



Grayslake Park District Athletic Program Parent Handbook

Grayslake Park District
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*** Please make sure you fill out the Player/Parent Code of Ethics and Athletic Emergency Form after you read the Parent Handbook. Forms can be found online at www.glpd.com.**

Philosophy

The Grayslake Park District Philosophy towards youth sports adheres to the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) Bill of Rights for Young Athletes.

AAHPERD Bill of Rights for Young Athletes

- I. Right to participate in sports
- II. Right to participate at a level commensurate with each child's maturity and ability
- III. Right to have qualified adult leadership
- IV. Right to play as a child and not as an adult
- V. Right of children to share in the leadership & decision-making of their sport
- VI. Right to participate in safe and healthy environments
- VII. Right to proper preparation for participation in sports
- VIII. Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success
- IX. Right to be treated with dignity
- X. Right to have fun in sports

To elaborate on this Bill of Rights the Park District feels that it is extremely important for our participants to have fun. The structure of youth athletic programs is to emphasize the fun of the sport in a safe and healthy environment.

The Park District is also concerned about the development of its participants. This development focuses on the following key elements:

1. **Physical:** To learn the sport skills, improve physical conditioning, develop good health habits and avoid injuries.
2. **Psychological:** To learn to control their emotions and develop feelings of self-worth.
3. **Social:** To learn cooperation in a team context and promote appropriate sportsmanship.

The Park District also attempts to give participants appreciation for the sport in which they participate. We hope added knowledge will make them feel comfortable both viewing the sport and/or participating in it, as they mature.

Through this philosophy, the Park District youth sports programs hope to produce children who appreciate sports, develop sports skills and value the concept of sportsmanship. Another goal of this philosophy is to give our youth a feeling of self-worth and a desire to improve themselves through sports.

The final authority in all situations that may arise within the program is the responsibility of the Park District staff.

EQUAL ACCESS

No eligible participant shall, on the basis of race, sex, creed, national origin, or disability be denied equal access to programs, activities, services or benefits, or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage or opportunity.

Rules of Conduct

BEHAVIOR

Participants are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior at all times. The following guidelines have been developed to help make Park District programs safe and enjoyable for all participants. Additional rules may be developed for particular programs and athletic leagues as deemed necessary by staff.

Participants shall:

- Show respect to all participants and staff, and take direction from staff
- Refrain from using abusive or foul language
- Refrain from causing bodily harm to self, other participants or staff
- Show respect for equipment, supplies, and facilities

All Coaches, Players, Parents and Spectators are responsible for making sure that they exemplify good sportsmanship.

The following behaviors are prohibited:

- Abusive language
- Baiting of referees
- Profanity
- Fighting
- Taunting
- Refusing to shake opponents' hands at the end of the game
- ****If any player or coach throws a ball or other piece of equipment in a spirit of anger or disgust, the referee shall call time and warn both benches that any repeat offense will result in the ejection of the player involved. If, in the referee's judgment, the action warrants, the player may be ejected without any bench warning.**

In addition, the following behaviors are also prohibited:

- Smoking/Tobacco use on Park District property
- Alcoholic beverages or any illegal substance

Head coaches are responsible for the behavior of assistant coaches, players, parents and spectators for their team. Use of profanity or other objectionable language by a player/coach/parent/spectator may result in ejection from the game and/or removal from the field area, at the discretion of the referee. No prior warning is required.

DISCIPLINE

A positive approach will be used regarding discipline. Staff will periodically review rules with participants during the program session. If inappropriate behavior occurs, prompt resolution will be sought (specific to each individual's situation). The Park District reserves the right to dismiss a participant whose behavior endangers the safety of themselves or others. If initial attempts to improve Player behavior are not successful, continued behavior problems may result in:

- Suspension from program for a designated time period.
- Removal from program.

Appeals by the participant and/or participant's parent/guardian may be directed to the Superintendent of Recreation.

****If a participant makes a direct threat of hurting himself, call the parent/guardian immediately. If a participant becomes overly aggressive and violent, call the police.**

Weather Conditions and Procedures

BAD WEATHER INFORMATION

1. Weather Hotline: (847) 223-7246
2. www.glpd.com
3. Grayslake Park District: (847) 223-7529
4. Brice Walsh (Recreation Supervisor)

Lightning is a violent act of nature and causes approximately 10 deaths per year in Illinois alone. In most instances, people injured by lightning are not directly hit. These non-direct hit injuries are caused by transients, currents that flow through people in the vicinity where lightning strikes the ground. Lightning strikes occur most frequently during the spring and summer months when thunderstorms are prevalent. It is the policy of the Grayslake Park District that all persons supervising outdoor activities be aware that when lightning or thunder is observed or heard, outdoor programs should be suspended and everyone should seek appropriate shelter. Supervisors should adhere to the following procedures and guidelines.

