

LEMON BOWL FLAG FOOTBALL RULES – Revised April 2016

All participants are required to complete a waiver of liability form. Any under age of 18 must have a legal parent or guardian sign the waiver of liability form.

Keep in mind this event is a gathering of friends, family and neighbors to raise money for charity. This is NOT official flag football and the rules are “compromised”. At the same time, this is not “backyard smash” football without rules and structure. So...play fair, play safe and just have fun!!!

No alcoholic beverages are allowed at or during the event.

3 DIVISIONS / 35 TEAMS

We have three divisions: Adult Competitive (age 16+), Adult Casual (age 16+), and Kid Casual (age 12-15) - allowing you to find the right style of play for your team. Teams should be 10 or more players. Each team plays a minimum of four games.

- Adult Competitive (max 20 teams): this division wants to get out there and give it their all, playing at a high-level and playing to win.
- Adult Casual (max 10 teams): this division will be comprised of people who want to play but are more interested in having a good time and enjoying the game in a less competitive atmosphere.
- Kid Casual (max 5 teams): this division is for children who want to come out to play and support the cause. Nothing competitive about it. Just kids helping kids!

| Competitive Division | | | | Casual Division | | Kid Division |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| 4 Divisions - 20 Teams | | | | 2 Divisions - 10 Teams | | 1 Division - 5 Team |
| Team 1 | Team 6 | Team 11 | Team 16 | Team 1 | Team 6 | Team 1 |
| Team 2 | Team 7 | Team 12 | Team 17 | Team 2 | Team 7 | Team 2 |
| Team 3 | Team 8 | Team 13 | Team 18 | Team 3 | Team 8 | Team 3 |
| Team 4 | Team 9 | Team 14 | Team 19 | Team 4 | Team 9 | Team 4 |
| Team 5 | Team 10 | Team 15 | Team 20 | Team 5 | Team 10 | Team 5 |

We require that each team raise a minimum of \$1,000. Please consider this before you register your team. When a Captain registers his or her team, they will select the division and set up their team’s fundraising page. They will then invite their teammates to register and invite people to start making donations to their fundraising efforts.

OFFICIAL UNIFORM:

All registered players MUST wear their team’s colored Lemon Bowl t-shirt at all times outside of any other clothing and visible to other teams.

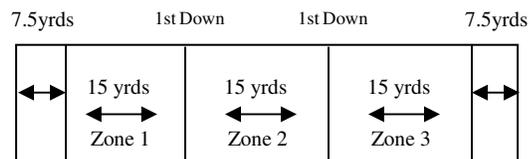
FLAG BELTS: Shirts are not permitted to hang over the flag belt. Flag belts are not permitted to be tied and should be worn as instructed so to not obstruct the defensive player’s ability to obtain the flag or flag belt.

ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT:

1. Headwear, leg and knee braces containing any hard, unyielding, stiff material.
2. Shoes with metal, ceramic, screw-in, or detachable cleats.
3. Jewelry (rings, earrings, necklaces).

FIELD DIMENSIONS (for the Competitive Division)

45 yards long x 30 yards wide, divided into three 15-yard sections
Each end zone is 7.5 yards deep.



NUMBER OF PLAYERS: Teams should consist of 8-15 players. Each team plays the game with 6 active players on the offense and defense side of the ball (a minimum of 6 is needed to avoid a forfeit).

Offensive Positions: 2 Offensive Linemen (ineligible receivers), 1 Quarterback, 3-WR.

Defensive Positions: 2 Defensive Linemen/pass rushers (must line up at the center of the ball opposite of the offensive linemen but are allowed to drop back in coverage AFTER a count of 3-Mississippi.

SCORING:

- Touchdowns = 6 points
- Extra Points = 1 point if successful from the 3 yard line
- Extra Points = 2 points if successful from the 10 yard line
- Interception Return for a Touchdown on PAT = 2 points (and the ball as is the case after other team scores).
- Safety = 2 points

LENGTH OF GAME: Playing time shall be 30 minutes with two 15-minute halves and a 2-minute half-time break.

TIME-OUTS: There are NO timeouts.

THE FLAG BELT: On the Offensive team, only the four (4) Eligible receivers (QB, 3-WRs) wear flag belts during the play. The two offensive lineman are ineligible receivers and therefore do not wear flag belts. All six (6) of the Defensive players on the active field of play wear flag belts.

Should a player lose their flag belt legally or illegally during a play and that player gains possession of a live ball, that player will be considered down when a legal tag (**one hand touch by the defense**) is made. Players must have possession of the ball before they can legally be deflagged. It is illegal for a defensive player to intentionally pull a flag from an offensive player who is not in possession of the ball.

In cases where a flag belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of the penalty.
Penalty: 10 yards from line of scrimmage.

FIRST DOWNS: Each offensive team will have 4 downs to advance the ball to the next zone (there are three, see diagram above). On or over the line is a first down. Within an offensive series, once the ball has passed a first down line, that line is no longer a valid first down marker. For example: should the offense advance from zone 1 into zone 2 and earn a 1st down, if the next play is for a loss back into zone 1, the offensive team can NOT get another 1st down by advancing back into zone 2.

