

Official Rules of WASA Sports Flag Football League

Section 1 – Playing Field and Equipment

The field, except for indoor flag football, is approximately 80 yards long and approximately 30 yards wide, and consists of a 60-yard playing field and two 10-yard end zones. Indoor flag football is played on a slightly smaller field. Standard college or pro-size footballs must be used.

Section 2 – Team rosters

The initial roster upon sign-up is for 10 players as 10 players is the maximum number of players allowed for the initial registration fee. However, each team may carry a maximum of 15 players on their roster as 5 additional roster spots can be added for \$50 each. Four (4) players are required on the field at all times, which includes a minimum of two (2) females. All teams must complete their roster before they are eligible to play. It is the team captain's responsibility to verify that each player is included on the roster before any game is played. Participants may not play on more than one team in a league and tournament.

1. **Uniforms** – All teams must wear uniform shirts (same color; same jersey style) with UNIQUE numbers permanently affixed to the back of the jersey. Jerseys that meet these criteria are provided by WASA Sports and are included in your team registration fees. Pocket less shorts are strongly recommended. At the start of each play, all players must have shirts tucked into pants, or shirts must terminate one inch above the flag football belt line. No jewelry is permitted.
2. **Shoes** – All players should wear shoes with molded rubber or removable cleats for the outdoor leagues. Any type of tennis shoe (no cleats) is recommended for indoor leagues. Bare feet, street shoes (non-athletic) and shoes with metal cleats are not allowed.
3. **Belts and Flags** – All players will use a flag belt provided by WASA Sports Flag Football. Belts are to be worn snugly around the waist, with flags at either hip (three flags per belt). Towels, playbooks, or any other items tucked into a player's waistband are considered flags, and constitute a flag pull if pulled during play.

Section 3 – Player Conduct

1. Team members and spectators are bound by these game rules, and shall be governed by the decisions of the assigned game officials or WASA Sports Flag Football representatives.
2. **The use of drugs or alcohol is strictly prohibited. First offense will result in a 1-week suspension; second offense will result in player/team being dropped from league without a refund.**

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3. Park rules will be in effect related to pets. Also, no littering on the sidelines. Teams must clean-up their area immediately after their game.
4. Zero tolerance for any unsportsmanlike conduct, including trash talk, verbal abuse and rough play. Offending players may be ejected from game and/or league play.
5. All players shall abide by the decisions of the officials. Players are not allowed to show objectionable demonstration or dissent at an official's decision by throwing equipment of any sort (balls, cones, etc.) or other forceful actions.
6. Players/teams may be suspended and/or ejected from game field any time before, during or after game. Suspended players/teams may be asked to not be at the field during suspension. Players attending games during suspension and being disruptive will subject their team to further penalty at the discretion of the officials. Players ejected from a game automatically receive, at a minimum, a one game suspension (the next game). NO REFUNDS GIVEN.
7. In addition to immediate ejection from the game, any player involved in fighting will be subjected to a minimum suspension of two (2) games and a \$50 dollar fine (max of \$100/team). Any team "clearing the bench" to fight will be penalized with a loss of that game, a minimum one-week suspension, and a \$100 fine. A suspended player and/or team will not be reinstated until the suspension and fines are served and paid.
8. Any player who verbally abuses (yells, curses, scream, threatens) a WASA Sports Flag Football official or representative following a game will at a minimum be subject to a one (1) game suspension and possible fine.
9. Players may not at any time lay a hand upon, push, shove, strike or threaten an official or representative of the WASA Sports Flag Football league. Players involved in such action before, during or after a game shall be permanently banned from participating in any WASA Sports Flag Football League event, and can be prosecuted for assault and battery.
10. Players who received a **second** personal foul (intentional or not) will be automatically ejected from the game, along with the team captain; play will continue. Should a team captain receive two personal fouls in a single game, the team will forfeit the game.
11. Defensive players should be advised that it is illegal to count the six-second clock or cadence out loud. This count will be done by the officials. Officials will allow one warning; teams not heeding warnings will be assessed a penalty of 15 yards for unsportsmanlike conduct.