Outdoor Program:

- Instructors and Supervisors should listen to current weather forecasts the morning of any outdoor planned activities so that employees can be alert to changing weather conditions.
- Monitor weather conditions as they appear on the horizon.
- Monitor weather radios when possible.
- Designate buildings that can be used when severe weather occurs.
- Plan alternative indoor activities for camps and related programs.
- It is the responsibility of the official to remove all players from athletic fields at the first sight of lightning or the first sound of thunder.
- All athletic teams must take cover in their vehicles and remove themselves from all dugouts and fields.
- **Whenever lightning is observed or thunder is audible, all outdoor activities should be suspended for a minimum of 30 minutes after the last sign of lightning or thunder is noted.**

When Outside:

- Avoid areas that are higher than the surrounding landscape.
- Do not use a tree for shelter.
- Keep away from metal objects, including bicycles, golf carts, umbrellas, etc.
- Avoid standing near tall or metal objects such as fences, light poles or power lines.
- Boaters, swimmers, fishers should immediately leave the water area and find shelter.
- If you feel your skin tingle or your hair stand on end, squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands on your knees with your head between them. Make yourself as small a target as possible and minimize your contact with the ground.

Outdoor Programs at Alleghany Park

For the safety of our patrons, the Grayslake Park District has installed **STRIKE GUARD Lightning Detection System**. The base unit is located at the Alleghany Park Concession Building. This system predicts when conditions indicate the potential for a lightning strike.

- If siren sounds (solid tone) and strobe light is on, take shelter- strobe light remains on during lightning detection.
- When siren sounds three five-second intermittent blasts and the strobe light is off - it is safe to return.
- This system is not absolute protection. Use common sense.

Seek shelter immediately if: you hear one long siren, you hear thunder (regardless of siren), you see lightning (regardless of siren), if you see the strobe light on when arriving at the park.

When the STRIKE GUARD sounds the warning siren and the strobe light is on:

- All activities must be immediately stopped.
- Park patrons should seek shelter in their cars (with the windows rolled up) or in a building. Patrons should avoid areas that are higher than the surrounding landscape; they should not use a tree for shelter, and should keep away from metal objects such as bicycles, golf clubs, fences, umbrellas, etc.
- Even if the weather does not appear to be threatening, everyone should seek shelter. People have been struck by a bolt out of the blue (lightning that strikes when the sky is clear).
- Remain in the shelter until the STRIKE GUARD sounds three five-second blasts of the siren and the strobe light turns off, signaling the all-clear.

Tornado Policy:

- Go to a shelter as soon as warning is sounded. A vehicle is never a shelter area. Available First Aid Kits, flashlights and radios are to be taken to the shelter area if possible. Once in shelter location, teachers and/or program leaders should take a head count and supervisors should account for their staff.
- If in a facility, everyone should sit on floor. At time of impact, put hands on back of head; bring elbows together and put head to knees. If you are outside in a low area or ditch, lie in the ditch face down and cover your head with your hands.
- Do not leave the shelter area until an announcement or all clear signal is heard. If you are outside with no radio or phone, wait until sirens have stopped and then use your best judgment according to the present weather conditions.

When Indoors:

- When indoors, stand clear from doors and windows.
- Do not use electrical equipment, including hair dryers, curling irons, computers, etc.
- Do not attempt to unplug TVs, stereos or computers during a storm.
- Avoid contact with sinks, faucets and related piping.
- Do not use the telephone unless for emergency use.

Winter Weather

The Park District tries our best to stay open whenever there is a winter storm, however, there are times that the safety of our staff and patrons will force us to close facilities or cancel programs. The decision to close the facility or cancel programs will be made by the Executive Director or Superintendent of Recreation.

It is every employee's responsibility to ensure that sidewalks and entryways are properly salted and cleared of snow for everyone's safety. Therefore, if you are able and it is necessary, please spread salt or assist with clearing when needed. If you are not able to assist, please make the proper people aware of existing hazards.

