

**SPORTS LEAGUE OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION**  
**Official Touch Rugby Rules**



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**DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY**

- 1 Advantage** is that property or part of play, which gives one team the potential to improve its position to score relative to the other team.
- 2 Attacking Team** is the team, which has possession or is gaining possession of the ball.
- 3 Attacking Scoreline** is the line on or over which a team has to place the ball to score a touchdown.
- 4 Behind** means in a position or direction towards a team's defending scoreline.
- 5 Dead Ball** means when the ball is out of play and includes the period following a touch until the ball is brought back into play at a Rollball, the period following a touchdown or penalty, until the match is recommenced, and when the ball goes to ground and/or outside the boundaries of the field of play.
- 6 Defending Scoreline** is the line, which a team has to defend to prevent a touchdown.
- 7 Defending Team** is the team without possession of the ball.
- 8 Deliver** means to part with the ball.
- 9 The Half** is the player who takes possession of the ball behind the player who performs the Rollball.
- 10 Field of Play** is the playing area bounded by the sidelines and Touchdown Zone lines, both of which are out of bounds.
- 11 Forward** means in a position or direction towards a team's own attacking scoreline.
- 12 Full Time** occurs at the expiration of the normal time allowed for play.
- 13 Interchange Area** is a rectangle measuring twenty (20) yards long by no more than five (5) yards wide, marked on both sides of the field, extending ten (10) yards either side of the half way line and being one (1) yard from the sideline.
- 14 Mark (For a Touch)** is the position where the attacking player in possession of the ball is at the time of the touch.
- 15 Mark (For a Tap)** is the centre of the halfway line for the commencement or recommencement of play, or the position where a tap is awarded as a result of an infringement.
- 16 Offside means** in a position forward of the ball for an attacking player and in a position liable to penalty for a defending player.
- 17 Onside** means in a position whereby a player may legitimately become involved with play.
- 18 Penalty** is the action by the referee in awarding a tap when a player or team infringes the rules of the game.
- 19 Rebound** occurs when the ball deflects from or makes contact with a player other than the player who first had possession.
- 20 Rollball** is the normal act of bringing the ball into play following a touch or a change of possession.
- 21 Ruling** is the decision made by the referee as a result of particular circumstances. It can result in a play on, a tap or a change of possession.
- 22 Scorelines** are the lines separating the Touchdown Zone from the field of play.
- 23 Sidelines** are the side boundaries of the field of play.
- 24 Tap** is the method of commencing the match, recommencing the match after half time and after a touchdown has been scored. It is also a method of recommencing play when a penalty is awarded.

**25 Touch** is contact on any part of the body between a player in possession of the ball and a defending player. A touch includes contact on the ball, hair or clothing and may be made by a defending player or by the player in possession.

**26 Touchdown** is the result of an attacking player, except the half, placing the ball on or over the team's attacking scoreline.

**27 Touchdown Zone** is the area bounded by the sideline, scoreline and Touchdown Zone Line.

**28 Touchdown Zone Line** is the line joining the sidelines extending no less than five (5) yards and not more than ten (10) yards past the scoreline.

## **THE FIELD AND THE BALL**

**1 Field of Play.** The Field of play is rectangular in shape and measures sixty (60) yards in length from scoreline to scoreline and thirty (30) yards in width.

**2 Markings.** Sidelines are to be extended at least five (5) yards beyond the scorelines and joined by the Touchdown Zone line. Interchange Areas measuring twenty (20) yards in length by no more than five (5) yards in width shall be marked on both sides of the field of play, extending ten (10) yards either side of the halfway line and one (1) yard from the sideline.

## **MODE OF PLAY, DURATION AND SCORING**

**1 Object.** The object of the game of Touch is for each team to score touchdowns and to prevent the opposition from scoring.

**2 Mode of Play.** The ball may be passed, knocked or handed between onside players of the attacking team who may in turn run or otherwise move with the ball in an attempt to gain territorial advantage and score. Defending players prevent the attacking team from gaining a territorial advantage by touching the ball carrier, either defending or attacking players may initiate touches upon which, play stops and is restated with a Rollball, unless other rules apply.

