



## 2022 Prescott YMCA Youth Flag Football

### Rules and Regulations

Welcome all coaches, players and officials, to the Prescott YMCA Youth Flag Football League. This program is based on caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and exercise for all individuals involved. The YMCA Sports Department will supply a supervisor/referee. Teams will report to the supervisor. THIS LEAGUE IS FOR FUN AND DEPENDENT ON GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP. Play to win, but DO NOT put winning ahead of being an honest player and a good person. We hope that you will enjoy your experience in our program and our staff would like to take this time to wish you the best of luck this season.

#### TEAM ORGANIZATION

- 1) A team shall consist of one to three coaches and a number of players determined by the YMCA Sports Department prior to the draft.
- 2) Player Selection:
  - a) Players will be drafted by the coaches on draft day. A lottery system will be used to determine the order of the draft.
- 3) Draft Rules – All players will be dispersed to teams by way of a draft. The purpose of the draft is to disperse unprotected players equitably to teams to promote evenly matched teams within the league. Parity is a league objective. Good spirited, fun, and competitive games result from parity. The YMCA Sports Department will decide special cases.
  - a) Selection Lists – Each coach, will declare his desire to coach and announce if he/she has an assistant coach. All coaches and assistant coaches will announce prior to the draft (and tryouts) their “protected players”. A “protected player” is a child or children of the head coach and/or the assistant coach and each “protected player must be drafted by a certain round which will be determined by the YMCA Sports Department.
  - b) Draft Skills Evaluation – All unprotected players will enter the league through a skills evaluation. Evaluations will be held following the end of normal registration. The YMCA Sports Department will schedule a time for Skills Evaluations. League officials will run prospective players through drills while coaches observe. Coaches will meet following the evaluation to conduct the actual draft.

- c) Numbers Parity: Each team with a coach having a child on the team will have to draft their child(ren) by a certain round. Any teams with coaches or assistant coaches who have no protected players will draft all rounds without stipulations.
  - d) Draft format: A chance process established by the YMCA Sports Department will determine the draft order. The draft order established in the first round will be reversed in the following round. That process will continue round after round until the draft is over.
- 4) After the Initial Draft – The YMCA Sports Department will place players on teams from the waiting list if vacancies arise, up until the first league game.
- a) Players can be traded only at the time of the draft. With approval of both coaches.

## GAME

- 1) At the start of each game, captains from both teams meet at midfield for the coin toss to determine who starts with the ball. The visiting team calls the toss.
- 2) The winner of the coin toss has the choice of offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss has the choice of direction. Possession changes to start the second half to the team that started the game on defense.
- 3) The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has four (4) downs to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has three (3) downs to score a touchdown.
  - a) If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, on 3 downs, and elect to "punt" on 4th down, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its own 5-yard line. If the offensive team goes for it on 4th down and does not cross field, the opposing team will start its possession from the spot.
  - b) Offensive Teams MUST declare 4th down intent; "Play or Punt", when asked by the referee and prior to the 'Ready for Play'.
  - c) Teams may use a timeout only to change the declaration of "Play" at any time prior to the expiration of the play clock.
  - d) If the declaration is "Punt" the ball changes possession and will be placed at the opposing Team's 5-yard line, 1st down, with NO option to change the declaration.
  - e) If the offense fails to score, after crossing midfield the ball changes possession and the new offensive Team starts at its 5-yard line
- 4) Teams change sides after the first half. Possession changes to the team that started the game on defense.

## FIELD DIMENSION

- 1) 70-yards long x 25-yards wide with - 2 10-yard endzones and a midfield line to gain.
- 2) No Run zones are located five yards prior to the line to gain and five yards prior to the endzone in the offense's direction.
- 3) No-run zones are in place to prevent teams from conducting power run plays. While in the no-run zones (a 5-yard imaginary zone before midfield and before the end zone), teams cannot run the ball in any fashion. All plays must be pass plays, even with a handoff.
- 4) Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.
- 5) Each offensive team approaches only TWO no-run zones in each drive (one zone 5 yards from midfield to gain the first down, and one zone 5 yards from the goal line to score a TD).