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12. Only assigned captains on the field are allowed to confer with officials during the game. Captains only are asked to contact the league directors to discuss disputes. Players who wish to protest calls should remain calm while at the field, and protest to the officials through the team captain.
13. Captains are responsible for informing their players of these rules, and will be responsible for the conduct of their team and its spectators. Captains and/or teams will be subject to expulsion if unable to control team participants or spectators. Captains are also advised to review the Captain's Constitution located on the league website.

Section 4 – League Rules

1. **Game Time** – Games will consist of two (2) 20-minute running halves, except for indoor flag football, which will consist of two (2) 15-minute running halves.

The clock will stop when:

- Either team uses one of its time-outs (see time-outs directly below), or
- In the last two minutes of the second half if the score is within 16 points (see “official clock” section directly below), or

If an official clock is in effect, the clock will stop until the SNAP for:

- Incomplete passes;
- Receiving catcher goes out of bounds;
- Extra point attempts;

During regular play, the official will blow the game back into play following an extra point attempt.

- Quarterback sacks;
- Six-second fouls;
- Changes of possession.

The clock will stop only until the ball is SET for:

- ALL offensive and defensive penalties in the last 2 minutes of the second half (exception: 6-second foul).

Official has the right to stop the clock, or not to do so, if deemed necessary or appropriate.

2. **Time-Outs** – Each team is allowed two (2) time-outs per game. Time out duration is approximately one minute. Should a team be leading by 21 or more points in the second half, that team may not utilize any of its timeouts.

If the offense elects to punt, then decides not to, a time out will be charged to that team. If the team has no time-outs left, they must punt.

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3. **Scoring**

Touchdown = 6 points (8 points if scored by a female by reception or forward pass)

5 yard conversion = 1 point (2 points if scored by a female by reception or forward pass)

10 yard conversion = 2 points (4 points if scored by a female by reception or forward pass)

Safety = 2 points (4 points if a safety is the result of a female sack)

Interceptions returned for touchdowns during conversion attempts will be awarded 2 points (4 points if the interception and touchdown are from a female).

4. **Mercy Rule** – Should a team be trailing by 30 or more points with five (5) minutes left in the game, the clock will not stop AND the referees will not allow either team to utilize their remaining time outs. Should a team be trailing by 12 or more points with two (2) minutes remaining in the game, the clock will not stop.

5. **Mercy Rule Cont.** – Should a team be trailing by at least thirty (30) points at any time during a game, that team will start each offensive possession at a minimum of midfield unless a turnover resulted in better field position. The team that is trailing while the mercy rule is in effect will have one extra player (5 total players) on the field for the entire offensive series (including extra point attempt) while the defense will field only 4 players (2 males and 2 females). Each team winning by at least thirty (30) points will have only one opportunity to score a touchdown once inside of the 10 yard line (a female does not have to score inside on that one opportunity when the mercy rule is in effect – refer to the “Possession” section below). Once the score is within thirty (30) points, this rule will no longer apply.

6. **Forfeits** – A game will be ruled a forfeit in the event a team does not show for their game (within 10 minutes after game time), or by a team’s inability to start or finish the game with a minimum of four (4) players (see “Number of Players”). Referees shall keep the official time.

7. **Number of Players** – Each team is required to have at least four (4) players to start a game with a minimum of two (2) females. Teams that are short players at the scheduled start time will be given a five (5) minute grace period to field a minimum team, but will be penalized six (6) points at the discretion of the officials. Referees shall keep the official time. If team is not successfully fielded at the end of the grace period, game will be an official forfeit. There must be at least two (2) girls on the field for each team at all times during play.

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8. **Tied Game** – In the case of a tied game, an overtime tiebreaker will be played at the end of regulation time. Captains will meet with the official for a coin toss to determine possession of the ball.

Both teams get a series of four (4) plays, with no time-outs. The first team takes possession of the ball at mid-field. If the team is unsuccessful in scoring, the spot of advancement is marked. The opposing team then takes possession at mid-field, and has four attempts to advance the ball going the same direction, either for yardage or to score.

