

**VAIL RECREATION DISTRICT  
2009 FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES**

1. Games will be played at Vail Athletic Field on Sunday. Should snow end the season early, refunds will not be issued.
2. The Vail Recreation District (“VRD”) reserves the right to expel any individual or team from the league for reasons of conduct, failure to observe rules, regulations and procedures. Fighting, taunting or offensive language of any kind will not be tolerated.

**PLAYER ELIGIBILITY/ROSTERS**

1. Players must be at least 18 years of age by the beginning of the season.
2. A team roster shall consist of a maximum of 20 players. Do not be caught short, plan ahead.
3. Rosters must be turned in prior to the first game. Rosters must be signed and filled out completely by players, managers, and coaches. Players who wish to change teams during the season, must do so by the third game of the season and in addition, sit out at least one week.
4. Changes/additions to your roster must be made by Friday prior to Sunday’s games. The players must sign the roster before the start of the game.
5. The burden is on the team manager to make sure all players have been listed on the field roster.

**TEAM AND GAME ORGANIZATION**

1. The game shall be played by two teams of eight (8) players each.
2. Each team must have at least six (6) players at all times on the field or the team will forfeit.
3. A minimum of five (5) players must be on the line of scrimmage. The defense may have 0 - 8 players on the line of scrimmage.
4. Game time is forfeit time. Show up early. There is NO grace period.
5. **Only the designated captain may talk to officials. The captain’s first choice of any option is final. Any other player who complains about a call could be charged for unsportsmanlike conduct (12-yard penalty).**
6. Game time consists of two (2) twenty-five (25) minute halves, running time. Five (5) minutes between halves and twenty-five (25) seconds between plays. Two (2) one minute time-outs per half per time.
7. In the last two (2) minutes of the second half the clock stops only:
  - A. Two minute warning (30 seconds) – Starts on snap
  - B. Incomplete pass – Starts on snap
  - C. Out of bounds – Starts on snap
  - D. Penalty – Starts on snap
  - E. Touchdown – Starts on snap
  - F. Extra point – Starts with next possession
  - G. Time-outs – Starts with snap
  - H. Change of possession – Starts at referee’s discretion
  - I. Official’s time out – Starts at referee’s discretion
8. Playing field – 80 yards divided into 4 first down zones, 20 yards long each. For a first down, the ball has to cross the line. The end zone is 10 yards on both ends.

**POINT RULE**

THE GAME WILL BE CALLED IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCURS:

1. After 10 minutes of play in the second half, one team leads another by 32 or more points.
2. If one team is ahead by 17 or more points and has possession of the ball with less than 2 minutes left.
3. Unacceptable and unsportsmanlike behavior by team(s) – referee’s discretion

## SCORING

1. The following methods shall be used for scoring:

- A. Touchdowns – 6 points each
- B. Safety – 2 points each
- C. Successful try for point (extra point)
  - 1. Running – 1 point
  - 2. Passing – 2 points

**Note: The ball must be caught “in” the end zone to be considered 2 points.**

- 2. The player's front foot and ball, or “downed ball” must break the plane for touchdowns.
- 3. After a safety occurs, the scoring team puts the ball in play at their 20-yard line.

## TIE GAMES

IN CASE OF A TIE SCORE, THE TWO FIELD CAPTAINS SHALL BE BROUGHT TOGETHER AND A COIN FLIPPED TO DETERMINE THE OPTION THROUGH AN EXTRA SERIES OF PLAY.

- 1. Each team shall be permitted one time-out. The team scoring the greater number of points in the overtime shall be declared the winner. The final score shall be determined by totaling all points scored by each team during the regulation game and overtime period(s).
- 2. To start the overtime, the offensive team shall put the ball in play, 1st and goal on team ‘B’'s 10 yard line. Team shall have a series of 4 downs. The series shall be terminated by any score by ‘A’ or if ‘B’ has possession at the end of any down. Team ‘A’ shall be awarded a new series when:
  - A. The penalty for defensive pass interference is accepted;
  - OR
  - B. When team ‘B’ is guilty of roughing the passer.
- 3. If a team scores a touchdown, it is entitled to try for extra point, except when it is unnecessary to break the tie. If the defensive team gains possession, the ball becomes dead immediately and team ‘A’'s series is ended.
- 4. After team ‘A’ has completed its series, team b will become the offensive team with the ball in its possession at the 10-yard line. The same end of the field will be used for both possessions in order to insure equal game conditions and conserve time.
- 5. If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series, the procedure shall be repeated with another period until a winner is determined.