KICK OFFS: There are NO kick-offs. The referee will award one team the ball to start the game. The ball will start on their 5-yard line, giving the first offensive team 40 yards to reach the end zone. The team not awarded the ball at the beginning of the game will receive the ball on offense after half-time.

PUNTING: On fourth down the Offensive team must declare their choice of running a play or turning the ball over to the opposing team via a "punt". The Defense will be informed of the offense's choice. The only way the Offense can change their decision is a defensive penalty occurs prior to or during the fourth down, as the penalty may advance the ball and possibly award the Offensive team a 1st down.

The only two players actively involved in the play are the punter and receiver. There are NO punt returns. The kicking team designates a punter who may choose to punt or throw the ball. The receiver is allowed to catch the ball as a “fair catch” but many NOT advance the ball. Should the receiver catch the ball, it will be placed at the yard line of the catch. If they receiver does not catch the ball, it will be placed at the yard line where it stops rolling or is “in the control” of the receiver. If the ball rolls into and lands in the end zone, the ball will be placed on the 5-yard line.

Huddle/Play Clock: 30 seconds. A delay of game shall be called if the offensive team takes more than thirty seconds between plays (we don't want teams taking “all day” to draw up an offensive play, the extra players on the sideline can do that). The Play Clock starts when the referee spot the ball.
Penalty –5 yards from line of scrimmage.

LINE OF SCRIMMAGE: The offensive team must have a minimum of 2 players set the line of scrimmage at the snap. Players in motion do not count as players on the line of scrimmage. Once the center has placed his hands on the ball no offensive player may enter the neutral zone. No defensive player may encroach, touch the ball, stand in, or in any other way interfere with the offensive team.
Penalty – Offensive False Start or Defensive Encroachment, 5 yards from line of scrimmage.

CENTER SNAP: Ball can be snapped between the Center's (one of the two ineligible lineman) legs or from the side of an Offensive Lineman. It can NOT be directly snapped by the QB.

BLOCKING: No contact above the shoulders or below the waist. Linemen must block with “palms up” and not with their shoulder. **Offensive linemen are NOT permitted to block beyond the line of scrimmage.**

RUSHING THE PASSER: The quarterback has a 3-second “pass clock.” It is the obligation of one of the Defensive linemen to count LOUDLY and at a **medium** PACE a 3-MISSISSIPPI count. If a pass is not thrown within three seconds, the DEFENSE may advance the QB. The QB is now eligible to run (after 3-seconds the QB can run even if the Defense does not advance him/her). If the ball is forward passed (including forward underhand shuffle pass but not including a backward pass, hand-off, or pitch) behind the line of scrimmage, the 3-second rule no longer is in effect and the Defense can rush.

ELIGIBLE/INELIGIBLE RECEIVERS: The two interior linemen are ineligible receivers/ball carriers. These players do NOT wear flags. The other four offensive players are eligible and must wear flags. If during a play the ball is fumbled and recovered (or inadvertently caught) by an ineligible receiver, the offensive team retains possession and the ball is placed back at the line of scrimmage (or at the spot of the recovery if the play is for negative yards) and results in the loss of that down.

SUBSTITUTIONS: Substitutions may be made on all dead ball situations or between plays. Offensive players must substitute an eligible player with an eligible player; and an ineligible player for an ineligible player. Defensive substitute players should come in wearing a flag belt. If the incoming defensive player does have the belt on, he/she may still play but would not be able to advance the ball if an interception or fumble recovery occurs.

FORWARD PASSES: If a player is in the air attempting to catch a ball, the player must contact the ground with at least **one foot in-bounds with the ball in their possession** prior to going out of bounds.

- If possession of the ball is lost when the player hits the ground, it is not a catch.
- If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams, the ball is dead at that spot and belongs to the Offensive team.

LATERALS: A lateral is any movement of the ball backward from (not parallel) to the point where the ball is. Any number of laterals is legal in a play.

- Hand-offs, pitches and lateral passes are all legal so long as they are thrown backwards and the second pass is also released from behind the original line of scrimmage. The receiver of the hand-off, pitch or lateral pass becomes the second QB and may NOT advance the ball beyond the original line of scrimmage via run and the 3-second rush count is still in effect. After 3-seconds, the second QB may run. If the initial pass is dropped, the play is dead and the ball will be spotted at the original line of scrimmage (ie: an incomplete pass).
- Hook and ladder plays are legal. A receiver may pitch the ball to another player, so long as the second player is behind the initial receiver. If the defense intercepts the pitch, it is a live ball and may be returned.

PASS INTERFERENCE: Any contact that, in the opinion of the official, interferes with the attempt to catch a pass (offensive or defensive player) is pass interference.

Defensive Pass Interference: 10 yards + Down Over

Offensive Pass Interference: -10 yards + loss of that Down

- Defensive Pass Interference on a 2-Pt conversion attempt: ½ distance to goal. Replay down.
- Offensive Pass Interference on a 2-Pt conversion attempt: Loss of the down.

