**SPFL RULE DIFFERENCES FROM NFHS**



**GAME PLAY**

* Players may be numbered 0 (or 00) through 99 and there are no restrictions on the number for an eligible receiver. Duplicate numbers are allowed. (SPFL Rule 1.7 (B)(C)).
* There is no blocking below the waist in the SPFL. The 15-yard penalty is a live ball foul for illegal block and a warning to the player. A second penalty for blocking below the waist is the same yardage penalty plus player EJECTION. (SPFL Rule 1.6(A)(6)).
* Players are not required to wear pads in their pants. All other NFHS mandatory equipment is required. (SPFL Rule 1.7(F)(G)). **All players on a team must have the same helmet shell color.**
* ****Running Clock Rule-The clock will run nonstop if the point differential is 35 points or greater starting in the 4th quarter. The continuous clock continues until the deficit is less than 30. By agreement, teams can start the continuous clock timing rules any time after halftime. (SPFL Rule 3.3(C)).
* A ball carrier is not considered down until he goes out of bounds, is held so his forward progress is stopped, or when he is contacted by an opponent and touches the ground with any part of his body other than his hands or feet. In other words, the ground does not cause a player to be down. This rule mirrors the NFL Rule. (SPFL Rule 5.2(1)).
* Targeting carries a 15-yard penalty from the succeeding spot, an automatic first down for fouls committed by the Defense, and an EJECTION of the targeting player. (SPFL Rule 6.2(C)(2)).
* There is no foul for hurdling in the SPFL.

**DEFENSE**

* No more than 4 Defensive players may be on the LOS at anytime A Defensive player is on the line of scrimmage if he is within 1 yard of the neutral zone and within 6 yards to the left or right of the ball. (SPFL Rule 1.6(B)(1)). The 10-yard penalty is a DEAD BALL foul for illegal formation and is an immediate penalty the moment there are more than 4 on the LOS at any time. (SPFL Rule 5.1(B)(1)).
* Blitzing- Defenses may rush as many players as they wish from within the Blitzing Bracket (12-yards wide (6-yards either side of the ball) and in front of umpire (no more than 5-yards deep) as long as the players were established inside the box **when the offense becomes initially set**. The 15-yard penalty is enforced as a live ball foul for illegal blitzing. Play should be stopped if player safety is compromised by the illegal blitz. A second penalty for illegal blitzing is the same yardage penalty plus player EJECTION. The Post-Snap Blitzing Rule ends when: (1) the QB becomes a runner; (2) QB exhibits the intent to run; (3) QB hands the ball off to another player; (4) QB goes beyond the width of the blitz box; and (5) Any loose ball from the time of the snap. (SPFL Rule 6.1(C)(2)).
* Defensive Pass Interference is enforced as a spot foul and an automatic first down. Following Defensive Pass Interference in the end zone, the ball is placed at the 1-yard line and an automatic first down. (SPFL Rule 6.1(D)(1)).
* Defensive Holding is enforced as a 10-yard penalty from the previous spot and an automatic first down. (SPFL Rule 6.1(D)(2)).

**OFFENSE**

* The gap between the Center and the Guards can be no more than 2 yards. The 5-yard penalty is a live ball foul for illegal formation. (SPFL Rule 1.6(A)(4)).

**SPFL RULE DIFFERENCES FROM NFHS**

**SPECIAL TEAMS**

* Restrictions on Defensive formations and blitzing remain in effect on special teams downs. (SPFL Rule 7.1(A)(1)).
* A Kicker may bring a kicking ball (designated with a “K”) into the game for Field Goal and PAT kicking attempts. A kicking ball may not be brought in for Punts. (SPFL Rule 1.3).
* PAT Attempts-If the PAT is a kick attempt, the ball is dead at the time of the kick. If the PAT is an attempt for 2-points, the defense may gain possession during the try and return the PAT for 2-points. (SPFL Rule 2.1(A)(6)).
* ****An illegal defense on a PAT attempt allows the offensive team to enforce the 10-yard penalty on the subsequent kickoff or a half the distance penalty from the spot of try.
* An unsuccessful FG attempt that passes the LOS and is untouched by the return team beyond the LOS is put into play at the previous spot. (SPFL Rule 7.1(A)(2)).
* Kicking Line Formation – Teams may line up no less than 3 players on each side of the kicking formation on kickoffs. (SPFL Rule 7.1(A)(3)).

**SPFL UNIQUE PENALTY TABLE**

**10-YARD PENALTY**

* Defensive Illegal Formation (More than 4 Defensive Players on the LOS) - DEAD BALL PENALTY
* Defensive Holding (Enforced from Previous Spot and Automatic First Down)

**15-YARD PENALTY**

* Illegal Blitz (Defensive Player Outside the Blitzing Bracket blitzes) (Second Offense is an Ejection)
* Block Below the Waist (Second Offense is an Ejection)

**SPOT FOULS**

* Defensive Pass Interference (also an Automatic First Down)

**EJECTION (In addition to normal penalty yardage enforcement)**

* Second Illegal Block Below the Waist
* Second Illegal Blitz
* Targeting
* Fighting
* Intentionally Contacting a Game Official
* Striking, Kicking, Kneeing of an Opponent
* Any Act if Unduly Rough or Flagrant
* A Second Unsportsmanlike Foul By Player or Non-Player
* A Substitute Leaving Team Box During a Fight

**UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

**In addition to the unsportsmanlike conduct fouls available to officials under NFHS Rule 9**, the SPFL rules include sportsmanship warning penalties for when a game participant exhibits poor sportsmanship behavior that in the opinion of an official does not rise to the level of a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct foul:

* First warning issued to a team- No Penalty
* Second warning issued to a team- Five-yard penalty enforced from the succeeding spot.
* Any additional unsportsmanlike behavior is a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct foul.