## THE FIELD

<u>Field sizes</u>	80 yard field
Ball begins on	20 yard line
1st down zones	3 @ 20 yards
5-yard penalties	4 yards
10-yard penalties	7 yards
15-yard penalties	11 yards
End zones	10 yards
Extra point mark	3 yard line

## GAME EQUIPMENT

- A. The ball must meet the specifications of size, shape, and weight for a regulation high school football game. During the game, each team may use a legal ball of its choice when on offense.
- B. **A team must have similar color jerseys.** Field supervisor will make the determination on playability of jersey. The burden is on the coach to make sure his/her team has proper jerseys.
- C. No article of clothing may cover any portion of player's flag. Shirts must be tucked into pants/shorts at all times.
- D. The all-turf shoes are the recommended shoes. Shoes must be a one-piece molded bottom. Only approved removable cleats will be allowed during games on grass fields.
- E. The use of headgear of any nature, shoulder pads, body pads, shoes with removable cleats, or any unyielding or dangerous equipment is prohibited. Players may use an ace bandage, no more than two turns thick, in any given area and can be anchored at each end by tape not to exceed two turns. No arm pads allowed however, knee pads are allowed.
- F. Stickum of any kind (on ball, body, gloves) is illegal.

Penalty for any illegal equipment: The player and/or team being charged with an unsportsmanlike foul (12 yards), individuals receive a 2 minute penalty, and are ineligible to participate until approved by referee.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **1. FUMBLES:**

- A. Play is dead when ball touches the ground.
- B. Ball is marked where it touches the ground, except when offensive team would gain added yardage, the ball is then marked where the player lost control of the ball.
- C. When the ball is fumbled into the opposing team's end zone by the offensive team the defensive team is awarded a safety (2 points) and the ball at the 20 yard line.

**Note:** if a punt or kick return is fielded into the end-zone and fumbled the opposing team is awarded a safety.

### **2. PUNTS/KICKS:**

- A. **NO KICKOFFS:** Start with "flip of the coin".  
 Team that wins coin toss chooses one of three (3) options
  - 1) Ball
  - 2) Defend east or west goal
  - 3) Defer until second half
 \*Offensive team starts on the 20-yard line.  
 2nd Half: Teams will switch defensive goals and team with option of choice may choose between "Ball" or defense.
- B. Protection on scrimmage kicks (punt): When a scrimmage kick is to be made, the kicking team must announce to the referee, before the ball is ready for play, that it wishes protection. After such announcement, the kick must be attempted. Exception: **a team is charged a time-out to change their option.**
- C. Formation on protected scrimmage kicks: Both teams must have seven (7) players on the line of scrimmage until after the ball is kicked. Players on the line must remain motionless until the ball has been kicked.
- D. Kicking the ball: The kicker should be at least 5 yards behind the line of scrimmage. The kicker may take a direct snap. Note: The ball is not dead if it touches the ground; the kicker may pick up the ball off the ground. After receiving the snap, the kicker must kick the ball within 10 seconds, immediately and in a continuous motion.

- E. When a scrimmage kick has crossed the neutral zone, touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to the receiving team unless the receiving team touches the ball and both feet are in the end-zone (safety, see fumble).
- F. If it hits a player of the receiving team (and remains in the air) and is caught in the air, it can be advanced by the receiving team. Ball can be recovered by the kicking team and not advanced.
- G. If any kick becomes dead in receiving team's end zone, it's a touchback.
- H. Change of possession takes place as soon as the ball is kicked. Therefore no "loose ball" fouls can occur.
- I. Quick kicks are illegal on any down. (penalty: Loss of down – 12 yards)

### 3. SNAP, PASSES & CATCHES:

- A. Legal snap: A legal snap shall be such that the ball immediately leaves the hand or hands of the snapper **between** his legs and touches a backfield player or the ground before it touches a lineman. The center sneak play is illegal. The center cannot receive the ball back through his legs from a backfield player.  
Penalty: Loss of down and 4 yards.
- B. Forward pass: Only 1 forward pass per down (spot foul – 4 yard penalty and loss of down.)
- C. Lateral: Unlimited number of passes thrown overhand or underhand behind or parallel to the passer's end line.
- D. Eligible receivers: all players are eligible to receive passes.
- E. Legal catch:
  - 1. **One** foot must be in bounds for a legal catch.
  - 2. Ball is legally catchable until it hits the ground or receiver is out of bounds.
- F. Sleeper play: no offensive player who is "spread" shall be closer than 5 yards from sidelines. The sleeper play is illegal. Penalty: loss of down and 4 yards.

