

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS
Winter 2010 HOWARD COUNTY RUN AND SHOOT FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES

www.hcrpsports.com

The Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks, through the League director, reserves the right to amend the rules and schedules as conditions may warrant.

1. **ROSTERS**

- 1.1. Each team shall be limited to 20 players at any one time.
- 1.2. Failure to turn in a roster before the first game will result in forfeiture of every game until the roster is on file with the League. Officials will not be assigned to any game in which a team does not have a roster on file with the League office.
- 1.3. Rosters are to be submitted on the official roster form. Players listed without signature and age are ineligible.
- 1.4. A player can only be on the roster of one team. Players cannot change to a different team at any point during the season. Teams cannot add players after the third game of the season.
- 1.5. Any additions or deletions must be put in writing and submitted to the League office before the player is eligible to play. Additions must include the player's full name, signature, address, and home and/or work phone numbers.
- 1.6. Teams using ineligible players shall forfeit each game in which the individual played. Further infractions will be subject to disciplinary actions as deemed necessary by the League Director.

2. **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

- 2.1. Players cannot play for more than one team during the season. Only players listed on the official roster (at League Office) are eligible to play.
- 2.2. All players must be at least 18 years of age. Age determination date is the first scheduled game of the current season.
- 2.3. If a player's eligibility is challenged during a game, the challenged player must produce a state or federal issued ID. (driver's license, passport, military ID) If the player is unable or unwilling to produce the ID then they are not eligible to participate in that game. The League Director shall be notified and further disciplinary actions will be taken if necessary.

3. **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- 3.1. Players ejected will serve a minimum of a one-game suspension (not including the game they were suspended from), further disciplinary action will be taken as needed by the League Director. A player who has been ejected has two (2) minutes to leave the field area (including the stands). If he fails to do so, his team forfeits the current game in which they are playing. The referees are responsible for timing the exit of the player. If the referees have to enforce the 2 minute ejection rule, the play clock will stop. If the game is not forfeited, the referee will then announce when they are restarting the play clock.
- 3.2. League suspensions and disciplinary actions will be reported to the Mid-Atlantic Recreation and Sports Alliance.
- 3.3. Refer to the "Standard Rules for Adult Sports" for further disciplinary actions.

4. **SCORE REPORTING & STANDINGS**

- 4.1. It is both teams' responsibility to call or email in the final score the next day following the game. Please call 313-4718 (voice-mail number and can be used 24hrs/day) to report scores or email Nicola Morgal at nmorgal@howardcountymd.gov. Any score not reported within 24 hours will be ruled a double-forfeit. Official standings will be kept on file at the Department. General standings can be viewed at www.hcrpsports.com. The purpose of score reporting is to ensure proper divisional play and to determine playoffs seeding. The website will display un-official standings. Official standings are kept on file at the league office.
- 4.2. Standings will be calculated as follows: (Scores not reported by the deadline will be an official 0-0 tie).
 - 4.2.1. Scoring Point system: 2pts for a Win, 1pt. for a Tie, 0 pts for a Loss
 - 4.2.2. Win percentage: (Total recorded wins + (.5 x number of ties) / Total Games)
 - 4.2.3. Forfeits: A win will be assessed to the non-forfeiting team. A score of 28-0 will be entered. Forfeits will also result in a loss of your forfeit bond - See Rule 5.3.
- 4.3. Tie breakers will be:
 - 4.3.1. Head to Head
 - 4.3.2. Point Differential teams within the tie
 - 4.3.3. Point Differential of overall record
 - 4.3.4. Goals Conceded (lesser amount wins)
 - 4.3.5. Goals Scored (greater amount wins)
 - 4.3.6. Official Tie

5. **MISCELLANEOUS**

- 5.1. The Department will provide cones to be used during games.
- 5.2. Games rescheduled by the Department must be played as rescheduled or forfeited.
- 5.3. A forfeit is considered a game. Forfeited games will not be rescheduled. A 28-0 win will be given to the team that did not forfeit. Teams that forfeit are responsible for all officials' fees for the forfeited game. Forfeiting teams will not receive a refund. More than two forfeits in a given season may result in being ineligible for playoffs and/or being dropped from the league without the possibility of a refund. 2010: Forfeit Penalty is \$90 per game forfeited. Forfeiting teams must repay the \$90 forfeit bond prior to their next scheduled game. Rescheduled games must be played as rescheduled or forfeited. For new teams, a forfeit bond is no longer required, however you must pay all officials fees for the game you forfeited to the league prior to your next scheduled game. If you fail to do so you will be removed from the league without refund and will not be eligible for the playoffs. A forfeit invoice will then be mailed to the team manager for payment. If payment is not remitted, further action will be taken.
- 5.4. When rescheduling a make-up game, the League Director will make every effort to first schedule games extending beyond

the last game on the same playing day. If that is not possible, then the League Director **reserves the right to reschedule games on any day in order to complete league play.**