## COACHES

- 1) All coaches must attend the pre-season Coach Meeting. This is MANDATORY.
- 2) Coaches are permitted to Coach on the sideline.
- 3) All team photographers, managers, position coaches, team moms, fans, etc. are required and must remain a minimum of 10 yards off the field in a designated viewing area.
- 4) Coaches, this is your responsibility to keep your fans and any other team associated members in the designated areas.

## ROSTERS

- 1) Home teams wear dark color jerseys. Visiting teams wear light color jerseys.
- 2) Teams may play with no more than 5 players and no less than 4 players on the field.
- 3) Teams will be granted a 5-minute grace period if they do not have at least 4 eligible players at the start of the game, to allow for the required players to report to the field.
- 4) In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient substitute players may play with 4 players on the field but no fewer than 4.
- 5) If 5 players are at the playing site, and it's game time, the game MUST begin.
- 6) If you know ahead of time that you will not be able to field a team please call the Sports Department @ 445-7221 ext. 233 as soon as you know.

## EQUIPMENT

- 1) All players must wear official NFL FLAG belts and flags.
- 2) Game balls should be age specific.
- 3) Players must wear shoes. Cleats are allowed. However, cleats with exposed metal are never allowed and must be removed.

- 4) Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads and knee pads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
- 5) Players must remove all jewelry, hats and do-rags. Winter beanies are allowed.
- 6) Players' jerseys must be tucked into shorts or pants if they hang below the belt line.
- 7) We recommend players wear shorts or pants that do not have pockets.
- 8) NFL FLAG footballs will be provided.
  - a) Flag belts and flags cannot be the same color as the shorts or pants.

## TIMING

- 1) Regular Season Games are played on a 40-minute continuous clock with two 20-minute halves, unless one team gains a 35-point advantage which will end the game. The clock stops for halftime, injuries and the Officials' discretion.
- 2) Halftime is two minutes.
- 3) Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball.
- 4) Each team has one 60-second timeout per half. They do not carry over.
- 5) Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
- 6) In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.

## OVERTIME

- 1) If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, an overtime period will be used to determine a winner. **Overtime format** is as follows:
  - a) A coin flip will determine the team that chooses to be on offense or defense first.
  - 2) The referee will determine which end of the field the overtime will take place on.
  - 3) Each team will take turns getting one (1) play from the defense's 5-yard line for one point or the defense's 10-yard line for two points. Whether to go for one or two points is up to the offensive team. Whether or not the team that begins on offense converts the team that started on defense gets a chance on offense to win or tie by converting a one- or two-point play of their own.
    - a) Example: Team A starts on offense and chooses to go for one point from the 5-yardline and is successful. Team B is then on offense and can choose to either go for one point from the 5-yard line to tie and force a second round of overtime or to go for two points from the 10-yard line for the win.
    - b) If the second team on offense in an overtime round fails to beat or match the team that went first, the team that went first wins.
- 4) If a second round of overtime must be played, the team that lost the coin toss will get to choose offense or defense for the start of the second round of overtime. This process

continues with teams alternating who gets to choose to be on offense or defense to start out during every round of overtime.

- 5) Both teams must “go for two” from the 10-yard line starting with the third round of overtime.
- 6) The final points earned by the winning team in the final overtime will be added onto the winning team’s total score. The losing team will not receive any additional points.
  - a) Example: End of regulation time, score is 14-14. Team A scores one point and Team B score two points. Team B wins with a final score of 16-14. Points are only added to total score from final round of overtime.
- 7) All regulation period rules and penalties are in effect.
- 8) There are no timeouts.

