

Paul Blank Invitational Thanksgiving Football Game Contest Rules ~ Updated for 2019

Time: There will be two 35-minute, running time, halves. The timekeeper will keep track of the time and will announce intervals of 20 minutes, 10 minutes, five minutes and two minutes. There will be a two-minute warning in each period. During the final two minutes the clock can be stopped by the officials at their discretion (reset the chains, referee discussion, injuries, etc.).

Time-Outs: Each team will be allowed three timeouts per half. This is in addition to referee time-outs for injuries or other stoppage of play.

Referees: In all instances, the decision of the referee will be final. Referees may assign penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct when a player disputes a call.

Penalties:

- Off sides - 5 yards
- Unnecessary roughness/Unsportsmanlike conduct – 15 yards
- Pass Interference – automatic first down, ball spotted at place of impact (or 1-yard line if penalty occurred in the end zone).
- Clipping – 15 yards
- Block in the back – 10 yards
- Intentional grounding – 10 yards and loss of down
- Ineligible Receiver – loss of down
- Out of bounds kick – Receiving team can accept penalty and have kicking team re-kick with 5-yard penalty or decline penalty and take possession at the 40-yard line.
- Delay of Game – 5 yards (teams have a 30 second play clock counted by the referees).

Eligible Receivers: With a team of 8 players, 3 players must line up as offensive linemen. Once the ball is spotted, and before it is snapped, up to 1 offensive linemen can verbally declare himself eligible to the defense and the referees. The offense has the choice to not declare an offensive lineman eligible, giving them 5 eligible players (4 receivers/RB plus the QB). The **non-offensive linemen**, who are eligible at all times, must line up **at least 3 feet** from the line, so it is clear to everyone on the field he is not a lineman.

Blitzing: There will be an automatic rush when a hand-off, fake hand-off, fumbled snap, lateral or forward movement by the quarterback occurs. In all other cases, there will be a three Mississippi rush to be counted out in a loud audible voice. If a defensive team blitzes, the referee should yell “blitz” at a loud volume to signify the blitz. The quarterback is free to run at any point. The defense can blitz a maximum of one time for every 4 downs. **IF** the defense illegally blitzes for a second time in a set of 4 downs, the referee will call a Delay of Game penalty (see “penalties” section above). If a player lines up behind the quarterback in the backfield the defense can automatically rush without the three second count. However, if the player in the backfield is in front of or next to the quarterback the defense must adhere to the three second rush count.

Tackling: The PBI is now a flag football contest. Once a player’s flag has been pulled from his uniform the referees will whistle the play dead. If a player falls to the ground, the defense must touch that player with one hand to end the play. **If a player falls to the ground and is not touched, he may get up and continue running.** Head on blocking is allowed - no blocking from behind or chop blocking.

Catches: Players must retain possession of the ball with at least one foot in bound for a catch to be deemed legal (NCAA rules). Players may not use the ground as an aid to make a catch.

Point-After Conversion: Upon a touchdown, the scoring team will have the option for a one- or two-point conversion. The offensive team will attempt a one-point conversion from the 2 yard line, and two point conversion from the 5 yard line. No kick attempts for extra points are permitted.

Field Goal Attempts: Field goals (three points) may be attempted. When a field goal is attempted, the defense is not permitted to rush the kicker. Fake field goals and punts are not allowed. On an attempted field goal, the offense will declare their intention. The offense must snap the ball to a holder, at which point the kicker has 5 seconds to kick the ball. Fumbled snaps/holds result in a dead play, and a turnover on downs.

Kicking: The kicking team will have the option to either kickoff (from their own 15 yard line), or **NOT** do any kickoff, optioning to give the receiving team the ball at their own 20 yard line.

Onside Kick: An onside kick must be declared verbally to both the referees and the receiving team and must travel 10 yards or be touched by the receiving team before being recovered by the kicking team.

All other general football rules apply.