The Executive Director or Superintendent of Recreation should approve all program cancellations and facility closings. If Grayslake School District #46 closes, all I Love Learning Preschool classes will be automatically cancelled. Other GLPD programs using D46 schools will make decisions independently. GLPD Staff will contact Coaches in case of any cancellations; coaches are responsible for alerting their players. The Superintendent of Recreation or Recreation Supervisors will announce any other recreation program cancellations.

Program staff and participants should be contacted by supervisors and/or available staff as soon as possible if canceling programs or closing facilities.

Uniforms

REMINDER FOR COACHES

- Players are required to wear their issued jerseys at every game.
- Players are to have shirts tucked in for pre-game warm-up and all games.

COACHES UNIFORMS

Coaches are required to wear their issued Park District coaching shirts on game days only. Just a reminder, all coaches are representatives of the Park District; the image that you present projects the image of the entire Park District.

Are participants allowed to have names printed on backs of jerseys?

NO. We ask coaches not to put their players' names on the back of their jerseys. This can be both a safety hazard (strangers calling players by name) and unfair to other teams. Uniforms are to remain as they are when distributed. If a team makes any alterations to their jerseys (aside from adjustments to address fit issues), each player will be required to purchase new jerseys.

JERSEY REPLACEMENTS

If a participant's jersey is lost or stolen, it becomes the responsibility of the participant's parent/guardian to contact the Athletic Supervisor for a replacement. Jersey replacement can take up to 3 weeks, and parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost.

Replacement Uniforms is quite expensive; cost varies depending on sport. Encourage participants to treat uniforms with pride and respect, and instruct all players to write their names *inside* all uniform parts (on the tag) and on any personal equipment (i.e. balls) with a permanent marker, so they can be easily identified. Reminder: You will not be reimbursed for the purchase of replacement uniforms.

Athletic League Rules

Please reference the rules section below that pertains to the sport your child is playing.

T-Ball Rules

GENERAL RULES

- This is an instructional league. It is designed for fun and to learn the basics of baseball.
- Base length will be 40'; pitching mound is 30'.
- All batters and runners must wear batting helmets at all times.
- There is no "tagging up" on a fly ball and no extra bases on passed balls/overthrows. When the fielder makes an attempt at a play, the runners must stop.
- NO stealing or lead-offs.
- A regulation game consists of no more than 4 innings or 1 hour and 15 minutes. Do not start a new inning after one-hour time.
- Home team is the last team on the schedule and needs to supply the equipment for the game. Home team takes the field first.

Negative behavior:

- Negative chatter is not allowed; encourage positive cheers for your players.
- Throwing of equipment is not allowed.
- Coaches are responsible for parents of children on your team.
- Head Coaches are responsible for other coaches on their team.

FIELDING

In both divisions, all players on a team will play the field. There will be a maximum of **10** players on the field at one time (unless there are only 1 or 2 kids on the bench, then let them play too). The balance of players will need to be rotated into the line-up so that each player has an equal amount of playing time. These fielding changes may be made halfway through the batting order per inning.

BATTING

Have a "bench coach" getting kids ready to come up to bat with helmet on.

Division I - Batters will hit only off of the tee (no coach pitch in this division regardless if the player is ready for it or not), all players on the team will bat each inning.

Division II - The batter will have the option of having a coach pitch to him/her (if they are able to make contact with the ball) or using the tee. If the coach pitches to the batter, the player has **only 5 attempts** to hit the pitched ball, then the tee will be brought back into play. Players not ready for the pitching will continue to use the tee as needed. Keep in mind that we have a time limit on the games (be sure that the player is capable of making contact prior to pitching to him/her during the game).

OUTS

Division I - We do not keep track of score/outs, both teams always win by "having fun."

Division II - Inning lasts until all players on the team have batted. Score will **not** be kept, but outs will be recognized and base runners will be taken off the bases if the out is made (The inning continues until all players have batted, even if 3 outs are recorded).

BASE-RUNNING

Division I - the batter will only advance one base at a time.

Division II - the base runner can advance bases from the hit only until the fielder picks up the ball, at which time the runner must stop. If the hit is into the outfield, the runner must stop when the ball is thrown into and reaches the infield.

