

SOUTH SAINT PAUL TACKLE FOOTBALL

Version 22.8.16 | League Rules

FORMAT

- Players are rostered by the coaches via a player draft, if a draft cannot occur **SSP Parks & Rec** staff will roster the teams.
- The game is played with seven (7) players, a minimum of five (5) players must be on the field at all times.
- Teams may **ONLY** have 3 coaches. These coaches must be identified on the team roster to be an official coach.
 - Only one coach per team is allowed on the field of play at a time prior to the snap (1 – Offensive, 1 – Defensive)
 - All coaches, both offensive and defensive, must move to the sidelines prior to the snap of the ball.
 - Coaches are responsible for having a copy of the rulebook and schedule.
- The playing field is 40 yards x 25 yards wide (End Zones are 10 yards x 25 yards wide)
- Junior size footballs are the official football size for tackle.
- 40 Minute game clock as follows:
 - Running Time (Clock stops last 4 minutes of the game for plays that are out of bounds, incomplete or are a penalty)
 - Two (2) 20 Minute Halves
 - Five minutes between halves (Half Time)
 - Two (2) 90 second time out per half, per team (Clock stops)
 - 30 Second huddle clock between plays
 - No Overtime (Exception for playoffs, please see playoff rules section)
 - Injuries will stop the clock; injured players will need to be out for a minimum of one (1) play after if cleared to play.
- Coin toss determines first possession and the “Away” team calls the toss. Winner of the toss can elect to receive or defer the first possession and the team who does not receive the ball to start elects what side to defend.
- Possessions begin at the 10 yard line at
 - The start of the game or the second half
 - After a score and an extra point attempt
 - When a safety occurs
 - When an interception/fumble occurs on an extra point attempt
 - If a team elects to “Punt” (No actual kicking is involved, the ball is moved by the officials)
- Dead Ball/Play Stops are deemed as follows and all actions should **STOP** immediately:
 - A helmet and/or safety equipment falls off while a player has the ball or is receiving a pass/handoff
 - ANY and ALL helmet-to-helmet contact (Deliberate or repeat offenders will be penalized/removed)
 - When a player in possession/control of the ball steps out of bounds
 - A score occurs
 - An interception/fumble occurs on an extra point attempt
 - Inadvertent whistle
 - Penalty occurs
- Scoring and Extra points are as follows:
 - A touch down is worth six (6) points.
 - One (1) Extra point is attempted from 3 yards out from the goal line.
 - Two (2) Extra Points are attempted from the 8 yards out from the goal line.
 - Safety is worth Two (2) Points and the team receives the ball at the 10 yard line on the next play.
 - Interceptions/fumbles on extra point attempts results in a loss of down and CANNOT be returned for points
 - NO Field goals, punting, kick offs or kicking of the ball.
- All players should receive equal playing time for both offense and defense in each game they participate in. Not evenly rotating players will have disciplinary action taken.

WEIGHT LIMITATIONS

- Maximum weight limit for Quarterbacks, Wide Receivers, Tight Ends, Full Backs and Running Backs is 115 lbs.
- Players will be weighed prior to the seasons start with weight violations being enforced by a 5-yard penalty, repeated weight violations may result in potential removal of the player/coach.