### 4. REMOVAL OF FLAG:

- A. When flag/belt is clearly taken from the ball carrier, the down shall end and the ball is declared dead. A player who removes the flag/belt from the ball carrier should immediately hold the flag/belt above his/her head to assist the officials. The spot of the ball will be determined by the ball carrier's front foot at time of deflagging.
- B. Loss of flags, play in progress: In all situations where a play is in progress and a ball carrier loses flags either accidentally, inadvertently, or on purpose, the deflagging reverts to a tag of the ball carrier.
- C. Tagging: tagging is placing one or both hands anywhere between the shoulders and feet of an opponent with the ball. The feet of the tagger may leave the ground to make a tag. Pushing, striking, slapping and holding are not permitted. Penalty: Automatic 1st down & 12 yards.
- D. Spinning: spinning to avoid deflagging or tagging **is** allowed.

### 5. BLOCKING

Blocking is obstructing an opponent by use of hands and body. The blocker's hands may not be locked nor may he swing, throw or flip elbows or forearms. Penalty: Illegal block: 12 yards.

**Blocking is only permitted on the offensive side of play and within 5 yards of the defensive side of the line of scrimmage. Absolutely no downfield blocking.**

**Blocking is not permitted once the ball has left the passers hand.**

- A. Use of hand or arm by offense: a teammate of a runner or a passer may legally block with his shoulders, hands, outer surface of his arms or any other part of his body under the following provisions:
  - 1. The hand(s) shall be:
    - A. In advance of the elbow.

- B. Inside the frame of the blocker's body.
- C. Inside the frame of the opponent's body (exception: When the opponent turns his back to the blocker).
- D. At or below the shoulder(s) of the blocker and the Opponent, (exception: when the opponent squats, ducks or submarines).
  - 2. The hands must be open and facing the opponent when the forearms are away from the body.
  - 3. The hand(s) and arm(s) shall not be used to grasp, pull, or encircle in any way that illegally impedes or obstructs an opponent.
  - 4. The hand(s) or arm(s) shall not be used to hook, lock, clamp, or otherwise illegally impede or illegally obstruct an opponent.
  - 5. Blockers may not leave their feet while attempting to block.
  - 6. Blockers must begin from a 2 point stance (includes defense).
  - 7. Blocks must be contact above the waist.

## 6. **TACKLING:**

- A. An attempt to encircle the body of an opponent with hands or arms, thus impeding progress (penalty 12 yards).
- B. Tackling or pushing a ball carrier that is running near a sideline for the purpose of knocking him/her out of bounds (penalty 12 yards). Ball carrier's progress can be stopped only by deflagging.
- C. Tackling or knocking a runner out of bounds, or any other flagrant means to prevent an obvious score within the 20 yard line will result in a touchdown.

## 7. **CHARGING:**

The ball carrier may not run through or over a defensive player. The object is for the ball carrier to evade the defensive player (penalty: 12 yards). **Note:** the referee will call "tackling" and "charging" just as a basketball official would differentiate "blocking" from "charging".

## 8. **CLIPPING:**

Running or driving into the back of an opponent (penalty: 12 yards).

## 9. **PROTECTING FLAGS:**

The ball carrier shall not protect flags by blocking with arms or hands or hurdling to stop an opponent from pulling or removing flags. (penalty: 4 yards and loss of down).

## 10. **MOTION:**

**One** offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion toward opponent's goal line. All other players must be without movement of any part of the body or its extremities (penalty: 4 yards).

## 11. **ROUGHING THE PASSER:**

When the defensive players rush the passer trying to deflect or block the pass, let their momentum carry them into the passer. Defensive players may not have any physical contact with the passer. (penalty: 12 yards and automatic 1st down).

## 12. **STRAIGHT ARM:**

Extended to ward off an opponent (penalty: 12 yards).

## 13. **HURDLING:**

An attempt by the ball carrier to jump over the upper body of a defensive player who is upright (standing, sitting, and kneeling are defined as upright). Runner may hurdle a player in the prone position to avoid injury. (penalty: 12 yards).

## 14. **STANCE:**

Both teams must use a two point stance only; no 3 or 4 point stances allowed (penalty: 4 yards).