1st-3rd Grade Girls' Recreational Softball Rules

GENERAL RULES

- The bases shall be 60 feet apart and pitching rubber at 35'
- An 11" Incredi-Ball softball will be used.
- Uniform shirts, shorts and visor must be worn for all games (with shirts tucked in). In cool weather, additional, appropriate clothing may be worn under the uniform (no hoods).
- Players shall wear helmets when batting, in the warm-up/on deck circle, and when running bases.
- Throwing bats or other equipment will not be tolerated.
- Any inning shall be considered completed when the entire roster has batted once. Outs will be recognized with the base runner retired. All players shall be in the batting line-up, whether or not they are playing a position in the field. The batting order CANNOT change throughout the entire game.
- All games shall be six innings or 1.25 hour in length unless called due to darkness or weather conditions. No inning should be started after one hour 10 minutes from the game start time. Extra innings shall not be allowed. The decision to call or postpone a game shall be the responsibility of the League Supervisor or with consent of both coaches if the League Supervisor is not available at the time.
- Teams that are short players may "borrow" from another GLPD team in this age group. Subs are to play the outfield.
- The season shall be considered INSTRUCTIONAL. There will be no recorded scores or standings. Every team "wins" by having fun!

PITCHING

Coaches will pitch to their own batters for the entire season. Coach "pitchers" shall not be allowed to field the ball and every effort should be made to avoid contact with the ball to allow the fielder to make the play. If the coaches make contact with the ball, it shall be considered a dead ball.

- The batter shall be allowed eight pitches to hit the ball.

FIELDING

- There shall be a maximum of 10 players on the field, including short-center, at any one time (if there are only 1-2 subs on the bench, then let them play in the outfield – be sure to explain the proper positions). All players should receive equal playing time.
- Substitutions should be made between innings.
- No player may sit out more than one inning in a row.
- No player shall be allowed to play in one position for more than 3 innings in any game.
- In the event of any overthrow or dropped ball as a result of a legitimate attempt to make a play, the runner(s) or batter shall not be allowed to advance any further than the base which the runner was approaching at the time of the throw. The batter will have the opportunity to "run out" a legitimate hit into the outfield.
- When a ball is thrown in from the outfield, it shall be considered a dead ball when it hits the infield, even if the defensive team does not actually have control of the ball.
- Base-stealing and leading off are not permitted.

Two defensive coaches shall be allowed on the field. They must be in foul territory and on opposite sides of the field. One offensive coach will be allowed at 2nd base in addition to the 1st and 3rd base coaches.

4th-6th Grade Girls' Recreational Softball Rules

GENERAL RULES

- The bases shall be 60' apart and pitching rubber at 35'
- An 11" sponge-centered softball will be used.
- Uniform shirts, shorts and visor must be worn for all games (with shirts tucked in). In cool weather, additional clothing may be worn under the uniform (no hoods).
- Players must wear helmets when batting, in the warm-up/on deck circle, and running bases.
- Throwing bats/other equipment will not be tolerated.
- An inning shall consist of three outs or once through the batting order. On the "last batter" of the inning, once a batted ball is in the possession of an infielder (in the infield), the inning for the batting team will be complete. There will be a continuous batting order; this order must remain the same throughout the entire game. A "batting order" will consist of one time through the number of girls on the team with the most players (if Team A has 13 girls and Team B has 11 girls, Team B would bat all 11 girls once, then continue back to the top of the order for 2 additional batters).
- All games shall be seven innings or 1¾ hour in length, unless called due to darkness or weather conditions. **No inning should be started after 1½ hours from the game start time.** Extra innings are not allowed. The decision to call/postpone a game is the responsibility of the League Supervisor (if Supervisor is not available, by consent of both coaches).
- Score will be kept for the individual games, but no standings will be kept.

PITCHING

Players will pitch to the batters. The pitcher will pitch until she has pitched 4 called "balls" (not strikes). At this time, if the batter has not hit or struck out, the offensive coach will then come in and pitch up to 5 additional pitches to the batter (coaches pitch to their own team's players). The strike count will remain the same when the coach comes in to pitch (if the batter has two strikes and the coach throws a strike, the batter is out on strikes). The batter will be called "out" if she does not get a hit; no walks will be given. If the player fouls the pitch off, the at-bat will continue, even if it leads to more than 5 pitches by the coach. A player will not be called out on a foul ball, unless the ball is caught. Coach "pitchers" are not allowed to field the ball; every effort should be made to avoid contact with the ball, to allow the fielder to make the play. If the coaches make contact with the ball, it shall be considered a dead ball.

