**CROSSCHECK POLICIES AND RULES**

**FLAG Divisions**

**Crosscheck Player Qualification**

**I. Player age and grade qualifications –**

**1st/2nd grade division** - Maximum grade for a player is 2nd grade or a player may be no younger than 5 years of age and no older than 8 years of age by August 1, 2018.

**3rd grade division** - Maximum grade for a player is 3rd grade or a player may be no younger than 7 years of age and no older than 9 years of age by August 1, 2018.

**4th Grade division** -Maximum grade for a player is 4th grade or a player may be no younger than 8 years of age and no older than 10 years of age by August 1, 2018.

**5th Grade division** -Maximum grade for a player is 5th grade or a player may be no younger than 9 years of age and no older than 11 years of age by August 1, 2018.

 **II. Head coach responsibilities and commitment –** The head coach has a huge responsibility and must be one who is serious about leading the team in a Godly manner. They are to maintain and follow the mission, vision and priorities established for Crosscheck Athletics by Grace Evangelical Church. The head coach is accountable for the following:

a. Setup team’s online registration process (preferred by May 6th)

 b. Turning in the following materials:

* + - List of rosters and jersey numbers by July 30th to Kevin Wieters (kevin@graceevan.org)
		- Team photo roster by August 25th (at Jamboree)

 c. Obtain team practice space (Crosscheck is not responsible to provide it)

 d. ONLY the head coach may reasonably ask for an explanation of a referees call during ball games

 e. Monitor the following:

* Heat index – head coach must know the heat index at their practice site
* Spiritual coach – head coach must allow the spiritual coach practice time for weekly

 devotionals

* Parents/Fans/Coaches/Players – the head coach is ultimately held responsible for the actions of his staff, players and fans
* Eligibility of your players – the head coach must make sure that all players have registered and attained proper equipment. A player must have registered online and have paid their registration fees. One cannot practice nor participate in the Jamboree or any games until registration is confirmed

**Disqualification from Play**

**I. Player eligibility** — Only a head coach can ask Crosscheck to check on the eligibility of a player or team. The following are areas which the Crosscheck Accountability Committee would investigate:

a. **Playing on multiple teams —** A player can only play on **ONE** team within Crosscheck and throughout the city within the same season. A request to challenge a player’s status must be received prior to the completion of the fourth (4th) week of the regular season game by the head coach ONLY. (*Crosscheck leadership can review cases any time during the season*.)

Upon receiving that request, the Accountability Committee will investigate the player. If a player is ruled ineligible, he will be suspended for the remainder of the season. The team will forfeit all games leading up to and including the game of the challenge.

 b. **Age limit —** Only the **HEAD** coach can ask for Crosscheck to check a player’s birth certificate. A request of a player’s birth certificate must be received prior to the completion of the fourth (4th) week of the regular season. The player’s birth certificate will then be requested by Crosscheck and must be submitted by the player’s head coach. A birth certificate must be produced and turned in to Crosscheck within three (3) business days of the request. If after three days and a birth certificate is not presented then the player will be suspended until the birth certificate is produced to Crosscheck and a ruling is delivered on the given case. In the case of a player being ruled ineligible, a team will forfeit all games leading up to and including the game of the challenge.

 c. **Player with a concussion —** Crosscheck views concussions as a very serious situation for an athlete and subscribes to the TSSAA concussion policy. All signs of concussion should be reported via email to Kevin Wieters (kevin@graceevan.org) by the head coach within 24 hours of a medical diagnosis. No player displaying any sign of a concussion may return to activity on the same day as the injury. The TSSAA Concussion “Return to Play” form must be signed by the examining physician in order for an athlete to resume practice and league play.

**II. Team eligibility —** A team playing in Crosscheck football cannot participate in any additional league during the Crosscheck season. A challenge must be received prior to the completion of the fourth (4th) week of the regular season. Upon receiving a challenge, the Accountability Committee will investigate. If a team is ruled ineligible, they will forfeit all games and no refunds will be granted.

