Outdoor 7 on 7 Flag Football Rules

I. Administration

A. A maximum of 14 players shall be placed on team rosters. 7 players will constitute a team.

B. Once rosters have been released, additional players may be added to the roster with written permission from the SYSA flag football coordinator or the SYSA director.

C. The Candy Bowl/Spring Flag Frenzy (section XIII) are optional end of the season tournaments in which teams will pay an extra fee and register by the deadline set by the SYSA flag football coordinator. Failure to register by the deadline may result in the team not being able to participate in the tournament.

II. Game & Field

A. Games will be a 7-on-7 format. All players are eligible to receive a pass.

B. The game will consist of two twenty minute halves. The clock will run continuously during each half.

C. The game clock will stop under the following circumstances:

I. Each team will be granted one timeout per half. This will be a one minute timeout.
II. Referees may stop the clock for a player injury, dangerous situations, or outside events.
III. Referees may stop the clock to explain penalties to players and/or coaches

D. Half time will last for a five minute period.

E. Grades 5-6 Field Size- 100 yards long and 40 yards wide, divided into two 10-yard end zones and four 20-yard zones.

F. Grades 1-4 Field Size- 60 yards long and 30 yards wide, divided into two 10-yard end zones and four 10-yard zones.

III. Equipment

A. Every player <u>MUST</u> wear a mouth guard.

- Players without a mouthguard will be sent off the field for one play. If they do not have a mouth guard, they may not return. Multiple mouth guard offenses will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.
- Mouth guards must be colored (not clear). Retainers, plastic mouthpieces, or any non-athletic mouth guards are not allowed.

B. Tennis shoes or rubber cleats are permitted.

C. Soft helmets are recommended, but not required for play.

D. During games, all players must wear SYSA issued flags. Flags must be secured so that there is one flag on each side of the player. If playing with flags that include a third flag, the third flag must be placed on the back side of the player (never the front). Any extra belt that is not fastened must be tucked away, and not fastened in a way that impedes in the flag being pulled.

E. Grades 1-2 will use pee wee size footballs. Grades 3-6 will use junior size footballs. During games. Grades 7-8 will use youth size footballs. SYSA will provide the game balls.

F. SYSA will provide a QB tee for games that are to be used to snap the ball at each beginning of each play.

IV. Starting a Game

A. Teams must have six players to begin a game. Failure to have six or more players will result in a forfeit. Teams playing with six players will play one player down.

B. 5 minutes prior to the game start time, up to three captains and an optional coach will meet with the referees. One player from each team will rock/paper/scissors. Winner of the match will have the choice to choose: receive (start with the ball), defer the choice (allow the opposing team to select receive or kick), or to choose the end zone to drive to in the first half. Teams that start with the ball in the first half will start on defense at the start of the second half.

V. Formations & Allowed Plays

A. The offense and defense can line up in any formation. However, the player who takes the ball from the tee to start the play will be considered the quarterback (QB).

B. Defensive players may line up on the neutral zone (1 yard from the line of scrimmage). For a defensive player to be eligible to blitz, they must be seven yards back from the line of scrimmage. This line will be marked by one of the officials before every play. Up to 3 players can blitz on every play.

VI. Moving the Ball

A. At the start of a half or after a score, teams will begin their drive on their 10 yard line.

B. Each play will begin once the QB picks the ball up from the tee. The tee will be set to have a seven second clock that will begin once the ball is picked up. If the ball is not thrown, handed off, or the QB has not crossed the line of scrimmage for a run before the buzzer goes off, then the play will be blown dead. The result of the play will be the loss of down and the ball will be spotted at the point where the play was called dead.

C. First Downs. The grades 1-4 field will be divided into four 10-yard zones. The grades 5-6 field will be divided into four 20-yard zones. When the ball is first downed in a zone, the team in possession will have a new set of four downs to move the ball into the next zone.

D. Fourth down. If the team in possession has not gotten a first down in three downs, before their fourth down the team can elect to go for it and run a play in an attempt to get a first down, or “punt.” There will be no actual kicking of the ball, instead, the ball will be placed on the opposing teams 20 yard line and give them possession of the ball if a punt is elected. If a team elects to run a play and they do not get to a new zone, then possession is turned over to the other team at the spot of the ball at the end of the play.

E. Run Play. The offense is only allowed to run the ball once per set of downs. A play will be ruled a running play if the ball carrier crosses the line of scrimmage while holding the ball. If a team attempts to run and fails to reach the line of scrimmage, then that play will not be counted as that zone's run play. A QB scramble (explained below) will not count towards a team’s run play per zone.

