7on7 Football League Rules

Officials

- Referee(s) serve as the field authority and/or field judge for all games. Their calls and decisions are final regarding all game rulings.

Field Dimensions

- The length of the game field is 45yds long (3 first downs of 15yds each) with a 10yd end zone.
- The width of the playing field is between 30yds and 50yds (depending on the age group).

Time

- Two 25-minute halves (continuous clock for each half).
- No time outs. The clock will not stop for injuries. If the game is delayed for more than 15 minutes to safely get a player off of the field, then the game will be postponed and played at a later date.
- Half-time is 5 minutes.

Rosters/Team Members

- Each team roster can have a maximum of 24 players. Players not on the roster are not allowed to play.
- All players must sign a facility and/or league waiver before playing. Parents of players under the age of 18 must sign the waiver.
- Teams are not required to use an offensive center. If utilizing one, the center is not an eligible receiver. The center must identify themselves by snapping the ball or kneeling on the field.
- Each team is allowed a maximum of 4 coaches on the sidelines during games.
- One offensive coach may be in the huddle with players between plays.

Game Start

- Teams must be on opposite sidelines of the playing field. Both teams are required to wear shirts/jerseys. The Home Team must change (or wear pinnies) if both teams are wearing the same color jersey.
- No High School team jerseys can be worn. All game shirts/jerseys must be numbered on the back.
- Standard rubber or plastic football cleats are permitted. No metal cleats are allowed.
- Visitors will have the 1st possession to begin the game and the home team will have the possession to begin the 2nd half.
- The ball is always placed at the 45yd line when beginning each offensive drive.
- Each team is allowed to use its own football. High School teams must use the official high school size football. The 14U division has the option to use a youth size (TDY) or a high school size football. The 12U division uses TDJ sized footballs and the 10U division uses K-2 sized footballs.
- Teams must be onsite and ready to start 15min before start time. If a team is late or does not have enough players to start on time, the game clock will begin and whatever time is left on the clock will be where the game starts.
- If a team is late by 10 minutes or more, they will forfeit the game.
- A forfeit is recorded as a 21-0 loss.
- There is no overtime during regular season games.

Advancing the Ball

- The offensive possession always begins on the 45 yard line. The ball is placed in the center of the field to begin each offensive series. Once the offensive drive begins, the ball is placed in the center of the field at the spot of touch.
- There are no directional changes for the offense during the game. The offense always faces into the end zone from the 45 yard line starting point.
- The field is marked at 15yd intervals (45yd, 30yd, 15yd, and end zone). Teams have 3 downs to make it across the 30yd line for a 1st down, an additional 3 downs to make it across the 15yd line for a 1st down, and then 4 downs to make it into the end zone.
- There are no running plays. All passes must be forward, laterals are allowed only after a completed pass.
- The QB is allowed 4.0 seconds (6.0 seconds for the 10U and 12U divisions) to throw the ball. Teams can use either a center or a QB Tee to start the play. If the ball is thrown after 4 (or 6) seconds, there is a loss of down and the ball comes back to the line of scrimmage.

Penalties

Offense

- Offside is a 5yd penalty
- Delay of game is a loss of down (each team has 25 seconds to snap the ball)

- Pass interference is a 5yd penalty and loss of down.
- No penalty may be assessed in excess of the 45yd line. If a penalty would move the offense behind the 45yd line, the offensive team shall be charged with a loss of down.
- Passes after the QBT alarm goes off are dead balls, the ball is returned to the original line of scrimmage (a "sack").
- Offensive team is responsible for retrieving and returning the ball to the previous spot or the new line of scrimmage

Defense

- Offside is a 5yd penalty
- Defensive holding is a 5yd penalty. If defensive holding occurs on the same play as a sack, the defense will be penalized and the sack is void.
- Defensive pass interference is a spot foul (1st down at the point of infraction). Pass interference rules follow IHSA football rules.
- Any dead ball penalty on the defense after a change of possession results in a loss of down for that team's offense when they begin their ensuing possession.
- Responsibility to avoid contact is with the defense. The defense is allowed an initial disruption, and then must cover. Excessive or prolonged contact will result in a tack on penalty at the end of the play (5 yards).

Additional Rules

- Receiver/Ball carrier is down when touched below the neck with one or both hands. Excessive force or shoving will be penalized by a 5yd penalty and an automatic first down. The player will be ejected if ruled unsportsmanlike and/or flagrant.
- Fumbles are dead balls at the spot with the last team retaining possession. A muffed snap is not a fumble/dead ball, the 4-6 second count remains in effect.
- There is no blocking.
- Each team will have 25 seconds to snap the ball once it has been marked ready for play.
- Responsibility to avoid contact is with the defense. There will be no deliberate bumping or grabbing beyond initial contact.
- Interceptions are dead balls and may not be returned. The defensive team receives 3 points and the ball on the 45yd line to start an offensive possession.
- The offensive team is responsible for retrieving and returning the ball to the line of scrimmage. The clock does not stop and any delay by the offense in retrieving and returning the ball to the referee will result in a delay of game penalty.
- The offensive center is not an eligible receiver.
- The center is responsible for re-positioning the QB Tee at the line of scrimmage.
- All passes must be thrown forward (they can be thrown behind the line of scrimmage, but must go forward). The only laterals allowed are ones that occur after the completion of a forward pass.

Behavior

- No taunting or trash talking. (5-yard penalty & expulsion if flagrant or repeated).
- Fighting: the player(s) involved will be ejected from the game. If a team fight occurs, the Teams involved will be ejected from the league.
- Any defensive dead ball foul on a play that results in the defense getting the ball will result in a loss of down penalty on the resulting offensive possession.

Scoring

- 6 points for TD,
- 1 point for PAT from 3 yard line,
- 2 points for PAT from 10 yard line (interception on PAT is dead ball).
- Three points for an interception (interceptions are a dead ball).
- Official score is kept by field referee and/or game manager.

Overtime Rules (Playoff Games Only)

- After a coin flip to determine first possession, teams will alternate 4 down series from the 15-yard line (10-yard line for 3rd/4th Grade Division).
- A winner is determined when one team outscores the other during an overtime session.
- Each team must go for 2 points on conversion attempts, beginning in the 2nd overtime.

Tiebreakers for Standings

- If teams are tied at the end of the regular season, the first tiebreaker is head-to-head competition
- The second tiebreaker is point differential (points scored minus points allowed), capped at 21 per game (we don't want to incent teams to run up scores in lopsided games).
- If teams are still tied, then standings will be determined by a coin flip.