

EBAC Flag Football – Rules

1. GENERAL

- 1.1. **Eligibility.** Any Electric Boat employee may participate in the Electric Boat Athletic Club (EBAC) Flag Football League (FFL) provided they are a member of the EBAC and a waiver is signed and on-file with the EBAC office. A player may not participate in the EBAC FFL, unless they appear on an official team roster and the EBAC office has confirmed their eligibility for that season. The commissioner will notify team captains when players are verified to be eligible to play.
- 1.2. **Rules.** This document will be reviewed before each season and voted on at the annual league meeting; there must be a majority vote to establish the rules for that league year. Anyone may attend and/or contribute to the discussions at the annual league meeting but only the team captains (or assigned delegate), head referee and commissioner may vote. Current revision of the rules will be kept up to date by the commissioner.

2. LEAGUE ORGANIZATION

- 2.1. **Officials.** The officials have absolute control of the game. Their decisions will be final and are not to be disputed by any members of either team. The officials will rule on all situations not specifically covered in this rule packet. **Each regular season game will include three referees. Each playoff game will include four referees. The head referee shall submit game logs to the commissioner by noon on the Friday following the games.**
- 2.2. **Teams:**
- 2.2.a. **Minimum roster size is 12 players (full or part time).** There is no maximum roster size.
- 2.2.b. Players cannot be on two rosters simultaneously. Players can fill in when teams need it. After rosters are submitted, a player may not switch to a different roster until the next league year unless specifically approved by the commissioner. There is no minimum amount of regular season games a player must play in order to play in the playoffs.
- 2.2.c. Each team will designate a captain. Captain duties include, but are not limited to:
- ⇒ Off the field responsibilities:
 - Single point of contact for team matters
 - Responsible for flow down of league announcements from the commissioner
 - Attending annual league meeting (or assigning a delegate)
 - Submitting team rosters to the commissioner
 - Collecting dues and submitting them to the EBAC office
 - Coordinating team attendance for all scheduled games
 - ⇒ In game responsibilities:
 - Coin toss choice (see section 4.2.)

- Choice of penalty options (see section 4.20.b.)
- Declaration for punting (see section 4.18.a.) and extra point tries (see section 4.19.b.)

2.2.d. Each team captain shall establish a team name and color at the annual league meeting

⇒ Priority for team names and/or color will be given to a team that is keeping the same name and/or color from the previous year. Other name or color conflicts will be resolved on a first-come, first-serve basis.

2.3. League Commissioner. Commissioner duties include, but are not limited to:

- 2.3.a. Liaison between EBAC office and the FFL league
- 2.3.b. Coordinating the game schedule and resolving conflicts
- 2.3.c. Maintaining current league standings and game logs
- 2.3.d. Maintaining this document
- 2.3.e. Sending league announcements in timely manner
- 2.3.f. Reserving the field
- 2.3.g. Coordination of annual league meeting
- 2.3.h. Establishing key dates:
 - ⇒ League start date
 - ⇒ Scheduling preferences due
 - ⇒ Rosters due
 - ⇒ Banquet and trophy fees due to EBAC
- 2.3.i. Coordination of the banquet
- 2.3.j. Ordering equipment
- 2.3.k. Providing rosters to the EBAC office and receiving verification of player eligibility
- 2.3.l. Providing vouchers to the EBAC office including:
 - ⇒ Field reservation fees
 - ⇒ Referee payments
 - ⇒ Equipment
 - ⇒ Banquet

3. EQUIPMENT & FIELD

3.1. EBAC FFL Provided Equipment:

- 3.1.a. Game ball (NCAA regulation size)
- 3.1.b. Flags and flag belts
- 3.1.c. Cones
- 3.1.d. Stop watch
- 3.1.e. Ball pump