- **Pitching form: Girls are to begin with both feet on the pitching rubber, facing the batter, with the ball showing. The pitcher may then step back with one foot, leaving the other foot in contact with the rubber throughout the pitch.**

FIELDING

- The defensive team will consist of 10 players. 7 players will be required to play a game; players may be borrowed from the other team to allow the game to be played, borrowed players must play in the outfield. Players must be a registered player of the Grayslake Park District league and equal or lesser age. Defensive players shall position themselves in a traditional manner. All outfield players shall be on the grass outside of the infield, except to make a play after a batted ball.
- All players must have equal playing time. No player may stay in one position for more than 3 innings. **No Player may sit out more than one inning in a row.**
- The "infield fly" rule will NOT be used. Clarify this with the umpire prior to starting.

BATTING / RUNNING BASES

Only one extra base will be allowed on an overthrow to an infielder per batted ball, regardless of the number of subsequent overthrows.

- Players must slide if there is a close play. Sliding must be feet first.
- **No base stealing is allowed, (no exceptions ex. wild pitch, poor throw back to pitcher etc.).** No leadoffs are allowed, if a player leaves the base early, the play shall be ruled dead and all runners must return to their original base. If problems persist, base runner will be called "out".

- **The strike zone shall be expanded as follows – one ball width higher than armpits to one ball lower than knees and one ball width wider than the plate inside and out.**
- **NO DROPPED 3RD STRIKE**

Base coaches can be parents or coaches (not players). **No defensive coaches will be allowed on the field.**

7th-10th Grade Girls' Recreational Softball Rules

GENERAL RULES

- The bases shall be 60' apart and pitching rubber at 40'
- A 12" regular softball will be used.
- Uniform shirts, shorts and visor must be worn for all games (with shirts tucked in). In cool weather, additional clothing may be worn under the uniform (no hoods).
- Players must wear helmets when batting, in the warm-up/on deck circle, and running bases.
- Throwing bats/other equipment will not be tolerated.
- An inning shall consist of three outs or a maximum of 6 runs per inning.
- All games shall be seven innings or 2 hours in length. **No inning should be started at 1¼ hours after the game start time.** They shall be played to the fullest extent possible unless the umpire rules that conditions do not permit completion or darkness becomes a factor.
- Score will be kept for the individual games, but no standings will be kept.

PITCHING

- Players will pitch to the batters. Batters will walk/strike out as normal.
- **Pitching form: Girls are to begin with both feet on the pitching rubber, facing the batter, with the ball showing. The pitcher may then step back with one foot, leaving the other foot in contact with the rubber throughout the pitch.**
- **If a pitcher hits 2 consecutive or 3 total batters in the same inning, they must be pulled from the mound. Any batter hit by a pitched ball will be awarded 1st base, as long as she has made an attempt to get out of the way of the ball. It is the umpire's discretion as to whether a girl has made an effort to get out of the way.**

FIELDING

- The defensive team will consist of 10 players with short center. 7 players will be required to play a game; players may be borrowed from the other team to allow the game to be played, borrowed players must play in the outfield. Players must be registered player of the Grayslake Park District league and equal or lesser age. Defensive players shall position themselves in a traditional manner. All outfield players shall be on the grass outside of the infield, except to make a play after a batted ball.
- All players must have equal playing time. No player may stay in one position for more than 3 innings.
- The "infield fly" rule will be used. Clarify this with the umpire prior to starting.

BATTING / RUNNING BASES

- The batting order must remain the same throughout the entire game.
- Players must slide if there is a close play or be called "out." It will be the discretion of the umpire whether the base runner had to slide or not. Sliding must be feet first.
- **If the ball is thrown to a base in an attempt to make a play, the ball is considered a live ball, and all runners can try to advance.**
- **On a wild pitch, a runner may attempt to advance. Only one runner can advance (no double steals) and runner can only advance one base (NOT home).**
- Base stealing is allowed after the ball crosses the plate. No lead offs are allowed. If a player leaves the base early, the play shall be ruled dead and all runners must return to their original base. If problems persist, base runner will be called "out." **(Double steals; stealing home and delayed steals will NOT be allowed).**
- **The strike zone shall be expanded as follows – one ball width higher than armpits to one ball lower than knees and one ball width wider than the plate inside and out.**
- **NO DROPPED 3RD STRIKE**

Base coaches can be parents or coaches (not players). All Players, Equipment and Coaches (other than base coaches) must be out of play at all times.

