

Iowa High-School Girls Flag Football Alliance

Governed and Sanctioned by: Michelsen-Groves SMP (Sports Management and Promotions)

Date Effective: January 2nd, 2025

Vision: To create an organized competition between Iowa High-Schools and their female student-athletes in the sport of American Flag Football.

Mission: To help continue the growth, education, and outreach of American Flag Football, as it advances nationwide in the high-school, collegiate, and Olympics levels of popularity.

Values: To create a new, safe, and engaging genre of American football that can be developed to meet the interests and benefits of girls athletics.

Game Play Rules

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Section 1. The Game

Subsection 1.1 The Game

- A. The game is patterned after American football.
- B. The team scoring the most points at the end of regulation play is the winner. If tied at end of regulation, see Section 4 Subsection 4.2 to determine the winner.

Subsection 1.2 The Field

A. Regulation Field

Please, see the below diagram. The starting lines will be in the center of the field at the Goal Lines.

First Downs will be marked at both 25 yard lines, and the 50 yard line.

No offensive rushing will be allowed within 5 yards to the first down marker(s) or within 5 yards to each endzone.



Subsection 1.3 The Ball

A. The Official Game Ball

1. All footballs will be classified as “**Junior**” size, and meet their desired air psi requirements.

Subsection 1.4 Rosters

A. Rosters Size/Limit

1. Each team will consist of Iowa High School aged, biological females.
2. Game Play will consist of 7 offensive players vs 7 defensive players.
3. Coaches will have a current/valid State of Iowa Coaching Endorsement.

Subsection 1.5 Referees

1. There will be (2) referees for every game, and be certified officials from either the Iowa Boys Athletic Association or Iowa Girls Athletic Union. (1) referee will be the “Head Official” and oversee the flow of the game and make the final ruling on disputed calls.
2. One Referee (Head Official) will be behind the line of scrimmage, and the other referee will be in the secondary.
3. There will be (2) spotters, on opposite sidelines who will mark when a player goes out of bounds. They will not make any referee decisions, and any referee will over-rule a spotter.
4. The Head Official will spot the ball and keep track of downs/scoring situations. No chain gain or down markers will be used, and first down barriers/out of bounds will be clearly marked.

Subsection 1.6 Player Positions

A. Offense

1. The offense must have five (5) players on the line of scrimmage with their shoulders substantially parallel to the line of scrimmage.
2. Of the seven (7) offensive players, three (3) players are designated as the Center, Left Tight-End, and Right Tight-End. These players as a unit, will be also be known as the offensive Line.
3. The center is the player who is over the ball in a position to snap the ball to a back from between/behind their legs.
4. The remaining players will be the quarterback, running back(s), and wide receiver(s). They will also be known as the “Back Unit”. The quarterback is the only one who may throw a forward pass.

Subsection 1.7 Special Game Rules

1. The gap between a downed offensive lineman can be no more than 2 yards. The Receivers and/or Running backs may not be within 5 yards of the offensive line. Referees are allowed to use judgment on 2-yard and 5-yard width.
 - Infraction: Illegal Formation
 - Penalty: Loss of Down
2. All offensive players must be simultaneously stationary for at least one second prior to any motion, before the snap. Only (1) player may be in horizontal motion at a time.
 - Infraction: Illegal Shift
 - Penalty: Loss of Down

3. Blocking is allowed, but must be done chest to chest. Any holding, hooking, tugging, hands to the face, block in the back, jersey pulling, or blocking below the waist is prohibited.

- Infraction: Illegal Block
- Penalty: Loss of Down

4. The football has 10 seconds to pass the line of scrimmage from the time the ball is snapped.

- Infraction: Stalling
- Penalty: Loss of Down

5. There is no intentional tackling or tripping. It shall be the Head Officials responsibility and discretion when determining intent.

- Infraction: Tackling/Tripping
- Penalty: Offense gets an automatic first down or half the distance to the goal, whichever applies.

6. The defense can blitz the quarterback after 5 seconds from the snap of the ball.

- Infraction: Illegal Blitz
- Penalty: Offense gets an automatic first down or half the distance to the goal, whichever applies.

7. Any back may advance the ball at any time. Except the quarterback. The quarterback can only advance the ball if being blitzed.