SPORTSMANSHIP

- Trash talking towards coaches, players, officials, league personnel, or spectators is **NOT** allowed.
- Any act of rough housing, including but not limited to, tackling out of bounds, elbowing/cheap shots, excessive contact, extra actions after a play or any other unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped, and that player may be ejected.
- A mercy precaution is enacted when at any point there is a 21+ point differential, the winning team will forfeit a defensive player. The losing team may add an additional player while on defense until the differential is lower than 21 points.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- This is a developmental league for both players, coaches, and officials. Please understand that this game is to be fun, safe and a positive learning experience for the players.
- Players should be rotated amongst positions as set by weight class throughout the season in attempt to allow for them to have a chance at all positions by the completion of the season.
- Each player should play sometime at both offense and defense within each scheduled game they are present at.
- At the official's discretion a warning may be given in place of a penalty to a player or coach for any of the stated rules. Coaches and players should not expect to receive more than one warning if any.
- Any and all penalty's called or warnings given are FINAL and will not be over turned. In the event two separate calls are made the officials will gather and discuss to make a final call collectively. There will be **NO** coach's influence.
- Only head coaches may approach the referee for clarification of a call or warning that has been issued and may not impact the official's ability to observe the next play. NO arguing is allowed and will NOT be tolerated. Multiple requests or abuse of the need for clarification may result in a 5-yard "Delay of Game" penalty.
- Forfeits will occur/result with the following guidelines:
 - If a team fails to roster/have available 5 or more players for a game
 - If all members of a coaching staff fail to arrive 10 or more minutes past of a games start time
- The South Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Youth Program has a zero tolerance for the following:
 - Arguing with officials (Coaches, players, parents and spectators included) or between player and/or coaches
 - Anyone physically or verbally abusing any player, coach, official, spectator, or staff member.
 - Any person entering the playing field other than coaches and players during the duration of a game.
 - Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct or personal fouls (tackling out of bounds, throwing a player to the ground, pass interference, charging, excessive contact, "horse collaring" tackle, ETC.).
 - Intentionally tampering with equipment.
- Any player, coach or spectator who is "Ejected" will need to leave the field before play continues, if said member does not remove themselves in a timely manner their team may be required to forfeit the game.
- All ejections will be reviewed by South Saint Paul Parks and Recreation and may face additional imposed penalties that are as follows but not limited to Probation, Suspension (Duration will be set) or being Banned from partaking in any or all South Saint Paul Parks & Recreations activities and/or events.

PLAYER ATTIRE & EQUIPMENT

- The league will provide each player with a jersey, helmet with chin guard and shoulder pads.
- Coaches will be provided with the mandatory game balls used for all teams, no other footballs are permitted.
- Players are required to always have and wear protective mouthpieces during both games and practices.
- Football pants are required and maybe black or white in color.
- Players must wear the official jersey, helmet* with chin strap & guard and shoulder pads* provided by the league for games. If a player arrives at the game without their jersey, helmet with chin guard, shoulder pads or mouth guard, they will NOT be permitted to play.
- Molded plastic/rubber soled cleats **are required** and permitted only, **NO** metal cleats.
- No jewelry (Include but not limited to watches, earrings, necklaces, rings, etc.) is permitted to be worn during the games.
- No hoodies or jackets/shirts with hoods, hand warmers or towels that attach/hang from the player are allowed.
- Intentionally tampering with equipment will result in ejection from the playing field with potential suspension for a duration as determined by the league and its governing members.

*Equipment with this marking are allowed to have the use of personal equipment to accommodate medical/preferences of the player at the request of the parent. These changes must be requested to the league and approved by the league. No modifications to the equipment provided by South Saint Paul Parks & Recreation.

OFFENSE DETAILS

- **Possessions and general offensive information**

- There is a 30-second huddle clock, which starts once the line of scrimmage is marked and the ball is spotted.
- The following personnel are required on the field for every offensive play:
 - One (1) Center
 - Two (2) Tackles (one to the left and one to the right of the center)
 - One (1) Quarterback (a Quarterback is an offensive player receiving the ball snapped from the center)
 - Three (3) additional offensive players (can be a mix of a Tight End, Wide Receiver's, Running or Full backs)
- There is a 115 pound weight restrictions for Running Backs, Receivers or Quarterbacks and may not exceed 115 lbs.
- Every offensive play requires that the center and both tackles be on the line of scrimmage for the snap.
- No player may cross the line of scrimmage prior to the snapping of the ball.
- Player Motion is allowed with the following guidelines:
 - Only one (1) player is allowed in motion at a time.
 - A player in motion must be greater than 1 yard behind the line of scrimmage.
 - All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage (left to right) and **NOT** towards the line of scrimmage.
- Shotgun snaps **are** allowed.
- The ball must be snapped between the center's legs to start a play.
- QB sneaks are allowed, the quarterback may elect to keep the ball and run with no need to handoff prior to a run.
- **NO** blocking below the waist and/or blocks in the back are not allowed.
- Spinning and/or jumping to avoid a defensive player while running with the ball is permitted.
- Jumping and/or diving to catch a pass is permitted.
- A player may **NOT** hurdle a standing player in their path, player's may hurdle a downed player that is in their running path.
- Diving to advance the ball is **NOT** allowed, this includes diving into score a touchdown and **NO** player may jump/leap or "leapfrog" over a player.
- **NO** stiff arms above the shoulders are allowed. Players may stiff arm providing its at shoulder level or below.
- Contact to the face, neck, head and/or helmet area of a player is not tolerated in any manner and will be reviewed. The on-field officials will make the call if the criteria meet the standards of ejection. **NO** helmet-initiated contact
- **NO INTENTIONAL/EXCESSIVE CONTACT** of any kind is permitted, the only contact that should occur in the game is that of proper tackling. NO targeting, helmet to helmet, driving a player to the ground, hitting a receiver if they are unable to catch a ball, hitting a player who fumbles, etc.
- The ball will be spotted at the point where a ball carrier/receiver/possessor is tackled, down by contact or the point a player in control of the ball steps out of bounds.
- For each possession the offense has four (4) downs to reach the first down marker, once the first down marker is passed within four (4) downs the offense will be granted another four (4) attempts to obtain the new first down marker. This process repeats until a first down is not achieved, a turnover or score occurs.
- A first down can be obtained by penalty that requires a first down be provided and/or if the penalty results in the ball placement being that greater than the first down marker.
- If a first down is not obtained by reaching the first down marker or the end zone within the four downs the ball will be turned over to the team at spot of the failed attempt.
- During any down within an offensive possession a team may elect to "punt" in which the ball will be turned over to the opponents own 10 yard line, in which the defense will become the offense.
- Home teams are required to provide volunteers to operate first down marker and chains.
- Both a touchdown and/or extra point is scored once the football crosses the plain/line of the end zone.
- **NO** intentional fumbles or fumble-rooskie (intentional fumble to allow a non-advancing player to advance the ball)

- **Passing information**

- All passes must be completed from behind the line of scrimmage (no feet, hands or ball may cross and be thrown or handed off forward), if a pass or hand off occurs beyond the line of scrimmage the play will be whistled dead, and the ball will result in a loss of down as well as a 5-yard loss from the original line of scrimmage.
- Only one (1) forward pass may occur per down and all passes must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Intentional grounding is **NOT** allowed and will result in a loss of down and a 5-yard penalty.
- Shotgun snaps are allowed
- The Quarterback may not move towards the line of scrimmage and have the ball snapped while in motion.
- A quarterback **may** be in motion laterally and have the ball snapped providing they are the only one in motion. Two people in motion will result in a dead play, loss of down and 5 yard penalty.
- Line personnel (Tackles, Guards and Center) are not allowed to be down field from the line of scrimmage greater than 3 yards on a passing play. Any passing play where a line player is downfield greater than 3 yards during a pass will result in a 5-yard penalty and loss of that down.
- A passer may **NOT** cross the line of scrimmage then return to behind the line of scrimmage and then pass the football. The football may not be passed from any point on the field once it has crossed the line of scrimmage. If done the result is a 5-yard penalty and loss of down.
- The quarterback/passer are **NOT** allowed to stiff arm above a defenders shoulders, no helmet with hand/arm contact.
- **NO** lowering of the helmet or use of the helmet to defend off tackles/tackler(s)

- **Receiver information**

- Centers, Guards and Tackles are **NOT** eligible to receive a pass. (QB/RB/WR/TE positions are allowed to receive a pass providing they are under the weight limit)
- A receiver can't willingly run out of bounds and then come back in bounds to catch a ball.
- A receiver may not line up out of bounds to start a play.
- A player who gains possession of a pass is considered in bounds if one (1) foot or other body part contacts the ground first while in the field of play prior to the ball/player or additional part parts go out of bounds.
- During any point that a receiver's elbow, knee, shin or body in between touches the ground during a tackle or play in which a defensive player touches them while said body part(s) are touching the ground, the player is considered down.
- In the event that a receiver and defender both catch the ball at the same time, and both retain possession to the ground, the tie would go to the receiver, with the receiver being down at the point of the tied reception.
- Charging is not allowed; a player may **NEVER** lower their head/helmet to run through or charge a defensive player. A 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty will result if this occurs.
- Stiff arming is **NOT** allowed above a defenders shoulders, no helmet with hand/arm contact.
- **NO** lowering of the helmet or use of the helmet to defend off tackles/tackler(s)