**III. Zero tolerance policy —** Crosscheck is a Christ-centered athletic association with the mission of advancing and building God’s kingdom. Crosscheck maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward foul language, behavior, etc. Unsportsmanlike and unruly behavior is prohibited. Crosscheck site directors, officials and/or Crosscheck representatives have the right at their discretion to remove unruly coaches, players and/or spectators from the premises. At the discretion of the Executive Director and the Accountability Committee, a team, coach, player and/or spectator may be removed from the league if behavior is regarded as systemic and is passively condoned and/or not addressed by the sponsoring organization. In this case, no refunds will be issued.

 a. **Unsportsmanlike conduct -** Unsportsmanlike conduct will be called by game officials and Crosscheck staff to enforce the zero-tolerance policy.A second incident of unsportsmanlike conduct will result in automatic ejection from the game and a 2-game suspension.This policy is targeted towards the coaches and players.

 b. **Unruly conduct —** Crosscheck site directors, officials and/or Crosscheck representatives have the right at their discretion to remove unruly spectators from the premises.

**Practice play and conduct**

1. **Pre-season practices —** The Crosscheck flag football season begins August 6, 2017. There are to be no practices, walk-throughs or conditioning as a team before that date. A violation of these rules will result in a one regular season game suspension for the head coach (not allowed anywhere on the field or sidelines). A second violation will lead to head coach’s expulsion from the league for the season. The following are the practice limits:

**1st/2nd Grade, 3rd Grade, 4th Grade & 5th Grade flag divisions**

* A team may practice no more than 25 hours between August 6 – 24, 2018
* Practices may not exceed 2 hours in length
* Only one practice allowed per day
* NO practices on Sundays
1. **Heat index —** Coaches are responsible for knowing the heat index at their practice site.

Coaches will need to monitor the heat index during practices. **If it is above 104o F, practice and play must be discontinued immediately**. The heat index should be determined by the head coach using the NOAA National Weather Service site ([www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)) and typing in the zip code of their practice site. Crosscheck follows the same heat index policy as that of the TSSAA. **However, we differ on the consequences of violators. Coaches found to be in violation of this rule will be suspended for one regular-season game (not allowed anywhere on field or sideline). A second violation will lead to a coach’s expulsion from the league for the season.**

**III. Playing time –** Each head coach should maintain a focus on developing each player – spirit, mind and body. Crosscheck encourages coaches to give all players ample playing time to develop each and every player’s skills. A coach may reduce playing time for a player not demonstrating proper behavior and respect toward coaches and/or other players. Any reduction in playing time must be reported to game officials on game day as well as to the opposing team. Once a 3-touchdown lead is obtained by a team, Crosscheck encourages coaches to give players other than starters more playing time.

**IV. Championship:**

* 1. Top 4 teams will participate in the post-season tournament
		1. Seeding’s will be determined by games won and not by points scored or point differential
		2. The top 4 seeded teams will play in the post-season tournament with the winning teams advancing to the championship game
		3. Division Tie Breakers:
			1. Head to head
			2. Head to head with highest seeded team against whom both teams have played
			3. Coin toss or two teams’ numbers will be drawn (in the case of a greater than a 2-way tie)

**Flag Football**

**I. The Game**

1. At the start of each game, a short devotional will be given by the field supervisor or an official.
2. The first possession goes to the home team. The visiting team chooses the end zone it prefers to defend. The second half starts with the visiting team with possession and defending the opposite end zone than the first half.
3. The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5-yard line and has 3 plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has 3 plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on the 5-yard line.
4. If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
5. All possession changes, except interceptions, start on the offense’s 5-yard line. On interceptions only, the offense will start possession wherever the defender with the football is ruled down. Interceptions may be returned during regular play. The defender making the interception is down when the defender’s flags are on the ground or the play is dead if the defender scores. Interceptions during an extra point attempt may NOT be returned.

**II. Equipment**

1. 1st/2nd & 3rd grade teams will use a Wilson K-2 football or similar size. 4th & 5th grade teams will use a Wilson TDJ ball or similar size.
2. Players must wear official Crosscheck jerseys and shorts at every game.
3. Players must use official league flag belts at every game.
4. A mouthpiece must be worn at all times and **cannot** be clear.
5. Cleats are recommended, but cleats with exposed metal are not allowed.

**III. Field play**

1. Teams must field a minimum of five players at all times. If not, a forfeit will be recorded for the game and we encourage the two teams to scrimmage each other.
2. Games are played to 40 minutes running time. If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game will **end in a tie**. There is **NO OVERTIME** in Crosscheck flag football. Half time is 5 minutes. In the last 2 minutes of a game the game clock will stop for any penalties and change of possession. It will restart on the snap.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
4. Each team has **one timeout** per half.
5. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
6. If a touchdown is scored the team receives 6 points. An extra point from the 5-yard line is worth 1 point and an attempt from the 12-yard line is worth 2 points. A safety is worth 2 points.
7. The **MERCY RULE** will be put into place if a team is winning by 3 touchdowns. The losing team will be given one more offensive series in regulation play. If they do not score, the game is over and goes into a scrimmage mode. (*The scrimmage mode is where the losing team gets the ball for up to 3 possessions. Each possession last until the team scores or is unable to achieve a first down. Points scored during this time do not count in the final score*.)