- Infraction: Illegal Run
- Penalty: Loss of Down

8. The Offense will not be allowed to rush the ball within 5 yards of the first down marker or within 5 yards of the endzone. The lone

exemption, is if the defense blitz's; than the quarterback may scramble for additional yardage.

- Infraction: Illegal Rush
- Penalty: Loss of Down

9. All offensive lineman, receivers, and running backs are eligible to receive a forward pass or backside handoff.

10. If there is no other reference or specific rule defined, then by default, the ruling will follow the current NFHS Rule Book.

11. Coaches will not be allowed on the field of play, unless injury or timeout.

12. The Head Official is the sole judge on the flow of the game, and shall use their authority and sole discretion, when making final decisions.

Subsection 1.7 Uniforms

A. Teams must have a HOME jersey, and an AWAY jersey. The HOME team will wear their HOME jersey, and the AWAY team will wear their away jersey. Each team cannot have matching colors.

B. Each player must have a flag belt containing (2) flags. The flags shall be either snap-on or Velcro. The flag colors cannot match that of their HOME or AWAY jersey, and all jerseys must be tucked in.

C. All players must be numbered 0 through 99. Numbers must be prominently displayed in contrasting color on the front and back of the jersey. Player nameplates are optional.

D. Required equipment would be football shoes suitable for football or turf activities, and a mouth piece.

DD. Soft Shell Helmets shall be optional.

H. The Head Official is the sole judge of legal and illegal equipment and shall rule on such without appeal.

Section 2 Scoring

Subsection 2.1 Points for Scoring

A. The following points are awarded:

1. Touchdown: Six (6) points
2. Safety: Two (2) points
3. Successful Point-After Conversion: One (1) Point or Two (2) points.

Subsection 2.2 Playing Periods

A. The length of the game is forty (60) minutes of actual playing time, there will be (2) halves and (4) quarters. Each quarter will consist of continuous running 15 minute clock.

B. Team End Zones shall be changed at the end of the First (1st) and Third (3rd) periods. At the start of the Second (2nd) and Fourth (4th) periods the ball shall be put at a point corresponding exactly to the point at the opposite end of the field where the ball became dead at the end of the previous period. It shall be put into play in exactly the same manner as if play had not been interrupted.

C. The time between the First (1st) and Second (2nd) Quarter and between the Third (3rd) and Fourth (4th) Quarter may not be longer than three (3) minutes.

D. Halftime is Fifteen (15) minutes in length unless otherwise approved by both teams and/or officials.

E. Overtime periods are authorized in the event neither team has scored more points than the other at the conclusion of the game.

Subsection 3 Stopping and Starting of the Game Clock

Subsection 3.1 Stopping the Clock

1. Time shall start when the ball is live at the start of each quarter and shall continue continuously, unless any of the following are met:

2. The clock shall be stopped:

- a) For a player injury.
- b) When time expires at the end of each period.
- c) When the Referee signals an Official's time out.
- d) On a change of possession after a scoring series.
- e) Coaches timeout.
- f) Final two minutes of each half, in the same standard as NFHS.

* Note: In the 4th Quarter if there's less than (5) five minutes remaining, and the losing team commits a penalty, the clock will continue to run.

* Note: In the 4th Quarter if there's less than (5) five minutes remaining, and If a player from the losing team gets injured, then the clock will stop. However, it will result in a 10 second runoff.

Subsection 3.2 Mercy Rule

Once a team is losing by thirty-five (35) or more points, the clock shall not stop unless there is an injury or timeout. The clock may stop again once the losing team gets within thirty-five points (35) points. This rule will be amended by the head referee to current Iowa High-School Football Standards.

Subsection 3.3 Starting the Clock

1. If the clock is stopped for any reason, the clock will normally start again on the ready for play signal of the Referee.
2. The Offense will have forty (40) seconds to snap the ball between plays. If the ball is not snapped, it will be a delay of game penalty.

Subsection 3.4 Team Timeout

1. In each half, both teams are permitted three (3) timeouts.
2. A timeout may be requested by a player or coach on the field.
3. A team timeout may be up to sixty (60) seconds in length.
4. During timeouts, one (1) coach may come to the center of the field to consult with his team or the team may assemble in front of the team bench and consult with more than one (1) coach.
5. The game clock will start on the snap following a timeout.