- 5.5. In case of rain/inclement weather on the day of the game, teams and referees should call the Inclement Weather line of the Park in which their game is scheduled after 7am on Sunday. Telephone numbers are listed on the league schedule.
- 5.6. Should there be an unplayable field due to inclement weather occurring after 7am, the decision of field playability will be left to the discretion of the referee.
- 5.7. Playoff awards will be given to a maximum of 15 rostered players.

PLAYING RULES -

Unless otherwise stated herein, the League shall play in accordance with the United States Flag & Touch League Rules.

1 - PLAYING RULE **GAME AND FIELD**

- 1.1. Touch Football as played in this League differs in several respects from that played in many areas. Our rules attempt to eliminate the heavy contact that results from unrestricted blocking and charging. **THE FORWARD PASS IS THE ONLY OFFENSIVE WEAPON**, no blocking is permitted on the line of scrimmage or down field. The passer has four seconds to find a receiver before the defensive team can rush with their designated pass rusher. The Quarterback and the pass rusher go one on one. The quarterback cannot cross the scrimmage line. There are no field goals. Games will consist of two equal halves of 25 minutes each. The clock shall be stopped only in the following situations: During a timeout; During a Serious Injury; Or during the last two (2) minutes of each half – for incomplete passes or out of bounds plays.
- 1.2. The playing field shall be 80 yards long and 40 yards wide. **There will be 10 yard end zone at each end of the field.** This field shall be divided into four zones of 20 yards each. Inbound lines are 10 yards inside the sideline.
- 1.3. Team boxes are between the 20 yard lines.

2 - PLAYING RULE **PLAYERS**

- 2.1. The offensive team shall consist of five players (quarterback and four receivers.) The defensive team shall consist of six players designated rusher (must rush) and five pass defenders.
- 2.2. During punts, the kicking team may use six players; the receiving team must use five players.
- 2.3. Each team shall designate a field captain for its offense and its defense. Only the captains may communicate with the officials on rule interpretations.
- 2.4. A player or coach/manager who is bleeding or who has blood on his uniform shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment can be administered. An athlete shall not continue competition unless the bleeding is controlled and the wound is covered.

3 - PLAYING RULE **UNIFORMS AND PLAYING EQUIPMENT**

- 3.1. Players shall wear a color-coordinated jersey with a number, pants or shorts, socks and athletic shoes without metal cleats. Each team should have an alternative color coordinated jersey for each player in the event both teams have the same color shirts. It is the home team's responsibility to change to their alternate jersey if both teams are wearing the same color.
- 3.2. NFL and College-sized footballs are the only approved balls for this league. The referee has the right to determine if a ball is illegal and require a legal ball to be used. If a team cannot provide a legal ball, they will forfeit the game. Each team shall provide their ball when on offense.
- 3.3. The referee has the final say on the legality of equipment.
- 3.4. All forms of jewelry are prohibited.

4 - PLAYING RULE **PENALTIES**

- 4.1. Distance penalties shall be 5, 10, and 15 yards, but no single enforcement shall exceed one-half the distance towards the goal line (Exception: Defensive Pass Interference).
- 4.2. Yardage Penalties: The offended team has a choice of play or penalty. If the penalty is chosen, then the opponents will run the down over.
- 4.3. Offside (snap infraction, illegal motion, encroachment, false start) - 5 yards.
- 4.4. Defensive Holding – 5 yards.
- 4.5. No contact downfield - the offensive player has the right of way, however the offensive player cannot initiate contact and must make a reasonable attempt to avoid contact if a defender has an established position.
- 4.6. Unnecessary roughness - 15 yards from the point of the foul or scrimmage line whichever is to the best advantage of the offended team.
- 4.7. Delay of game by the defensive team - 5 yards and the clock stops until the offensive team is ready.
- 4.8. Intentionally grounded ball to avoid a loss of yardage- loss of down and 5 yards from the line of scrimmage. Within 2 minutes of either half, the clock continues to run.
- 4.9. Offensive pass interference - 15 yards from the line of scrimmage and loss of down.
- 4.10. Defensive pass interference - first down for the offensive team at the point of infraction. If it is unsportsmanlike or intentional, it is an additional 15 yards from the point of infraction. Defensive pass interference committed in the defensive team's end-zone shall result in the ball placed at the one-yard line and an automatic first down.
- 4.11. Illegal screening - 15 yards from the point of foul.
- 4.12. Defensive charging - 15 yards from the point of foul.
- 4.13. Illegal forward pass - 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and a loss of down if the passer crosses over the scrimmage line to make a pass, 5 yards from the point of the pass if a down-field forward pass (forward lateral).
- 4.14. Unsportsmanlike conduct - 15 yards from the line of scrimmage.
- 4.15. Loss of Down Penalties:
 - 4.15.1. Delay of game by the offensive team.
 - 4.15.2. Failure to huddle
 - 4.15.3. Too many players
 - 4.15.4. Illegal advancement of the ball

