



Indiana University South Bend FLAG FOOTBALL RULES FALL 2007

Indiana University South Bend Intramural Policies and Procedures

RULES

The Office of Athletics and Recreation uses the National Intramural Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) governing body rules for the majority of the rules for all sports. However, there are some rules added or changed for the best of the program. These changes are all written into the rules for the specific sport or event.

FEES

Team sports have a fee of \$15.00 per team. Individual and dual sports have a fee of \$3.00 to \$5.00, depending on the sport or event. Some events are offered for free.

WAIVERS

Each participant is required to read and sign a WAIVER form before they can participate. The university assumes **NO medical or financial responsibility for any voluntary participation in intramural sports**. The university encourages all intramural participants to maintain their own health and/or accident insurance, as well as insurance to cover personally owned equipment.

ELIGIBLE PLAYERS

- A. Students who are registered for classes, pay IU South Bend tuition, and have valid Student Activities Center (SAC) memberships
- B. Faculty and staff (*not* faculty and staff spouses) who have valid SAC memberships
- C. Dues-paying members of the IU South Bend Alumni Association who have valid SAC memberships
- D. Participants listed on a team/individual the entry forms located at the front desk of the SAC
- E. (Team sports) Players added at any time during the regular season, providing they have not already played for another team. Teams can add a player at game time, provided he/she has proper identification. This player's name is then added to the team roster, after checking eligibility. Rosters are frozen for teams participating in playoffs. Players must have participated in at least one regular-season game to be eligible to participate in a playoff game.
- F. Students, faculty, and staff who can present a **valid IU South Bend picture identification (ID)** card to the game official prior to the start of the game or event. **If an IU South Bend student/faculty/staff picture ID is not presented, the participant cannot play.**

- G. IU South Bend Alumni Association members who can present a valid **SAC membership card and a valid form of picture identification** (e.g., driver's license, state ID, etc.)
- H. Teams are limited to the following former varsity/junior varsity squad members meeting the specified criteria:
- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| *Basketball 1 | *Flag Football 2 |
| *Soccer 3 | *Tennis 1 |
| *Volleyball 2 | |
- Current intercollegiate (varsity or junior varsity) and military academy players are ineligible. If you are listed as a member of a varsity sport (or on "Squad List") in the same or a related activity and gender during the 2007-08 academic year, you are ineligible.

CAPTAINS/MANAGERS

All captains/managers must attend the MANDATORY preseason captains' meeting. The day and time of the meeting is announced on the intramural sports' Web site and on flyers posted around campus. Failure to attend this meeting results in an automatic loss to start the season. You must have a representative at the captains/managers meeting to get your season schedule.

FORFEIT POLICY

- A. If game time arrives and one team does not have the minimum number of five players, then the team is awarded an additional five minutes for participants to arrive.
- B. If the team has at least five players present by the end of the additional time period, then the game must start promptly, and game time is reduced by five minutes.
- C. If, after the additional five minutes, the team does not have the minimum of five players, then the game is awarded to the team that has enough players.
- D. If neither team has the minimum of five players, then it is a double forfeit.

Once a participant or team forfeits twice, they are automatically eliminated from league and post-tournament play.

OFFICIALS

Game and event officials are comprised of intramural officials from IU South Bend. Players and coaches are expected to treat officials with respect and dignity.

CONDUCT

All players are encouraged to play to the best of their ability and make every effort to win, within the spirit of the rules. Teams are responsible for the actions and behavior of their players, coaches, and spectators. Please behave in a courteous and responsible manner. Good sportsmanship is required at ALL TIMES.

- Any player ejected from a game must sit out the remainder of that game and cannot play again until they meet with the intramural coordinator.
- If problems on the field/court continue, the player/participant will be asked to leave the field/facility.
- An ejection of a participant is also subject to further discipline that can go to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs at IU South Bend.

AWARDS

The championship team is awarded IU South Bend championship t-shirts immediately following the championship games/tournaments.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM

- A. Shoes: Players may not wear metal or screw-on cleats, baseball shoes (either of metal or plastic), or street shoes. Molded rubber cleats are allowed. Barefoot play is prohibited. Exception: A punter may punt the ball without shoes, but is ineligible to participate further until both shoes are on. No player is allowed to play in boots.
- B. Teams should attempt to wear shirts of similar color. If a team does not have a uniform shirt color, mesh shirts are provided.
- C. Games are played with a regulation-size football.
- D. Jewelry may not be worn during intramural activities. The only jewelry permitted is medical bracelets, wedding bands and stud earrings (**must be taped. We do not provide tape**). If a player is wearing jewelry, a 10 yard penalty is assessed (for each and every infraction).
- E. Flag belts may not have knots.
- F. Shorts/pants with pockets are not allowed. Shirts must be tucked in.