## SCORING

- 1) Touchdown: 6 points
- 2) PAT (point after touchdown) 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (10-yard line)
  - a) Note: 1 point PAT is pass only; 2 point PAT can be run or pass.
- 3) Interceptions returned for scores during regular game play are worth six points, conversions or overtime are worth two points.
- 4) Safety: 2 points
  - a) A safety occurs when the ball-carrier is declared down in his/her own end zone. Runners can be called down when their flags are pulled by a defensive player, a flag falls out, they step out of bounds, their knee or arm touches the ground, a fumble occurs in the end zone or if a snapped ball lands in or beyond the end zone.
- 5) A team that scores a touchdown must declare whether it wishes to attempt a 1-point conversion (from the 5-yard line) or a 2-point conversion (from the 10-yard line). Any change, once a decision is made to try for the extra point, requires a charged timeout. A decision cannot be changed after a penalty.
- 6) After one team is winning by 35 points or more, the game is over. Once a 35 or more point advantage is gained, no PAT will be attempted.
- 7) Forfeits are scored 35-0 for the winning team.

## LIVE BALL/DEAD BALL

- 1) The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
- 2) The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage.
  - a) It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give both teams a “courtesy”

neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.

- 3) A player who gains possession of the ball in the air is considered in bounds as long as the first foot or other body part contacts the ground in the field of play.
- 4) The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.
- 5) Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- 6) Any official can whistle the play dead.
- 7) Play is ruled "dead" when:
  - a) The ball hits the ground.
    - i) If the ball hits the ground as a result of a bad snap, the ball is then placed where the ball hit the ground.
  - b) The ball-carrier's flag is pulled.
  - c) The ball-carrier steps out of bounds.
  - d) A touchdown, PAT or safety is scored.
  - e) The ball-carrier's knee or arm hits the ground.
  - f) The ball-carrier's flag falls out.
  - g) The receiver catches the ball while in possession of one or no flag(s).
  - h) The 7 second pass clock expires.
  - i) Inadvertent whistle
  - j) Ball-carrier leaves their feet other than jump cuts, spinning or to avoid a downed player on the field of play.

**NOTE:** There are no fumbles. The ball becomes a dead ball. (If the ball is fumbled forwards then it will be spotted where the ball carrier lost possession.)

- 8) If inadvertent whistle occurs the offense has two options:
  - a) take the ball where the whistle blew and the down is consumed
  - b) replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
- 9) If it occurs on the last play of the half or game, the offense will be awarded one untimed down and given those two options.
- 10) A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.
- 11) Officials should all agree in order to change a call on the field that is in dispute

## RUNNING

- 1) The ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled.
- 2) The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball.
- 3) Only direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Handoffs must be between the legs of the center.
  - a) "Center sneak" play is no longer allowed. The QB is not allowed to handoff to the center on the first handoff of the play.
  - b) Any player who receives a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
  - c) Once the ball has been handed off, in front, behind or to the side of the quarterback, the seven-second passing clock is eliminated and all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- 4) Absolutely NO pitches or laterals of any kind.
- 5) No-run Zones are located 5 yards before each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. Teams are not allowed to run in these zones if the subsequent line is LIVE.
- 6) Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. Diving, leaping or jumping to avoid a flag pull is considered flag guarding.
- 7) Spinning/Jump Cuts are allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a flag pull.
  - a) Players spinning out of control will be called for flag guarding.
- 8) Ballcarriers may leave their feet and the play will continue for spinning, jump cuts, QB's passing progression or if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid a collision with another player and the play will continue without stoppage.
- 9) No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.
- 10) Offensive players in close proximity of the ball-carrier must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.
- 11) Flag obstruction – All jerseys MUST be tucked in before play begins. The flags must be on the player's hips and free from obstruction. Deliberately obstructed flags will be considered flag guarding.

## PASSING

- 1) All passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage, thrown forward and ball out of hand prior to breaching the line of scrimmage.
  - a) There is no intentional grounding
  - b) All passes that do not cross the line of scrimmage, whether received or not, are illegal forward passes, unless touched by a defender.

- c) The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go 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, the play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
  - a) If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage (LOS).
  - b) If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the play is dead and treated like an incomplete pass.

