

# **Buckeye Invitational Games Rules**

## **1. GENERAL RULES**

Fields are approximately 70 yards long and 30 yards wide.

OHSAA rules will govern play except as noted below.

The game is played 5 vs. 5. The minimum a team needs to play a game is 4 players.

Only 1 coach is allowed in the huddle during play. The coaches should not interfere with the course of play in any way. Offensive coaches can not act as a screen and defensive coaches can not stand on the playing field.

There is absolutely no blocking, screening or tackling allowed (incidental contact is NOT considered blocking or tackling). The referees are the final decision-maker on this.

A roster of at least seven eligible players will be maintained by the Director. Only players on the official roster may be used in games. The age bracket in which a player participates should be determined by the player's age as of May 23, 2009. Players may play up in an age bracket but not down, but may only be listed on one roster and play for one team. Rosters may be modified at check-in before the first game, but not thereafter. Use of non-roster players is prohibited and at the Director's discretion may result in a forfeit of all games in which the player participated. Use of a non-roster player may result in disciplinary action, including suspension of the coach. No refunds will be given.

Injured players must sit out 1 play even if a timeout is called.

Teams are responsible for their own water and first aid. No visible cuts or blood on clothing or persons.

The game ball shall be a conventional football constructed of leather, rubber, or similar material.

The ball must be inflatable and have seams. The allowable sizes vary by age group. These must be provided by each team:

Ages 8 and under: Pee Wee Size

Ages 9-12: Junior Size

Ages 13 and up: Youth Size

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## **2. FLOW OF THE GAME**

A coin toss determines first possession. The coin toss will be based on OHSAA rules. The referee will explain your options on the field. Teams will switch directions and first possession at 2<sup>nd</sup> half.

The offensive team takes possession of the ball on its 5-yard line and has 3 plays to cross midfield and obtain a first down. If the offensive team fails to cross mid-field, the ball changes possession and the opposition starts its drive from their own 5-yard line.

Once a team crosses midfield, it has 3 more plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the opposition starts its drive from their own 5-yard line.

All possession changes, except for interceptions, start on the offense's own 5-yard line.

Teams will play (2) 20-minute halves with a 5-minute halftime.

All games will have a running clock, except during the final (1) minute of the game and the 1<sup>st</sup> half in which a "Pro Clock" will be used. The clock will be stopped after incomplete passes, plays that end out of bounds, during timeouts, during a change of possession, to set the ball for a 1<sup>st</sup> down and during extra points. Officials can also stop the clock during play at any time at their discretion. The "Pro Clock" will not be used in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half if a team is winning by more than 20 points.

Each team will have (2) 30-second timeouts per half. The clock will stop for all timeouts.

Each team, not the referee, is responsible for retrieving their ball after each play and getting it back to the referee. Once the referee spots the ball, a team has 30-seconds to snap the ball. The referees will announce when the clock is down to 10 seconds.

Teams must have at least 2 players on the line-of-scrimmage including the center.

## **3. SCORING**

Touchdown – 6 points

Extra Point – 1 point (played from the 5-yard line, no running allowed) or 2 points (played from the 12-yard line, running allowed). If an extra point pass is intercepted it may not be returned.

Safety – 2 points – The team recording the safety will also receive the ball on their own 5 yard line.

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### **4. RUNNING**

The quarterback (the person receiving the snap) cannot run with the ball.

The QB must take full possession of the snap (no fumbleroosky). The snap must be between the legs – not to the side. The QB can be under the center or in shotgun formation.

Direct handoffs and pitch plays behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. The offense may use multiple handoffs/pitches behind the line of scrimmage. Only one lateral or pitch of any kind is allowed past the line of the scrimmage (the downfield pitch play MUST be from a downfield receiver who catches the ball and takes no more than one step before pitching the ball, i.e. Hook & Ladder or Hook & Lateral).

“No running zones,” located 5-yards from each end zone and 5-yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage, power running situations.

The offensive team can not run a running play when the line of scrimmage is in a “no-running zone”.

The player taking the handoff/pitch can pass from behind the line of scrimmage.

Once the ball has been handed off or pitched, all defensive players are eligible to rush.

Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (no diving or jumping allowed).

The ball is spotted where the ball is located when the flag is pulled, not the ball carrier’s feet.

### **5. RECEIVING**

All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage.)

Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. The motion cannot be towards the line of scrimmage.

A player must have at least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

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## **6. PASSING**

The quarterback has a (7) seven-second “pass clock.” If a pass is not thrown within the seven seconds, the play is dead (treated as an incomplete pass).

