

# **2010 Season**

## **Northern Hills Youth Flag Football**

### **MISSION STATEMENT, CODE OF CONDUCT, AND RULES OF PLAY**

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Belle Fourche Area Youth Football Association, Inc. ("BFAYFA") and Spearfish Youth Football Association, (SYFA), believe that athletic competition conducted with honor and good sportsmanship, builds character and thus improves the lives of our children. The BFAYFA and SYFA are committed to providing each child with an enjoyable learning experience. We understand the primary reason children participate in sports is to have fun while competing with each other. We believe every child matters and should be given the opportunity to learn and improve his/her knowledge and skills. The BFAYFA and SYFA mission is to provide the opportunities and training necessary for each child to learn and compete at his/her greatest ability. While competing to win may be important, the greater value lies in competing with honor, practicing good sportsmanship, and being gracious in victory and defeat. The BFAYFA and SYFA will strive to maintain the highest standards of health and safety for all involved in athletic competition. No child will be asked or forced to engage in risky or unhealthy behavior above the normal requirements of the sport.

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Code of Conduct applies to any person, player, coach, referee, administrator, parent, or spectator associated in any way with the Belle Fourche Area Youth Football Association, Inc. and Spearfish Youth Football Association. The intent of this Code is to protect the health and welfare of the youth participating in the association's program. This "Code of Conduct" is intended to provide a guideline for participation in the association's program, and is not intended to be inclusive of all situations that may arise in conducting the activities of the association.

All persons participating in the association's program, however, agree to obey the following Code of Conduct while participating in the association's activities. It is intended that any event sponsored by the association, whether within the community or outside the community, at any time and place, shall be governed by this code of conduct. Any violation of this Code will cause the person to be ineligible to coach, play, referee, participate, or otherwise involved in the activities of the association until such time as this violation can be investigated, reviewed, and a determination made by the BFAYFA or SYFA Boards of Directors ("BOD") guidelines.

1. At all times, both on and off the field, he/she will display good sportsmanship.
2. He/she will control their temper at all times and will help others to do the same.
3. He/she will do their best to continue to improve their skills or increase their knowledge required to perform the function they have assumed.

4. The needs of the team come before their own.
5. He/she will represent themselves, their family, and their team with honor and dignity.
6. He/she will not argue or harass game officials.
7. He/she will not use profanity and/or language interpreted to be degrading.
8. He/she will not use drugs.
9. He/she will not consume alcohol in the vicinity of playing/practice fields. Persons under the influence of alcohol will not be allowed to participate or perform their assigned function at that time. The use of tobacco in any form will not be allowed on/off the field.
10. He/she will treat teammates and members of other teams with respect.
11. He/she will win with honor, and if they should lose, they will exhibit dignity and decorum.

**RULES OF PLAY**  
**Flag Football (3rd and 4th Grade)**

**GAME:** Flag football is designed to retain the fun, many of the skills and the basic strategy of football without the major contact. Elimination of major contact is the purpose of the following set of rules. These rules are precautions against injuries. Players must play by the spirit of these rules. This is not tackle football, and violators of rules jeopardizing their safety or the safety of the other players will not be tolerated. Such violators may be disqualified.

**INJURIES:** In case of any major injury, the coach will contact the ambulance for emergency treatment. When the ambulance arrives, the attendants will determine the best method of handling the situation and transporting of the injured player. Individuals participate at their own risk. They are responsible for their own health and safety.

**GAME CANCELLATION:** Games may be cancelled due to weather or scheduling problems by a Board member, either coach, or the referee. Reschedule games when referees are available.

**TEAMS:** Nine players shall constitute a team. On offense, six players must be on the line of scrimmage which must include one center two guards, two tackles and one end. The end may be split or tight but must stay on the line of scrimmage. The backfield consists of one quarterback, one full back, and one running back. Any formation may be used on defense. A team may not start or continue play with less than nine players. Two coaches may be on the field but must be 10 yards behind their players and can not interfere with the play. Extra players must be on the sidelines.

**EQUIPMENT:** Each player must wear flags. The belt and flags will be provided by the home team. Shirts must be tucked in or be at least 4 inches above the waist so the flags can be easily seen and grabbed. Flags may not be twisted under or fastened to the inside of the belt. Metal cleats are illegal. Corrugated-wedge shoes or soccer (molded) cleats of non-metal material (rubber, nylon, plastic, etc.) will be legal. Replaceable or screw-in type cleats of any kind will be illegal. Players may not participate in sandals, boots, street shoes, or bare feet. Any protective padding worn by players must be approved by the officials prior to the game. ABSOLUTELY NO JEWELRY will be allowed during play.