**3 Duration.** The match is fourth five (45) minutes duration, consisting of two (2) twenty (20) minute halves. There is a short halftime break. The duration may only be extended for exceptional circumstances.

**4 End of Play.** When time expires play is to continue until the ball next becomes dead. Should a penalty be awarded during this period, the penalty is to be taken.

**5 Scoring.** A touchdown is awarded when a player (without being touched and other than the half) places the ball on the ground on or over the team's attacking scoreline and within the boundaries of the Touchdown Zone. A touchdown is worth one (1) point.

**6 The Winner.** The team who at the end of play has scored the most touchdowns is declared the winner. In the event of neither team scoring, or in the event of both teams scoring the same number of touchdowns, a draw is declared.

## **TEAM COMPOSITION AND SUBSTITUTION**

**1 Number of Players.** No more than six (6) are allowed on the field at any time. A minimum of four (4) is required for the match to continue. All players who are involved in the match both on and off the field of play are under the direct control of the referee.

**2 Mixed Competition.** In mixed competitions, the maximum number of males allowed on the field of play is four (4). In order to avoid forfeit, the minimum of (4) players is required, at least (1) of which must be female.

**3 Substitution.** Players may substitute at any time in accordance with the interchange procedure. There is no limit to the number of times a player may interchange.

**4 Interchange Procedure.** Substitute players must remain in their interchange area for the duration of the match. All interchanges must occur at or within the team's Interchange Area, and only after the substituted player has crossed the boundaries and entered the Interchange Area. All interchanges must be made on the one side of the field and without delay. Physical contact does not have to be made between interchanging players,

and players leaving or entering the field shall not hinder or obstruct play and must enter from an onside position. Following the scoring of a touchdown, players may interchange at will without having to wait for the substituted player to enter the interchange area.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team five (5) yards infield from where the substituted player left the field or where the substituting player entered the field, whichever is the greater advantage.

## **COMMENCEMENT AND RECOMMENCEMENT OF PLAY**

**1 The Toss.** Team captains are to toss the coin in the presence of the referee with the winning captain's team receiving possession for the commencement of the first half, the choice of direction for the first half and the choice of Interchange areas for the duration of the match.

**2 Attacking Team.** The attacking team is to start the match with a tap at the centre of the halfway line following the indication to commence play from the referee. All players of the attacking team are to remain in an onside position until the ball has been tapped.

**RULING** - A change of possession at the centre of the halfway line.

**3 Method.** The tap is taken by placing the ball on the ground at or behind the mark, releasing both hands from the ball, tapping the ball with either foot a distance of not more than one (1) yard, and retrieving the ball cleanly. Any player of the attacking team may take the tap. Any onside player of the attacking team may retrieve the ball once the tap has been taken.

**RULING** - A change of possession at the mark for the tap.

**4 Defending Team.** All players of the defending team are required to retire a distance of not less than ten (10) yards from the mark for the tap. Defending players may move forward of their positions once the ball has been tapped with the foot.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the attacking team along a line ten (10) yards directly forward of the original mark.

**5 Recommencement of Play.** For the recommencement of play following a halftime break, teams shall change directions and the team losing the toss is to start the match with a tap as described in Rules 6.2 and 6.3. For the recommencement of play following the scoring of a touchdown, the team against which the score was made is to recommence play as described in Rules 6.2 and 6.3.

**6 Kicking.** The ball cannot be kicked or played with the foot except when taking a tap or a Rollball. The half may use the foot to control the ball.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the position where the ball made contact with the foot.

## **POSSESSION**

**1 General.** Providing other Rules do not apply, the team with the ball is entitled to six (6) touches prior to changing possession with the opposing team.

**2 Changeover Procedure.** Following the sixth touch or the loss of possession due to any other means, players of the team losing possession are to hand, or pass the ball to the nearest opposition player, or place the ball on the ground at the mark without delay. Attacking players who request the ball are to be given the ball. Players are not to delay the changeover procedure.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team ten (10) yards forward of the mark for the change of possession or penalty.

**3 Ball to Ground.** If the ball is dropped to the ground a change of possession results. The mark for a change of possession is where the ball first pitches or where the attacking player dropped or passed the ball, whichever is of greater advantage to the team gaining possession.