- Note: any pass, pitch, or toss from QB that is caught by any player behind the line of scrimmage and that player crosses the line of scrimmage, that will be ruled a run play regardless if the ball was a forward or backwards pass. QB designed runs, draws, reverses are allowed.

F. Passing. There can be a total of two passes, forward or backwards, from a player behind the line of scrimmage. The second pass must go across the line of scrimmage. Any pass of the ball that leaves the QB and is caught in front of the line of scrimmage will be considered a pass.

G. QB Scramble. If a defender blitzes and crosses into the neutral zone, then the QB will be able to scramble. QB scrambles will not count as a team's one run in that zone. However, if the QB begins to scramble before the blitzer crosses into the neutral zone, then that play shall be ruled a run play.

VII. Substitutions & Timeouts

A. Each team has one timeout per half. Each timeout will be one minute long. Mass substitutions should only be done during timeouts, halves, or during the change of possession.

VIII. Scoring

A. Touchdowns are worth six points.

B. Safeties (The offense being downed in their endzone) are worth two points. After a safety, the scoring team will start on their 30 yard line.

C. Extra Points: Teams can elect to go for one point or two points

- The one point try will be from five yards out. The offense can only score on this try by passing, no run play. Defenses may blitz, but the QB will be allowed to scramble on this try.

- The two point try will be from ten yards out. The offense may run or pass the ball. The QB is also eligible to scramble if blitzed, just like a normal play.

- Note: Interceptions on extra point tries will be blown dead.

- Note: if a team elects to one of the tries and gets a penalty, they may elect to change their try and the penalty will be enforced from the new try location.

IX. Special Rules and Definitions

A. Each player MUST play at least half the game.

B. Each Player MUST equally play on offense and defense in each game.

C. Blocking. An illegal block is defined as obstructing an opponent with contact of their body. If a player makes contact in the form of a moving screen, hand block, push, shoulder push, or any other contact with the opposing player, then that will be considered an illegal block. Legal "blocking" is defined as obstructing an opponent without contact by moving into their way.

D. The play shall be called dead at the point at which the ball carrier's flag is removed from their belt. The ball will be placed at the location of the ball.

E. If a player is not wearing flags, a flag(s) falls off at the beginning or during the play without being pulled, the flags are covered by an untucked shirt, or if the flag is deemed unreachable for any reason by the official, then the player will be called down at the point in which the player is touched by the defense.

F. The player's feet must stay on the ground. Therefore, hurdling, diving, and jumping to avoid a flag pull will be called down at the point of contact. Spinning is allowed. The player will be called down if their knee, butt, or back touch the ground, regardless if the flag is pulled.

G. Motion. Lateral Motion before the snap by one player is allowed.

H. Play the Flags, not the Player. Defensive players must play to pull the flags of the offensive player. Contact with the upper body or excessive contact will be ruled a tackle (official's discretion). If a blitzing defensive player tries to swat the passed ball from the QB and makes contact with the throwing arm or upper body of the QB, this will be considered roughing the passer.

I. Charge. Ball carriers and blitzers may not run through opposing players. Players must attempt to evade opposing players and not "charge" through them. If no attempt is made to avoid contact, then a charge may be called. If an offensive player tries to avoid running out of bounds and makes a cut towards the field and runs into a defensive player who is trying

to make a play on the flags, a collision may occur. This may not be a charge. Any lowering of the head or shoulder to make contact with a player will be considered a charge.

J. Tackle. Any lowering of the head or shoulder or any contact on the upper body, or legs that is deemed excessive or a push of the ball carrier will be considered a tackle (official's discretion).

K. Targeting. Any tackle that is deemed to be intentional, overly physical, and with no clear attempt at the player's flags will be considered targeting. Targeting will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty and the ejection of the player who committed the tackle.

L. Flag Guarding. The offensive player may not intentionally interfere with the defender's attempt to grab the flag. The ball carrier's natural running motion does not constitute flag guarding. The ball will be called dead at the point of the flag guarding infraction.

M. Holding. If a player pulls on the pants or shirt of the ball carrier and does not immediately let go and impedes the ball carrier's movement, this is holding.

N. Fumbles. Are dead at the point where the ball hits the ground, or is recovered in the air by the other team. Strips are an intentional grabbing for the ball by the defense. Since they are not playing the flags, this will be considered an unsportsmanlike penalty.

O. Interceptions. Are live balls and can be returned for a touchdown, except during extra point tries.

P. Play Clock. There will be a 30 second play clock that will begin once the official who is not keeping the game clock gets into position. This official will give a 10 second warning. Failure to start the play by 30 seconds will result in a delay of game.

Q. One foot in bounds while receiving the ball will constitute a catch. In the event of a joint catch, the ball will be ruled a catch for the offense.