Glasses may be worn if needed at the player's own risk. No casts or metal braces will be allowed.

**FIELD:** The playing field will be 40 yards wide and 60 yards long with the end zones being 10 yards deep. The total length of the playing field will be 80 yards.

**LENGTH OF GAME:** Each half of the game shall consist of 20 minutes. Kick-offs and point after attempts will not be included in this total. Plays, which result in penalties, will count towards the total, except in the last play of either half when the defensive team has committed a penalty.

**COIN TOSS:** The referee shall toss the coin in the presence of the team captains. The team winning the coin toss shall have the choice of kicking or receiving first. They may let the other team pick and the winning team may then pick which goal they want to defend only if they give up their right to pick if they kick or receive, otherwise the losing team picks which goal they want to defend.

**EXTRA POINTS:** 2 point conversion from the 10-yard line or 1 point conversion from the 5-yard line.

**TIES:** Both teams get the chance to score with four downs starting from 20 yards out. Mark the distance gained with the furthest distance winning if neither team scores. In the overtime only an interception stops the series the ball cannot be returned for a touchdown mark the distance gained. The coin toss is the same for overtime.

**DEAD BALL:** Anytime the ball carrier touches the ground with any part of his/her body other than hands or feet, the ball is dead. Any ball hitting the ground, whether on a pass, fumble, etc. is a dead ball and the offensive team retains possession unless it occurred on 4th down.

For purposes of a punt or kickoff the receiving team only may address the ball. The receiving team shall be afforded the opportunity to pick up a ball that has struck the ground and advance it. However, if the ball is dropped while catching it or picking it up from the ground, the rules of a fumble shall apply and the ball is dead where the drop occurred. If the receiving team chooses not to address or advance the ball, it shall be dead where it last stopped.

The ball is also declared dead when a flag is removed from the ball carrier, or if the ball carrier loses one of their flags accidentally. When any player missing a flag catches a forward pass, the ball shall be ruled dead and play will continue from that spot. No player shall intentionally remove the flag of an opposing player to make them an ineligible receiver. Penalty - 10 yards.

**YARDS AND DOWNS:** 1st downs based on the 1st and 10 yards using marker and chains.

**FORWARD PASS:** Only the offensive end, full back, running back, and quarterback are eligible to catch a pass. All forward passes must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage with only one forward pass allowed per play.

**BLOCKING:** Blocking is allowed above the waist on the line of scrimmage only. The blocker must keep hands and elbows in. Downfield and outside of the ends of the line screen blocking only is allowed. Blockers are not allowed to knock down any defenders or use stiff arms regardless of being on the line of scrimmage or downfield. Penalty for illegal blocking - 10 yards.

**DEFENSIVE RESTRICTIONS:** Defensive players may not use their hands on blockers. They must attempt to avoid blockers. Incidental contact with the hands will be allowed, but should the defender gain an advantage by use of the hands, he or she will be penalized 10 yards. Defensive players must be at least two yards off the line of scrimmage when the ball is put into play. Line referee has the discretion to line up the defensive line properly.

**TACKLING:** It is a foul to tackle, trip, kick, push, shove, elbow, dive at, or stiff arm the ball carrier, the blockers, or the defenders. The ball carriers progress cannot be impeded in any way. (For any of these violations, the penalty is 10 yard, if flagrant - possible disqualification).

**BALL CARRIER AND RUNNING WITH THE BALL:** Only the offensive end, quarterback, full back, or running back may carry the ball from an offensive play. The center must hike the ball directly to the quarterback at which time he can run, hand off, or pass. The full back and running back may also pass after receiving the handoff from the quarterback. It is a penalty for the ball carrier to stiff arm, charge into, knee, kick, or try to knock over a player at any time. The carrier must try to avoid contact with all defensive players at all times. This is judged like a charging foul in basketball. Hurdling, diving, or jumping over other players is not allowed. The ball carrier may not guard their flag and must keep them on their hips, not in front of them. (Penalty for the above acts - 10 yards)

**UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS:** A player may be disqualified from the game for unnecessary roughness or unsportsman-like conduct plus a 10-yard penalty. This includes any coach or player using abusive language or arguing with the officials over a decision.