SPORT-SPECIFIC RULES

The National Intramural Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) rules are used as a base and are consulted concerning interpretations.

1. **Game Time:** Playing time is forty-four minutes, divided into two halves of twenty-two minutes each. The intermission between halves is five minutes. When overtime occurs, there is a three minute intermission. The clock only stops in the last two minutes of the game for timeouts, official timeouts, touchdowns, first downs, injuries, point after touchdown (PAT), penalties, incomplete pass, out of bounds, or touchbacks.
2. **Field:** The playing field is one 100 yards long and 40 yards wide. There are four playing zones of 20 yards each and two 10 yard end zones.
3. **Start of Game:** The team that wins the toss chooses either offense or defense. Deferring is not an option. The captain who loses the toss chooses the goal they want to defend. For the second half, team option will be reversed. The offensive team begins the game (and all possessions immediately following a touchdown) on the 10 yard line, with 20 being the first line to gain.
4. **Scoring:**
 - a. **Touchdown** - six points
 - b. **PAT** (point after touchdown) from three yard line - one point
 - c. **PAT** from 10 yard line - two points
 - d. **PAT** from 20 yard line - three points
 - e. If defense intercepts on a PAT, they may return the ball for the same point value of the offense attempt.

- f. **Safety** - two points (a safety is scored when the ball becomes dead in the end zone of the team in possession and that team provides the momentum which placed the ball into the end zone.) **The team scored upon shall place the ball in play with a punt from their 20 yard line.**
5. **Mercy:** When a team is up by 19 points with less than two minutes remaining in the game, the game ends.
6. **Timeouts:** Each team is entitled to two 60 second timeouts per half. The timeout ends when the ball is whistled ready for play.
7. **Delay of Game:** A team has 25 seconds **from the time the ball is whistled ready for play** to snap the ball.
8. **First Down:** A team is allowed four downs to advance the ball across each zone line (20 yards apart). Each time a team does, it is awarded a first down and is allowed four more downs to cross the next zone line. If a team is pushed backward, it must still reach the original first down line. Upon a change of team possession, the line to gain is that line immediately down field from the spot where the ball becomes dead. **In case of penalties during a play involving change of team possession, the line to gain is not established until after the penalties are assessed.**
9. **Line of Scrimmage (LOS):**
- The offensive team must always have at least four players on the line of scrimmage. Any offensive player may be on the line of scrimmage, except the quarterback or the punter. The quarterback (player receiving the snap) or the punter must be **at least two yards** behind the line of scrimmage. The punter must be positioned directly behind the snapper. The quarterback must be directly behind the snapper at the time of the snap (he can be in motion).
 - Penalty: illegal procedure
 - There is **no** requirement for defensive players on the line of scrimmage, except during a punt when there must be **four** defensive players on the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted.
 - Penalty: illegal procedure
 - The offensive line of scrimmage is the yard line and its vertical plane, which passes through the point of the ball nearest its own goal line.
 - The defensive line of scrimmage is the yard line and its vertical plane, which passes one yard from the point of the ball nearest its own goal line.
10. **Huddle:** Teams do not have to huddle after every play.
11. **Offsides:** Offsides occurs when an offensive or defensive player is **in the neutral zone** (space between the two lines of scrimmage) when the ball is snapped. This violation **does not** involve movement.

12. **Encroachment:** Encroachment occurs when an offensive or defensive player illegally moves into the neutral zone prior to the ball being snapped.

13. **False Start:** No player of the offensive team shall make a false start. A false start includes faking a charge or a play. An infraction of this rule may be penalized whether or not the ball is snapped and the penalty for any resultant encroachment or contact foul by an opponent shall be canceled.

- Penalty: illegal procedure

14. **Shift:** A shift is the action of one (1) or more offensive players who, after taking set positions, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap. If two or more players are involved in the shift, the action must be simultaneous. The player(s) shifting must come to a “set” position for one second before the ball is snapped.

15. **Motion:** One player only may go into motion providing he/she does not move towards the line of scrimmage.

- Penalty: illegal procedure

A player who sets up off the line of scrimmage and then goes into motion is not required to be five yards from the LOS at the time of the snap. (The player cannot, however, take more than one step toward the LOS prior to the snap.)

16. **Stance:** All players must assume an "upright," two-point stance.

- Penalty: illegal procedure

17. **Snap:** Legally snapping the ball is passing it back from its position on the ground with a **quick and continuous motion** of the hand(s). After the ball has been adjusted by the center, it is **not** a legal snap if the ball is first moved forward or lifted. The center may not be called for offsides as long as he / she is facing forward or sideways.

- Penalty: illegal procedure

18. **Passing:** A forward pass (**any live ball thrown toward the opponent's goal line**) must be thrown from a point behind the line of scrimmage. On punts and interceptions, no line of scrimmage has been determined; therefore, forward passing is not allowed. Backward passes (a live ball thrown toward or parallel to the passer's goal line, also referred to as a lateral) may be made at any time on any play.