- **Runner information**

- The QB may run the ball once it has been snapped by the center. Can be ran from direct snap or shotgun formation.
- QB/RB/WR/TE positions may take a handoff from behind the line of scrimmage. Centers, Guards or Tackles are **NOT** eligible to receive a handoff.
- There is no limit to the number of handoffs that can be performed by the offense in a single play, so long as the ball never crosses the line of scrimmage.
- The player who takes a handoff can throw the ball, if they do not pass the line of scrimmage first.
- Charging is not allowed; a player may **NEVER** lower their head/helmet to run through or charge a defensive player. A 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty will result if this occurs.
- Stiff arming is **NOT** allowed above a defenders shoulders, no helmet with hand/arm contact.
- **NO** lowering of the helmet or use of the helmet to defend off tackles/tackler(s)

DEFENSE DETAILS

- **Possessions and general information**
 - Defense alignment for all downs will be set as follows:
 - Two (2) Defensive Line players must be 1 yard off the line of scrimmage and may not align over the center
 - The remaining five (5) players may align 3 yards or greater of the line of scrimmage anywhere on the field
 - No forward movement from the defense prior to snap, Movement away from the line of scrimmage and lateral movements are allowed.
 - Defensive players may not pass the line of scrimmage, until the ball is snapped.
 - Only the two (2) defensive line players may rush and must start from a set position. They may not use the “A” gap.
 - **NO** Blitzing is allowed.
 - A defensive player must not willingly go out of bounds while in pursuit of an offensive player, nor may they come from out of bounds to make a play/tackle on the offensive player.
 - Defenders must only attempt to tackle an offensive in a safe manner to make a tackle/stop.
 - Bumping, push off, hand checking or jamming is **not** allowed by any player and all intentional contact will result in a penalty.
 - Interceptions are allowed and may be returned for yardage/score.
 - Diving to intercept a ball **IS** allowed.
 - Stripping or forcing a fumble or removal of the ball from a receiver and/or runner’s hand(s)/arm(s) are allowed. In the event a ball is forced out the players possession the play will continue until possession is completed and the possessor is ruled down.
 - **NO** excessive tackling is allowed of any kind, all players must use safe tackling in taking the player to the ground.
 - A player may never lead with or strike a player with their helmet.
 - A tackling player may not tackle by the collar or neck area of the shoulder pads from behind. **NO** “horse collaring”

OVERTIME RULES

- There is no overtime during the regular season and is only reserved for the playoffs when bracket play games are scheduled.
- During a bracketed playoff game if the regulation play clock ends and the score is tied the following will apply:
 - A coin toss will determine who starts with the ball
 - The team to call the coin toss is the opposite team then the one who called it to start the game
 - The winner of the coin toss will elect to receive the ball to start or to defend first
 - Offense will start at the 10-yard line and will use the same rules as outlined in the rule book
 - If the offense fails to score on its series of possession and/or the ball is turned over the team taking over will have an attempt to score by starting at the point as outlined within the rule book (IE: Interceptions and Turnover on downs have their own points in which the ball will be placed to start). If the team who caused the turnover scores a touchdown resulting in a lead, they will be determined the winner. If they don’t score and turn it over on downs or have an interception, play will continue and will become sudden death/first to score
 - If a team scores on the first series possession after the coin toss, this team will attempt an extra point (1 or 2 point try). The score will be tallied, and the opposing team will then have a series of possessions to score a touchdown followed by an extra point attempt to either tie or take the lead. If the attempt results in a lead the game is over, a tie the game continues as the opposing team takes possession and play continues this way until a lead is taken (1st to score).