**PUNTING:** An offensive team on 4th down must declare their intentions when punting before they approach the line of scrimmage. Neither team may cross the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The defensive team must have 4 players on the line of scrimmage, these four players may block on the line only, and they may not retreat until the ball is punted. The punter has 10 seconds to kick the ball after receiving it. If the snap hits the ground on a punt it is still live for the punter only to pick up and punt. Penalty of 5 yards for any violation of these punting rules.

**RECEIVING A PUNT:** The ball will be live for run back after hitting the ground on a punt only if it has not touched a member of the receiving team prior to touching the ground. If the punt receiver drops the ball while trying to catch it, the ball is dead.

**BALL IN PLAY:** A team gets 40 seconds to put the ball in play with the help of a coach after it is signaled ready by the referee. Violation of this rule is a 5-yard penalty.

**SCORING:** Touchdown - 6 points. Extra points for one point from the 5-yard line, 2 points from the 10-yard line.

**OUT OF BOUNDS:** In accordance with National Intramural Recreational Sports Association, only one foot must touch in bounds in order for a pass reception to be considered legal. Sideline cones are considered out of bounds.

**BALL BLOWN DEAD:** If the ball is mistakenly blown dead, the offensive team shall have the option to replay the down or accept the ball were it was blown dead. On loose balls such as passes in flight, the down must be replayed.

**INTERCEPTED PASSES:** Intercepted passes may be returned by the defensive team.

**SUBSTITUTES:** Free substitution is allowed except the replaced player can not be on the field when play starts.

**START OF PLAY:** At each play from scrimmage, the ball shall be reasonably placed in the center of the field by the referee. All plays start with a snap from center. The center may not keep the ball even if the quarterback touches it. The center may adjust the ball prior to the snap but may not make any fake motions. One offensive backfield person may be in motion as long as he/she moves parallel or backwards from the line of scrimmage. The offensive team must be set one second prior to the snap.

**TIME OUTS:** Each team will get 2 (30 second) timeouts per half. They do not carry over to the second half.

**KICKOFFS:** All kickoffs will be from a kicking tee at the 30-yard line. There are no on-side kicks. If the ball is kicked out of bounds or does not travel 10 yards, the receiving team has the option to take the ball at that point or have it re-kicked from the 20 yard line.

**FUMBLES:** There are no fumbles in flag football. The ball will be marked dead where it hit the ground or possession was gained by the other team. The team that lost the ball will retain possession. Balls that are pulled out of the carrier's hands and controlled by the defensive team will be blown dead and the team that lost the ball will retain possession. All snaps from center that are dropped will be dead except for snaps to the punter, which can be picked up and punted only by the punter.

**FOULS AND PENALTIES:** A foul is an infringement of the rules, which result in a loss of yardage. The captain of the offended team has the option of accepting or declining any penalty except dead ball fouls. If the penalty is declined the number of the next down is the same as if the foul had not occurred. Whenever the penalty is greater than the half the distance to the goal line, the penalty shall be half the distance to the goal line. **Any situation not covered in the rule sheet will be decided by the officials in charge of the game.**

## **SUMMARY OF PENALTIES:**

Loss of down:

- 1) Illegal forward pass by team (also loss of 5 yards).
- 2) Offensive pass interference (also loss of 10 yards).
- 3) Illegally handing ball forward (also loss of 5 yards).
- 4) Intentional grounding (also loss of 5 yards from the spot of the ball).

Loss of 5 yards:

1. Delay of game.
3. Less than 6 offensive players on the line of scrimmage.
4. Illegal motion or shift.

Loss of 10 yards:

1. Team not ready to play at start of either half.
2. Interference with the opportunity to catch a punt.
3. Defensive pass interference (automatic 1 down - penalized from line of scrimmage).
4. Striking, kicking, kneeing, elbowing, etc.
5. Roughing the kicker (also 1 down).
6. Roughing the passer (also 1 down).
7. Unsportsman-like conduct.
8. Holding by offense or defense.
9. Illegal use of hands or arms (block).
10. Guarding flag.
11. Clipping.
12. Tripping.
13. Running into opponent obviously out of play. Shoving opponent out of bounds instead of pulling flag.
14. Impeding the ball carrier.
15. Person illegally on the field.
16. Diving, jumping, or hurdling.

All penalties are enforced from the point of snap or kick when they involve fouls committed at the time of the snap or kick.

Loose ball fouls during a pass or kick, are penalized from the previous spot unless the foul was committed behind that spot. In that case penalize from the spot of the foul.

Running plays are all plays when a player is running with the ball. Penalize from the end of the run unless the foul is committed by the offense behind that spot. In that case penalize from the spot of the foul.

All non-player fouls are penalized from the succeeding spot.