19. All players are eligible to be passing receivers.

- a. A receiver must have control of the ball when he/she first returns to the ground in bounds. One foot in bounds constitutes a legal catch. **The lines are considered out of bounds in football.**
- b. Two or more offensive and/or defensive players **may touch** the ball in succession. If two opposing players **catch** the ball simultaneously, the ball is dead and belongs to the offensive team at that point.
- c. An offensive player, who goes out of bounds of his/her own volition, loses eligibility to handle the ball during that down until an opponent or a teammate has touched the ball.

- d. Players of either team have equal rights to the ball. It is not pass interference if two or more players are making a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch, or bat the pass. A player must not go "over" or "through" another player to pursue the ball.

20. **Dead Ball:** A live ball shall become dead and an official shall sound the whistle when:

- a. A ball carrier has a flag removed legally by a defensive player.
- b. A ball carrier is legally touched with one hand between the shoulders and knees, if the flag is no longer attached.
- c. Any part of the ball carrier's body, other than hands and feet, touch the ground.
- d. A quarterback is downed if his/her flag is legally removed before the ball is released.
- e. A forward or backward pass strikes the ground.
- f. A ball goes out of bounds or a player in possession touches the out of bounds line, the ground, or any person or object that is out of bounds.
- g. The ball breaks the vertical plane of the goal line (nearest edge). A touchback, safety, or extra point occurs.
- h. Specific fumble or punt rules apply.

21. **Fumble:** A fumbled ball becomes a **dead ball** when it touches the ground. The team fumbling retains possession of the ball at the point where the ball first struck the ground. (Unless it occurs on the fourth down in which case possession is determined by whether a first down has been earned.) **A fumbled ball may only be advanced if it is recovered before the ball strikes the ground. Exception:** If the ball is fumbled forward (towards opponent's goal line), it is spotted from where the fumble occurred. If the offensive team fumbles into the end zone the ball is considered dead and a touchback occurs for the defensive team.

22. **Punt:**

- a. The offensive team must inform the officials of their intent to punt while they are **in the huddle**. The decision to punt is irreversible.
 - Penalty: illegal procedure
- b. The punter, when receiving the snap, must be at least five yards directly behind the snapper and must punt the ball immediately.
 - Penalty: illegal procedure
- c. No player on either team may move into the neutral zone or off the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted.
 - Penalty: illegal procedure
- d. A punted ball that has bounced on the ground or is muffed may be picked up and advanced by the receiving team, providing the ball has not been downed by the kicking team. (A muff is an unsuccessful attempt to recover a ball; the ball being touched in the process, but possession is not established.)
- e. A punt that enters the receiving team's end zone may be downed or returned at their own risk. (If downed, it is a touchback.)

23. **Legal Offensive Blocking:** An offensive player **must not move into a defensive player or initiate contact**. Blockers must keep their hands grasped behind their backs (female blockers will be allowed to have their arms in front of their bodies, but must have their hands and

elbows in contact with their bodies at all times). The offensive player is limited to forcing a rusher to alternate their path by moving laterally. Any use of the arms, elbows, or legs to initiate contact is illegal. A blocker must be on his / her feet before, during, and after a block. Beyond the line of scrimmage, one moving screen blocker is permitted.

24. **Defensive Rushing:** Defensive players must attempt to go around the offensive player's block. Defensive players may **not use** their hands to hold or push. Once a rusher gets alongside or past a blocker, the blocker is responsible for contact that occurs.
25. **Substitutions:** Substitutions may be made without restrictions during any dead ball situation. An offensive player entering the game must report to the huddle.
26. **Inadvertent Whistle:** A live ball becomes dead at the sound of the whistle and:
 - a. If a live ball is loose behind the line, or a legal **forward** pass, snap or punt is in flight, the down will be replayed.
 - b. If a live ball is loose following a backward pass (lateral) or fumble beyond the offensive team's line of scrimmage, or behind the offensive team's line of scrimmage following a change of team possession, the ball is awarded to the team last in possession at the spot where possession was lost and the down is counted.
 - c. If a live ball is in player possession, the team may choose to accept the play at that point or replay the down.
27. **Overtime:** The team captain, winning the coin toss, has the option of offense or defense. All overtime periods are played toward the same goal line. Each team has a series of four downs from the t10 yard line. If the defense intercepts a pass or fumble and returns it for a touchdown, they win the game. If they do not return the interception or fumble for a touchdown, the ball will be placed at the Team B 10 yard line to begin their series of four downs, if available. Tries are attempted and scored as indicated.
28. **Conduct of Players - Offensive:**
 - a. A ball carrier may spin to "make a move" to avoid being downed, but he/she may not continually spin down the field.
 - b. Penalty: unsportsmanlike conduct
 - c. A ball carrier may not defend or guard their flags in any manner.
 - d. Penalty: unsportsmanlike conduct
 - e. The ball carrier must have his/her belt completely exposed and properly fastened around his/her waist. Clothing may not cover the belt.
 - f. Penalty: loss of five yards
 - g. All players are required to wear a flag belt. If a player breaks the huddle not wearing a flag belt, the referee may point out the problem to the player. If the 25 second count expires before the player secures a belt and the ball is snapped, the team is penalized for delay of game. If the player refuses to acquire a flag belt, the team is penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct. If the referee does not notice the player without a flag belt until after the ball is snapped, the opponents have the option of accepting the result of the play or penalizing the team five yards from the line of scrimmage.