If an interception occurs during overtime, the offense is awarded yardage gained to the lesser of 1) the line of scrimmage prior to the interception or 2) the point to where the INT is returned. If the ball is returned beyond the mid-field; the defense automatically wins.

Whichever team advances farthest, or gains the most points, wins. Teams must always go for “the win” when attempting extra points. For example, if the first team scores and earns an extra point, the second team must attempt 2 extra points should they score. Teams winning by yardage are awarded 1 point.

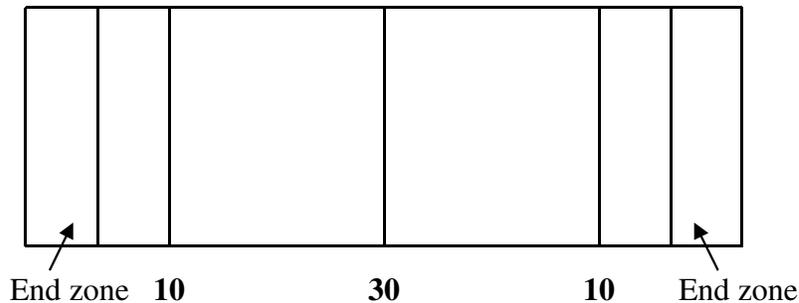
If teams advance equally, and score remains tied, the game will go into **sudden death OT**. Each team will have a single play going out from their own 10-yard line to score or advance the ball farthest. One point is awarded to the winning team, regardless of whether the win is by yardage or scoring.

In a tied game, any defensive penalty will result in the application of the penalty plus a re-play of the down. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty (either in regulation or in overtime).

9. **Coin Toss** – Officials will call “Coin Toss” at mid-field prior to game with the captains of each team. Winner of the coin toss chooses to be on offense or defense or the direction they want to go in the first half. Loser of coin toss decides direction of ball if the winner chooses offense or defense or decides to be on offense or defense first if the winner chooses direction. At half time, teams switch sides, and team starting game on defense begins second half on offense.

10. **Possession** – Starts at offense’s 10-yard line.
 - 4 downs for first down – 30 yard line
 - 4 downs for first down – 10 yard line
 - 4 downs inside 10 yard line

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A female player must touch the ball at least once every four plays during a particular possession (the center having possession at the beginning of a down is excluded). Touch the ball includes a forward pass (a pass BEYOND the line of scrimmage AND in the vicinity of a receiver) or receiving a pass beyond the line of scrimmage. If a female player does not touch the ball in four plays on a particular possession, there will be a turnover on downs.

If defense successfully defends goal inside the 10-yard line, ball is always returned to at least the 10-yard line upon turnover on downs.

Possession is when a player controls the ball while touching one or both, or any part of his body other than his hand(s) to the ground inbounds. Inbounds is determined by the lines on the field (when available), regardless of the position of field cones or markers. All inbounds and possession calls are ultimately determined by the officials.

11. **Spotting the ball** – The ball’s forward progress is measured at the farthest advancement of the body or ball when player is in possession of the ball.
12. **Taking a Knee** – This will not stop the clock. Play is live until ball carrier is either touched or flagged.
13. **Intentional Grounding** – Is illegal and the defense will be rewarded with a sack. The attempted pass must be in the vicinity of a receiver. If an attempted backward pass (behind the line of scrimmage) is incomplete, the ball will be placed at the spot where the ball hit the ground.
14. **Inadvertent Whistle** – In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has the option to either replay the down or to take the play at the point the whistle has blown. Should an inadvertent whistle occur after an interception, the ball will be marked at the spot where the whistle was blown.
15. **“All Passing” League** – All players are eligible to catch the ball. The ball must cross the line of scrimmage in the air to advance. Receivers must have at least one foot in-bounds for a legal catch. (See possession paragraph above)

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16. **Six Second Rule** – Quarterback has six (6) seconds to release the ball; time clock is from snap of ball. The ball must be completely out of the quarterback's hand before duration of time. If the ball is not thrown within six seconds, it is a sack and team is assessed a ten (10) yard penalty in addition to a loss of down. During a muffed snap, the 6-second count continues to run from the time the ball hits the ground or the quarterback.