**IV. Offensive ball play**

1. Center sneaks are **NOT** allowed and the ball must be snapped between the center’s legs. Side snaps are **NOT** allowed.
2. The quarterback cannot run with the ball- even if the quarterback is being rushed by the opposing team. Only direct handoffs and pitches behind the line of scrimmage are permitted. Offense may use multiple handoffs / pitches behind the line of scrimmage.
	1. Running is not allowed if a team is inside the “*No Running Zones*” located 5 yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield. (see field layout).
	2. Passes made in the No Running Zone must be completed beyond the line of scrimmage. The entire body of the pass receiving player and ball must be beyond the line of scrimmage.
3. Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet. (NO DIVING).
4. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is located.
5. Absolutely NO laterals or pitches of any kind are allowed as a ball carrier runs downfield.
6. An illegal Forward Pass: A forward pass is illegal if:
	1. 1. The passer’s foot is beyond the scrimmage line when the ball leaves his hand.
	2. 2. Thrown after team possession has changed during a down.
	3. 3. Intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage.
	4. 4. A passer catches his untouched forward or backward pass.
	5. There is more than one forward pass per down.
7. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
8. Only 1 player is allowed in motion at a time.
9. A player must have at least 1 foot inbounds when making a reception.
10. The quarterback has a 7-second “pass clock”. If a pass is not thrown within the 7 seconds, the play is dead with a loss of down and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. Once the ball is handed off the 7-second rule is no longer in effect and defenders may cross the line of scrimmage.
11. No blocking is allowed at any time. This includes those players on the offensive/defensive line and receivers/defensive backs.

**V. Defensive ball play**

1. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of 7 yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players **not** rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
2. Once the ball is handed off the 7-yard rule no longer is in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage.
3. A special marker or the official will walk-off and designate 7 yards from the line of scrimmage. Defensive players should verify they are in the correct position with the official on every play.
4. Teams are not required to rush the quarterback; the 7 second clock is in effect.
5. Players rushing the quarterback may attempt to block a pass; however, NO CONTACT can be made with the quarterback.
6. Tackling is **NOT** allowed at any time during play.

**VI. Play stopped**

1. Coaches can make substitions during play when the official has whistled the play stopped (also called dead ball).
2. The play is ruled stopped when:
	1. The ball carrier’s flag is pulled.
	2. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
	3. A touchdown or safety is scored.
	4. The ball carrier’s knee hits the ground.
	5. The ball carrier’s flag falls off.
	6. The ball carrier uses a stiff-arm, guards their flag or swats away a defender’s attempt to pull the flag.
3. There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball hits the ground. Offensive team retains possession of the ball. Mishandled offensive snaps/exhange (shotgun or direct) are immediately dead once the ball hits the ground.
4. A official or site director can stop play at any time.

**VII. Sportsmanship**

1. Crosscheck Athletics maintains a **zero-tolerance** policy toward language, behavior, etc. from coaches, players and fans.
2. Players must show good sportsmanship and honor without protest the official’s calls. The head coach may reasonably ask for an explanation of a call.
3. If the official, site director or a Crosscheck representative witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will receive an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty (10 yards from the line of scrimmage). A second incidence of unsportsmanlike conduct will result in automatic ejection from the game and at least a 2 game suspension.
4. Trash talking and taunting will also result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If trash talking occurs, the official will give 1 warning. If it continues, the player, coach or spectator will be ejected from the game and asked to leave the property.
5. Coaches are encouraged to provide solid playing time for ALL players. Each coach should maintain a focus on developing each player – spirit, mind and body. A coach may reduce playing time for a player not demonstrating proper behavior and respect toward coaches, officials or other players. Any reduction in playing time should be reported to officials on game day as well as to the opponent team coach.
6. Once a 3-touchdown (see “III. Field play” # 7) lead is obtained by a team, Crosscheck encourages giving players other than starters more playing time and the opportunity to carry the football.
7. Penalties will be called by the officials and not the coaches.