Co-Ed Youth Volleyball League Rules

GENERAL RULES

This is a non-competitive, instructional volleyball league. Our goal is to teach the skills involved in volleyball, while having fun! This is an instructional league and the focus of the league is on teaching volleyball, not on winning. All players, coaches and parents are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times. I.H.S.A. rules will be used with the following clarifications and exceptions:

PLAYERS

- Six players on the floor at a time.
- Players rotate clockwise one position when a player starts serving.
- Extra players rotate into the back center position, ensuring equal playing time for all players.
- If a team is short of players, they may borrow a registered player(s) from the league within the same division or lower. Teams unable to find additional players may play with less than 6 players.
- All players must have equal playing time per match. Do not "carry over" playing time to the next match.
- No jewelry may be worn by any player during practices/games including rings, earrings, necklaces, hair clips, etc.

SERVICE

- Players will serve from behind the designated line (boundary line for 7th-8th grade, 5' shorter line for 5th-6th grade, and 10' shorter line for 3rd-4th grade).
- Any serve touching the net and then going over the net (in bounds) will be considered "in play". A ball served into the net will be blown dead and a side-out awarded.

*****For 3 / 4 grade only**- After 3 successful serves by 1 player, there will be a side-out called, and the opposing team will get a chance to serve. Coaches are to assist with keeping track of the number of serves.

*****For 5 / 6 grade only**- A player will get a maximum of five serves. If, after five serves, the serving team maintains service, the players will rotate and the next player will take over service.

*****For 7 / 8 grade only**- For the first half of season, a player will get a maximum of five serves. If, after five serves, the serving team maintains service, the players will rotate and the next player will take over service. In the 2nd half of season, a player will serve until there is a side-out.

MATCHES

- A coin flip is held before the first game & third game to determine which team will serve/receive & pick sides.
- We will be using the rally scoring method; each serve, a point will be awarded (i.e. a serve which goes into the net results in a point for the receiving team). Whichever team earns the point also earns the next serve.
- A match will consist of three games played to 25 points (or first to 27). The winner of two games wins the match.
- You must win by 2 points. If one team has won the first two games, the third game SHOULD (if time allows) still be played to 15 (17 max, time permitting). Maximum time for matches is one hour.
- Each team gets two time-outs per game. An additional time out will be given if the score is tied at "game point" (24 or 14).

RULES

- Each team has three hits to return the ball to the other side of the net.
- A player cannot hit the ball twice in a row. A block does not count as a hit.
- The ball cannot be caught, lifted or carried.
- Players cannot cross over the centerline (but may step on the line) or touch the net during play (a net which is forced into the player is no infraction)
- No back row blockers or hitters are allowed.
- Blocking/Attacking the Serve is not allowed. An "attack" is any forward motion above the shoulders.
- Multiple Contact ("double hit") on the first play of the ball is legal on any play if it is a) the first of the team's three hits, or b) only one person attempts to play the ball.

Flag Football Rules

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

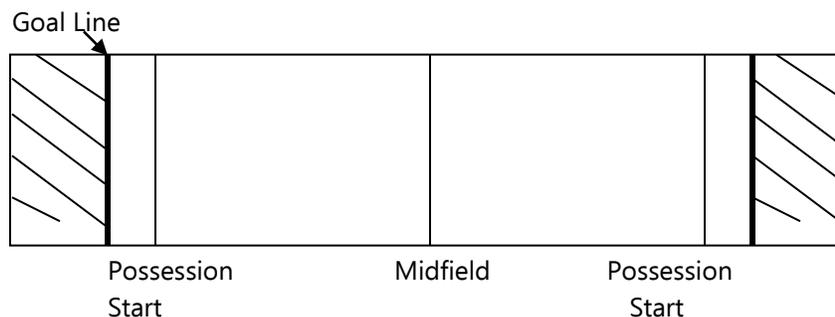
- This is a non-competitive league in that coaches are to emphasize learning and not winning. In fact, score will not be kept in the 5-7 year old leagues, it will be kept in the 8-10 league, *but standings will not be kept.*
- Football size used will be the K2 for 5-7 and TDJ for 8-10.
- Games will consist of two 20-minute halves, with a 5-minute half time.
- All games will be officiated by Park District staff and/or patched officials.
- There will be one 2min timeout per team for each half. Referee can cut time for timeouts.
- Coaches are encouraged to match skill level with the opposing team, particularly on the line to avoid injuries.
- It is recommended to rotate players during every game, so that they may be able to experience every facet of playing flag football. You may find it easiest to rotate players defensively and offensively by half.
- If a team has less than 7 players available at game time, both teams will play with 6, however, if one team has less than 6 players, that team is permitted to borrow a player from the opposing team or another Park District team of equal level.
- Offense must have a minimum of 4 players on the line of scrimmage, defense 3 players.
- Defensive set-up – On defense, no nose guard position will be used over center and the defensive line must be line up opposite the offensive line (no slot players).
- We will use the “re-do” rule in the 5-7 leagues. We will not call penalties - rather we will call a “re-do”, explain what infraction was made, and then re-play the down. The only exception to this rule is if the rules are “being abused”, i.e. pushing players out of bounds, tackling, or holding the ball carrier – the offensive team will receive an automatic 1st down and 5 yards from the infraction. In the 8-10 league, we will call the penalties outright and penalties will be marked off.
- All players will wear flag belts, even the lineman.
- Shirts/Jerseys must be tucked in and the white belt ends must be securely tied around the belt to prevent accidental pulling.
- All conversion plays (run and pass) will be scored as 1 point.
- Any ball fumbled, will be dead ball. **If it is a snapped ball to QB, QB may pick up and continue play. If defense touches bad snap to QB then play is dead.**
- Eligible Receivers – will only be the running/tailbacks or those players lined up outside of the guards/tackles.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