**4 Mishandled Ball.** If a player mishandles the ball and providing the ball does not go to ground, play is to continue.

**5 Intercepts.** Intercepts by onside defending players are allowed. Following an intercept, play continues until the first touch is effected, a touchdown is scored, or a stoppage occurs as a result of other actions.

## PASSING

**1 General.** A player in possession may pass, flick, knock, throw or otherwise deliver the ball to any other onside player in the attacking team.

**2 Forward Pass.** A player in possession is not to pass, flick, knock, throw or otherwise propel the ball in a forward direction

**RULING -** A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the mark where the ball was passed, flicked, knocked, thrown or otherwise propelled forward.

**3 Passing into Opposition.** A player who passes the ball at or towards a defending player and thereby causes the ball to go to ground shall lose possession. However, if the defending player attempts to catch the ball or play at the ball and the ball goes to ground, the attacking team retains possession. Play is restarted at the mark where the ball goes to ground or at a position of best advantage to the non-offending team. The touch count is restarted.

## THE ROLLBALL

**1 When Required.** A player is to perform a Rollball under the following circumstances:

- (a) When a touch has been effected;
- (b) When possession changes due to the sixth touch;
- (c) When possession changes due to the ball going to ground;
- (d) When possession changes due to an infringement by an attacking player at a penalty or a tap;
- (e) When possession changes when the half is touched (or places the ball on or over the scoreline) whilst in possession of the ball;
- (f) When possession changes due to a player in possession of the ball running across the sideline, or
- (g) When so directed by the referee.

**2 Method.** The attacking player is to position on the mark, face the opponent's (defending) scoreline, stand parallel to the sidelines, and roll the ball backwards along the ground between the feet a distance of not more than one (1) yard. Once the ball is placed on the mark, the attacking player may step over the ball.

**RULING -** A change of possession at the mark.

**3 (a) Attacking Team.** Any other player of the attacking team may receive the ball from the Rollball and thus become the half. The half may pass or run with the ball. However, if touched, loses possession.

**RULING -** A change of possession.

**(b) The half** is not to delay picking up or gathering the ball. The player who performs the Rollball is not permitted to obstruct or otherwise prevent the defending team from gaining possession or effecting a touch on the half.

**RULING -** A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the mark where the infringement occurred.

**4 Defending Team.** All Players of the defending team are to retire a distance of not less than five (5) yards from the mark for a Rollball. Players of the defending team are not permitted to move forward of the five (5) yard position until the half has made contact with the ball.

**RULING -** A penalty awarded to the attacking team along a line five (5) yards forward of the mark for the Rollball and nearest the infringement.

**5 Actions Without Half in Position.** When the player in possession is required to Rollball without a half in position, players of the defending team may move forward of the five (5) yard positions as soon as the ball leaves the hand/s of the player in possession. Should a defending player gain possession, the match is recommenced with a Rollball at the same mark.

**6 Voluntary Rollball.** A player in possession is not to perform a Rollball unless a touch has been effected.

**RULING -** A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the mark where the Rollball occurred.

## THE TOUCH

**1 General.** Players of both defending and attacking teams are to use the minimum force necessary to effect touches.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the non offending team and, as a minimum, a warning to the offending player.

**2 Ball knocked from Hands.** If the ball is knocked from the hands of a player in possession during a touch, the touch counts and the player retains possession, and they are required to perform the Rollball. The touch count continues, unless it is the sixth (6th) touch.

**3 Actions Following Touch.** After a touch has been effected, the player in possession is required to stop, return to the mark where the touch occurred if the mark has been over-run, and perform a Rollball without delay.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the defending team at the mark.

**4 Passing after Touch.** A player is not to pass or otherwise deliver the ball after a touch has been effected.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the defending team at the mark where the touch occurred.

**5 Claimed Touch.** A player must not claim or otherwise call for a touch unless a touch has actually been effected.

**RULING** - If an advantage is apparent, the referee will indicate "play on", otherwise a penalty is awarded to the attacking team where the touch is claimed.

**6 The Mark.** The mark for the Rollball is dependent on the position of the player in possession at the time of the touch.

