

# **GSFFA FLAG RULES AND REGULATIONS**

## **NJ Shore Flag Football League 2003**

**Voted on and revised at the July Captains meeting**

*All rules that have been changed or added are in **BOLD***

### **RULE 1**

#### **THE FIELD**

##### SECTION 1:

Dimensions - The game shall be played upon a rectangular field 60 yards in length and 40- yards in width.

##### SECTION 2:

Marking - First down markers are positioned at the mid field yard line. First downs are achieved by crossing the marker.

##### SECTION 3:

Players' area - Players must position on the sideline and should not interfere with the game. !0 yard line to 10 yard line.

##### SECTION 4:

### **RULE 2**

#### **THE BALL**

##### SECTION 1:

Each team must provide either an NFL or NCAA regulation size ball fully inflated. The *referee shall be the sole judge* as to whether all balls offered for play comply with these Specifications.

### **RULE 3**

#### **FLAG BELTS**

##### SECTION 1:

Sonic flag belts are the only flag belt used in the GSFFA.

##### SECTION 2:

All players are required to wear a sonic flag belt.

##### SECTION 3:

All flag belts must be a different color from pants worn by team. Both flags must be the same color.

SECTION 4: Game jerseys cannot cover flag belts. Jerseys must either be tucked in pants, or 4 inches above flag belt.

#### RULE 4 BLOCKING

##### SECTION 1:

No blocking or interference at anytime during the game. Once the ball is caught beyond the line of scrimmage all offensive players must stop. If the ball is intercepted then all defensive players must stop. Any player continuing to play will draw an unsportsmanlike penalty.

#### RULE 5 TACKLING AND RUNNING

##### SECTION 1:

Tackling - Tackling a ball carrier is illegal, as is aggressively shoving or pushing the ball carrier to the ground or out of bounds. A legal tackle is defined as pulling off the ball carriers flag without impeding his forward movement. Incidental contact does not constitute a penalty against the offense or defense.

##### SECTION 2:

Flag shielding - A ball carrier cannot shield his flags from the opponent with his free hand when attempting to allude tacklers. Penalty is 10 yards from spot of foul and loss of down.

##### SECTION 3:

Stiff arming - Stiff arming is illegal and will draw a Flag shielding penalty.

##### SECTION 4:

Ball carrier inadvertently losses his flag belt or flags, single hand touching of the ball carrier will constitute a legal tackle (or any type of contact). If the player is not wearing a flag belt then the player is automatically down at the spot of touching the ball.

##### SECTION 5:

Ball carrier inadvertently falls to the ground - A ball carrier that falls to the ground will be considered down.

##### SECTION 6:

Fumbles - There are no fumbles. When the ball carrier losses control of the ball and it touches the ground the play is ruled dead and the ball is spotted at the point it touched the ground as long as the spot is at or behind the ball carriers forward progress. The clock does NOT stop for a fumble.

##### SECTION 7:

Diving and jumping - Ball carriers may not dive or jump in an effort to gain extra yardage. Diving and jumping is defined as a player clearly leaving both feet in an aggressive attempt to gain extra yards.

**SECTION 8:**

One foot must be "in-bounds" to constitute a legal pass reception.

**SECTION 9:**

Ball stripping - Illegal and will result in a ten yard penalty enforced at the spot of the infraction.

**RULE 6**

**GAME TIMING**

**SECTION 1:**

Length of the game - The length of the game is 44 minutes, divided into two halves of 22 minutes each. Running time with no clock stoppage is used for the first 20 minutes of each half. The clock will stop at the final 2:00 minute of each half. During the final 2 minutes traditional clock stoppage is used only when the ball carrier steps out of bounds, incomplete pass, a change in ball possession, a score is achieved or time out is taken.

Note: I fumble is a running play and the clock will NOT stop when a fumble occurs.

**SECTION 2:**

Half-time- will not exceed 5 minutes.

**SECTION 3:**

Starting Each Game - Not more than five minutes before the start of the game, the referee, in the presence of both team captains, shall toss a coin at the center of the field. The toss shall be called by the captain of the visiting team. The winner of the toss must choose one of the three privileges.

- A) Take the ball
- B) Defer to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half
- C) Which end to defend

**NOTE:** Officials fee must be paid before coin toss (\$50 each team)

**SECTION 4:**

Second Half – The losing/deferring captain will make his choice of one of the below options.

- A) Take the ball
- B) Which end to defend

## SECTION 5:

Time outs - Each team is allowed two time out per half. Charged time outs can be used at anytime. The time clock will begin at the snap of the next play.

Exception: The referee may allow:

- A) Necessary time to attend to an injured player. That player must sit out for next play.
- B) Repair legal equipment.