To advance over the opposing team’s goal through the use of running, or passing plays.

PLAY AREA

The playing field shall be not more than 70 yards long and not more than 30 yards wide. Two areas 20 yards from the goal line, marked with pylons, divide the field into three zones. End zones, 5 yards behind the goal line, are the areas in which scores are made.



PLAYERS

Each team shall be composed of seven players: Left End (LE), Left Guard (LG), Center (C), Right Guard (RG), Right End (RE), Quarterback (QB) and Halfback. It is 7vs7.

EQUIPMENT/UNIFORMS

- 5-7 - Wilson K2 Mini-Footballs, Flags | 8-10 – Wilson TDJ Footballs, Flags
- No jewelry of any type allowed. Jackets and/or sweatshirts may be worn under the team jersey.
- Different colored shirts for each team will be provided and must be worn for all games.
 - Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- Each player shall be required to wear a belt with two flags attached. Flags are to be worn with one flag on each hip.
 - Flags must be the official flags provided by the Park District.
 - Flags cannot be tied or knotted to prevent the opposing player from pulling it out easily. The white belt ends must be securely tied around the belt to prevent players from pulling the belt rather than the flag.
 - Flags must be of a contrasting color to the team jersey

DIVISION OF GAME

The game shall consist of 2 halves, with each half lasting 20 minutes on a running clock. A rest period of 5 minutes between halves will be taken.

RULES

Games

There will be a coin toss by the referee. The team that wins the coin toss may choose either of two options: Start with ball or defend. The other team chooses where they want to start first. These are reversed at the beginning of the second half.

The game is started on the 5yd line. The team advances the ball until flagged. They have 4 plays to cross midfield, and then have 4 plays to cross opposing team's goal line. To keep possession of the ball, the offensive team must advance to the midfield line in 4 plays. If this happens, the team continues for 4 more downs, until it crosses the opposing team's goal line. If it fails to make a first down or score in 4 plays, it forfeits the ball to the other team and they will start at their own 5 yard line. This will continue the entire game.

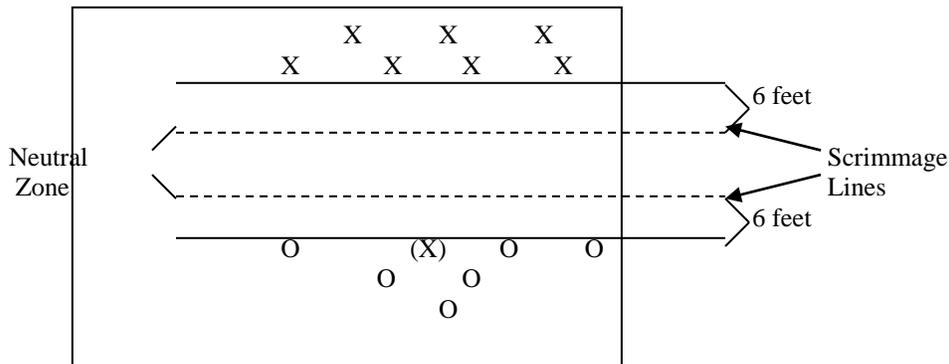
Scoring

There is no official scoring in the 5-7 age divisions of flag football. In the 8-10 age division, score will be kept in the manner of youth contact football (see below). No standings will be kept.

