



2017 League Rules

About the League: The Indiana Women's Flag Football League was established in Indiana, Pennsylvania in 2015 by Julie Sadler and Kaycee Newell. We are a women's non-contact flag football league, playing a 5-on-5 game. Our season runs late-May through mid-August.

Requirements & Basic Information for League Participants

Sportsmanship

We are a league of women who want to get out and have some fun. Our number one rule is sportsmanship. Remember it. *For further clarification see: Sportsmanship and General Player Conduct (p. 10)*

Medical Insurance

The IWFFL does not provide medical insurance. Players are responsible to provide their own medical insurance.

Waiver and Release of Liability

While the league does not provide medical insurance, we are insured for general liability. It is therefore required that each league player and referee sign the IWFFL General Liability Waiver as well as our General Liability Insurance Waiver. These waivers acknowledge that players are willingly participating in an adult flag football league, and agree not to hold IWFFL or Mack Park liable for any injuries or harm that may result from their participation. No player may play until they have signed the waivers - no exceptions will be made.

Player Qualifications

Players must be women, 21 years of age and older.

Player Registration

Space in the league is limited to 78 (six teams of 13 players). All players must register with the league and pay a \$40 registration fee. This fee is non-refundable (some exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis). If you chose to quit the league, your registration fee will be treated as a donation to the league.

- Players are expected to attend 60% of all regular season games. Players who register with the intention of playing less than 60% must contact us to ensure this will not create a problem with attendance on the team. This does not necessarily mean you will be unable to register, but those who can attend more games will be given priority.
- IWFFL has two (2) registration periods. Priority registration is open between the final regular season game and the End of Season Banquet. This period is only open to current players who attended 60% or more of regular season games. Open registration begins on January 1st and remains open until all the teams are full. This period is open to new and

continuing players. Depending on the results of Priority registration, team choice may not be accommodated during the Open registration period.

- All registrations must be accompanied by the payment of the registration fee.
- Should a player fail to sign her waiver and fail show up to the first two games (without pre-approval), her registration will be considered void and her space will be filled.

Player Uniform

Players must wear the current-season's team uniform (shirt) during game play. Team shirts include your team name and logo on the front and uniform sponsors on the back. Shirts will be distributed prior to regular-season play at two events in May. *Shirts will not be given to those who have not signed their IWFFL and Insurance waivers. Until a player signs the waivers, her team shirt will be the property of the team (not the player).*

Our Field

IWFFL regular season games are played at Mack Park Fairground Field, entrance #1 off Hospital Drive. Our field and bathroom access is provided free-of-charge courtesy of the JS Mack Foundation. It is expected that league players assist in cleaning field after games to ensure continued support and freedom to play at Mack Park.

Equipment

Players must wear running shoes or plastic molded cleats only (absolutely NO metal cleats may be worn at any time on the Mack Park field), and league-provided flag belts, and designated league team shirt. Shirt alterations are fine – however the team logo must not be altered or cut in anyway and the sponsor logos must be visible on the back of your shirt. Do not wear any accessories that could injure another player during game-play (i.e., large rings).

Game Day and Time

Games will be played Thursday nights. The game begins at 7:00 pm and will run till 8:05. Each game consists of two 30 min halves with one 5 minute half time. Prior to the start of the game, a coin toss will be held with team captains and a referee. The winner of the coin toss will decide the ball possession and end zone. We will not be doing kickoffs.

Weather Cancellations

Game cancellations due to weather will be decided the day of the game by league officials and team captains, and will be due to extreme weather conditions only (i.e, heavy rain, high winds, electrical storms). Make up games will be played on the Sunday of that week same time, same place weather permitting.

Game Forfeiture and Substitutes

Teams must have a minimum of 5 players to play. If you arrive at the game and you have less than 5 players by the designated start time of 7:00pm – your team forfeits the game and the other team is given the win. (You can choose to stay and scrimmage with the opposing team, but the game will be recorded as a loss.)

If you have determined that you will have less than 5 League players prior to the game you may attempt to find a substitute player so that you do not have to forfeit, however you must let league representatives know prior to game day. Your temporary substitute must sign both insurance waivers before that player is eligible to play. No exceptions.

****Should a situation arise where both teams show up and both teams have less than 5 players you will both record the game as a loss. Playing with less than 5 players is too hard. People get tired, tempers flare, and there is more of a possibility of injury. ****

Role of Team Captains

Each team has appointed captains. Their role is to represent your team in this league, relay information to players on the team, conduct coin tosses at the beginning of the game (and in overtime if necessary), solve disagreements within the game with the opposing team captains, and foster a positive environment within the team. Team captains are not considered coaches and should allow their entire team to develop plays and game strategies.

Team Coaches and Advisors

The IWFF League does not sanction the use of team coaches. Team captains and other team players will make any and all decisions during game play. While IWFF team may choose to involve spouses, partners, or friends to advise during practices, those individuals will be considered SPECTATORS during game play. Complaints of interference or coaching from these individuals will be taken seriously by IWFF League Representatives.

