

2023 Evergreen League Game Rules

The league plays by NCAA rules with these exceptions: 1. Kick-off is from the forty-yard line and use of a tee is permitted. 2. Each team is afforded three timeouts per half. 3. A coach from each team is allowed on the field during a timeout. 4. The halftime period is twelve minutes. 5. Gloves of different colors are permitted. 6. Tinted visors are not permitted. Overtime Policy: If a game is tied at the conclusion of four quarters, it goes to overtime. The officials will invite each team's captains to the fifty-yard line for the overtime coin toss. The designated field captain for the visiting team will call heads or tails. The winning team of the coin toss can either decide to play offense or defense, or which end of the field will be used for both possessions of that overtime period. The decision cannot be deferred. The team that loses the coin toss will exercise the remaining option (e.g. If the winning team decides to play offense/defense, the losing team will decide which end of the field will be used, and vice versa). The losing team will also have the first choice of the two options for subsequent even-numbered overtime periods, while the team that wins the coin toss will get the first choice for subsequent odd-numbered overtime periods. Each overtime period consists of a two-possession series with each team getting one possession on offense and one on defense. The team on offense will always start at the designated twenty-five-yard line (unless relocated by a penalty). The team on offense can choose to start its possession with the football anywhere on or between the hash marks. Each team will receive one timeout for every overtime period. Timeouts not used during regulation cannot be used during overtime and an unused timeout allotted for one overtime period cannot be carried over to another overtime period. Timeouts used between overtime periods will be charged to the succeeding period. Each team retains the ball until it scores or fails to make a first down. The team that scores the most points during regulation and overtime wins the game. If the game is still tied after an overtime period, there will be another overtime period. If after two overtime periods the score is still tied, the game is over and declared a tie. Lastly, per NCAA rules, an interception or fumble recovery CAN be returned for a TD. The play is not dead upon the turnover.

SCRIMMAGE DOWNS:

When the ball goes out of bounds either in player possession or via fumble, the clock is stopped long enough to relay the ball to the Umpire for setting. Once set, the Referee will start (wind) the clock. Exception: During the last 2 minutes of either half, the clock starts on the next snap on plays out of bounds.

On incomplete passes, the clock will always start on the next snap.

On First Downs attained, the clock is stopped just long enough to get the Down Maker and Line to Gain Chains set. Once set, the Referee will start the clock. If the play went out of bounds, the clock will start when ready unless it's during the last 2 minutes of either half.

KICK-OFFS:

The clock is started when the ball is touched by a member of the receiving team in the field of play. If the kick is caught in the air in the endzone, the clock will start when the kick returner brings the ball out of the endzone.

PLAY CLOCK:

The play clock is 40 seconds and starts on the dead ball signal of the previous scrimmage play. Anytime the play clock is interrupted (for a foul, official's time-out, injury time-out, measurement, etc.) it will be reset to 25 seconds and will start on the Referee's whistle. The Back Judge will keep the play clock and raise his hand above his head when there are 10 seconds remaining on the play clock. Once the play clock reaches 5 seconds remaining, he will give a 5-count horizontal wave. The Back Judge is the deep official on the home sideline with a 6-man officiating crew. He is the deep official in the middle of the field with a 5-man crew.

OTHER:

During the last 2 minutes of either half, if there is a foul, the offended team may choose to have the clock start on the snap instead of the ready for play signal if it was to start on the signal. They may NOT choose to start the clock on the ready for play signal if it were to start on the snap (ie after an incomplete pass, following a change of possession, or a play that went out of bounds.)

Note: The offended team retains this choice even if they decline the penalty for the foul. For example: Defense is "Offside" on a pass play that goes for 35 yards. Offense would decline the penalty and take the result of the play. However, if the play ended up in bounds, they can choose to have the clock start on the snap instead of the ready for play signal if occurring with less than 2 mins to go in either half.

MISC:

Running Time: May be used by mutual agreement of both head coaches.

NCAA/Evergreen League Reminders Updated 9/17/2021

Free Kicks: KOs are from the 40yd line.... Resulting Touchbacks go to the 20yd line... Kickers must have at least 4 players on each side of kicker... All kicking team members must be within 5yds of free kick line... Encroachment by kickers is live ball foul...

Free Kick Fouls: Live ball encroachment by kickers – penalty options: 5yds and re-kick or 5yds added on to end of return. Free kick out-of-bounds penalty options: take ball 25yds from spot of kick, 5yd and re-kick, or 5yds added on to spot where it goes out.

Free Kick Returns: Kick caught in air in the endzone can be run out of endzone by return team. Grounded kick in endzone is automatic touchback. Same momentum rules as Federation on kicks caught inside 5yd line. No blocking below the waist allowed.

Punt Returns: Punts (and unsuccessful FG attempts) caught in the air in the endzone can be run out of the endzone by defense. Grounded punts in the endzone are touchbacks. The goal line plane is insignificant on punts with regards to touchbacks. No blocking below the waist allowed on punt returns.

PAT Attempts: Whether kicking for 1pt or rushing/passing for 2pts – these are “live” plays. The defense can return a fumble, interception or blocked PAT kick (if picked up behind LOS) for a 2 pt safety. Offense can advance a blocked PAT kick if picked up behind LOS for a 2 pt try.

Fumbles: Forward fumbles out of bounds are returned to spot of fumble. Backwards fumbles out of bounds are spotted where they went out.