**7 Interference After Touch.** Following a touch, the ball is deemed to be dead and is brought into play at the Rollball when the half touches the ball or, if there is no half in position, when the ball leaves the hands of the attacking player performing the Rollball. See rule 9.4 and 9.5. Defending players are not to interfere with the player in possession or otherwise prevent the immediate Rollball, after a touch is made.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the attacking team five (5) yards forward of the mark for the Rollball.

**8 Touched While Scoring.** On the rare occasion a player places the ball on the ground on or over the scoreline at the same time a touch is effected, the touch counts and a touchdown is not awarded.

**9 Touch on Offside Defender.** Should a player in possession effect a touch on an offside defender who is making every effort to retire and remain out of play, the touch is to count. If the player in possession is the half, a change of possession results.

## **BALL ON OR OVER SIDELINE/SCORELINE**

**1 On or Over Sideline.** The ball becomes dead when it or a player in possession touches or crosses the sideline and a change of possession results. However if a player in possession is touched prior to crossing the sideline, then the touch counts and play continues with a Rollball at the mark where the touch occurred.

**RULING** - The team NOT responsible for the ball touching or crossing the sideline restarts play with a Rollball five (5) yards infield from where the ball or the player in possession touched or crossed the sideline, or at the position of best advantage to the attacking team.

**2 Touched over Attacking Scoreline.** If a player in possession of the ball is touched after crossing the attacking scoreline and prior to the scoring of a touchdown, the touch counts. Play is restarted with a Rollball five (5) yards infield from where the player in possession crossed the scoreline.

**3 Ball on or behind Defending Scoreline.** If a player in possession of the ball is touched whilst on or behind their defending scoreline, the touch counts and play is restarted with a Rollball five (5) yards infield from where the player in possession was touched.

**4 Actions Near Defending Scoreline.** An attacking team is not required to Rollball within five (5) yards of the defending scoreline. After each touch the player in possession may move forward to the five (5) yard broken line to Rollball.

**5 Actions near Attacking Scoreline.** When a touch is effected within five (5) yards of the attacking scoreline, a player in possession may move directly behind the mark a distance of up to five (5) yards to the broken line to restart play with a Rollball.

**6 Actions further than Five (5) Yards from Defending Scoreline.** When defending players are required to defend further than five (5) yards from their defending scoreline, they must move forward beyond the five (5) yard broken line and continue to move forward in an attempt to effect a touch on the player in possession.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the attacking team at the position of the ball at the time the offence is identified.

## **BALL TOUCHED IN FLIGHT**

**1 Intentional Contact by Defender.** If the ball goes to ground following a defender's attempt to gain possession, the attacking team retains the ball and the touch count restarts. This also applies if the defending player deliberately knocks the ball to the ground. The mark where the Rollball occurs is where the ball first pitches or where the defender touched the ball, whichever is of best advantage to the attacking team.

**2 Intentional Contact but not to Ground.** If a defending player touches the ball in flight and the ball is retrieved by an attacking player, play continues and the touch count restarts at the next touch.

**3 Intentional Contact and Touched again by Attacker.** If an attacking player attempts to gather the ball after a deflection by a defender and the ball goes to ground, the attacking team retains possession and the touch count restarts.

**4 Rebound and Ball to Ground.** If the ball rebounds from a defending player who has not made an attempt to retrieve the ball and the ball goes to ground, a change of possession results and the play restarts with a Rollball where the ball first pitches or where the ball rebounded from the defender, whichever is of best advantage to the team gaining possession.

**5 Rebounds but not to Ground.** If the ball rebounds from a defending player who has not made an attempt to retrieve the ball and the ball is regained by an attacking player, play on and the touch count continues.

## **OFFSIDE**

**1 Attacking Team.** A player in the attacking team is offside when that player is forward of the player who has possession or who last had possession. In general play, offside attacking players who interfere with play should be penalised.

**2 Attacking Player Offside at Tap.** Attacking players are to remain onside at a tap until the ball has been tapped.

**RULING** - A change of possession at the mark

**3 Defending Team.** A player of the defending team is offside when the following rules are infringed:

(a) Rule 6.4 - at the commencement and recommencement of play.

(b) Rule 9.4 - at the Rollball.