If the pass interference is unsportsmanlike, the team may be penalized an additional 10 yards.

BUMP & RUN: Is allowed by defense as long as the initial bump occurs within two yards of the line of scrimmage. This bump may continue for 3 yards. All checking / bumping must be done with extended arms and open hands, between the waist and shoulders. Contact to the receivers head or face is strictly prohibited. Defensive holding is a penalty.

INTENTIONAL GROUNDING: Illegal to avoid a sack. This is a referee's decision.

SLEEPER PLAYS: No sleeper plays are allowed (ie: an offensive player giving the impression that he/she is going to leave the field of play as a substitute).

OUTLAWED PLAYS: The QB cannot throw a forward pass to himself. It has to be at least touched by an eligible player on the offense or defense (with some intent of doing so). The QB cannot bounce the pass off the centers back and run with it as a completed pass. Both of these calls will result in an incomplete pass and are at the discretion of the officials.

CHARGING: Charging (when an offensive player runs into or through a defensive player who has established position) is illegal.

RUNNER DOWN: The ball carrier is considered down when one flag is pulled; the flag belt is removed; the player goes out of bounds, or when the player is on the ground and one-hand touched.

OBSTRUCTING THE RUNNER: A defensive player shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of the runner when attempting to remove the flag belt.

STIFF ARMING: Stiff arming is not allowed and if it occurs, the play is dead and the ball placed at the spot of the foul. For repeat offenders, a personal foul will be called, and if warranted an unsportsmanlike conduct or ejection will result.

GUARDING THE FLAG BELT: Runners shall not flag guard by using any part of the body or ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Flag guarding includes but is not limited to:

- 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 that flag guards.

STRIPPING: It is illegal to strip (intentionally or unintentionally) or knock the ball from the player who has possession of the ball. Players must attempt to pull the ball carrier's flags. The defender may knock the ball away as a receiver is trying to establish possession, but once the ball is secured, it may not be stripped.

FUMBLES: Should a fumble occur in front of the line of scrimmage, it is a live ball and possession of a ball goes to the team that recovered it. There is no advancing a fumble. Should a fumble occur behind the line of scrimmage (ie: QB drops snap or RB/WR drops hand-off, pitch or pass)...it is a dead ball and the ball is spotted for a loss at the initial spot of the dropped ball.

INTERCEPTIONS: Interceptions are live and may be returned.

FAIR CATCH: A legal fair catch signal is extending the arm above the head and waving it from side to side and is only eligible on a punt.

CLIPPING: Any initial contact to the back, anywhere on the field, is a clip.

TIE GAME: A game that ends in a tie remains a tie (other than in a playoff game). No overtime play.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT: **No profanity shall be tolerated.** No baiting or taunting of an opponent shall be tolerated.

PENALTIES: 5-yards

- Article of clothing covering portion of player's flag
- False start or illegal act by the snapper
- Intentional grounding
- Delay of game
- Off-sides
- Holding

PENALTIES: 10-yards

- Interference with opponent to catch a kick - the receiving player of a kick cannot be touched or interfered with in any manner.
- Offensive pass interference - when offensive player interferes with defensive player while trying to intercept a pass - 10 yards FROM LINE OF SCRIMMAGE + loss of down.
- Defensive pass interference - when defensive player interferes with the offensive player when trying to catch a pass. 10 yards FROM LINE OF SCRIMMAGE + replay that down (not a new 1st down).
 - If pass interference by either player is intentional or unsportsmanlike conduct, team will be penalized an additional 10 yards.
- Running into opponent (Charging)
- Clipping or Tackling
- Flag Guarding
- Stiff Arm

PENALTIES: 15-yards *(and possible disqualification for use of excess force, unsportsmanlike conduct, multiple penalties, etc.)*

- Illegal conduct, unsportsmanlike conduct, excessive foul language, taunting, or arguing with referee.
- Illegal block - No player shall block in a manner that would cause their feet, knees, or legs to strike an opponent. A player may not leave his feet in an attempt to block an opponent. No blocking below the belt regardless of where the first contact was made.
- Striking, Kicking, Kneeing (also disqualification)
- Tripping, striking head or neck

COMPETITIVE DIVISION (20 Teams)

Each team in the Competitive Division will play a minimum of four games.

GAMES 1-4: the teams will be divided into 4 divisions and each team will play 4 games against their division foes. The two teams from each division with the best Won/Loss record will advance to the playoffs. Should there be a tie in records the second deciding factor shall be Point Differential (Total Points Scored minus Total Points Given Up), with the higher number advancing. (ie: If Team A scored a total of 80 points in the five games played and gave up 50, they have a score of 30. If Team B scored a total of 60 points and gave up 20, they have a score of 40. Team B has a higher point differential and advances to the playoffs). Any ties in Point Differential will be decided by a coin toss.

PLAYOFFS: Playoffs will be decided by best record with the top 8 teams earning eligibility.

- The team with the highest ranking will be the Home team and will play against the team with the lowest ranking.



This is a single elimination process. Win and move on. Lose and join us at the after-party.