**15. DEFENSIVE PASS INTERFERENCE:**

Penalty will be first down at the point of infraction, not 12 yards from the line of scrimmage. If infraction occurs in the end-zone, penalty will be first down and goal at the one yard line.

**16. ILLEGAL OR MISUSE OF FLAGS:**

Triple threat flag belts as per manufacturers specifications. Flags must be worn as intended; flags, belts, and buckles must be worn outside or on top of all clothing – any looping, tying, cutting, or flag alterations of any kind will be an unsportsmanlike penalty of 12 yards and player ejected for current and next game.

**17. STICKUM PENALTY:**

Player or ball is ineligible to play in game until the referee is satisfied the substance has been removed (penalty 12 yards).

**18. STEALING THE BALL:**

Defense may “steal” the ball in a quick and continuous motion when no contact occurs with ball carrier’s arms, hands, and/or when no unnecessary force is used. (penalty 4 yards, if flagrant 12 yards).

**ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES**

**1. UNSPORTSMANLIKE PENALTIES:**

A. All unsportsmanlike penalties will result in the offending player(s) being removed from the game for a total of 2 or more game minutes.

B. Unsportsmanlike conduct towards an official, scorekeeper and/or administrator will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty (12 yards), change of possession if the team is on offense and ejection and suspension.

C. Teams may play with fewer than 6 players on a penalty situation if the player is eligible to return.

D. Two unsportsmanlike penalties on a player or coach will result in an ejection and possible suspension.

E. Three unsportsmanlike penalties by a team will result in a forfeit.

**2. BOUNDARIES:**

All players, coaches, and spectators will not be allowed inside the 20-yard line boundary while the game is in progress. (penalty 5 yards).

**3. SPECIFIC PENALTIES:**

A. If the penalty occurs during a loose ball play (pass) the penalty is enforced against the offensive team from the previous spot and the down is played over.

B. On a running play, the penalty on the offensive team is enforced from either spot of the foul or the end of the run, whichever hurts the team the most, and the down is played over.

**4. LOSS OF DOWN PENALTY: (80 YARD FIELD, SEE PAGE 3)**

A. Intentional grounding: plus 4-yard penalty

B. Illegal forward pass: plus 4-yard penalty

C. Illegal handling (forward lateral): plus 4-yard penalty

D. Offense pass interference: plus 12-yard penalty

E. Center sneak play: plus 4-yard penalty

F. Kick violations: plus 12-yard penalty

**5.** When an offensive team is within four yards of a 1<sup>st</sup> down, the defense will be allowed one neutral zone violation. The offense may opt to decline this penalty. Should the defense commit a 2<sup>nd</sup> neutral zone violation the penalty will be 12 yards from the 1<sup>st</sup> down line.

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

THE VRD HAS TAKEN THE POLICY OF PROSECUTING ANY PLAYER, COACH OR SPECTATOR THAT VIOLATES ANY TOWN OF VAIL MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE.

1. No player shall at any time lay a hand upon, push, shove, or threaten to strike or verbally threaten an official, staff member or spectator.

**Penalty: player will be suspended from all VRD sports for one full year.**

2. Any player(s) involved in a physical altercation with another player, coach, staff member or spectator will:

- a. Be ejected from the game.
- b. Receive a minimum of 3 game suspensions.
- c. Be placed on "probation".

3. Taunting, offensive language or unsportsmanlike behavior towards an official, supervisor, or staff member will result in:

- a. Ejection
- b. Minimum of 1 game suspension
- c. Probation

4. Officials and supervisors are empowered to warn, eject, and recommend suspensions for players and/or coaches for any misconduct or violation of rules.

5. Any player ejected from the game must leave the field, sidelines, and spectator area. Failure to leave can result in a forfeit.

6. Anytime a game gets out of hand, the referees, field supervisor, or any VRD official has the authority to forfeit the game.

7. Any team having 3 or more team members (player or coaches) ejected from a game shall be penalized with a forfeit.

8. All suspensions carry an automatic probation. Once a player(s), coach and/or team have been placed on probation, their conduct will be evaluated throughout the remainder of the season. Further conduct violations will result in a minimum suspension extending through the remainder of the season.

9. Teams are responsible for their players and spectators conduct before, during, and after the game.

10. No player will be allowed to play if acting in an intoxicated manner. Penalty: out of that ball game and the next game played. To be ruled upon by referees and/or vrd officials.