4th Down Fumbles: On a 4th down play, only the fumbler can recover and advance the ball for the offense. If the defense recovers, the play remains alive... once any offensive player (other than fumbler) recovers, the play is killed and returned to spot of fumble. Have the bean bags ready! The same principles apply to a fumble on a 2pt try.

Neutral Zone: Defense in the NZ at snap is live ball offside – flag it and let the play go. Defense in NZ and making contact with offense is dead ball encroachment foul. Defense in NZ causing reaction by offensive player head-on or in immediate gap is dead ball encroachment foul. Anytime the offensive line jumps prior to the snap the play is killed. It’s either a false start or a foul by defense for causing the movement (encroachment.) Wings have to come in and discuss what they got with Ump/Ref.

Ump/Ref can tell whether the Offensive Lineman was in immediate gap or down the line from the Defender in the NZ.

Illegal Formation Fouls: There is no foul for less than 7 players on the LOS for offense, however – there is a foul for more than 4 players in the backfield by the offense. What this means is that you can play with only 10 (or 9) players on offense – provided there

are no more than 4 lined up in the backfield- and that there are still 5 players on the LOS numbered 50-79.

Defensive Pass Interference: If the foul is less than 15yds from LOS, the ball is placed at spot of the foul and 1st down awarded. If more than 15ds downfield from LOS, the penalty is 15yds from previous spot with 1st down. Be accurate with the flags on the passes less than 15yds downfield.

Facemask Foul: Grasping and then twisting, turning or pulling mask is a 15yd personal foul. No 5yd foul for just grasping the mask.

Blocking Below the Waist (BBW): BBW by offense outside the FBZ is allowed provided it is from the front and not “against the grain.” No BBW outside the zone that is towards the offense’s own goal line. BBW blocks cannot be further than 5 yds downfield from the LOS. BBW is not permitted on ANY change of possession play (punt/KO return, fumble return, interception run-back.)

Timing: The Evergreen League uses Modified NCAA timing. Halftime length is 12mins with no mandatory 3min warm-up. On plays OOB, the clock is stopped long enough to spot the ball; and then the R winds the clock (does not apply during last 2 mins of either half.)

Overtime: NCAA overtime procedure is “extra inning” style; however it is 1st and 10 from the 25yd line. Defense can get possession and attempt to score (like on a try.) If still tied after two innings, the game will be declared a tie. The only clock used in OT is the play clock.

Play Clock: Evergreen League 40 second play clock is used. Back Judge raises hand above head at the 30 second mark. At the 35 second mark , the Back Judge starts a horizontal wave 5 count. When play clock interrupted due to foul/penalty enforcement, official’s TO for measurement, injury, etc., the play clock is set at 25secs when the ball is marked ready for play. Let the QB know that the play clock has been re-set to 25.

Time Out: 3 TOs per team per half. Evergreen League allows one coach on field with team during a TO.

Misc.: If an offensive player lines up in the NZ (this usually pertains to wideouts or gunners on punts) this is a dead ball encroachment foul. “Blow and Throw” as this is a dead ball foul. Don’t let the play go off when the offense lines up in the NZ!

NCAA/Prep Games

PAT Attempts – Not the Time to Take a Play Off

Bert Lawlor, NHFOA

So many crazy things can happen on a “live” PAT attempt when officiating an Evergreen League game. It is definitely not the time to let your guard down – or take the play off. After a Touchdown, keep officiating right through the dead ball period, through the PAT try, and don’t stop until the teams are headed upfield for the succeeding kickoff.

Blocked PAT Kicks

The defense (B) can pick up a blocked kick behind the Neutral Zone and advance it. They can also pick up a blocked PAT kick beyond the NZ in the field of play (ie not in the endzone) and advance it. Also, they can catch a blocked/deflected kick out of the air anywhere and advance it. That’s right – anywhere; behind the NZ, beyond the NZ, even in the endzone. If they advance it all the way to A’s endzone, they are awarded 2 points.

Basically, PAT kicks are treated as punts, they are alive and can be advanced by B until they become grounded in the endzone.

Team A can only advance a blocked PAT kick if recovered behind the NZ.

1 and 2 Point Safety

Any time B gets possession on a try (interception, recovered PAT kick, recovered fumble) and then the ball becomes dead in B’s endzone in B’s possession, then it is a 1 point Safety for A. Example 1: B intercepts a PAT pass and then as he runs it out of endzone he gets hit and fumbles the ball back into the endzone. If B falls on it in the endzone, A gets a 1 point Safety. If A recovers it, A gets a 2 point safety. Example 2:

B recovers a partially blocked PAT kick on the one yard line. As he begins to advance the ball, he gets hit at the three yard line and the ball is fumbled backwards into B's endzone where a team A player dives on it. Team A is awarded a 2 point Safety. If B's teammate falls on it, then A gets a 1 point safety. Weird eh?

Team B Scores

Team B can: 1.) pick up a PAT kick either behind or beyond the NZ and in the field of play 2.) pick up a fumble by A 3.) intercept a pass thrown by A 4.) Catch an unsuccessful PAT kick in the air - and try to advance. If they advance all the way to Team A's endzone, they are awarded 2 points. NOT 1 Point as some of us have previously ruled or believed.

Team A Fumble

If A player fumbles during a PAT attempt, the ball becomes dead when any A player other than the fumbler recovers the ball. If a B player recovers, he may advance and try to score. NOTE: A muffed hand-to-hand snap is not considered a fumble. Any A player can recover a muffed snap and advance the ball.