## SECTION 6:

Time between plays - The offensive team has 30 seconds in which to snap the ball once the referee has spotted the ball after the previous play has been ruled dead. It shall be the responsibility of the **offensive team** to retrieve the ball and hand it to the referee after each play. The referee will indicate by signaling to the offensive team when 10 seconds remain on the 30 second clock.

## SECTION 7:

Mercy rule - Should a team be trailing by 18 or more points at the final "Two-Minute Warning", The game clock will continue as a running clock.

## RULE 7 PLAYERS

### SECTION 1:

Number - The game is to be played by two teams of five players each. Less than 5 is a forfeit. More than five players on the field is illegal, while less than five players is legal.

### SECTION 2:

At the coin toss, each team must designate its captains, one for the offense and one for the defense. Captains' act as sole representatives of their team in all communications with the officials. (No other players may question the officials)

### SECTION 3:

Rosters - Team rosters will made from the waiver forms that are filed. If a player doesn't fill out and file the form he is an illegal player. Any team using an illegal player will forfeit the game and will be charged for such any action. Players cannot switch teams unless the player gets league approval first. This will be the official roster for the playoffs.

### SECTION 4:

Rosters - Teams may carry up to 10 players on their roster.

### SECTION 5:

Teams must be in matching jerseys (color) by week 1.

## RULE 8 GENERAL GAME PLAY

### SECTION 1:

The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four downs (4) to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four downs (4) to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new

offensive team takes over at the previous spot. On fourth down a team may elect to “kick” which would give the ball to the other team on their own 5 yard line.

## A) RUNNING

### SECTION 1:

The quarterback cannot run with the ball.

### SECTION 2:

1. Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs (or backwards passes). No Blocking.
2. The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from **behind** the line of scrimmage.
3. Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
4. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving).
5. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s hips are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.
6. If the ball carrier falls down the play is over.

### SECTION 3:

Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind (beyond the line of scrimmage).

### SECTION 4:

“No-running zones,” located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power-running situations.

## B) RECEIVING

### SECTION 1:

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
2. As in the NFL, only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
3. A player must have at one foot inbounds when making a reception.

## C) PASSING

### SECTION 1:

1. All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
2. Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.

3. The quarterback has a seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the seven-second rule no longer is in effect.
4. Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception. Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line. During an interception return no defensive players may block or run interference. Only the player making the interception can return the ball.

## RULE 9 EXTRA POINTS

### SECTION 1: Extra point

One point = the offensive team will have one play from the 5 yard line (no run/no rush).  
Two points = the offensive team will have one play from the 10 yard line. Running play allowed.  
Defensive rush from the goal line.

## RULE 10 OFFENSIVE FORMATION

### SECTION 1: Line of scrimmage - Offensive team must have at least three players on the line of scrimmage.

SECTION 2:  
Eligible receivers - All other players are eligible to run down field and catch passes. Receivers can all line up on one side-there does not have to be a balanced wide receiver set, however at least three players must be on the line of scrimmage prior to the snap.

SECTION 3:  
The ball must be snapped between the legs, not off to one side, to start every play.

SECTION 4:  
Motion - Only one player can be in motion at the snap of the ball and must be running parallel to the line of scrimmage. Please note that more than one player can initially go into motion (shift), but only one at the snap of the ball.

SECTION 5:  
A bad snap from center - The Quarterback has one chance to recover the ball cleanly if it falls in front of him. If the ball goes over his head the ball is dead at the spot it touches the ground.

## RULE 11 DEFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE FORMATION

### SECTION 1: Rushing the quarterback-

- 1 . All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players

can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.

- 2 Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule no longer is in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Remember, no blocking or tackling is allowed.
- 3 If a defensive false starts ( rushes before the snap) the player must stop before the line of scrimmage and can no longer rush unless a hand off take place.

#### SECTION 2:

Formation - Defensive team can line up in any formation they choose.

#### SECTION 3:

Bump and run - One bump is allowed on a receiver within five (5) yards of the line of scrimmage by only one defensive player.

### RULE 12

#### SCORING

##### SECTION 1:

Touchdowns = 6 points  
Safety = 2 points

##### SECTION 2:

Extra points - Pass 5 yd line = 1 points  
Extra points - Pass 10 yd line = 2 points  
Intercepted extra point returned for score = 2 points.

