are no safeties in ESSC Flag Football Tournaments**

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## INTERCEPTIONS

- The defensive team can intercept a forward pass or lateral from the offensive team
- An interception can be returned for a score (touchdown)
- If the defensive team intercepts a convert attempt and scores, they will be awarded as many points as the offensive team was attempting (1 or 2)
- If an interception occurs in the end-zone and the player is flagged down, a touchback will occur, and the intercepting team will gain possession on the 10-yard line

## VIOLATIONS & FOULS

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Violations are intentional or unintentional rule infractions. A violation may result in the re-playing of a down if the opposing team was put at a disadvantage by the violation. Players are expected to call violations committed by themselves or their team.

### OFFSIDE

### QUARTERBACK CROSSING THE LINE OF SCRIMMAGE BEFORE BEING RUSHED

### ILLEGAL PASS

## FAST STEAMBOAT COUNTING

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### 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:
    - Accept - Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage
    - Accept - Play the next down from the spot where the foul occurred
    - Decline - Play the next down from the spot where the previous play concluded
  - An offensive foul will result in the following choices for the defensive team:
    - Accept – Loss of down for the offensive team
    - Decline – The result of the previous play stands
- If a foul occurs while the football is in the air, the play is always completed
- If a defensive foul occurs on the 4<sup>th</sup> down, the offensive team can accept the foul (original line of scrimmage, or spot foul) and replay 4<sup>th</sup> down
- **If there is ever a disagreement over a foul call, replay the down from the original line of scrimmage**

### DEFENSIVE INTERFERENCE

- Body contact, holding, pushing
- Screening a receiver (intentionally covering the eyes or blocking their vision)
- Prematurely pulling a flag from an offensive player's belt

### OFFENSIVE INTERFERENCE

- Body contact, pushing-off, or any sort of blocking
- Includes pick-plays
- Flag Guarding
  - Includes covering the flags with clothing, using arms or hands to guard the flags, or jumping to avoid being flagged down
- Charging
  - Aggressively running through stationary defenders that are in front of the ball carrier

## 5. REPORTING AND STANDINGS

After each game/match, both captains must ensure that the scores are written on the appropriate standings print-outs provided by the SSC. Teams that do not report scores will receive a zero for that game/match.

### HOW TEAMS ARE RANKED

At the end of the round robin, teams will be ranked based on the criteria below:

1. Match points are derived from 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie and 0 points for a loss. Actual spirit points are then added to your match points for wins, ties and losses to result in your total points (Games Coordinators will award a 1, 0 or -1 to each team following the match).

2. Differential of points scored vs. points allowed.
3. Results in the match versus the team you are tied with (if applicable).
4. Rock, paper, scissors.

## 6. WEATHER

This tournament is an all-weather event and will take place, rain or shine. Players are expected to come prepared to play through some not-so-great weather. Unplayable conditions include: very heavy rain, snow, hail or thunder and lightning.

Although some weather conditions are not ideal to play through, we must ensure that we utilize the playing time we have. If you are not sure whether to continue playing or not, please wait for an update from an SSC representative