



## Pewamo-Westphalia Jr. Pirates Flag Football

### OFFICIAL GAME RULES

#### LEAGUE PHILOSOPHY:

This program exists to serve the needs of our youth. All involved should be allowed to participate on an equal basis in a low competitive atmosphere. The primary focus should be on individual development, fundamentals and teamwork. The main emphasis is on having fun, involving the family, and developing a positive self-image. Good sportsmanship is expected at all times from the players, coaches, and parents.

The goal of the league is to maintain participation levels from year to year. We hope each athlete will want to play the following year based on the positive experience they had the previous year. Nothing impacts the experience an athlete has more than how their coach conducted themselves. Coaches are reminded the National Championship is not being decided on any given game night, nor are they the next Nick Saban, Bear Bryant, or Vince Lombardi. The PW football program has thrived on keeping the game fun and participation levels high – and it starts at the Jr. Pirates level.

#### COACH / PLAYER CONDUCT:

*I hereby pledge to be positive about my youth sports experience and accept responsibility for my participation by following this Player's Code of Ethics Pledge.*

- Have fun!
- Be a good sport whether you win or lose.
- Learn the value of commitment to the team.
- Put personal goals aside for the betterment of the team.
- Show courtesy and respect to teammates, opponents and coaches.
- I will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct.
- I will not engage in rude behavior.
- I will treat everyone with respect.

#### SPORTSMANSHIP:

In order to keep up with our philosophy and good sportsmanship, remember to shake hands with your opponents at the conclusion of the game.

#### FLAG RULES:

- A. A coin toss will determine first possession.
- B. The offense takes possession of the ball at its 5 yard line and has four (4) plays to cross the first down marker. Once a team gains a first down, it has four (4) plays to reach the next first down marker or score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score or gain a first down in four (4) plays the defense gains possession at their own 5 yard line.
- C. Only two first downs per possession are allowed. After a first down is attained the offense team must try to advance the ball to the next first down marker or score a touchdown.



- D. All possessions changes start at the offenses 5 yard line. This includes interceptions and failed fourth down conversions. Interceptions returned for a touchdown are excluded.
- E. Teams changes sides after the first twenty (20) minutes. The team starting the game on defense will start the second half on offense.

### **PLAYER/ GAME:**

Teams will consist of 8 to 9 players. Six (6) players are on the field during the game. Teams will not play shorthanded. In the event a team would fall below 6 players on game night, coaches should contact one of the Jr. Pirates Football Board members ASAP to discuss potential alternatives.

Flags should be worn over any team t-shirt, sweatshirt, etc. It is recommended shirts be tucked in.

### **TIMING/ OVERTIME:**

- A. Games will be two (2) twenty (20) minute halves
- B. Halftime is typically about five minutes. Enough time for kids to take a quick break and get a drink.
- C. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game is considered a tie. There is no overtime.
- D. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has **30** seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced.
- E. Each team has two 60-second timeouts per half.
- F. "Hurry up" offense is allowed. However, if a score differential of 21+ has been reached, the hurry up is no longer allowed. The offense must wait 15 seconds after the previous play is dead before snapping the ball again.

### **SCORING:**

Touchdown: 6 points

Extra point: 1 point (played from 5 yard line)  
2 points (played from 10 yard line)

*If the defensive team intercepts an extra point try, the ball is downed immediately and no points may be scored.*

Safety: 2 points

### **RUNNING:**

- A. The quarterback cannot run with the ball beyond the line of scrimmage before a successful handoff.
- B. Offense may use multiple handoffs behind the line of scrimmage.



- C. Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind behind the line of scrimmage. **This includes double passes, bubble screen type passes, etc.**
- D. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- E. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are allowed to rush.
- F. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player. No diving.
- G. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier's feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
- H. Blocking is not allowed. This includes forming a wall behind or past the line of scrimmage and having players walk forward to advance a ball carrier behind the wall.