##### SECTION 3:

Overtime - Tie games at the end of regulation will be decided in a "shoot out" format. Each team will take possession at the opposing teams' 10-yard line and will be given four downs in which to score a touchdown. The opposing team shall be given the same opportunity. If at the end of 3 consecutive Shoot outs the score remains tied the shoot out will continue as sudden death (next team to score wins). **(This is for Play-offs only)**

### RULE 13

#### FIGHTING AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

##### SECTION 1:

Unsportsmanlike conduct - Fighting and unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Players ejected by the referees for striking an opponent or official faces criminal charges. Verbal abuse also will not be tolerated. Such abuse when deemed inappropriate will be automatic game ejection and one to three game suspension. If player is involved in a second infraction during the season that player will be suspended for the rest of the year. (No questions asked).

In certain cases if the commissioner sees fit a player may be suspended for the year or life.

**SECTION 2:**

In the event there is a bench clearing fight the game will be called. After a review with the officials post game report a judgment will be made on win, loss, double forfeit. Judgment will be final.

**SECTION 3:**

Two unsportsmanlike penalties in a game at anytime will call for automatic ejection.

**SECTION 4:**

No profanity at anytime. To anybody! (Players, fans, friends, teammates, officials). No using Gods name in vein.

**SECTION 5:**

If the referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the tournament. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

**SECTION 6:**

Trash talking is illegal. Officials 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 referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

**RULE 14**

**REFEREE FEE and, BOND**

**SECTION 1:**

At the start of each game before the coin toss each team is responsible to pay the referee fee of \$50.00.

**SECTION 2:**

The referee bond is \$100.00 which is paid before the season starts. This bond is used in the event a team forfeits a game. Team that forfeits will not be allowed back until another bond is paid. If a team does not use its bond it will be returned at the end of the season via mail.

**RULE 15**

**Forfeit game bond & Team elimination from schedule/league**

**SECTION 1:**

Each team is required to submit a referee forfeit bond in the amount of \$100.00. If you do not forfeit a game the bond will be used to pay officials for the play-offs. If you do forfeit a game you will not be eligible to play until you reenter another forfeit bond of \$100.00.

**SECTION 2**

If a team forfeits a game before week 4 they will be eliminated from the schedule with no refund of registration fee and bond. After week 4 if a team forfeits two games they will be eliminated from the schedule with no refund of registration fee and bond

## RULE 16

### Forfeit of a scheduled playoff game

#### SECTION 1:

If you forfeit a scheduled playoff game by not showing up, or you do not have enough team members to field a team for a scheduled game after 15 minutes of scheduled game time, your team will be charged with a loss for that scheduled game. There will be no refund of bond, or registration.

## RULE 17

### Schedule & schedule changes for the regular season & Playoffs

#### SECTION 1:

Schedules will be given for the first 4 weeks of a season any team that forfeits a game will be eliminated from the schedule. After week 4 the remainder of the schedule will be given out for the rest of the season.

#### SECTION 2:

A scheduled regular season game or playoff game can be rescheduled with 5 days notice.

#### SECTION 3:

Game days can be either Saturday or Sunday for both regular season and playoff games.

#### SECTION 4:

If canceled (weather, etc.) and games cannot be rescheduled then there is no refund for said game(s).

## RULE 18

### CHOICE OF SIDE LINE

#### SECTION 1:

During the regular season its first come first serve for choice of side line.

#### SECTION 2:

During the playoffs its home teams choice for side line.

## RULE 19

### Alcohol & Drugs

Alcohol & Drugs are strictly prohibited from the playing field, and parking lots. Any team that does not comply with this rule will be ejected from the league with no refund.

## RULE 20

#### SECTION 1:

Rules not covered in the GSFFA official rules and regulations book will judged by the officials. Commissioner has final say on all rulings and that is the final authority.

## RULE 21

### Penalties

All penalties will be called by the officials.

Defense:

Offsides: 5 yards and automatic first down

Illegal equipment: 5 yards and automatic first down

Interference: 10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal contact: (holding, blocking, etc.) 10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal flag pull (before receiver has ball) 10 yards and automatic first down

Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) 10 yards and automatic first down

Offense:

Illegal motion: (more than one person moving, false start, etc.) 5 yards and loss of down

Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage) 5 yards and loss of down

Illegal equipment: 5 yards and loss of down

Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off/away defender) 10 yards and loss of down

Flag guarding: 10 yards (from spot of foul) and loss of down

Delay of game: Clock stops, 5 yards and loss of down

- Officials determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the basic spot.
- Only the team captain may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls.
- Games cannot end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.

Attire

Cleats are allowed, except for metal spikes. Inspections must be made.

Same color jerseys must be worn during play or players are not eligible to play.

Sonic flag belts are the only flag belt used in the GSFFA.

Note: There are no kickoffs, and no blocking is allowed.

Thomas Paulikas  
Commissioner

Garden State Flag Football Association

[www.gsffa.com](http://www.gsffa.com)