1. Touchdown – 6 points
 - A touchdown is made when a player advances the ball over the opposing team's goal line.
2. Safety – 2 points
 - A safety is made when the offensive team:
 - Causes the ball to go into its own end zone, and is tagged before the ball is advanced into the field of play.
 - Causes the ball to go beyond or out of its own end zone.
 - Causes the ball to be kicked, centered or lateral to the ground in their own end zone.
3. Conversion Plays – 1 point
 - A conversion is made when the offensive team scores from a scrimmage line 5 yards from the goal line on a play immediately following a touchdown. If defensive teams intercepts ball, play is dead.

Scrimmage Line

Scrimmage lines – two imaginary lines, running the width of the playing field, are called “scrimmage lines”. The forward and back ends of the football determine these lines. The area between these lines is known as the “neutral zone” - no player may be in this area. At the start of each play, the defensive players must be six feet behind their respective scrimmage lines. New scrimmage lines are formed wherever the ball is downed.



Advancing the Ball/Running

The offensive team must have a minimum of four plays on the line of scrimmage. The offensive team may advance the ball by a running or passing play. **NO QB SNEAKS UP THE MIDDLE.** The defensive team must have at least three players on the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball at their 6 feet away line.

Keeping Possession of the Ball

To keep possession of the ball, the offensive team must advance the ball to the midfield line within four consecutive downs. The defensive team shall have the right to intercept passes.

Huddle

The players and one coach shall come together in the area behind the ball for the purpose of determining their next play (If each team has at least three coaches, then two coaches will be permitted on the field). The huddle period may not exceed 25 seconds.

Passing Plays

- Forward Pass – A forward pass is a pass thrown forward to an eligible teammate. The pass must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage. A forward pass cannot be legally thrown once the passer has gone beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Lateral Pass – Throwing a pass laterally or backward to a teammate while trying to advance the ball is a lateral pass. This pass is permissible any place on the field.

Out of Bounds

If a ball goes out of bounds, the next play is started near the center of the field, at right angles to the point where the ball went out of bounds. No scrimmage play shall be started closer than approximately ten yards from the sidelines.

Fumbles

A fumbled ball that hits the ground is always dead, and is put into play at the point where it hits the ground. The team that fumbled is still in possession of the ball, unless it is fourth down. The defensive team shall not have the right to gain possession of the ball when fumbled by the offensive team. On the snap to the quarterback is dropped, is the only time the QB can pick up and still continue with play. If defense touches ball on a bad snap from offense, the play is dead on spot of ball.

Turnover on Downs

If a team fails to cross midfield in 4 plays, it will be turnover on downs and opposing team will start at their own 5 yard line. If a team crosses midfield and fails to score, it will be turnover on downs and opposing team will start at their own 5 yard line. The only play that will not result in starting at their own 5 yard line is an interception. If ball is intercepted then team can run to touchdown until flag is pulled. They will then start ball where flag was pulled.

Flag Tackling

1. The player with the ball is "downed" at the point where the flag is pulled out by a defensive player. The next play begins at this spot on the field. Decision of the officials is final.
2. If a ball carrier's flag is inadvertently dropped while play is being executed, the ball carrier shall be considered "flag-tackled" at the spot where the flag hits the ground.
3. If a pass receiver's flag is inadvertently dropped while play is being executed, the receiver shall be considered "flag-tackled" at the spot where he/she catches the ball.

Violations and Penalties

- 5-7 age divisions – Penalties will not be called. Instead, referees will stop the game and call a "RE-DO", and the down will be played over. The referee will explain to the players what infraction occurred (i.e. off-sides, unnecessary roughness, etc).
**EXCEPTION: IF A RULE IS BEING ABUSED – then the violating team will be disciplined with the opposing team given an automatic first down and an advancement of the ball – 5 yards from the point of the infraction.
- 8-10-age divisions – Penalties will be called outright and penalties marked off.

Offsides – A player is offsides when any part of his/her body is beyond the scrimmage line. **Exception: Center may have hands beyond the ball.

Illegal Forward Pass – Any ball thrown from a spot beyond the line of scrimmage, or throwing the ball forward more than once during the same scrimmage play.

Defensive – Holding, tripping, leaving of feet to "flag tackle", unnecessary roughness, illegal use of hands, pushing the ball carrier out of bounds, tackling ball carrier.

Offensive – Holding, tripping, clipping, use of hands, stiff-arming, flag guarding, tackling the linesman.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct – For players, coaches and fans: unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated.