Department of Recreational Sports | Intramural Sports
2017-18 Flag Football Information Sheet

Thank you for being a part of one of the best intramural programs in the nation. We are proud to offer a variety of quality intramural activities. Good luck and we hope you have a fun and exciting season!

If you have questions throughout the season, please feel free to contact us by calling our office (540-231-8297), emailing imsports@vt.edu, stopping by our office in 135 War Memorial Hall or consulting our Participant Policy and Procedure Manual.

Key Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Regular Season Starts:</td>
<td>Monday, October 23rd</td>
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<td>Regular Season Ends:</td>
<td>Thursday, November 9th</td>
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<td>Playoff Brackets Posted:</td>
<td>Saturday, November 11th</td>
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<td>Playoffs Begin:</td>
<td>Sunday, November 12th</td>
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<td>Championship Night Presented by Foxridge:</td>
<td>Thursday, December 7th</td>
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Rules of the Game

1. The Game, Field, Players, and Equipment
   a. Men’s/Women’s games are played between teams of 7.
   b. CoRec games are played between teams of 8.
      i. In CoRec, the number of male and female players may not differ by more than 1. If possible, there should be an equal number of males and females.
   c. 4 players are needed to start a Men’s, Women’s, or CoRec game. In CoRec, the +/-1 ratio applies.
   d. If a team falls below the required number of players due injuries or ejections, play may continue until the game is no longer competitive.
      i. In CoRec, there may only be one more of a gender than the other on the field at a time.
   e. Teams may use their own ball, as long as it meets all requirements:
      i. Men’s games – shall use a regular size ball only
      ii. Women’s/CoRec games – may use a regular, intermediate, youth, or junior size ball
   f. During play, the offensive team is responsible for the football. The offensive players are responsible for taking the ball back to the team huddle. The officials will not retrieve balls.
   g. Must be worn with 1 flag on each hip, 1 flag in the back, and the clip secured to the other end of the belt. Flag belts may not be tied!
   h. Players are not permitted to wear illegal equipment. The follow are considered illegal equipment:
      i. Hard-billed hats/headbands with knots
      ii. Jewelry
      iii. Any casts, above or below the waist
      iv. Pads or braces worn above the waist
      v. Shoes with metal, ceramic, screw-in, or detachable cleats
      vi. Shirts or jerseys that do not stay tucked in, unless it is 4” above the waist
      vii. Any hood that does not remain tucked in
      viii. Jerseys with any arm-opening more than 4” below the armpit
      ix. Any player attire that has pocket(s)
      x. Towels attached to the players waist
      xi. Hand warmers worn around the waist
2. Definitions
   a. **Dead ball** – a ball not in play
   b. **Live ball** – a ball in play
   c. **Loose ball** – a pass, fumble, or kick
   d. **Batting** – intentional slapping or striking the ball with hand or arm
   e. **Catch** – the act of establishing the ball in flight, first contact the ground inbounds while maintaining player possession
   f. **Muff** – an unsuccessful attempt to catch the ball, the ball being touched in the attempt
   g. **Legal kick** – punt by a player of the team in possession, and continues to be a punt until it is caught by a player or becomes dead by rule
   h. **Passer** – a player who has thrown a legal forward pass
   i. **Screen blocking** – legally obstructing an opponent without using any part of the body to initiate contact
   j. **Foul** – a rule infraction in which a penalty is prescribed
   k. **Penalty** – a result imposed by rule against a team or team member that has committed a foul

3. Periods, Time Factors, and Substitutions
   a. The game consists of two 20-minute halves with a running clock. The clock will stop by for the 2 minute warning in each half and will restart on the snap.
      i. During the last 30 seconds of the first half and the final two minutes of the second half, the clock will stop on scores, penalties, out-of-bounds, first downs, possession changes, touchbacks, inadvertent whistles, and incomplete passes.
      ii. Overtime periods will not be used during the regular season, but will be used during playoffs.
   b. Each team is entitled to one 30-second time-out per half (one additional time-out for the entire overtime).
   c. Extension of periods – a period may be extended if one of the following happen as time expires:
      i. There was an accepted penalty for a live-ball foul
         1. Exception – penalties that are enforced as dead-ball fouls, penalties that carry a loss of down, and penalties that result in a safety
         ii. There was a double foul
         iii. There was an inadvertent whistle
         iv. There was a touchdown scored
            1. Will not attempt try if points will not affect the outcome of the game
   d. The referee will stop the game clock in the event of an injured player. The player must sit out at least one play if the clock is stopped to attend to their injury. A team timeout cannot be used to return the player to the field for the successive play.
   e. Delay of game – if the team in possession fails to snap the ball within 25 seconds of the ready-for-play signal, or if they snap it before the ready for play signal, that team has committed a delay of game foul.
      i. If a team attempts to conserve time illegally, the clock may be started on the ready for play signal.
      ii. If a team attempts to consume time illegally, the clock may be started on the snap. This includes delay of game and encroachment fouls by the defense.
   f. Players may substitute freely between downs. Substitutes must be in uniform and ready for play prior to the substitution.
   g. In CoRec, the gender ratio must be maintained following a substitution.

4. Live Ball/Dead Ball
   a. The ball becomes live when it is snapped legally.
   b. The ball becomes dead when:
      i. A forward pass strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players.
      ii. A backward pass or fumble by a player strikes the ground.
III. A runner’s flag belt is removed legally by an opponent. A flag is removed when “the clip” is detached from the belt, or if the flag/belt rips when pulled.

IV. A runner is legally touched with one hand between the shoulders and knees, including the hand and arm, if the belt falls off during play.

V. A snap hits the ground.

VI. A muffed punt strikes the ground.

VII. The passer is deflagged before releasing the ball.

VIII. If a ball in-flight hits an official at any time and the ball falls to the ground (if the pass was forward, it is an incomplete pass, otherwise the play is dead at the spot).

IX. Any part of a player’s body – other than the hand or foot – hits the ground.

X. When the prosthetic device becomes dislodged from a player in possession of the ball.

XI. An inadvertent whistle is blown.

C. Out-of-bounds

I. If the ball or any part of a player touches the boundary line, the ball is dead.

II. If an inbounds runner touches or is touched by an out-of-bounds player or official, the ball remains live.

D. Inadvertent whistle – when an official sounds a whistle inadvertently during a down

I. When the ball is in player possession – the team in possession can choose to put the ball in play where declared down or replay the down.

II. When the ball is loose from a fumble, backward pass, illegal kick, or illegal forward pass – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down.

III. During a legal forward pass or a punt – the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down is replayed.

E. Succeeding spot – the location of the

I. If the ball becomes dead inbetween the hashes, the pucks will be placed at that location.

II. If the ball becomes dead outside of the hashes, the pucks will be placed on the nearest hash.

III. Team A may designate the spot from which the ball is put in play anywhere between the hash marks for:

   I. The start of each half

   II. The try

   III. Following a:

   1. Safety

   2. Touchdown

   3. Try

   4. Awarded catch after a punt

IV. The start of each OT series

5. Fumbles

   a. There are no fumbles in flag football.

   b. A fumble or backward pass is dead at the point it hits the ground.

   c. The ball belongs to the team last in possession – touching is a fumble is not considered legal possession.

6. Series and Number of Downs

   a. The team in possession of the ball shall have four consecutive downs to advance to the next zone line-to-gain. After a change of possession, the succeeding play will be first down for the team with possession.

   b. The zone line-to-gain shall be the line (or field marker) in advance of the ball, unless distance has been lost due to penalty or failure to gain. In such cases, the original line in advance of the ball at the beginning of the series of downs is the zone line-to-gain (referred to as “double stakes”).

      i. Exception: in overtime, the zone line to gain will always be the goal line.

   c. The most forward point of the ball, when declared dead between the goal lines is the determining factor.

7. Kicking the Ball
a. There are no kickoffs; a new series (after scores, touchbacks, etc.) will start at the 14-yard line, unless moved by penalty.

b. After receiving the snap, the kicker must punt the ball immediately in a continuous motion.

c. Neither team may cross the scrimmage line until the ball is kicked. Once punted, a kick may be blocked.

d. There are no quick kicks or fake punts. All punts must be announced to the Referee.

e. The ball becomes dead immediately when a kick breaks the plane of the receiving team’s goal line.

f. A muffed kick is dead at the spot where the ball touches the ground.

g. If the kicking team recovers a muffed kick before it touches the ground, the ball becomes dead and it is a new series for the kicking team at the spot of recovery – the kicking team may not advance a kick.

h. There are no fair catches in flag football. *Penalty: Unfair Act.*

8. Scrimmage Play

a. Field Markings
   i. There will be 2 hash marks parallel to each sideline and located 15 yards “in” from the sideline.
   
   ii. Before ready for play signal, a team may designate the spot from which the ball is put in play anywhere between the hash marks in the following situations:
      a. Start of each half
      b. For a try
      c. Following a touchback, safety, try, and awarded catch after a kick
      d. For the start of each series using the overtime procedure

   iii. For the remainder of any team possession:
        a. If the ball becomes dead outside the hash marks, play will restart on the nearest hash mark.
        b. If the ball becomes dead within the two hash marks, the next play will start at that spot.

b. Snapping
   i. The snap need not pass through the snapper’s legs but must be done in one continuous motion. *Penalty: Illegal Snap.*

   ii. The player receiving the snap must be at least 2 yards behind the scrimmage line. *Penalty: Illegal Formation.*

   iii. The snapper is the only offensive player required to be on the offensive scrimmage line.

   iv. The snapper may carry the ball from the huddle to the scrimmage line. A towel may be used to help keep the ball dry and placed under the ball, but may not be attached to the player.

   v. No player on the offensive team shall make a false start. A false start is any movement simulating the start of play. *Penalty: False Start.*

   v. At the time of the snap, it is encroachment for any player to break the plane of his/her scrimmage line, except the snapper’s right to be over the ball. *Penalty: Encroachment.*

   vi. Prior to the snap, all offensive players must come to a complete stop and remain stationary for at least one full second. If two or more players shift, all must become set for one second before the snap. *Penalty: Illegal Shift.*

   vii. Only one offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion toward the opponent’s goal line. *Penalty: Illegal Motion.*

11. Handing the Ball

a. Any player may hand the ball forward or backward at any time.

b. In CoRec, a male runner cannot advance the ball through the scrimmage line until the ball has been touched beyond the scrimmage line. *Penalty: Illegal Advancement.*

c. There are no restrictions under the following conditions:
   i. During a run by a male once the ball has been touched beyond the offensive scrimmage line.
   ii. During a run by a female runner.
   iii. After a change of team possession.

12. Passing and Receiving

a. All players are eligible to touch or catch a forward pass. Only one forward pass may be thrown per down.

b. A forward pass is illegal if:
i. The passer’s foot is beyond A’s scrimmage line when the ball leaves his/her hand.
ii. The ball is thrown after team possession has changed during the down.
iii. The ball is intentionally grounded to save loss of yardage.
iv. A passer catches his/her untouched forward or backward pass.
v. If there is more than one forward pass per down.
vi. **Penalty: Illegal Forward Pass.**

c. After the ball is snapped, and until it has been touched, there shall be no offensive pass interference beyond the offensive scrimmage line if the legal forward pass crosses the offensive scrimmage line. **Penalty: Offensive Pass Interference, 10 yards.**
d. After a legal forward pass is released by the passer and until it has been touched, there shall be no defensive pass interference beyond the offensive scrimmage line while the pass that crosses the offensive scrimmage line is in flight. **Penalty: Defensive Pass Interference, 10 yards.**
e. If opposing inbounds players simultaneously catch a pass, the ball becomes dead at the spot and belongs to the passing team.
f. In CoRec, plays – including a try for 1, 2, or 3 points – are classified as either “open” or “closed”.
   i. “Open” means that males are eligible to catch a pass from any player.
   ii. “Closed” means that males are not eligible to catch a pass from another male player.
   iii. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass completion must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards (i.e., female to male, male to female, or female to female).
   iv. Fouls, whether accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next legal forward pass completion is “open” or “closed.
g. In CoRec, if a female completes a pass to a male behind the offensive scrimmage line and any male advances the ball beyond the scrimmage line, the penalty shall be an illegal forward pass enforced form the spot of the pass. If the play was closed, then the succeeding play will also be closed.
h. A player must have one foot inbounds for a legal reception.

13. Scoring and Touchback Plays
a. In Men’s or Women’s a touchdown is 6 points.
b. In CoRec, if a woman scores or throws a legal pass and any offensive player scores, prior to a change of possession, the point value is 9.
   i. In CoRec, all other touchdowns are 6 points.
c. In Men’s, Women’s, or CoRec, a safety is 2 points.
d. A try is granted to a team following a touchdown. The team will have the opportunity to score:
   i. 1 point from the 3-yard line
   ii. 2 points from the 10-yard line
   iii. 3 points from the 20-yard line

14. Mercy Rule
a. If a team is 19 or more points (25 in CoRec) ahead with two minutes to play, the game is over.
b. If a team scores during the last 2 minutes of the game and that score creates a 19 or more point difference (CoRec 25 points) the game is over.

**All other rules will follow the NIRSA Flag & Touch Football Rules Book.**
**Sportsmanship**

1. After each game, teams are given a sportsmanship rating by the officials, the scorekeeper, and the supervisor. The following rating system is used as a guideline for all sportsmanship ratings:

   “5” *Excellent Conduct and Sportsmanship* – Players cooperate fully with opponents and officials. The captain calmly converses with officials and has full control of his/her teammates.