R. Pass Interference. Any contact while the ball is in the air that impedes the offensive or defensive player's right to the ball is interference.

S. Score is not kept during regular season games. Therefore, there cannot be ties. No overtime will be played.

T. Ejection: Any ejection will result in removal from the current contest and suspension from the next contest. Severe infractions may result in longer suspensions as determined by SYSA.

X. Penalties

Penalty name (definition or location of definition)- Penalty

Defense	**Tackle (IX J)**- 10 yards from the end of the play **Pass Interference (IX R)**- 10 yards from previous spot **Holding (IX M)**- 5 yards from the end of the play **Offside (Defensive player lined up in neutral zone)**- 5 yards from previous spot **8 players in the play**- 5 yards from previous spot OR result of the play **Illegal Blitz (lined up inside of 7 yards when hiked)**- 5 yards from the end of the play
Offense	**Flag guarding (IX L)**- down at the spot of the foul **Blocking (IX C)**- 10 yards from the spot of the foul & replay of down **Pass Interference (IX R)**- 10 yards from the previous spot & loss of down **False Start/ Offsides/ multiple players in motion/ delay of game**- 5 yards **8 players (breaking the huddle with 8 players)**- 5 yards **Stiff Arm**- 10 yards from the end of the play **Illegal Run (running twice in a zone)**- 5 yards & replay of down **Illegal Forward Pass (QB throws & is past the scrimmage line or VI F)**- 10 yards & loss of down
Both	**Charge (IX I)**- 5 yards from the end of the play **Unsportsmanlike**- 15 yards from the end of the play. **Fighting**- 15 yards from the end of the play & automatic ejection **Illegal flag pull (pulling a flag of a non ball carrier)**- 5 yards (multiple= unsportsmanlike) **Targeting**- 15 yards from the end of the play & automatic ejection

Note: Multiple Unsportsmanlike penalties in a game will result in ejection from the game and suspension from the next game. Plays with penalties on both teams will offset and the down will be replayed.

XI. Player, Coach, & Spectator Code of Conduct

A. By playing, coaching, or spectating in this league, you are agreeing to the terms of the Code of Conduct. You can find the Code of Conduct here.

B. Any player or coach that is found to be conducting themselves in a way that violates the Code of Conduct will be disqualified from the current contest and the following contest. Spectators who violate the Code of Conduct will be asked to remove themselves from the area. Repeat offenses can result in longer suspensions.

C. SYSA will have a zero tolerance policy on behavior that violates the Code of Conduct.

XII. Concussion Protocols

A. SYSA will follow the Lystedt law. A player who is suspected of a concussion by an official, coach, or parent must be removed from the game or practice. The player will be eligible to return to SYSA activities once a doctor's note is provided to SYSA that states the player is healthy enough to return to play,

XIII. Tournaments

A. The Candy Bowl and Spring Flag Frenzy are optional end of the season tournaments in which teams will pay an extra fee and register by the deadline set by the SYSA flag football coordinator. Failure to register by the deadline may result in the team not being able to participate in the tournament.

B. The Tournaments will follow all SYSA Fall Flag Football rules, unless noted below.

C. Pool Play Schedule. Each team will be assigned into a pool and scheduled two pool play games

D. Bracket Play. The top seed of each pool will play the second seed of the other pool. The winners of each game will play in the Candy Bowl Championship

- Tie breaking for seeding into bracket play:

    1) Win-Loss Record during pool play
    2) Result of Head to Head match up (if applicable)
    3) Least Points Allowed
    4) Point Differential
    5) Coin Flip

E. Timing Rules.

- Games will be 30 minutes long
- Each team will be allotted 3 timeouts per game
- Extra points will be untimed
- Mercy Rule. If a team takes a 17 or more point lead, the clock will not be stopped at all except for timeouts

F. Overtime Rules. If the game clock has expired and both teams are equal in score, then the following overtime rules will go into effect.

- Team captains will play Rock, Paper, Scissors. The winner will be able to elect to play offense or defense first. The loser will be able to choose which endzone to defend.
- Each team will have the choice of going for one point from the 5 yard line or going for two points from the 10 yard line. The extra point rules will be the same as the SYSA flag football rules.
- After each team has attempted to score, if one team has scored more than the other, then that team will be the winner.
- If neither team has scored, or both have the same score, then the teams will enter the next over time period. In this period, the team that started on offense first in the previous overtime will start the subsequent overtime on defense. For second and subsequent overtimes, each team must make the play from the 10 yard line.
- Each team will be granted one 30 second timeout for the entirety of the overtime periods. After five overtimes are played, there will be mandatory 1 minute timeout.