5 - PLAYING RULE THE TOUCH

- 5.1. It is a touch when an opponent:
 - 5.1.1. Touches a runner with one open hand and with minimal force below the shoulders.
 - 5.1.2. Touches the football (when the football is clearly in the possession of the opposing team), as the football is considered to be part of the ball carrier.
 - 5.1.3. Makes contact with a player while said player is making contact with a pass (forward or lateral.)
 - 5.1.4. It is a touch whenever a ball carrier's knee touches the ground.
- 5.2. It is considered a sack if the quarterback has the ball in his possession and is touched by a defensive player. The ball is then placed at the spot where the sack occurred.
- 5.3. No player shall make an unsportsmanlike touch of an opponent. An unsportsmanlike touch is one that is **INTENTIONALLY** made:
 - 5.3.1. With two hands, or with excessive force, or with a clenched fist.
 - 5.3.2. In any manner judged unsportsmanlike by an official.

6 - PLAYING RULE PERIODS AND TIMING

- 6.1. Games are two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves. Rest periods between halves shall be five (5) minutes. Each team's captain can call two (2) time-outs (30 seconds each), each game. The game clock will be stopped during called time-outs and when it becomes apparent that play will be interrupted because of injuries or unusual circumstances.
- 6.2. The play clock will be stopped for all incomplete passes and out of bounds play during the last two minutes of each half and for touchdowns.
- 6.3. The play clock shall start when a kick is legally touched or the ball is snapped to start a period of restart after a charged time-out, or to restart after an out of bounds play / incomplete pass during the last two minutes of each half and for touchdowns.
- 6.4. The game clock shall start when the ball is snapped.

7 - PLAYING RULE STARTING THE GAME

- 7.1. At least five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled game time, the referee shall meet with the representatives of both teams for a coin toss. The team winning the toss may elect one of the following: offense, defense or to defer. If the winning team defers, the team that loses the toss will elect either offense or defense to start the first half, and the team that deferred will elect either offense or defense to start the second half.
- 7.2. Game time is forfeit time. No grace period.
- 7.3. A team must field at least five (5) players on the field at all times, otherwise a forfeit will be declared.

8 - PLAYING RULE KICKS AND PUNTS

- 8.1. There will be no kickoffs. The offense puts the ball into play at their own 10-yard line.
- 8.2. Any punt into the end-zone will be brought out to the 10 yard line.
- 8.3. Punts are not free balls. They belong to the receiving team at the point where either the receiving team takes possession of the ball, the ball is downed by the kicking team, or at the point where the ball crosses out of bounds.
- 8.4. There are no punt returns.
- 8.5. All punts must be declared. No Quick Kicks! Once declared, the choice is irrevocable. Receiving team is required to place a minimum of three players on the line of scrimmage. Attempts to block the punt or distract the punter shall not be allowed. No player from either team may cross the scrimmage line until the ball is kicked. Once the ball is kicked, players may move from the line of scrimmage.

9 - PLAYING RULE PLAY FROM SCRIMMAGE

- 9.1. **Prior to the start of each scrimmage play, all offensive players must huddle within the inbound area. The offensive team has 25 seconds to get off their play once the ball is spotted.** A huddle is defined as a gathering at least five yards behind the line of scrimmage for at least 1 second, ending with all players clapping hands simultaneously. This gives the defense time to regroup.
- 9.2. The offensive team can use any alignment. The quarterback may be his own snapper provided the ball is on the line of scrimmage at the start of the play. If the quarterback is his own snapper, he **MUST SLAP** the ball with an open hand to indicate that the play has started. **A snap from center may be tossed back to the quarterback or snapped between the legs, however if the snap makes contact with the ground, it will be considered a dead ball and loss of down.**
- 9.3. Movement by the offensive team is unlimited as long as there is no forward movement until the ball is snapped.
- 9.4. Beginning with the snap, the line judge shall count 4 seconds (one thousand, two thousand, three thousand, and rush). On the rush command, and not before, the designated defensive rusher **must** then cross the scrimmage line. The designated rusher is not limited to remaining on the line of scrimmage prior to the count of four. More than one player can rush the quarterback, however at a minimum there must be one designated rusher.

10 - PLAYING RULE SERIES OF DOWN/FORWARD PASSING ADVANCEMENT OF THE BALL

- 10.1. A team shall be allowed four downs to advance the ball across a zone line. Each time a team advances the ball across a zone line; it is awarded a first down and will be allowed four more downs to make the next zone line.
- 10.2. All forward passes must be thrown from a point behind the line of scrimmage.
 - 10.2.1. No forward passes from beyond the line of scrimmage (penalty- 5 yards from spot, loss of down.)
 - 10.2.2. Only one exchange may be made behind the line of scrimmage. More than one exchange will result in a downed ball at the point where the second exchange started. There is a loss of down. It is illegal for player #1 to pass the ball

forward behind the line of scrimmage to player #2 and for player #2 to make another forward pass, there is only one forward pass allowed. Once the ball is passed across the line of scrimmage, the line of scrimmage is dissolved. A snap by a center is not considered an exchange. **When there is an exchange behind the line of scrimmage, the defensive team is free to rush as many players as desired, provided that one of them is still the designated rusher.**

- 10.3. For a legal catch, a player must have possession and control of the ball and come down inbounds with at least **one foot**.
- 10.4. The practice of chucking, bump and run techniques is prohibited. If either the offensive or defensive player puts his hands on their opponent while coming off the line of scrimmage, the official will call an unnecessary roughness penalty.
- 10.5. Face guarding an opponent is pass interference.

11 - PLAYING RULE **SCORING**

- 11.1. Touchdown: 6 points
- 11.2. Extra point conversion from 10 yard line: 2 points
- 11.3. Extra point conversion from 5 yard line: 1 point
- 11.4. Safety: 2 points
- 11.5. Return of conversion attempt by defense for a Touchdown: 1 point if offensive team was attempting a 1-point conversion, 2 points if offensive team was attempting a 2-point conversion.**

12 - PLAYING RULE **LOOSE BALL**

- 12.1. All fumbles and muffs are a dead ball the moment they touch the ground. The team that committed the muff or fumble automatically regains possession.

13 - PLAYING RULE **DEAD BALL**

The ball becomes dead when:

- 13.1. A player in possession of the ball is legally touched or downed.
- 13.2. Following an incomplete forward pass.
- 13.3. When a ball is carried out of bounds.
- 13.4. On all muffs and fumbles.

14 - PLAYING RULE **SUBSTITUTION**

Unlimited substitution is permitted under the following conditions:

- 14.1. Defensive team - Substitution is permitted any time the ball is dead.
- 14.2. Offensive team - Substitution must be made before the team breaks the huddle, all incoming substitutes must participate in the huddle.
- 14.3. NO SLEEPER PLAYS!**

15 - PLAYING RULE **OVERTIME**

- 15.1. If after regulation time a game is tied, each team will get one possession from the 10-yard line (70 yards from the end zone). The team who moves the ball the farthest during four (4) plays will win. There are no first downs in overtime.
- 15.2. The team who scored last in regulation will be on offense first in overtime.
- 15.3. An interception shall result in a change of possession; you cannot run back an interception. The offense's previous line of scrimmage will be the distance the other team must beat. The defensive team would then take possession on their own 10-yard line and has four (4) plays to advance the ball.
- 15.4. If there is a defensive penalty, the offensive team keeps the yardage of the penalty and the down is replayed.
- 15.5. If both teams score, the team who used the least number of plays to score shall be declared the winner.
- 15.6. If a team scores a touchdown, teams can opt to go for a 1pt or 2pt conversion. If both teams used the same number of plays to score the team with the highest points wins (touchdown plus extra point score). If the total points scored are the same, the game goes to double overtime.
- 15.7. The above rules will be used until a winner is determined. If a team wins by moving the ball the furthest, their final score will still be increased by 6, e.g. regulation score is 8-8, the team who moves the ball furthest wins, so the final score is 14-8.

16 - PLAYING RULE **PROTESTS**

- 16.1. There will be no rule protests. If you have a rule concern, please call the League Director. The league wants its rules interpreted properly. While we cannot prevent wrong interpretations in all cases, we can take steps to prevent any repeat problems with rule interpretations.
- 16.2. If you have a protest regarding a team or a player that protest must be received by the League Director within 24 hours of the game.