3.2. Uniforms:

- 3.2.a. Shirts shall match team color established at the annual league meeting. Shirts do not need numbers.
- 3.2.b. All pass-catching eligible players (everyone but the offensive line) will wear the official flag belt with the flags attached in the proper locations.
- ⇒ Shirts or jerseys must be tucked under the flag belts as well as into the shorts/pants and in no way cover or protect the flags.
 - ⇒ Flags must be of contrasting colors with shirts/vests/jerseys and shorts/pants.
 - Example: gold jerseys will wear red flags; red jerseys will wear gold flags.
- 3.2.c. Players are prohibited from wearing the following:
- ⇒ Shoulder pads
 - ⇒ Helmets
- 3.2.d. Cleats are allowed.
- 3.2.e. Players are allowed to bring their own belts, provided they slip the EBAC FFL flags and flag holders onto the belt. The flag holder mechanism may not be changed in any way and the flag must not be blocked in any way.
- 3.2.f. Each player must wear pants or shorts without any belt(s), belt loop(s), pocket(s), exposed drawstrings, or holes.

- 3.3. **Field.** Overall size of the playing field is 100 yards long by 50 yards wide. The length is divided up into four 20 yard sections with 10 yard endzones on either side. See Figure 1, below.

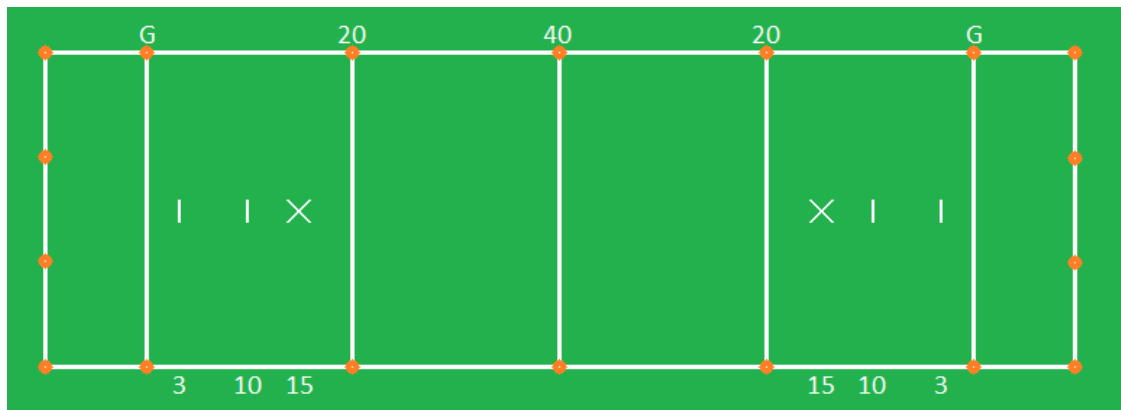


Figure 1: Playing Field

- 3.3.a. The commissioner will coordinate with the field owner to have lines painted as follows:
- ⇒ Side lines around the 100 yard by 50 yard perimeter
 - ⇒ Goal lines 10 yards in from each end
 - ⇒ Zone lines at 20 yard intervals between the goal lines
 - ⇒ Hash marks in the middle of the field at 3 and 10 yards from each goal line
 - ⇒ X mark in the middle of the field 15 yards from each goal line

- 3.3.b. Referees shall place cones on the field as illustrated by the orange dots in Figure 1.
- 3.3.c. The commissioner shall reserve a field based on the following considerations, ranked by priority:
 - ⇒ Size of field
 - ⇒ Availability
 - ⇒ Cost
 - ⇒ Distance from EB New London and EB Groton
 - ⇒ Field conditions
 - ⇒ Line painting available
 - ⇒ Bathroom facilities on site
 - ⇒ Parking
 - ⇒ North/south configuration (to avoid sunset interference)