****Please remember that while YOU may feel your spouse, partner, or friend add valuable input and experience to the team, your teammates may not feel similarly (even if no verbal complaint is given). In order to foster a positive and equitable team environment, these non-league advisors should only be used after agreement from the entire team.****

Basic Game Play Rules

Scoring

Our games will be played on grounds without field goal posts. We are going to forgo the point-after situation entirely and 1pt point will be awarded for every touchdown.

Lining up

A cone will mark the LOS. Offensive and Defensive players will line up on the same cone this year (vs the previous year where we had a buffer courtesy cone.) The referee will move the cone up the field and is responsible for it's placement.

Flags

Flag belts must be worn over player clothing and positioned such that the three flags are aligned on hips and backside. Players must wear flags on the field. If an offensive player is caught without flags after the ball is hiked, the play will be considered dead and it will result in the loss of down. If your flags fall off while you are the ball carrier, the play is dead where the flags have come off. It is your responsibility to make sure your flags are secured properly. In the event a defensive player is on the field without flags, and she pulls an offender's flags, the flag pull will count (but we will all boo and shame her to go put her flags on), if however she intercepts the ball, the play is dead and it is a repeat of the down for the offense. (If the defense intercepts the ball, and her flags fall off simultaneously, the interception will count, but the play is dead at that point.)

Moving the Chains

The rules for first downs are about as technical as touch football gets. However we won't have chains to mark these downs so we will be using cones to mark the line to cross for a first down at midfield and cones to mark starting lines of scrimmage. You have 4 downs to make a 1st down or touchdown, if your team is not successful the result is a change of possession. The ref will use the cone closest to her to determine 1st down.

The Count

Once the ball is hiked, the QB will have 5 "Mississippi's" before defense can rush to take her flag. Only after the full 5 "Mississippi's" can the defense advance on the QB behind the line of scrimmage, however after the 5 count the QB may also choose to advance past the line of scrimmage to run the ball for a gain of yardage. The referee is responsible for counting the Mississippi's out loud. If the offense crosses the line before count, it is a 5 yard penalty and loss of a down. If the defense crosses early, the play will continue, and 5 yards will be added at the end of the run.

Huddle Time

Huddle time is 10 Mississippi's or less, if necessary the referee will call out the warning to keep the game moving. Disregard of the referees attempt to move the game along will result in the loss of a down at the discretion of the referee.

Passing and Receiving

All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass.

- Only ONE forward pass may be thrown per down. A forward pass is defined as any pass that is used to advance the ball across line of scrimmage no matter the delivery style (underhand, overhand or shovel).
- The pass begins when the ball is released from the quarterback's hand. The defense may not cross the line of scrimmage prior to 5 Mississippi's OR QB pass (whichever comes first).
- A non forward pass can occur at any time behind the line of scrimmage. However, once the ball leaves the quarterback's hands, the defense can cross the line of scrimmage in pursuit.
- If any pass (forward, backward or lateral) is caught simultaneously by two opposing players, if there is no clear receiver of the ball, the ball becomes dead, and is considered a completed pass and belongs to the offensive team.
- Each player is eligible to receive a pass even if she steps out of bounds or out of end zone, as long as she catches the ball in bounds or comes down first in bounds with at least (1) one foot. If the receiver comes down with one foot in bound and one foot out of bounds simultaneously, the pass is incomplete. This will be at the discretion of the referee.

Fumbles

For offensive fumbles, the player will get credit for the progress made before they dropped the ball. The ball will be dead once it hits the ground and the play will resume from the place where it was dropped. If the player never really catches it, it is an incomplete pass. If the ball is fumbled, and flies into the air, and a defensive player catches it before it hits the ground, the defensive player may run the ball.

Inbound/Out of Bounds

Upright orange pylons are used to mark end zones, and mid-field (aka 1st down). IWFFL uses flat orange cones to mark the perimeter of the field, and out-of-bounds shall be called if the

player is clearly past the cones. The play is dead, and will restart where the player is thought to have gone out-of-bounds. The entire width of each goal line shall be part of the end zone. Close calls will be at the discretion of the referee.

End Zone Mercy Rule

So the other team scored a touchdown, your team gets the ball, you make your 4 tries and all end up as incomplete passes. You are still on your goal line and the ball is now switching possession to the other team, who can now basically just walk across the goal line. They may have played great defense, but in an effort to make the game more challenging, the offense will start their set of downs at the halfway point of that side of the field. The offensive team still has 4 attempts from this position to attempt a T.D.

Tie-Breaker Rules

At the end of the regulation time if there is a tie, the team that won the coin toss at the beginning of the game will have 1st possession of the ball. However there will be an additional coin toss to determine who gets the ball 1st in the case of sudden death. Each team will get a chance to score before moving to sudden death.