Once the ball is handed off or pitched, the seven-second rule is no longer in effect.

Passes can be behind or beyond the line-of-scrimmage. If the pass is incomplete and is thrown behind the line-of-scrimmage and behind the passer, the ball will be placed where it hit the ground.

Interceptions can be returned by the defense. If the interception was not returned for a TD, the team that intercepted the ball will begin where the player’s flag was pulled except when a team is leading by 20 or more points. If a team is winning by 20, they will maintain position of the ball but will start on their own 5 yard line.

## **7. DEAD BALLS**

The ball must be snapped between the legs to start play. If the snap hits the ground, the play is ruled dead. The ball will be spotted where it hits the ground. If the snap hits the ground in the end-zone, it is a safety. No stripping of the football.

Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.

Play is ruled “dead” when the ball carrier’s flag is pulled out, ball carrier steps out of bounds, a touchdown or safety is scored, or the ball carrier’s knee hits the ground. If the flag belt falls off a player without being pulled, the ball will be placed where the flag fell off.

## **8. RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK**

All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.

Any player(s) can rush the quarterback as long as they start seven (7) yards back.

Players not rushing the quarterback may defend at the line of scrimmage.

Once the ball is handed off, the seven-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.

A referee or marker will designate 7 yards from the line of scrimmage.

The rushers can not interfere with the quarterbacks throwing arm. A penalty will be called if the player hits the quarterback’s arm.

If a team is winning by more than 20 points, they will not be permitted to rush/blitz the quarterback.

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## 9. PENALTIES

### 1. All defensive penalties will be 5-yards:

Off-sides

Pass Interference

Illegal Contact (holding, blocking, bump & run guarding, etc.)

Illegal Flag Pull (before receiver has the ball)

Illegal Rushing (starting rush inside the seven-yard marker)

### 2. All offensive penalties will be 5-yards:

Illegal Motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc)

Offensive Pass Interference (illegal pick, pushing off defender)

Flag Guarding (using hands to “swat” defensive hands away or the flag)

Delay of Game (clock stops if inside one minute in half)

Spiking the football after a touchdown. The penalty will be assessed on the extra point attempt.

3. If the penalized team is less than 5-yards from the end zone, the penalty will be half the distance to the goal.

4. The referees will use their best judgment when making calls and may give warnings at their discretion. Please respect their decision. Only the head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players and/or parents cannot question judgment calls.

5. Halves cannot end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines the penalty.

6. Personal fouls will be 10 yard penalties.

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### **10. OVERTIME RULES**

If the score is tied at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, teams move directly into overtime.

Each team will have an offensive series.

There will be a coin toss to start the overtime. During overtime, the teams will start at midfield and have three plays to score. If they score they will choose to go for one or two extra points. Teams will proceed in the same direction.

If the teams are still tied after the first overtime period, a deepest penetration rule will apply.

Each team will have 1 timeout in the overtime period, regardless of how many they had at the end of regulation.

### **11. SPORTSMANSHIP / ROUGHING**

If the referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the offending player (and their coach) will receive a warning and possibly an unsportsmanlike penalty. No more than 2 warnings will be given. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> infraction, the player will be ejected from the game. For the safety of all players, excessive rough play will not be tolerated.

Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine language that may be considered offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators. If trash talking occurs, the referee may give one warning. If it continues, the player and/or coach will be ejected from the game (and possibly for the rest of the tournament depending on the circumstances). They are required to leave the immediate field area. No refunds of any kind will be given.

Teams are responsible for their fans.

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### **12. ATTIRE**

Cleats are allowed. No metal cleats.

Mouthpieces are required for all players (no exceptions).

No jewelry, rubber sports bands or hats.

Teams must provide identical light and dark jerseys for the entire team. All jerseys must be tucked in during play at all times.

All hard and soft casts must be completely covered according to OHSAA rules and a physician's signed "ok to play" note must be shown to the refs in order to play in any game.

Baseball hats can be worn during the game. They must be worn backwards.

Official Flag-a-Tag Sonic Flag Football belts must be worn (official flag length is 16½ inches). Teams supply their own flags.

Shorts/pants cannot be the same color of the flag belt. Shorts/pants cannot have pockets.

### **13. MISCELLANEOUS**

Each game will be officiated by two referees, if only one referee is available, games will be adjusted by age division, youngest to oldest.

Tournament organizers would like to thank i9 Sports for the use of their flag football rules.