4. THE GAME

- 4.1. Players. The game is played with eight players on the field from each team. The game can be played **8-on-7** (with a 10 minute grace period to provide at least seven players). If the minimum players do not arrive, the team in question will forfeit and the official score will be recorded as 7-0.
- 4.2. Pre-game Coin Toss:
 - 4.2.a. One minute prior to the start of the game, the head referee shall gather the two team captains for the coin toss.
 - 4.2.b. The captain winning the coin toss shall have a choice of options for the first half or shall defer their option to the second half.
 - 4.2.c. The options for each half are:
 - ⇒ Offense or defense
 - ⇒ Which goal to defend
 - 4.2.d. The captain, not having the first choice of options for a half, shall exercise the remaining option.
- 4.3. Time:
 - 4.3.a. Games will consist of two 20-minute halves with a three minute half time. Overtime will be played in the playoffs only (see section 4.21.).
 - 4.3.b. Neither half can end on a defensive penalty; the down will be replayed.
 - 4.3.c. Games may be shortened if weather or other conditions interfere (referee discretion)
 - 4.3.d. The clock will continuously run throughout the game, except for the last two minutes of each half where the clock will stop only for out of bounds, incomplete pass, penalties, turn over on downs, injuries, team time outs and official time outs. After official timeouts, penalties, and injuries, the clock will restart (if necessary) after the ball is spotted.

- 4.3.e. A team is allotted two 30 second time-outs per half and **one 30 second time out in each overtime series**. Time-outs do not carry over from the first half to the second half, nor into overtime, nor between overtime series.
- 4.3.f. **If a team is 19 or more points ahead when the official announces the two minute warning for the second half or any point thereafter, the game is over. If that team reaches between 19-21 points ahead via a touchdown before scoring a try, the try must be completed.**
- 4.4. Start of Game. The start of each half will begin by placing the ball on the 15 yard line (X painted on field, see Figure 1).
- 4.5. Ball Advancement. To gain a first down, the ball must be advanced to or beyond the next zone line to gain, regardless of where the series originated (within four downs).
- 4.6. Player Substitution. Unlimited substitutions are permitted as long as it is done during a dead ball, in between plays, and there is no delay of game. No substitute shall enter during a down.
- 4.7. Referee's Whistle:
- 4.7.a. A whistle stops play right where it is. The play shall not continue.
- 4.7.b. **Inadvertent whistle:**
- ⇒ With the ball in possession of a player, the offense has the choice of
 - Taking the play (ball at the spot where the whistle blew)
 - Replay down from original line of scrimmage
 - ⇒ If the whistle was blown during a punt or a legal pass in flight, the down will be replayed.
- 4.8. Scrimmage:
- 4.8.a. After the ball is put into position by the official, the offense has 25 seconds to snap the ball. Referees shall indicate verbally when there are 10 seconds **and 5 seconds** left on the play clock.
- 4.8.b. On offense, there must be at least five players on the line of scrimmage at the snap. The remaining players must be either on their scrimmage line or behind their backfield line. All players must be inbounds (Penalty - 5 yards).
- 4.8.c. The offensive line consists of three players (a center and two tackles, balanced). These players are considered ineligible and cannot catch a forward pass.
- 4.8.d. Any time on or after the ball is marked ready for play, each offensive player must momentarily be within 15 yards of the ball before the snap (Penalty - illegal procedure, 5 yards).
- 4.8.e. One offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion toward the opponent's goal line at the snap. Once set, other offensive players must be stationary in their

positions without movement of the feet, hand, or arms (Penalty - illegal procedure, 5 yards). Players may swivel their head but the center's head cannot be moved in a quick downward snapping motion.

4.8.f. Both lines **must** assume a two point stance. The offensive linemen must be set for one full second before the snap.

4.8.g. The center (snapper) may not run with the ball. **The ball must be snapped but does not need to be snapped between the legs.**

4.9. Rushing:

4.9.a. The ball carrier must run to avoid defenders, not over them. The runner may, however, attempt to maneuver between or around defenders when trapped along the sidelines.

4.9.b. If the ball carrier falls down on their own and the fall was not caused by contact from any defender, the ball carrier may get up and continue to advance the ball (provided the ball did not touch the ground, regardless of whether or not it is in control of the ball carrier). A defender need only touch a ball carrier that is down to de-flag them.