   “4” *Good Conduct and Sportsmanship* – Team members display minor disagreement or unsporting behavior. Teams receiving an unsportsmanlike penalty/foul are not eligible to receive a rating higher than a “4” for that game. A team wins by forfeit.

   “3” *Average Conduct and Sportsmanship* – Team members display disagreement and unsporting behavior toward officials and/or opponents. Teams receiving more than one unsportsmanlike penalty/foul are not eligible to receive a rating higher than a “3” for that game.

   “2” *Below Average Conduct and Sportsmanship* – Team members display a serious lack of control and continuously show unsporting behavior to officials and/or opponents from the field/sidelines. The captain has little or no control of team. Must have received at least one unsportsmanlike penalty/foul to receive a “2” or below. Forfeiting teams receive a “2” rating. Teams with an unsporting ejection cannot receive higher than a “2” rating.

   “1” *Poor Conduct and Sportsmanship* – Captain has no control over team, resulting in an ejection. Team is completely uncooperative. Any team causing a game to be forfeited – other than by not showing up – may receive a “1” rating.

   “0” *Team Disqualification* – Player(s) or coach(s) ejected for abuse against a staff member or opponents. Team is disqualified for unsportsmanlike acts before, during, or after the game.

   **Please help us make this system work by giving appropriate ratings**

2. Each week, all teams that maintain a 5.0 sportsmanship average are entered into a drawing for a sportsmanship award. The team receiving these awards will also have their picture posted on the Intramural Sports website.

3. Regular Season Situations:
   a. Teams must maintain a 3.0 average throughout regular season play to be eligible for playoffs.
   b. Teams that receive below a 3.0 average for any game will be contacted by the Intramural Sports Office.

4. Playoff situations
   a. If a team receives below a 3.0 average in a playoff contest, that team will be eliminated from playoffs.
   b. If neither team receives at least a 3.0 average, a double forfeit is declared and both teams are eliminated.

5. If a game is not finished due to any circumstances, the sportsmanship rating earned will stand.

6. The Department of Recreational Sports may impose additional penalties on players that are unsportsmanlike during regular season or playoff contests.
Eligibility

1. Any person who has purchased the Full Intramural Membership is eligible to participate in any team activity. The following persons are eligible to purchase memberships:
   a. Student or employees; individuals associated with Campus Ministry, VCOM, Vet Med; Visiting Scholars; CRC Employees, and Long Term Guests (except Dependents). Such persons are eligible until they withdraw from the University or fail to comply with eligibility guidelines.
   b. Alumni are not eligible to purchase the Intramural Membership unless they fall into one of the previous categories mentioned.

   *All memberships may be purchased online. To complete your purchase of an intramural membership, you will be required to watch an online video presentation covering the basic policies of the program.*

2. All players must show their valid VT Hokie Passport in order to play. No ID, No Play!
   a. Cards must be readable – unrecognizable pictures, names, or numbers may not be considered valid.

3. Participants may play for only one single-gender team and one CoRec or Open team (when offered).

4. Current varsity athletes may not participate in their sport or allied sport during the academic year. Former varsity athletes must sit out for one semester following their last varsity game before being eligible to play in their sport or allied sport (both summer sessions are considered one semester). No more than three varsity athletes (any combination of current or former athletes) may play on one intramural team.
   a. A varsity athlete is defined as anyone who is on a varsity athletic team roster during the academic year, anyone participating with a varsity squad in an attempt to make a roster, red-shirts, Proposition 48 students, and any scholarship player with eligibility remaining.
   b. Former varsity athletes are defined as anyone who was a varsity athlete (as defined above) at any time within the past five years beginning the semester following their last varsity game.

5. Sport Club members are allowed to participate in their sport or allied sport with a maximum of three total players per team roster (sport specific). For example, an intramural soccer team may only have three club soccer players but may have six members of the field hockey club. Sport club members are defined as anyone whose name appears on the current year’s roster.

6. Current or former professional athletes are ineligible to participate in their sport or allied sport.

7. Team captains are responsible for checking player eligibility for his/her teammates and the players of the opposing team. The Intramural Staff is not responsible for checking player eligibility but reserves the right to impose disciplinary action for players/teams discovered to have ineligible players.

8. Teams found to have one or more ineligible players, will forfeit all games in which the player(s) played.
   a. Teams will have until 5:00pm the next business day after discovered to pay the Forfeit Reinstatement Fee ($20) in order to remain in the league. If the fee is not paid by the deadline, the team will be removed from the league.
   b. If the player(s) correct eligibility issues (e.g., purchase the appropriate membership by midnight the 2nd day after participating), the team will be allowed to remain in the league. Ineligible players may be suspended from play in that sport’s gender classification (i.e., Men’s, Women’s, CoRec) for the remainder of the season.