**VIII. Penalties**

1. All unsportsmanlike conduct penalties are 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and will be recorded by the head official. A second incidence of unsportsmanlike conduct (by the same person) will result in an automatic ejection from the game and a 2 game suspension.
2. The following chart shows the consequence of penalties:

 **Offensive Penalties**

 5 yard Penalties from the Line of Scrimmage **without** loss of down

* Illegal equipment
* Offside
* Delay of game

 5 yard Penalties from the Line of Scrimmage and loss of down

* Illegal motion – more than 1 person moving
* Illegal forward pass\*

\* An illegal Forward Pass: A forward pass is illegal if:

1. The passer’s foot is beyond the scrimmage line when the ball leaves his hand.

2. Thrown after team possession has changed during a down.

3. Intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage.

4. A passer catches his untouched forward or backward pass.

5. There is more than one forward pass per down Pass interference

* On-field coaching interference
* Screening or blocking – is from the spot of the foul

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 10 yard Penalties from the **spot of foul** and loss of down

* Unnecessary roughness
* Flag guarding

 **Defensive Penalties**

 5 yard Penalties from the Line of Scrimmage **without** automatic first down

* Illegal equipment
* Offside
* Delay of game

 5 yard Penalties from the Line of Scrimmage and automatic first down

* Illegal contact – holding, blocking
* Illegal flag pull – before receiving the ball
* Illegal rushing – start rushing inside 7-yard mark
* On-field coaching interference

 10 yard Penalties from the **spot of foul** and automatic first down

* Unnecessary roughness
* Stripping the ball out
* Pass interference (just spot of foul)

 10 yard Penalties from the Line of Scrimmage and automatic first down

* Taunting
* Roughing the passer
1. **Questioning calls**: Only the head coach can ask the officials questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players and assistant coaches cannot question judgment calls. Games cannot end on a defensive penalty unlesss the offense declines it.

**IX. On-field coaching**

 **Offense**

1. Only 1 offensive coach is permitted on the field at any one time. Prior to the snap of the ball, this coach must be positioned at least 5 yards from the deepest offensive player and must maintain this distance throughout the play.
2. The offensive on-field coach is not permitted forward of the line of scrimmage until the play has ended and is not permitted to verbalize any instructions to any player during a play.
3. The offensive coach is permitted to direct a player where to line up prior to the snap but may not give further verbal instruction prior to snap.

NOTE: NO on-field coaches allowed for 5th grade division teams

 **Defense**

1. Only 1 defensive coach is permitted on the field at any one time. Prior to the snap of the ball, this coach must be positioned at least 10 yards from the deepest defensive player.
2. Once the play has started the defensive coach must maintain a position of at least 10 yards behind the deepest offensive player. If the offensive team is within 15 yards of the goal line, the defensive coach must position himself out of the end zone.
3. The defensive coach must maintain his position until after the play has ended. In addition, this coach cannot verbalize any instructions to any player once the offense breaks the huddle or lines up.

 **Interference penalty**

1. If the offensive or defensive on-field coach interferes with the flow of the play or verbalizes any instructions to his players, an “on-field coach interference” penalty will be called.
2. Penalty for **defensive** “on-field coach interference” penalty is 5 yards and automatic first down. Penalty for **offensive** “on-field coach interference” penalty is 5 yards and loss of down.
3. If a subsequent “on-field coach interference” penalty is assessed to the same team, the official has the option of issuing an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on the offending team.

 **Sideline coaching**

1. The coach(es) on the sideline must remain on their sideline at all times. They may not enter onto the field nor cross the midfield line into the opposing teams space.
2. In either case the coach(es) will be given a warning for the first incident. If they enter a second time or any consecutive time after that a 5 yard penalty will be assessed each time to their team.

**X. Parents and fans**

1. Parents and fans must seek to engage in and encourage good sportsmanship.
2. All should cheer for the players and cheerleaders.
3. One must keep negative comments to themselves.
4. Seek to compliment **all** players, cheerleaders and coaches (even the other team).
5. Parents and fans are **not** allowed on the player’s sideline or at the back of the end zones.
6. Please keep a close eye on your children who are not playing football or cheerleading.
7. Remember to work to serve the Lord and have some fun with your sons and daughters.
8. Please help to maintain clean fields and surrounding areas.

If you have any questions concerning any ruling or consequence, please contact:

Kevin Wieters – Director of Crosscheck and Grace Athletics at 756-7136 or kevin@graceevan.org