## RECEIVING

- 1) All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- 2) Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted toward the line of scrimmage.
- 3) A player must have at least one foot or other body part in bounds, contacting the ground first with possession.
- 4) In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.
- 5) Interceptions are returnable. If returned for a score during regular game play, the score will be worth six points, two points if returned during conversions and/or overtime.

## RUSHING THE PASSER

- 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 can 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.
- 3) A special marker, or the referee, will designate a rush line seven yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
  - a) A legal rush is:
    - i) Any rush from a point 7-yards from the defensive line of scrimmage.
    - ii) A rush from anywhere on the field AFTER the ball has been handed off by the quarterback.

- iii) If a rusher leaves the rush line early (breaks the 7 yard area), they may return to the rush line, reset and then legally rush the quarterback.
  - iv) If a rusher leaves the rush line early and the ball is handed off before he/she crosses the line of scrimmage, he/she may legally rush the quarterback/ball carrier.
- b) A penalty may be called if:
- i) The rusher leaves the rush line before the snap and crosses the line of scrimmage before a handoff or pass – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
  - ii) Any defensive player crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is snapped – offsides (5-yards from line of scrimmage and first down).
  - iii) Any defensive player not lined up at the rush line crosses the line of scrimmage before the ball is passed or handed off – illegal rush (5-yards from the line of scrimmage and first down).
- c) Special circumstances:
- i) Teams are not required to rush the quarterback with the seven second clock in effect.
  - ii) Teams are not required to identify their rusher before the play.
- 4) Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, contact to the QB, unless ruled incidental by the official, would result in a roughing the passer penalty.
- 5) The offense cannot impede the rusher in any way. The rusher has the right to a clear path to the quarterback, regardless of where they line up prior to the snap. The PATH is set pre-snap from the rusher or rushers directly to the QB. PATH does not move once the quarterback moves.
- 6) If the “path or line” is occupied by a moving offensive player, then it is the offense’s responsibility to avoid the rusher. Any disruption to the rusher’s path and/or contact will result in an impeding the rusher penalty. **If the offensive player does not move after the snap, then it is the rusher’s responsibility to go around the offensive player and to avoid contact.**
- 7) A sack occurs if the quarterback’s flags are pulled behind the line of scrimmage. The ball will be spotted where possession of the ball is once the flag is pulled.
- a) A Safety is awarded if the sack takes place in the offensive team’s end zone.

## FLAG PULLING

- 1) A legal flag pull takes place when the ball-carrier is in full possession of the ball.
- 2) Defenders can dive to pull flags but cannot tackle, hold or run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags.
- 3) It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier’s possession at any time.

- 4) If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during a play while that player has possession, the player is down immediately and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
- 5) If a player who has one or no flags in their belt takes possession of the ball, the play is dead at that spot on the field.
- 6) A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.
- 7) Flag guarding is an attempt by the ball-carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, ball, arm or shoulder or intentionally covering the flags with the football jersey.

## FORMATIONS

- 1) Offenses must have a minimum of one player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and up to four players on the line of scrimmage. The quarterback must be off the line of scrimmage.
  - a) A team may shift formations prior to the snap as long as they are set for at least 1 second before the ball is snapped.
  - b) One player at a time may go in motion at least 1 yard behind the line of scrimmage.
- 2) Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.
- 3) The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion between his/her legs to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands.

## 6-8 YEAR OLD GUIDELINES

- 1) Defenders may NOT rush the passer unless there is a legal handoff executed in the backfield.
- 2) One Coach for each team is permitted on the field pre-snap to help their players, but MUST be off the field prior to the snap of the ball.
- 3) If the ball falls to, or touches the ground during the initial center to quarterback exchange, the play is ruled a 'Do Over' with no loss of down, once per down. On a second consecutive occurrence, the down is consumed.

## UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- 1) If the site supervisor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee's discretion. No appeals will be considered. FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!