9. As long as a game is ready to begin by game time, any participant who arrives after that time may participate provided they properly check in (see Roster Policy above).

10. Men/Women are required to play in their specific single-gender divisions when offered unless participating on a CoRec or Open team (e.g., no women in men’s division and vice versa).

Ejection Procedure

1. Players, coaches, or fans ejected from intramural contests must immediately leave the playing area if requested to do so by Intramural Staff.
   a. Failure to leave may result in forfeiture of the game.

2. Individuals ejected from intramurals should receive an email notification from the Intramural Sports Staff as well as a notification form from an Intramural Sports Supervisor on site. Ejected participants must contact the Intramural Sports Graduate Assistant(s) within 14 days of the ejection.
   a. Failure to do so may result in referral to Virginia Tech’s Office of Student Conduct.
b. Ejected participants are suspended from participating in all intramural programs and from the use of recreational sports facilities until having met with the Intramural Sports Graduate Assistant(s).

c. An ejected individual found to be playing with an intramural team prior to meeting with the Intramural Staff may result in loss of intramural privileges for the duration of the academic year.

d. Self-imposed punishment is not accepted.

3. Ejection meetings are structured around open dialogue to ensure all points of view are represented before any outcome is decided. Therefore, it is in the ejected individual's best interest that the meeting is conducted in a timely fashion.

*MORE information on the ejection process can be found in the Participant Policy and Procedure Manual.

Protests

1. Eligibility Protests
   a. If a team wishes to protest player eligibility, the captain is responsible for notifying a supervisor.
   b. Following an eligibility protest, the game will be played as normal. The Intramural Staff will rule on the protest the following business day and notify both teams of the outcome.

2. Rule Misapplication or Misinterpretation Protests
   a. **Judgment calls cannot be protested.**
   b. If a team wishes to protest a rule application or interpretation, the captain must notify the Intramural Supervisor immediately, before the continuation of play. **The team captain should refuse to continue play until the supervisor arrives and makes a ruling regarding the protest.**
   c. If the team captain disagrees with the supervisor's protest ruling, the team captain should immediately inform the Supervisor that the contest is being played under protest. In that situation, the Supervisor will record all necessary information (e.g., score, ruling, date, time, site number, time remaining in the contest) and file a report with the Coordinator of Intramural Sports.

**All protests must be filed in writing by the protesting team captain with the Intramural Sports Office by 12:00 noon the day following the incident and accompanied with the Protest Fee ($10). See the Participant Policy and Procedure Manual to find the Protest Form.

Inclement Weather & Cancellations

1. Decisions concerning game status are made before 4:00pm daily.
2. All decisions made after 4:00pm are made by the supervisor on duty at the activity site.
3. For the most current game status, follow us on Twitter/Facebook (@VTIntramurals)
4. Games cancelled during regular season play will not be rescheduled (unless circumstances permit). The Intramural Sports Office will notify team captains/co-captains if games are rescheduled via email once rescheduling has been completed.

Responsibilities of the Captain

1. Know rules, schedules, and program policies... and pass information along to all team members.
2. Have team members properly check in prior to the scheduled start time with their valid VT Hokie Passport.
3. Encourage sportsmanship with all team members.
4. Act as team representative when discussing rule interpretations and player eligibility with Intramural Staff.
5. Select one MVP from the opposing team following each game.

Equipment

1. Teams are required to bring a white shirt/jersey and a dark-colored shirt/jersey to all games.
   a. The dark-colored shirt/jersey must be a similar shade of color for all team members.
   b. Opposing teams are not allowed to wear similar colors during the game.
   c. If both teams show up with the same color, the captains must determine which team will wear an alternate color. If an agreement cannot be reached, both teams will forfeit the game.
   d. Teams playing flag football, 9-on-9 soccer, 5-on-5 basketball, and softball are required to have one- or two-digit whole numbers on their shirt/jersey for administrative purposes.
a. Player numbers must be distinct from other team members.
b. Numbers must be clearly visible from a distance of 10 yards.
c. Taping numbers is not allowed.

2. Due to safety risks, all jewelry – except medical alert items – must be removed before play.
   a. Taping over jewelry is not an acceptable alternative to removing jewelry.
   b. If a Supervisor suspects a team member has taped over jewelry, the team member may be asked to remove the tape. If a team member does not remove jewelry or tape, he/she is not eligible to play.

3. Casts (above or below the waist) and braces (above the waist) are not allowed.

4. **Pockets are not allowed.**