In the case of a ball being batted back to the QB by the defense, the QB may run with the ball (acting like a receiver). If the QB catches the ball *behind* the line of scrimmage, he has the option to either run or throw the ball with **no** time limit.

If the QB drops the ball after taking possession of the snapped ball, the play is blown dead. If this takes place while the QB is throwing the ball, the play is incomplete and the ball returns to the line of scrimmage. Otherwise, the ball is spotted where dropped.

17. **Field Markers** – Field markers are used to mark the line of scrimmage and rush line. QB (or another offensive player) is responsible for moving markers forward after each play. Failure to do so will result in a penalty for delay of game. **This is not the responsibility of the officials.**
18. **Counting Out Loud** – It is illegal (for offense or defense) to count the six seconds out loud. Officials will allow one warning; teams not heeding warnings will be assessed a penalty of 15 yards for unsportsmanlike conduct.
19. **Begging A Call** – During or after a play, if a possible infraction occurs and players or coaches from either the field or sidelines begin yelling out or excessively question calls, a penalty of at least 5 yards can be tacked onto the end of the play, based on the discretion of the officials.
20. **Cussing** – Use of foul language on the field or sidelines during a game is prohibited. This carries a 5-yard penalty per incident. (Not to be confused with unsportsmanlike conduct which carries a 15-yard penalty), officials discretion.
21. **Center Snaps**
- Quarterback can receive ball directly from behind center's legs, via long snap (shot gun), or from standing center who tosses ball from his side.
 - Wild/muffed snaps are live (for six seconds).
 - Center must always be behind ball at time of snap.
 - If defensive player recovers a “muffed snap”, the result of the play is a sack; there is no change in possession unless that recovery occurs on fourth down.

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22. **Double Passes** – Double passes are allowed behind the line of scrimmage, and are subject to the six-second rule. The six second count will continue until ball is thrown past the line of scrimmage. Dropped double passes are blown dead and spotted where the ball is dropped. Shovel passes are legal and can be advanced as long as the ball is thrown past the line of scrimmage. Ball must be completely released within six seconds of the snap. There can be no forward advancement of the ball on a lateral or shovel pass to a receiver behind the line of scrimmage (the key is a lateral pass).
23. **Hand-Offs, Laterals and Snaps from Center** to motion man are all legal plays and still cannot be advanced until a pass is made beyond line of scrimmage (subject to six-second rule from the snap of the ball).
24. **Downfield Laterals** – are legal. Receiver, after catching ball, may lateral. Ball must be lateralled behind the progress of the initial receiver. Dropped laterals are spotted where the ball lands or at the spot of the initial receiver, whichever nets the least yardage. A lateral dropped into the end zone results in a safety.
25. **Flag Guarding** – This is considered intentional or unintentional covering of the flag. It is best for the ball carrier to run with the ball out from his body using two hands to avoid a flag guarding call. In addition, the ball carrier cannot lower his head or shoulders to charge through the opponent. An offensive ball carrier must attempt to avoid the defender and cannot collide with a defender to take him out of play. In addition, the QB cannot use his body or the ball to impede a rusher's ability to pull the QB's flag. Flag guarding carries a 10-yard penalty. A flag guard in the end zone results in a safety.
26. **Blocking** – Blocking can only be done to protect the quarterback, and must always be done with extended arms (no body blows) and open hands. Absolutely no blocking is allowed below the waist or above the shoulders. Blocker and rusher must always keep their hands off the opposition's face or head. If not, a penalty will be assessed. Once blocking contact is made with the rusher behind the line of scrimmage, it is the responsibility of the rusher to make an attempt to get around the blocker without bull rushing (overpowering the blocker or running the blocker over). See "illegal rush" below. This could also result in an unsportsmanlike penalty depending on the excessiveness of the action, which will be determined by the official.