#### **RECEIVING:**

- A. All players are eligible to receive passes including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage.
- B. Only one player is allowed in motion at one time.
- C. A player must have one foot inbounds when making a reception.

#### **PASSING:**

- A. All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- B. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- C. The quarterback has a 10 second "pass clock". If a pass is not thrown within the ten seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the ten second rule is no longer in effect. It is the responsibility of the offensive coach to keep the pass clock, and call their own QB down if the pass clock expires. This is basically an honor system, if you feel the other team is excessively going over 10 seconds, talk to the other team's coaches. We do not expect/want teams timing other teams.
- D. Interception returns are allowed.
- E. The player that receives the snap is considered the Quarterback. They may not be rushed and are subject to the pass clock. This includes a direct snap to a player lined up in the running back position or a player in motion.

#### **DEAD BALLS:**

- A. The ball may be snapped between the legs or off to one side or in a shotgun position to start the play.
- B. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.



C. Play is ruled dead when:

1. Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
2. Ball carrier steps out of bounds.
3. Touchdown or a safety is scored.
4. Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
5. Ball carrier's flag falls out.
6. Ball carrier uses a stiff arm against a defender.
7. Ball carrier holds their own belt (flag) to prevent it from being pulled by a defender.

Note: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground with the team who fumbled it still in possession unless it was on fourth down, then the opposing team gains possession at their own 5 yard line.

**DEFENSE:**

- A. There will be no rushing of the quarterback. The quarterback has ten (10) seconds to pass the ball or they are automatically down. Players may defend the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, all defenders may rush and go behind the line of scrimmage.
- B. Defensive players may not leave their feet. No dive-tackles for a flag are allowed. Exception: leaping to avoid injury.
- C. Players are not allowed to "strip" the ball from other players.
- D. If an offensive and defensive player both go up to catch a ball, possession goes to whomever catches it first. A defensive player cannot remove the ball from possession of an offensive player.

*Remember: Blocking with hands/arms and tackling are not allowed.*

**SPORTSMANSHIP / ROUGHING:**

- A. If the coaches witness any act of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any other unsportsmanlike act the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected. **FOUL PLAY AND TRASH TALKING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
- B. Coaches have the right to determine offensive language (trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators). If trash talking occurs, the Coaches will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

**PENALTIES:**

Flag football depends on the integrity of the coaches. We do not have game officials. Coaches will call all penalties, **within reason**. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage. Many of these kids are playing flag football for the first time, we do not expect coaches to call every single penalty. Use penalties as a coaching opportunity. Many issues can and should be worked out between the coaching staff of the two teams. Always keep in mind that teaching and fun are more important than wins and losses.

<b>DEFENSE</b>	
<i>OFFSIDES</i>	5 yards and automatic first down
<i>INTERFERENCE</i>	10 yards and automatic first down



<i>ILLEGAL CONTACT</i>	Holding, blocking, etc. 10 yards and automatic first down
<i>ILLEGAL FLAG PULL</i>	Flag pulled before receiver has ball 10 yards and automatic first down
<i>ILLEGAL RUSHING</i>	Rushing the quarterback 10 yards and automatic first down

<b>OFFENSE</b>	
<i>ILLEGAL MOTION</i>	More than one person moving or false start 5 yards and loss of down
<i>ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS</i>	Pass received behind line of scrimmage 5 yards and loss of down
<i>PASS INTERFERENCE</i>	Illegal pick play, pushing off, away defender 10 yards and loss of down
<i>FLAG GUARDING</i>	10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
<i>DELAY OF GAME</i>	5 yards and loss of down

THERE ARE NO KICKOFFS AND BLOCKING IS NOT ALLOWED.

CLEATS ARE ALLOWED EXCEPT FOR METAL SPIKES.

***All games will be played on their scheduled dates unless weather conditions or playing field warrant postponement.***

<p><b>ALL PLAYERS ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR A PROTECTIVE MOUTHPIECE. A mouthpiece is provided for each athlete.</b></p>
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