(c) Rule 15.5 - at the tap for a penalty.

(d) Rule 9 - Referee Note D - offside at a quick Rollball or tap.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the attacking team in accordance with the above rules.

## **OBSTRUCTION**

**1 Attacking Team.** Players of the attacking team are not to obstruct defending players from attempting to effect a touch. A player in possession must not run or otherwise move behind the referee or other players in the attacking team in an attempt to avoid a touch. Obstruction here is defined as a deliberate attempt by an attacking player to gain an unfair advantage by preventing a defending player from effecting a touch.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the defending team at the mark where the infringement occurred.

**2 Defending Team.** Players in the defending team are not to obstruct or otherwise interfere with the attacking players supporting the player in possession.

**RULING** - A penalty awarded to the non-offending team at the mark of the infringement providing the stoppage is not to the disadvantage of the attacking team.

## **PENALTY.**

**1 General.** A penalty is to be awarded for an infringement by any player in accordance with the rules contained herein.

**2 Location of the tap for a Penalty .** The mark for a penalty is normally at the location of the infringement unless otherwise detailed in specific rules. For infringements which occur on the boundaries, within five (5) yards of the defending scoreline or outside the field of play, the location of a tap from a penalty is to be five (5) yards infield (or on the five yard line) from where the infringement occurred.

**3 Method.** The ball does not have to be lifted from the ground for the tap. However, the ball must be at or behind the correct mark prior to the tap being taken.

RULING - A change of possession at the mark.

**4 Attacking Team.** Players of the attacking team are to be onside at the tap.

RULING - A change of possession at the mark.

**5 Defending Team.** Players of the defending team are to be onside at the tap.

RULING - A penalty awarded to the attacking team along a line ten (10) yards directly forward of the original mark and nearest the infringement.

**6 Penalty Touchdown.** A penalty touchdown will be awarded if any action by a player or spectator deemed by the referee to be contrary to the rules or spirit of the game, prevented the attacking team from scoring a touchdown.

## **ADVANTAGE**

The principle of advantage to the non-offending team is to apply at all times, providing some advantage is readily obvious. Once a team is given the advantage that team does not necessarily forfeit the right to other action as described in these rules.

## **LEAGUE POLICIES**

**GAMES:** During the regular season matches are to be played within time allotted (warm up time is included). Games will be divided into two 20-minute halves with a brief half-time break.

**REFS:** Each week CSSC will provide referee(s) for each game.

**FORFEITS:** If your team forfeits a match during the season, the following rules apply:

**First Offense:** Loss of a game.

**Second Offense:** Loss of game and staff reserves the right to remove team from playoffs.

**Third Offense:** Removal from the league

Any team that forfeits more than once also forfeits any guarantee or right to a certain number of guaranteed games.

If you know in advance that your team is going to forfeit a game, we encourage you to call our office, at 312.850.8196, so as to help us schedule your opponent a game.

Teams have until ten minutes past the designated start time to field a full squad (or the league minimum of players required according to rules). If at that time a team is unable to field a legal team, it will be up to the staff and the opposing captain to determine whether a team will receive a forfeit win or if a team will allow the opposing team to play a legal game with less than the league minimum of players required according to the rules.

## **STANDINGS:**

The updated standings will be posted weekly online at [www.chicagosocial.com](http://www.chicagosocial.com). The standings will display each team's rank within its skill level. Rank is based on winning percentage.

## **PLAYOFFS:**

Playoffs will begin immediately following the end of the regular season and will typically last between 2 and 3 weeks. After teams have been seeded according to their records all captains will receive an email with the 1<sup>st</sup> week of playoff game times roughly 3 days before their league playoff date. **Teams will not receive notification for any other weeks of playoffs!** It is the responsibility of **ALL TEAMS** to check the playoff brackets at the league or online to find out what time they will be playing the following week if they win. In playoffs it is not uncommon, (and in some cases will be necessary), for teams to have more than one match in a given night. No substitutes will be allowed during playoffs. All players must have signed the waiver by the second week of the season in order to be eligible for playoffs. All eligible teams will make the playoffs. Playoff eligible teams will be determined on a league by league basis. Teams that have violated the forfeit policy during the course of regular season will not be eligible for playoffs. In certain situations teams at, or near the bottom of the standings may not advance to the playoffs. Check with the CSSC office to see if this applies to your league. Playoffs are single elimination.