No blocking rusher from behind (unless contact is maintained when rusher spins, and then blocker cannot drive defender into ground). Once contact is lost, there is no blocking to the back. No clipping. No holding. It is illegal to cross the line of scrimmage for a block. No rips; no head contact – 5-yard penalty. **NO DOWNFIELD BLOCKING ALLOWED.**

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27. **Impeding the Rusher** – Offense cannot get in the way of or knock down the rusher; offense must avoid the rusher (unless it is the offensive player's intention to block the rusher behind the line of scrimmage). This carries a 5-yard penalty. Center must do all the blocking behind the line of scrimmage.
28. **Bump and Run** – One initial bump is allowed by defense directly on the line of scrimmage only, and **only after the offense has crossed the line**. Defense may slide with the offense on the line. Offense may defend self on line of scrimmage. Bumping must be done with extended arms (no body blows) and open hands, between the waist and shoulders. No contact to face/head. No clipping or holding. **NO DOWNFIELD BUMPING ALLOWED.** Any contact on the bump and run is to be done solely on the line of scrimmage-official's discretion.
- If offense is bumped or pushed out of bounds by defense, offense may re-enter field and continue play. If offensive player is not pushed, that player cannot be the next player to have possession.
29. **Pass Interference** – No face guarding by the defense if the offensive player must come back to the ball; defense must look for, and play the ball. In the case of a tipped ball, defender must play the ball, NOT the player. Defense cannot make contact with the receiver until after the ball is touched by the receiver or in an attempt to intercept the pass. Pass interference calls are left up to the discretion of the officials. Pass interference penalties carry an automatic first down at the spot of the foul. If a defensive pass interference penalty occurs in the end zone, the ball will be placed at the 1-yard line with an automatic first down.
30. **Stripping** – Absolutely no stripping of the ball allowed. Players must go for the flags. The stripping rule comes into play only when the receiver has brought the ball into their body or when the QB has possession of the ball. 5-yard penalty.
31. **Rushing** – Defensive rusher(s) must start rush five yards from line of scrimmage, and be completely behind the rush mark. If rusher jumps offside, then goes back behind rush mark, he may still rush. Rusher must go for the QB's flags or straight up to block the pass. There is absolutely no knocking the ball out of the QB's hands.

There is no limit to the number of players who may rush. Rusher must keep shoulders up and make an attempt to avoid offense. No ripping; no holding. If the ball is passed behind the line of scrimmage, the rusher rule is not in effect once the initial pass is completed.

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32. **Roughing the Passer** – This is when the passer is hit BEFORE, DURING, or AFTER a pass. Any contact to the ball or body is a penalty – rusher must go for the flag or up to block ball. Penalty will be tacked on to the end of the play. This rule is not in effect when a defender tips the ball, or when the QB's follow-through results in contact. 10-yard add-on penalty, discretion call by official.
33. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** – Carries a 15-yard penalty. Includes unnecessary roughness, trash talking, and verbal abuse. Official's discretion.
34. **Offside** – If offensive player(s) line up offside, it is a dead ball play. If defensive player lines up offside, it is a live ball play. The officials will notify the offense when all players are onside. Either offside results in a five-yard penalty.
35. **Formations** – Three receivers stacked on one side or “trips” formation to one side of the center is an illegal formation. You can motion out of this three-receiver set. A 4-player team may stack receivers in any formation.
36. **Player Down of Own Accord** – If receiver catches the ball and falls to the ground on own accord, receiver can get up and run, unless flag is pulled or player is touched while on ground by opposing team. This is a judgment call by officials. Officials are advised to blow play dead if it is even close, especially in heavy traffic.
37. **Illegal Motion** – Players, markers and **officials** must be set for at least one count before the ball is snapped. Only one player can go in motion on any given play. There can be no forward motion until the ball has been snapped. **The ball cannot be snapped until the official says that the “ball is set.”**
38. **Picks** – are illegal. If player intentionally runs into (makes contact with) a defensive player to free up an offensive player, it is considered a pick play and is prohibited. It is not considered a pick without contact. Offense is not allowed to discontinue a route to impede the defense. This call is made at the discretion of the official.
39. **“Last Man Rule”** – If there is no one between the ball carrier and the end zone, and the defensive player tackles, pushes, or holds in an effort to stop the offensive player from scoring, the offense will be awarded a touchdown.
40. **Interceptions** – Returned but stopped inside the 10-yard line will be advanced to the 10-yard line (except in overtime). Interceptions in the end zone are considered a live ball and can be returned.
41. **Fumbles** – are dead at the point of the fumble, and cannot be advanced. No change of possession (unless there is a muffed snap as previously mentioned).