4.9.c. Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag (Penalty - flag guarding, 10 yards). Flag guarding includes:

- ⇒ Swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging
- ⇒ Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging
- ⇒ Lowering the shoulders in such a manner which places the arm over the flag belt to prevent an opponent from deflagging

4.9.d. The runner is prohibited from contacting an opponent with extended hand or arm. This includes the use of a "stiff arm" extended to ward off an opponent attempting to deflag/tag.

4.10. Tackling (deflagging):

4.10.a. Tackling in flag football is defined by removing the flag. Intentionally knocking or bringing a player to the ground is illegal.

4.10.b. When a flag is clearly taken from the runner in possession of the ball by a defender, the ball is declared dead and the down shall end. The player who removes a flag from the runner shall immediately hold the flag above their head.

4.10.c. If a flag or a flag belt inadvertently falls to the ground, a one-hand tag between the shoulders and knees constitutes a tackle.

4.10.d. In an attempt to remove the flag from a runner, defensive players may contact the body and shoulders, but not the face, neck or any part of the head of an opponent with their hands. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the runner down in an attempt to remove the flag.

4.10.e. A player may leave their feet in an attempt for the flag.

4.11. Contact:

4.11.a. Contact is not allowed except for:

⇒ Between the offensive and defensive lines

⇒ Receivers may block down field

⇒ Defenders may “jam” route running receivers at the line of scrimmage only

⇒ Tagging a ball carrier when their flag had fallen out (see section 4.10.c.)

⇒ Contacting a ball carrier in an attempt to remove the flag in accordance with section 4.10.d.

4.11.b. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to the face of another player will be a penalty.

4.12. Fumbles:

4.12.a. If the ball carrier fumbles the ball, it is dead at the point it touches the ground and the ball will be spotted where it left the ball carrier's hand.

4.12.b. Touching the ball, whether controlled or not, with the ball hitting the ground, is considered a fumble.

⇒ Exception: a ball hiked by the center that hits the ground but is immediately picked up by the quarterback will not be considered a dead ball.

4.12.c. A ball fumbled into the air is called an ‘air fumble’ and may be intercepted and advanced by any player provided it never touches the ground.

4.12.d. A defensive player may not attempt to strip or knock a ball out of a ball carrier's hands

4.13. Forward Pass:

4.13.a. The ball may be passed forward only once per down and must be from behind the line of scrimmage. The ball may be passed backward or laterally as many times as desired on any one play until the ball becomes dead.

4.13.b. Forward passes are not permitted on punts or interceptions of forward passes.

4.13.c. Definition of a catch:

⇒ Control of the football must be established (referee's best discretion)

⇒ One foot must be in-bounds when a catch is made and before the other foot touches out-of-bounds for a legal catch

4.13.d. A receiver who voluntarily steps out of bounds before or during their pass route loses eligibility for that play. If a receiver is pushed out of bounds, that player must come back in before making a play on the ball. A penalty may be assessed or the pass completed, or both.

4.13.e. When a player makes a diving catch, they can get up and advance the ball unless they are touched by a defensive player or the ball touches the ground.

4.13.f. Possession will be awarded to the offense if there is a simultaneous catch between the offense and defense and both players fall to the ground with no one in clear control of the ball.

4.13.g. An offensive lineman may not go for routes, but they can catch the ball if it is first tipped or deflected by an eligible offensive or defensive receiver. Touch rules for a flagless ball carrier will apply if the lineman is not wearing flags (see section 4.10.c.).

4.13.h. A receiver may receive the ball or a defensive player may intercept a pass even if their flag has accidentally dropped-off, and either may advance the ball. Touch rules for a flagless ball carrier will apply (see section 4.10.c.).

4.13.i. If a player intercepts a pass in the endzone and takes a knee in the endzone or is deflagged in the endzone, it will be considered a touchback and the ball will be spotted at the 15 yard line.

