



Wellington Recreation

Official Youth Flag Manual

Purpose of League Play

The purpose of the league sponsored by Wellington Recreation is to provide kids with the opportunity for learning and fun in a safe environment. Friendly competition and clean sportsmanship will be emphasized. Our main goal is for ALL participants (players, coaches, parents, etc.) to have FUN while building athletic, team, and social skills.

A. Field, Players, and Equipment

a. The Field

- i. Size: 70 yards (goal to goal) x 40 yards wide, 10-yard end zones. Playing field will be divided into four equal zones.

b. The Players: No team may play without a certified coach present on the playing field.

- i. Age 6-8 and 9-12 play 5v5. If the opposing team has fewer than five players, it may borrow players from the other team to make the sides equal.
- ii. Each player shall take equal turns/time sitting out when substitutes are needed.
- iii. Each player shall play both offense and defense. Players shall play every position on offense every game.
- iv. Any number of substitutions may enter the game for either team when the ball is dead.
- v. Players must be on an official roster and may not participate if they outside the specified age/grade group.

c. The Equipment

- i. The ball shall be a pee-wee size ball. Ball shall be provided by Wellington Recreation.
- ii. All participants shall wear an official flag belt. Belts provided by Wellington Recreation. Flags shall be worn on the sides and in such a manner as to be clear of any obstructions. Shirts must be tucked in and not hanging over the flags. Officials may whistle a ball carrier down immediately for deliberately placing flags in a non-legal position.
- iii. Players attire:
 1. Athletic shoes (no metal spikes)
 2. Protective mouthpiece is optional. Wearing one is highly encouraged.
 3. No jewelry
 4. Official Recreation Jersey worn on outside.
 5. Headwear shall be soft and without any hard brims (i.e. No helmets/ball caps)
- iv. Hoods on coats or other apparel shall be tucked in and not hanging out.
- v. Pads and safety equipment or attire deemed by the official to be unsafe shall be illegal.

B. The Game

a. Timing

- i. The game consists of two halves, each 30 minutes in length. Half-time shall be 5 minutes in length.
- ii. Each team is allowed two time-outs per half. Each time out will be one minute in length.
- iii. Time runs continuous for each half except for legal time outs or on field injuries. If no official is present, home team shall designate a non-coach to be the official time keeper. Approximately two minutes before the end of each half the official timekeeper shall call out a two-minute warning. Play shall continue without stoppage.
- iv. Game clock shall start when one of the following occurs:
 1. Ball is kicked to start a half of play
 2. Ball is hiked following a time out
 3. Ball is hiked following an on-field injury

4. At the direction of the official after any stoppage of time
5. If time for any period expires during a down, play shall continue until the end of the down
6. The PAT attempt shall be allowed should time expire

b. Scoring

- i. A touchdown shall count as six points. A touchdown shall be scored when, in an upright position, the ball carriers feet break the plane of the goal line.
- ii. A point after the touchdown attempt (PAT) is awarded after a touchdown is scored. Defensive team cannot score on a PAT attempt. The PAT attempt shall consist of one offensive play from the following options:
 1. Five-yard line for a 1-point conversion (run or pass)
 2. Ten-yard line for a 2-point conversion (run or pass)
- iii. A safety shall count as two points.
 1. A safety is scored when the ball is legally in possession of a player becomes dead behind their own goal line, provided the impetus which sent the ball into the end zone was given by a member of their own team. Points are awarded to the opposing team, and the team scored upon puts the ball in play with a place kick or punt from their 10-yard line.
 2. If a team commits a foul in the end zone where the spot of enforcement is designated as the spot of the foul, it will be declared a safety. *Exception – When a player intercepts a forward pass or catches a scrimmage kick between their five-yard line and their goal line and their momentum carries them into the end zone where the ball becomes dead, the ball will belong to the receiving team at the spot of the catch or reception.*

c. The Kick Off

- i. A coin toss will determine which team will have their choice of kicking or receiving to begin the game. Kicking team will choose which end zone to defend (first half only). Kicking team will then receive in the second half and vice versa. White team captain shall call the coin toss.
- ii. The kick off shall be a place kick and shall be taken at the beginning of each half and after each touchdown. After a safety, the offended team has a choice of place kick or punt.
- iii. The kick off shall be taken at midfield. All players on the receiving team must be at least 15 yards from the line the ball is kicked from. All players on the kicking team must be behind the ball.
- iv. If a member of the receiving team controls the kicked ball, they may run, hand off, or lateral the ball until the ball carrier is downed or the ball is fumbled.
- v. If the ball goes out of bounds before the ball is touched, the receiving team may take the ball at the spot it goes out of bounds or at the receiving team's 15-yard line (whatever is most advantageous to the receiving team).
- vi. On-side kicks are illegal. Once the ball has been put into play, only the receiving team may take possession of the ball.
- vii. On a touch or muff (first touch), the ball will not be called dead, the receiving team will be allowed to pick it up and run with the ball. A fumble after possession has been established will be whistled dead at the spot.
- viii. If the kick off enters the end zone, a player may run the ball out of the end zone or down it and have the ball put in play at receiving teams own 10-yard line (touchback).
- ix. Kick-off: The ball is downed when the kicking team touches the ball first after a kick off or punt. The receiving team has the opportunity to field the ball if it is rolling or stopped but has not been touched.
- x. A kick of touched in the end zone by the kicking team, will be called dead and brought out to the 10-yard line (touchback).
- xi. No kick-offs for Ages 6-8. When team takes possession the ball will be placed at the 10 yard line.