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42. **Punting** – Punted ball may be returned. Return team may field any two designated punt returners. A lateral is allowed on a punt return. The punting team cannot run down field until the ball has been kicked. **NO BLOCKING ALLOWED ON PUNT RETURNS.** Ball is ruled dead if the punt is not fielded cleanly, dropped by return team or downed by punting team (official's discretion).

If the offense elects to punt, then decides not to, a time out will be charged to that team. If the team has no time-outs, they must punt.

A punt is spotted at the change of possession regardless of the spot on the field (a punt is the only time that a ball can be downed inside the 10 yard line). Punts downed in the end zone will be spotted at the 10-yard line.

Punts that hit the roof in indoor leagues are marked dead at the spot the ball hits the ground.

43. **Interference on Punt Returns** – Defense must allow return man room (minimum of 5 yards) to receive the punt. Official's judgment call. 10-yard penalty.

Substitution – Can be done after ball is blown dead. For *substitute* receiver to be a legal player, they must be at least five yards from sidelines (unless coming out of the huddle) and have entered from the team's common sideline. With the exception of timeouts, only 5 players are allowed in the huddle – infraction will result in a 5-yard penalty and replay of down.

Section 5 – Scheduling

WASA Sports Flag Football reserves the right to change scheduling, and will notify team captains within 24 hours of such if changes have been made. Captains will be the only members of team contacted by WASA Sports Flag Football. Team captains are responsible for notifying their teammates of any schedule changes.

Section 6 – Penalties (Offensive) – *all offensive penalties will be immediately blown dead*

NOTE: If player crosses first down marker before infraction, and penalty brings ball back, it is still a first down.

NOTE: All offensive penalties behind the line of scrimmage will be assessed from the line of scrimmage.

1. **Offside** = 5 yards + replay of down (dead ball penalty)

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2. **Delay of game** = 5 yards + replay of down (25 seconds allowed between plays)
3. **Illegal pass (quarterback)** = 5 yards + loss of down (quarterback crosses line of scrimmage before releasing ball)
4. **Illegal pass (receiver)** = 5 yards + loss of down (receiver catches ball behind line of scrimmage before releasing ball)
5. **Kicking the ball out of bounds on a muffed snap** = 15 yards + loss of down
6. **Illegal blocking behind the line of scrimmage** = 5 yards + loss of down
7. **Illegal downfield blocking** = 5 yards from the spot of illegal block
8. **Illegal motion** = 5 yards + replay of down
9. **Diving/jumping to advance ball or avoid flag pull** = loss of down at point of foul (ball returned to place player left his feet)
10. **Offensive interference** = 10 yards + loss of down
11. **Flag guarding** = 10 yards + loss of down from spot of foul. This penalty can only be assessed if the flag has *not* been pulled.
12. **Unsportsmanlike conduct** = 15 yards from end of play

Section 7 – Penalties (Defensive)

1. **Illegal rush** = 5 yards + replay of down, or decline penalty
2. **Illegal flag pull/Holding** = 5 yards marked from end of run
3. **Illegal contact** = 5 yards + replay of down
4. **Pass interference** = automatic first down at spot of foul. No face guarding by defense; defense must look for and play the ball. Any interference committed by defense in end zone, ball will be placed at two-yard line. In case of a tipped ball, defender must play the ball, NOT the player.
5. **Stripping the ball** = 5 yards
6. **Roughing the passer** (any contact to quarterback's arms) = 10 yards + automatic first down
7. **Last man call** = automatic TD for offense (last defensive player holds up or pushes out of bounds the ball carrier)
8. **Unsportsmanlike conduct** = 15 yards + automatic first down

NOTE: 2 personal fouls by team member = ejection from game along with the team captain

NOTE: 2 personal fouls by team captain = forfeiture of game.

NOTE: Captains are strongly encouraged to read the Captain's Constitution and to share these rules with their team. WASA Sports Flag Football is always available to listen to possible rule changes and reasons why rules are not working.