⇒ Exception: If the ball is intercepted in the endzone and the intercepting player crosses over the goal line, then steps back into the endzone and takes a knee or is deflagged, a safety will be awarded to the opposing team (see section 4.19c.).

4.14. Spotting the Ball:

4.14.a. After the ball carrier's flag is removed or the ball carrier runs out of bounds, the ball will be spotted for the next play based on the location of the ball when the play was first considered dead.

4.14.b. With the ball carrier in possession of the ball, a first down will be awarded if the ball crosses plane of the zone line to gain when the flag is removed, regardless of whether the flags are over the line to gain.

⇒ There is no such thing as forward progress in flag football. The ball will be spotted at the location of the ball when the play was first considered dead, regardless of whether the player crossed forward over the zone line to gain and came back over the line before being tackled.

4.14.c. With the ball carrier in possession of the ball and flags intact, a touchdown will be awarded the moment that any portion of the ball crosses plane of the goal line, regardless of whether the flags are over the goal line.

4.15. Blocking:

4.15.a. The offensive block shall take place with only hand contact. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to the face of another player will be a penalty.

4.15.b. Receivers may block down field.

4.15.c. Chop blocking, blocking in the back, clipping, "high-low" double teaming, blind blocking or any blocking deemed malicious is prohibited.

4.15.d. Offensive players may not grab and/or hold a defensive player.

4.16. Defensive Line:

- 4.16.a. Two down lineman must line up one yard off of the ball, within the offensive tackles' shoulders and may not line up head-up with the center (see Figure 2 below for specific alignment rules).

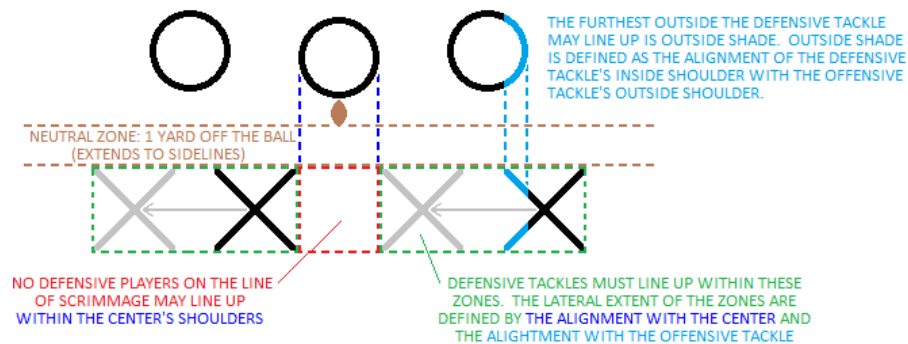


Figure 2: Defensive Line Alignment

- 4.16.b. Simulating an offensive cadence to draw the offence offside is unsportsmanlike and will receive a 10 yard penalty.
- 4.17. Pass Rushing
- 4.17.a. In addition to the two defensive linemen, up to two blitzing players are also allowed to rush the quarterback (maximum of four pass rushers).
- 4.17.b. Blitzing is allowed on every down.
- 4.17.c. A maximum of two rushers are allowed on either lateral side of the football.
- 4.17.d. Linebackers blitzing may line up inside of the tackle box (green zones shown in Figure 2). Linebackers outside of the tackle box or lined up on the center must line at least 2 yards off the line of scrimmage.
- 4.17.e. Pass rushers must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear the ball has been thrown forward. No defensive player shall contact the passer who is standing still or fading back. (Penalty - roughing the passer, 10 yards from previous spot, or from the end of the run (if the pass is completed), and an automatic first down)
- 4.18. Punting:
- 4.18.a. Prior to making the ball ready for play on fourth down, the official must ask the offensive team captain if they want to punt. The official must communicate the offensive captain's decision to the defensive captain and the other officials. The offensive captain also may request a punt on any down. After such announcement, the ball must be kicked; fake punts are not allowed. Once the offense has declared they will punt, the captain must call a time-out to change their option.
- 4.18.b. Quick kicks are illegal (Penalty - illegal kick, 10 yards).
- 4.18.c. The punter must be at least 3 yards behind the center.
- 4.18.d. After receiving the snap, the punter must punt the ball immediately and in a continuous motion (Penalty - illegal procedure, 5 yards).