Example Scenario: Red team is playing Blue. Blue won the coin toss at the beginning of the game. They get the ball at their goal line first. Blue scores a touchdown. Then Red gets a chance, they score a touchdown. The game is still tied. It now moves to sudden death, which is where winning the coin toss comes into play, as it will be Blue team's ball first in sudden death. Whichever team scores first wins the game. In this scenario had Blue scored on their chance and not Red, the game would have been over (no need to sudden death).

Guidelines for Fair Games

Screening

Only Screen Blocking is permitted. Screen blocking shall be defined as obstructing the rusher's path to the quarterback or ball carrier, as long as it is done behind the line of scrimmage (LOS) with any part of the body except head, hips and legs. There can be no independent movement of the elbows.

Techniques: The screener must use one of the two following methods: 1.) Screener must have thumbs hooked into their flag belt or waistband OR 2.) Screener must hold arms behind her back with arms locked together in some manner. A Screener may not leave her feet.

Moving Screen

When a player is in motion in an attempt to prevent the rusher from maneuvering to de-flag a player. These are only legal behind the LOS when protecting the passer or potential passer.

Stationary Screen

Set by players in a manner that places the screener in a position that attempts to prevent the rusher or defender from maneuvering to de-flag a ball carrier or receiver or ball carrier. A stationary screen is legal behind the LOS. Once the passer or potential or ball carrier crosses the LOS all downfield screens must be stationary screens. THINK PYLONS!

***Infractions** will be enforced at the point of infraction by a 10 yard penalty.*

Rushing

Rushing is defined as the act of a defensive player pursuing the offensive player who is in possession of the ball. The rusher may not run over the screener. The rusher may not pull the screener toward him or push the screener away from him.

***Infractions** A penalty will be automatically be called if the rusher touches the screeners head if the screener is upright - 10 yards.*

Roughing the Passer

A roughing the passer when the pass is incomplete or intercepted by the defense, will be marked off 10 yards from the line of scrimmage. In the case where the pass is completed, the penalty will be marked off from the end of run and an automatic 1st down in either case.

Ball Carrier

The responsibility of avoiding contact rests with the ball carrier. She must show the officials she made an effort to avoid contact. The ball carrier **WILL NOT DELIBERATELY RUN OR DRIVE INTO A DEFENSIVE PLAYER**. A ball carrier may spin or jump but realize that while spinning or jumping she is in a “state of non-control” and should contact occur as a result of her uncontrolled momentum she will be penalized. The “Stiff Arm” is also illegal. - Both mentioned infraction 10 yard penalty.

Deflagging the Runner

Illegal deflagging is prematurely pulling an opponent’s flag with the intent of making the offensive player ineligible to become a ball carrier. Penalty is 5 yards from the point of infraction.

Runner stripping occurs when a defender attempt to strip or take the ball from the grasp of a player in possession. This is also a form of illegal deflagging - 5 yard penalty.

Flag Guarding

Ball carriers may not guard their flags, either intentionally or unintentionally, to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag. Flag Guarding includes, but is not limited to:

- Swinging the hands or arms over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from de-flagging or placing the ball over the flag belt for the same purpose
- Lowering the shoulder and placing the arm over the flag belt
- Stiff arming an opponent
- Using the ball to protect the flags

Infraction: *The first call of Flag Guarding by the referee is considered a warning. Any additional call (on the same player) the play is dead, the ball will be returned to it's last snap location and it will be considered a loss of a down.*

Personal Fouls & Inappropriate Conduct

Personal fouls may include but are not limited to:

- Using fist, foot, knee, or leg to contact an opponent.
- Steal, attempt to steal or strip, or bat the ball from a player in possession – (The players will use their discretion on this one, it becomes tricky here if the defense player is going to attempt to make an interception and the receiver is trying to catch the ball, if it is a flagrant ball steal and the offense clearly had possession it becomes a personal foul – in the event the players can not agree League Reps will decide the call.)
- Tripping a player, clipping, etc.
- Unnecessary roughness.
- Touching a player or ball carrier with undue force.

- Roughing the passer
- The runner may not be aided by a teammate (grabbed, pushed, or pulled).
- The runner may not stiff-arm an opponent.

Penalty: All of the above 10 yards (Back or Forward depending on if the foul is on the offense or the defense)

Behaviors resulting in automatic ejection from game:

- Intentional and aggressive physical contact with any player (i.e., tackling)
- Sustained inappropriate verbal confrontations with other players (i.e., harassment, aggressive language, trash-talking, confrontational body language)

League Representatives and Referees will use their discretion to determine whether behavior was intentional or unintentional with regards to ejections.

Sportsmanship and General Player Conduct:

- IWFFL players should conduct themselves as in the spirit of comradery and respect towards others in the league. Verbal or written comments displaying a lack of respect toward teammates, league-mates, league representatives, or spectators will be treated seriously. Those intentionally creating conflict within the league, and those continually displaying inappropriate verbal or aggressive behavior will be barred from league play or affiliation with the IWFFL.