d. Touchback

- i. After a kick off, a touchback occurs when the ball goes of bounds behind a goal line or when the ball becomes dead in possession of a player behind his own goal line, provided the player has not previously exited the end zone. Ball is put in play at the 10-yard line.
- ii. An interception downed in the end zone comes out to the 10-yard line.

e. Regular Play

- i. Teams on offense have four (4) downs to advance the ball from one zone to the next. A new set of four (4) downs shall be awarded upon advancement into a new zone. If after four (4)

consecutive downs the spot of the ball is not sufficient to award a new set of downs possession is awarded to the defense.

- ii. Beanbag markers will be utilized to mark the line of scrimmage and seven (7) yard encroachment zone. (Marked by an official)
 - iii. Teams shall trade end zones defended after halftime break.
 - iv. Quarterback is defined as player, different from the snapper, receiving the ball from the player snapping the ball. Only five players per team are allowed on the field during a play.
 - v. The Quarterback is determined by player who receives the direct snap.
- f. Defense**
- i. Defense must be played man-to-man with **NO ZONE DEFENSE** all age divisions.
- g. The Line of Scrimmage & Offense**
- i. Advancing the Ball: To advance the ball after the snap, the team may run with it or pass it.
 - ii. The offense must hike the ball into play within forty-five (45) seconds from the time the official places the ball on the line of scrimmage.
 - iii. All players of the offensive team must remain stationary for one second before the ball is snapped.
 - iv. One person may start in motion, but this person cannot be on the line of scrimmage and their motion must be taken away from, or parallel to, the line of scrimmage. Illegal Motion penalty is 5-yards.
 - v. On a shift play, all players of the offensive team must come to a complete stop and remain motionless in a legal position for at least one full second before the ball is snapped. An Illegal Shift carries a 10-yard penalty.
 - vi. The person hiking the ball must:
 - 1. Hike between the legs, with the snapper facing the defense, to a teammate behind the line of scrimmage.
 - 2. Transfer the ball fully to the teammate receiving the ball.
 - 3. The “center sneak” is an illegal play.
 - vii. The offense and defense cannot enter or break the plane of the neutral zone until the ball is hiked. An infraction of this rule is off sides. Any player braking or lining-up in the neutral zone will be flagged (play is called dead for ANY off sides infraction by the offense). This penalty cannot be declined. Penalty: 10 yards
 - viii. At least one offensive player must be on the line of scrimmage.
 - ix. Any number of players may line up on the line of scrimmage defensively (no requirements).
- h. Fumbles**
- i. If a ball carrier drops the ball, it is dead at the spot (providing the ball hits the ground), team keeps possession and advances to the next down. If fumble occurs on fourth down and the spot is not sufficient to award a first down, then possession is awarded to the defense.
 - ii. Fumbles on Quarterback/Center exchange:
 - 1. Play is blown dead and down is replayed if Quarterback is directly under the center.
 - 2. If Quarterback in in shotgun, play continues if ball is front of Quarterback, if ball is past Quarterback ball is blown dead and play resumes as if a fumble occurred.
 - 3. On a punt play, the punter may pick up a fumbled snap and immediately punt the ball.
- i. Running Plays**
- i. The Quarterback cannot run with the ball. He must pass the ball forward or hand it off behind the line of scrimmage. Play is dead when the Quarterback advances past the line of scrimmage.
 - ii. The ball carrier may run in any direction, hand off, or lateral anywhere on the field. All handoffs or laterals must be to the rear of the ball carrier beyond the line of scrimmage. If dropped, the ball is dead at the spot (fumble).
 - iii. Stiff-arms or covering the flags in any manner shall be illegal (Flag Guarding). Play is blown dead.
 - iv. No player may jump, leap, or hurdle while in possession of the ball, especially at goal line and first down situations. If this occurs, ball will be considered dead automatically and loss of down. Officials will not call jumping over a player lying on the ground, quarterbacks jumping to get the ball over defenders and related situations.
 - v. Spinning is allowed but ball carrier cannot lose contact with the ground.