4.18.e. Neither the kicking nor the receiving team may advance beyond their respective scrimmage line until the ball is kicked (Penalty - illegal procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot).

4.18.f. Punts which land out of bounds will be spotted where they went out. Punts which land in the end zone or go out of bounds through the back of the end zone will be considered a touchback and the ball will be spotted at the 15 yard line.

4.19. Scoring:

4.19.a. Touchdown – 6 points

- ⇒ With the ball carrier in possession of the ball and flags intact, a touchdown will be awarded the moment that any portion of the ball crosses plane of the goal line, regardless of whether the flags are over the goal line.
- ⇒ A touchdown will be awarded when a pass is caught in the endzone at the moment the receiver establishes possession/control of the football and the first foot to land is in bounds.

4.19.b. Try – 1, 2, or 3 points

- ⇒ After a touchdown, the offense will attempt a try for extra points. The offensive captain must declare to the head official if they will attempt a 1 point try from the 3 yard line, 2 point try from the 10 yard line, or a 3 point try from the 20 yard line. To successfully complete the try and be awarded the appropriate points, the offense must score the ball in accordance with the same rules that define a touchdown.
- ⇒ 3 points will be awarded to the defense if a try is intercepted and returned to the opposite endzone.
- ⇒ Any post-snap penalties that are incurred during the try will be assessed to the spot of the ball that starts the next possession of the team opposing the scoring team.
- ⇒ After a try, there will be a change of possession to the opponent of the touchdown scoring team and the ball will be spotted at their own 15 yard line, unless moved by a penalty.

4.19.c. Safety – 2 points

- ⇒ A safety is scored by the opposing team when the team with possession of the ball:
 - Is deflagged in their own endzone (exception: when possession is first established in the endzone and the ball was never carried out of the endzone, i.e. punt returns and interceptions)
 - Takes a knee in their own endzone (exception: when possession is first established in the endzone and the ball was never carried out of the endzone, i.e. punt returns and interceptions)
 - Runs the ball out of the back of their own endzone

- Fumbles the ball out of the back of their own endzone
- ⇒ After a safety, possession of the ball will go to the safety scoring team, spotted at their own 15 yard line, unless moved by penalty

4.20. Penalties

- 4.20.a. The head referee can overturn calls made by the other officials.
- 4.20.b. The captain's first choice of any penalty option shall be irrevocable.
- 4.20.c. Five-yard Penalties:
- ⇒ Offsides: marked from the original line of scrimmage
 - ⇒ Delay of game: marked from the original line of scrimmage
 - ⇒ Illegal procedure: marked from the original line of scrimmage
 - ⇒ Intentional grounding: point of infraction and loss of down
 - ⇒ Illegal pass: point of infraction and loss of down
 - ⇒ Intentional forward fumble: point of infraction and loss of down
 - ⇒ Failure to wear proper uniform: marked from the original line of scrimmage (enforced after every play the offending player is on the field until the uniform issue is resolved)
- 4.20.d. Ten-yard penalties will marked from the basic spot of enforcement according to the "all but one" principle unless otherwise specified. Ten-yard penalties include:
- ⇒ Pass interference:
 - By offense: marked from the original line of scrimmage and loss of down
 - By defense: marked from the original line of scrimmage and automatic first down. Defensive interference also includes pushing or shoving the receiver out of bounds while in route or intentionally removing the flag before the catch while the ball is in flight.
 - ⇒ Illegal use of hands, forearms, or elbows
 - ⇒ Offensive or defensive holding
 - ⇒ Flag guarding
 - ⇒ Leaving the feet on a block
 - ⇒ Roughing the passer
 - ⇒ Stiff-arming
 - ⇒ Illegal blocks (chop blocking, blocking in the back, clipping, "high-low" double teaming, blind blocking or any blocking deemed malicious)
- 4.20.e. Gross unsportsmanlike conduct, intentional or flagrant foul: The person(s) charged with gross unsportsmanlike conduct, intentional or flagrant foul may be removed from the game and suspensions may be enacted. Any player receiving two unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will be ejected immediately, and will be subject to suspension from the EBAC FFL.