Section 4: OVERTIME RULES

All overtime formatting will follow NFHS guidelines

Section 5: LIVE BALL, DEAD BALL, POSSESSION, OUT OF BOUNDS

Subsection 5.1 Live Ball/Ball in Play

- A. The ball is considered live and in play until the ball is dead. An official shall sound his whistle after the ball is dead.

Subsection 5.2 Dead Ball and End of Down

The ball becomes dead and the down is ended:

1. When a runner goes out of bounds.
2. When a live ball goes out of bounds.
3. When any forward pass (legal or illegal) is incomplete.
4. When anyone in possession of the ball goes to the ground, including knee(s) and/or elbow(s).
5. When any score occurs.
6. When a game official sounds his/her whistle inadvertently.
7. When the ball runner has one flag pulled.
8. When the ball is fumbled.

Section 6: Flow of the Game

1. The ball shall be placed at the Goal Line in the center part of the field following the coin toss, halftime, and touchdown(s), and/or point after conversions, safeties.
2. Teams must go for it on 4th down. If the team fails to advance, then the following team will get their ball back at the starting point.
3. There will be no kick offs, punts, field goals/PAT's, onside kicks.
4. When a team scores a touchdown, they go for a one-point or two-point conversion. The ball will be placed on the three (3) yard line for one point, and (5) yard line for two points.
5. When the defense intercepts the ball, the ball may be advanced. Wherever the runner gets their flag pulled or goes out of bounds, that shall be the place where the offense takes over.

6. If a team fumbles, the ball is dead and the game will continue with the offense in possession, unless they failed to convert on 4th down.
7. If the defense gets a safety, the defensive team will be rewarded two points. The offense will again get the ball back and start at their starting line.
8. If a team is losing in the 4th quarter, then they may select an “onside kick”. After the losing team attempts their 1 point or 2 point conversion, they may attempt a one play from their opponents twenty-five (25) yard line. If the losing team scores, then the play stands as if it were an onside kick. The team would not receive any points, but would receive the ball back at the starting point. If the defense stops the conversion, then the opposing teams offense would receive the ball at the 50 yard line. If an interception/fumble occurs, then the play is dead, and the opposing team gets the ball back at their fifty (50) yard line.
9. The offense may substitute player personal following a play. The defensive personal shall only substitute if the offense substitutes.
10. If a ball is intercepted/fumbled on a one or two point conversion, then the play is dead and cannot be advanced.

Section 7: Inclement Weather Game Interruptions/Postponement Rule

A. Game Not Started

If a game has not started and needs to be postponed to another time and or date due to inclement weather, all team(s) will be notified. If it becomes a logistical challenge, and play cannot continue within a reasonable time frame, money will be refunded to all participants.

B. Game in Progress Before Halftime (Regular Season & Playoff)

If a game has to be terminated and the progress of the game is in that it has not reached halftime, the game will end with the winning team being the team ahead at the time of termination. If the game is scoreless or a tie, then a coin toss will determine the winner

C. Game in Progress After Halftime (Regular Season Game)

If a game has to be terminated and the progress of the game is in that it has surpassed halftime, the game will end with the winning team being the team ahead at the time of termination. If the game is scoreless or a tie, then a coin toss will determine the winner.

D. Heat Related Delay

Prior to the scheduled kickoff if heads of both teams and the officials meet out of concern over the heat index which is measured in Temperature and Humidity, the game can be delayed up to no more than one hour from the scheduled start time to assist in allowing the heat index to lower. Referees are instructed to have an increase in official's timeouts to allow for water breaks at a minimum of one per quarter or more at their discretion.

E. Rain/Lightning Delay

All games will be continued as normal during times of rain. However, if a lightning strike is seen by an official. The game may be paused and continued thirty (30) minutes from the last seen lightning strike.

F. Tornado Warning/Thunderstorm

If weather is severe enough, and lightning, hail, and/or tornados are present. The game shall be stopped immediately, and everyone shall take cover inside of the school until it's considered safe.

Section 8: Post Season (Playoff format)

A. School Classification and Post Season Formatting TBD