- vi. In running, the ball carrier must attempt to avoid tacklers. Deliberate charging into a defensive player, with or without head down is illegal “Brushing” or other unavoidable contact is not willful charging.
 - vii. The “center sneak” is an illegal play.
- j. Passing Plays**
- i. Every player is eligible to catch a forward pass. The quarterback is eligible to catch a forward pass after he has handed it off.
 - ii. It is a legal catch when a player gains possession of the ball with at least one foot inbounds.
 - iii. For a defensive player to be eligible to cross the line of scrimmage before a handoff or forward pass, the player shall line up beyond the seven-yard zone. The seven-yard zone shall be marked by the official with a bean bag.
 - iv. If a legal catch is not made, the ball is dead and returns to the previous line of scrimmage.
 - v. If a simultaneous catch takes place, the ball is dead and belongs to the offensive team.
 - vi. Lateral (backward) passes, overhand or underhand, may be made anywhere on the field and there is no limit to the number that may be attempted in a play or down.
 - vii. No player may hand the ball off forward of their position on the field to another teammate unless both players are behind the line of scrimmage and before the ball goes forward to the line of scrimmage.
 - viii. A ball which falls from the passer’s hand shall be judged accordingly to the following:
 1. If there is any forward motion by the arm, the ball is ruled an incomplete forward pass and returned to the line of scrimmage.
 2. If there is no forward motion, the ball is ruled a fumble and dead at the spot of the ball touches the ground.
 - ix. If is intentional grounding when there is not a receiver in the vicinity of a thrown ball.
 - x. A “double pass” is illegal. (A double pass means two forward passes.)
 - xi. Incomplete forward passes behind the goal line will not be considered touchbacks.
 - xii. A pass is illegal if the passer has crossed the line of scrimmage or if it is the second forward pass in the same play.
- k. Pass Interference**
- i. No contact with the receiver is allowed, unless it is a simultaneous effort by both players to get the ball. If ball is in the air contact, offensive or defensive, shall be called as Pass Interference.
 - ii. Defensive Pass Interference Penalty: Point of Infraction, automatic first down.
 - iii. Defensive Pass Interference in the end zone shall result in the ball being placed at the 1-yard line, automatic first down.
 - iv. Intentionally de-flagging an opponent before they have possession of the ball shall result in one of the following:
 1. If legal catch is made by player de-flagged, play continues as one hand touch.
 2. If pass is incomplete, pass interference shall be called against offending team.
- l. Conduct & Roughness**
- i. If the field supervisor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be asked to sit out for 5 minutes.
- m. Penalties**
- i. **Defense:**
 1. Offside – 5 yards and automatic first down
 2. Interference – 10 yards and automatic first down
 3. Illegal contact (holding, blocking, contact on the ball carrier, etc) – 10 yards and automatic first down
 4. Illegal flag pull (before receiver has the ball) – 10 yards from the spot of the foul and automatic first down
 5. Illegal rushing (starting rush from inside 7-yard marker) – 5 yards and automatic first down
 - ii. **Offense:**
 1. Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start, etc) – 5 yards and loss of down
 2. Illegal forward pass (forward pass attempted behind the line of scrimmage) -5 yards and loss of down

3. Offensive pass interference (illegal pick lay, pushing off/away defender) – 10 yards and loss of down
4. Delay of game – 5 yards and loss of down (clock stops until next snap in second half)
5. Flag guarding – 10 yards from spot of foul and loss of down, this includes tying the flag
6. Illegal screen block – 10 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down
7. Illegal pitch (more than 1 pitch, lateral or backward pass per play) – 5 yards and loss of down
8. Jumping automatic dead ball loss of down

Miscellaneous:

- All players have a right to play every game and an equal amount of time if they have attended regular practices
- Players are optional but encourage to wear a mouth guard at all practices and games. A blue-white reversible jersey is required for game play
- Playing Conditions: Field supervisor will determine if games will or will not be played. Games will be called if safety is a concern.
- Opposing parents, coaches, and players should shake hands after each game.
- Wellington Recreation recommends that this age group should have in season practices limited to one 45-60 minutes session per week for Ages 6-8 and one or two 60-90 minute sessions per week for Ages 9-12.
- Games called due to inclement weather may be rescheduled. One weekend at the end of each season will be set aside for make-up games. Coaches can set up a time, if any, to make up a missed game.
- Participation awards, when awarded, will be given to ALL participants.
- Parents, coaches, non-playing players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters. All coaches are volunteers and as such are not employees of the Town of Wellington.
- Practice dates and times will be scheduled at the discretion of the coach.
- All coaches will be required to attend a training seminar and will be subject to a background check.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products will be allowed or used in the parks during games or practices.
- Swearing will be tolerated by fans, participants, or coaches. All adults need to remember that they are role models and need to be positive in their words and actions.
- A parent or fan that is loud, obnoxious, or disrupts the event will be asked to leave the premises and will be expected to comply immediately.
- Elastic Clause: The league director shall have complete charge of the Youth Sports League. Any and all situations not specifically covered by these rules shall be acted upon by the league director and all actions by the league director will be final.
- The league director reserves the right to change or amend any of the rules or regulations contained in this manual. Any question concerning Youth Sports should be directed to:

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