4.21. Tie Game:

- 4.21.a. There will be no overtime in regular season games; the final result will be recorded as a tie.

- 4.21.b. For playoff games that are tied at the end of regulation, the game will continue into overtime per the following rules:
- ⇒ The two field captains shall be brought together and a coin will be flipped to determine the option. The winner of the toss shall be given the option of offense, defense, or direction.
 - ⇒ There is no running game clock in overtime, however there is a play clock in accordance with rule 4.8.a. Time outs will pause the play clock for 30 seconds.
 - ⇒ The offensive team will be given four downs from the opposing team's 10 yard line.
 - ⇒ The object will be to score a touchdown. Extra point tries will be attempted as normal.
 - ⇒ After the first offensive team scores a touchdown and completes the try, or after the first offensive team fails to score within four downs, the opposing team will be given the same opportunity to score within four downs from the 10 yard line. If the first offensive team does not score and the second offensive team does, the game will be over.
 - ⇒ If the game remains tied after this procedure, it will be repeated until the tie is broken.
 - ⇒ Interceptions in overtime:
 - If the intercepting team returns the ball for a touchdown, the game is over and the intercepting team wins.
 - If the intercepting team does not score a touchdown, but is ahead in points, the game is over and the intercepting team wins.
 - If the intercepting team has not yet had an offensive series (or if they were the second team to go on offense in overtime), the ball will be theirs and placed on the 10 yard line, where they may attempt to win by scoring a touchdown within four downs.
 - If the intercepting team was the first to have an offensive series and the score remains tied, the ball will be theirs and placed on the 10 yard line, where they may attempt to go-ahead by scoring a touchdown, but the opposing team will still have an opportunity to win via their own series.
 - ⇒ One time-out is allowed during each overtime series for both teams.
 - ⇒ Both teams will face the same direction for each offensive series.

5. MATCHUPS

5.1. Regular Season:

- 5.1.a. The season will be played between May and August (no games the week of holidays).
- 5.1.b. The commissioner will post the schedule no later than 2 weeks before the first game.
- 5.1.c. Regular season games will be played on weeknights at 4:30pm and 5:30pm.

- 5.1.d. There are no divisions. Each team will play every other team in the league at least once.
- 5.1.e. The commissioner will announce updated league standings by each Friday afternoon.
- 5.1.f. The commissioner shall reserve at least one time slot per week for make-up games and one full week of open time slots for make-up games a week before the playoffs.
- 5.2. Playoffs:
 - 5.2.a. The top six teams will make the playoffs. All teams will make the playoffs if there are six or less teams in the league.
 - 5.2.b. Playoffs are single-elimination.
 - 5.2.c. Playoff seeding will be determined based on total wins. Tiebreakers are as follows:
 - ⇒ Winner of head to head matchup
 - ⇒ Least total points-against
 - ⇒ Most total points-for (average of points-for in all games that not won by forfeit)
 - ⇒ Coin flip by commissioner with both captains (or delegates) in attendance
 - 5.2.d. Playoff matchups:
 - ⇒ First round (quarterfinals):
 - #1 and #2 seeds earn a first round bye
 - #3 seed will play the #6 seed
 - #4 seed will play the #5 seed
 - ⇒ Second round (semifinals):
 - #1 seed will play the lowest (worst) seed remaining from the first round
 - #2 seed will play the highest (best) seed remaining from the first round
 - ⇒ Championship round:
 - Both remaining seeds from the second round will play for the EBAC FFL championship