**Seeding:** Teams are seeded based upon a winning percentage, head to head and strength of schedule. Teams may play more than one game per day/night, and/or play games on days/nights other than your regularly scheduled league day/night if necessary. CSSC reserves the right to schedule playoff games on days other than teams regularly scheduled league night. Any questions regarding rules, policies, or eligibility of players must be addressed before the start of the game. Any team that would like to challenge the eligibility of an opposing player must do so before the start of the game. No protests will be considered valid after a game has started.

## **WAIVERS:**

In order to participate in the league, each participant must sign the team waiver. Waivers are provided and must be completed and handed in no later than the first night of play. Players not present the first week of play will still be required to sign a waiver with our staff before participating. Players must sign the waiver in order to be eligible for playoffs.

## **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:**

Players who have been placed on the roster and signed the waiver are eligible for playoffs. A formal protest may be filed before a game if an opposing player's eligibility is in question. The player in question will be required to provide his/her player information (name, address, phone #, and signature) in writing to a CSSC staff member prior to the start of the game. This qualifies as an official protest. Any protest made during a game or after a game will NOT be considered a formal protest. The game will then be played in its entirety as scheduled. Teams will be notified of all rulings on the identified eligibility discrepancy by the following business day – decisions will not be made on site. If the protest is proven to be legitimate, it will result in the forfeiture of the game in question. Games subsequent to the protested game may be



rescheduled. The above procedure will also apply for any other “logged” protests. All rulings by CSSC staff are considered final.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP:**

The idea of CSSC is to have fun. We hope that all participants keep that in mind when becoming involved. Although the games may become intense, you still can be competitive while maintaining good sportsmanship. With this said, any behavior deemed unacceptable by staff may result in suspension and/or ejection from a game or the league. Abuse of officials/referees, and other staff will not be tolerated. CSSC reserves the right to remove a player from a game or a league if they are considered to be bringing down the quality of the league. CSSC will not tolerate fighting! Fighting will be an automatic ejection from any game and in most cases ejection from the league for the remainder of the season.

## **STAFF:**

To coordinate and run the league, our refs and/or staff will be available at all times to help the league run as smoothly as possible. If you have questions regarding schedules, policies, rule interpretations, directions to the bar, etc. please ask.

## **LEAGUE CANCELLATION/RAINOUT:**

**Please call our weather hotline for the most up to date information on any cancellations (312.773.7100)**

Leagues may be cancelled due to extreme weather conditions, dangerous or unplayable conditions in the facility, facility constraints, etc. CSSC staff makes every effort to play all scheduled games, thus we will not cancel games unless absolutely necessary. Therefore, if you are calling concerning a decision on a cancellation, remember we will not have an answer until close to the start of the league.

If the league is cancelled, CSSC staff will change the “weather hotline” immediately. If possible, the CSSC will then email all of the captains to let them know. It is then the captain’s responsibility to inform all teammates of the cancellation. If a league is cancelled on site, CSSC staff will attempt to contact those teams still scheduled to play the remainder of the league day/night. Depending on the time of cancellation, some teams will have to be notified on site. If we do cancel, follow next week’s schedule (ex. If April 13 is cancelled teams should follow the April 20 schedule for their next game). The games that are cancelled will be made up towards the end of the season if time allows. In extreme circumstances, CSSC reserves the right to run a shortened season without a refund. CSSC reserves the right to move games or weeks to an alternative location when deemed necessary without compensation. CSSC also reserves the right to schedule games on days other than your regularly scheduled league day/night if necessary.

**PRIZES/ JERSEYS:**

Each team will receive a pre-bundled set of colored jerseys with various sizes at the first night of the league. Additional shirts and sizes can be purchased from the CSSC for an additional charge. The top teams in each division will receive a prize of great emotional, spiritual, and most importantly, social value.

These policies are designed to make the league run as smoothly and safely as possible, and provide continuity for its participants. Each player in the league is responsible for this information: please advise your team of these rules and thanks for playing.