- 2) Offensive or confrontational language is **NOT** allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the officials will determine if a warning or immediate ejection is warranted.
- 3) Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.
- 4) Ball-carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.
- 5) Defenders must give free releases off the line of scrimmage to offensive players and are not allowed to run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags. **ROUGH PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**
- 6) ***Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship as well:***
  - a) ***Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other teams.***
  - b) ***Keep comments clean and profanity free.***
  - c) ***Compliment ALL players, not just one child or team.***
- 7) ***Fans are required to keep fields safe and kid friendly:***
  - a) ***Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in all areas of the field.***
  - b) ***Stay in the end zone area, not between fields.***
  - c) ***Dispose of ALL trash in designated trash cans.***
- 8) Unsportsmanlike conduct penalties:
  - a) Defense + 10 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down
  - b) Offense - 10 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down

## **GENERAL PENALTIES**

- 1) The referee's will call all penalties.
- 2) Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.
- 3) All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (Spot fouls)
- 4) Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question calls.
- 5) Games or halves may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
- 6) Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
- 7) Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.
- 8) Spot fouls in end zone: Defensive (Ball on one-yard line, first down)/Offensive (Safety)
- 9) All coaches are responsible for the behavior of any players, coaches, and fans in attendance. (Team Captains and Coaches are the only ones authorized to communicate with the referee(s) in any fashion).
- 10) **If the offensive team commits a penalty on the play they crossed the first down marker AND the penalty occurred after crossing the line to gain, the offensive team will be granted a first**

down. After losing the penalty yardage the team will have first and goal (cannot gain another first down for crossing midfield). In this situation if the ball is spotted in the midfield no run zone the no run zone is not active and the offense will still be allowed to run the ball.

11) Roughing the Passer penalty will either be a spot foul or enforced from the line of scrimmage. The Penalty will be enforced from the line of scrimmage in these instances:

- a) if there was no gain on the play
- b) or if the play ended with a QB sack

12) Roughing the Passer-Spot Foul (penalty yardage will be added on to a completed pass).

## DEFENSIVE SPOT FOULS

Defensive pass interference (Automatic first down)

Holding (+5 yards and automatic first down)

Stripping (+10 yards and automatic first down)

Roughing the passer (+5 yards and automatic first down)

## OFFENSIVE SPOT FOULS

Screening, blocking or running with the ball (-10 yards and loss of down)

Charging (-10 yards and loss of down)

Flag guarding (-10 yards and loss of down)

## DEFENSIVE PENALTIES

Defensive unnecessary roughness (+10 yards and automatic first down)

Defensive unsportsmanlike conduct (+10 yards and automatic first down)

Offside (+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down)

Illegal rush (Starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) (+5 yards from LOS and automatic first down)

Illegal flag pull (Before the receiver has the ball) (+5 yards from LOS and automatic first down)

Roughing the passer (+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down)

Taunting (+5 yards from line of scrimmage and automatic first down)

## OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

Offensive unnecessary roughness	(-10 yards and loss of down)
Offensive unsportsmanlike conduct	(-10 yards and loss of down)
Offside / false start	(-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down)
Illegal forward pass (Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage)	(-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down)
Offensive pass interference	(-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down)
Illegal motion (More than one person moving)	(-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down)
Delay of game	(-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down)
Impeding the rusher	(-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down)
Illegal Procedure	(-5 yards from line of scrimmage and loss of down)

## LEAGUE STANDINGS AND TOURNAMENT FORMAT

- 1) Standings will be available online at [www.prescottymca.org](http://www.prescottymca.org). Go to the "Program" tab on the home page and then click on "Sports" on the drop down menu. Then find the "Youth Flag Football League" section. Standings will be updated weekly.
- 2) All teams are eligible for post season play will be seeded for the tournament based on their regular season record. In the event of identical records, the following tie breaker system will be in effect:
- 3) All teams will be reseeded according to the following criteria for bracket play:
  - a) Least Games Lost
  - b) Most Games Won
  - c) Head-to-Head Record (Two teams only)
  - d) Coin Toss

# FIELD DIAGRAM