- h. Offensive diving is allowed. If contact is initiated while airborne, the offensive player may be called for unnecessary roughness.

29. Conduct of Players - Defensive:

- a. No player shall steal the ball from a player in possession.
- b. Penalty: unsportsmanlike conduct
- c. A player who removes the flag belt from the ball carrier **should immediately HOLD the flag belt above his/her head** to assist the official in locating the spot where the capture occurred.
- d. The feet of a player who removes the flag belt may leave the ground. A player may not dive into a ball carrier to remove the flag belt or present a hazardous situation for himself/others by lifting feet from the ground.
- e. Penalty: unnecessary roughness
- f. If an eligible receiver is deflagged prior to touching the ball on a forward pass thrown beyond the passing team's scrimmage line, the penalty is the same as pass interference. All elements of defensive pass interference must be present. Defensive pass interference is contact beyond the neutral zone by a defensive player whose intent to impede an eligible opponent is obvious and could prevent the opponent the opportunity of receiving a catchable forward pass. Defensive pass interference occurs only after a forward pass is thrown. Any other time a defensive player deliberately withdraws an opponent's flag before that player has possession, the penalty is unsportsmanlike conduct.
- g. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the ball carrier down in an attempt to remove the flag. The defensive player is restricted to reaching for the flags.
- h. Penalty: unnecessary roughness or, for more severe infractions, unsportsmanlike conduct

30. Summary of Penalties:

- a. **Loss of Five Yards**
 - i. Clothing covering flag
 - ii. Delay of game
 - iii. Offsides
 - iv. Encroachment
 - v. False start
 - vi. Illegal procedure
- b. **Loss of Five Yards and Loss of Down**
 - i. Intentional grounding (marked from spot of pass)
 - ii. Illegal forward pass (marked from spot of pass)
 - iii. Illegal backward pass (marked from the spot of pass)
- c. **Loss of 10 Yards - Major Penalties**
 - i. Defending the flag
 - ii. Clipping
 - iii. Illegal blocking / contact
 - iv. Pushing
 - v. Illegal use of hands
 - vi. Tripping

- vii. Unnecessary roughness
- viii. Illegal time out
- ix. Holding
- d. **Roughing the Passer:** Automatic first down and 10 yards (marked from line of scrimmage)
- e. **Defensive Forward Pass Interference:** Ten yards from the previous line of scrimmage and an automatic first down
- f. **Offensive Forward Pass Interference:** Loss of 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down
- g. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct**
 - i. Against Offense: Loss of 10 yards and a down
 - ii. Against Defense: Ten 10 yards and automatic first down
 - iii. Possible player ejection

31. Summary of Penalty Enforcement Spot

- a. **Penalty Enforcement Spot: Unless specified,** infractions which occur behind the line of scrimmage are penalized from the line of scrimmage and infractions which occur beyond the line of scrimmage will be penalized from the point of infraction. Any dead ball penalty should be assessed from the succeeding spot (the point at which the ball would next be put in play if that foul had not occurred).
- b. **Half the Distance:** A measurement cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. If the penalty is greater than this, the ball is placed halfway from the enforcement spot to the goal line.
- c. A penalty, which occurs against the defending team on a successful extra point attempt, is administered on the following possession.
- d. If both teams commit live ball fouls, each foul is an offsetting foul. The penalties cancel each other and the down is replayed.
- e. When two or more live ball fouls are committed by the same team, the offended team is given the option of selecting one of the penalties.
- f. **Loss of Down Penalty:** A loss of down penalty cannot cause a team to lose possession; a loss of down penalty accepted on fourth down does not result in a turnover; that part of the penalty will not be enforced. On a play involving change of possession, the team gaining possession cannot lose a down that they have not yet been awarded; the team would start with first down, not second down.

32. **Flag vs. Whistle:** The whistle is blown and the ball is declared dead on the following violations: encroachment, false starts, and delay of game. A thrown flag indicates all other violations. Play continues and the offended team is offered the option of accepting or declining the penalty after the ball becomes dead.