



OFFICIAL TEXAS STATE 7ON7 PASSING TOURNAMENT RULES

2023 Edition

1. Field Dimensions

- A. Field Length--45 yards long
- B. Field Width--160 feet (60 feet to hash mark, 40 feet between)
- C. End Zone--10 yards deep

2. Player Equipment

- A. All teams will have two jerseys (a white and a dark jersey) with player's number on the front and back. The number on the front must be a minimum of 2" and the number on the back must be a minimum of 4".
- B. No football jerseys of any type shall be worn. T-shirts, compression shirt, or basketball type sleeveless shirts are the only choices of acceptable jerseys. No player will be allowed to participate without a shirt.
- C. A mouthpiece is required. No player will be allowed to participate without a mouthpiece.
- D. No sideline-to-player communication devices may be used.
- E. A cap-style soft shell helmet is required and must be worn properly and fully fastened. No player will be allowed to participate without a fully fastened, properly worn cap-style soft shell helmet.
- F. A cap-style soft shell helmet is defined as:
 1. Must have a Virginia Tech rating of 4 star or higher. Search "Virginia Tech Soft Shell Helmet Ratings. You may also try this link: <https://www.helmet.beam.vt.edu/flag-football-headgear-ratings.html>
 2. Must have no metal components.
 3. Must have no hard component parts.
 4. Must have no sharp or hard edges and/or anything that could cause harm to another player.
 5. Must have a fully functional retention system or chin strap.
 6. The helmet manufacturer must carry a combined General Liability/Excess Liability insurance policy on their soft shell helmets

3. Starting the game

- A. A central timekeeper will be designated. All games will begin and end on this person's instructions. He will also announce the time remaining at the 10, 5, and 2 minute mark.
- B. Visitors will have first possession and wear white (top team in bracket or first team listed will be the visitor). The home team will have first possession the 2nd half and wear a dark color (bottom team in bracket or 2nd team listed will be the home team).
- C. Visitors (team in white) will always align their team on the right sideline facing the end zone. Home (dark jersey) will always align their team on the left sideline facing the end zone.
- D. Ball is always placed on the right hash mark when at the 45 yard line.
- E. Referee will announce/post the score before each offensive possession begins.

4. Moving the ball

- A. Offensive Plays Must All Be Passes! (No Run plays or Kicking/Punting)
- B. Field is marked at 15 yard intervals with cones. (3 first downs without a penalty would result in a touchdown)
- C. Possession always begins at the 45 yard line at the right hash mark. Hash mark placement of

the ball must be enforced by officials, in accordance with NCAA rules, once the ball has been advanced.

- D. No penalty will be assessed in excess of the 45 yd line. On an unsuccessful or successful offensive play from the 45 yard line resulting in an offensive penalty: The ball will be returned to the 45 yard line and THE NEXT SUCCEEDING PLAY WILL BE FORFEITED. I.e. 1st down will become 2nd down; 2nd down will become 3rd down; and 3rd down will result in a turnover.
- E. Offenses always move in the same direction
- F. No "Double Passes" are allowed.
- G. Once a forward pass has been thrown, a backward pass (lateral) is allowed.
- H. Should a swing pass not cross the LOS and a defensive player tags the ball carrier behind the 45 yard line, it is a safety.
- I. The offense has 40 seconds between downs to snap the ball. The 40 second play clock will start immediately after the ball has been ruled dead by a game official after a down (HS play clock rules)

5. Special Rules

- A. No blocking.
- B. Receiver/Ball carrier is legally down when touched with one or both hands. (Excessive force by shoving, pushing, or striking a blow will be penalized by automatic first down and 5 yards. Expulsion of a player(s) if ruled unsportsmanlike & flagrant).
- C. Fumbles are dead balls at the spot with the last team retaining possession. A muffed snap is not a fumble/dead ball. The 4.0 second count remains in effect on snaps.
- D. Two delay of game penalties in the same possession results in a turnover.
- E. Any offensive penalty on the extra point try results in a turnover.
- F. The QB is allowed 4.0 seconds to throw the ball. The Official timekeeper starts a stopwatch on the snap of the ball from center and stops the watch as soon as the QB releases the ball.
 - 1. If release is under 4.0 seconds, the play goes on.
 - 2. If the timekeeper sees that the clock has exceeded 4.0 seconds, he waits until the play is over (the play is not blown dead), then brings the ball back to the original line of scrimmage with loss of down. (The timekeeper will be an official or coach from a team that is not playing)
 - 3. All penalties will be marked off on a 4 second count EXCEPT for pass interference.
- G. Defensive Pass Interference is the same as NCAA rules. (automatic 1st down & spot foul up to 15 yds)
- H. Responsibility to avoid contact is with the defense. There will be NO chucking, deliberate bumping, or grabbing. These actions will result in a 5 yd. penalty and an automatic 1st down.
- I. Offensive pass interference is the same as NCAA rules. (15 yard penalty)
- J. Interceptions may be returned ("no blocking" rule applies). If an interception is returned beyond the 45 yard line (the offensive origination point) it is a touchdown and point after attempt should ensue. The teammates of the person who intercepted the ball may trail the runner so as to be in position to take a backwards pass. They may not block for or screen for the runner.
- K. Offensive team is responsible for retrieving and returning the ball to the previous spot or the new scrimmage spot in a timely fashion. Failure to do so can result in a delay of game penalty.
- L. The offensive center is not an eligible receiver (teams must have a center). The ball must be snapped from the ground. [2023: eliminate "between the snapper's legs. (mirror the game of football)"]
- M. The center will be responsible for setting or re-positioning the Referee's bean bag at the line of scrimmage. On change of possession, the team moving to offense will ensure the bean bag gets to the new scrimmage line. (centers on both teams responsible).
- N. No taunting or "trash talking". (5 yard penalty & expulsion if flagrant).
- O. The offense must gain at least 15 yards in the first 3 or less plays or the defense takes over. (There is no kicking). Four down territory occurs only after offense proceeds to or inside the 15 yard line cone (third quadrant).

- P. Fighting: the player(s) involved will be ejected from the game and tournament. If a team fight occurs, the teams involved will be ejected from the tournament and denied participation in any/all state qualifying tournaments! They will also be disqualified from participating in the state tournament. Throwing a punch will be disqualification for that SQT.
- Q. Any dead ball foul on a play that results in the defense getting the ball and it is unable to be penalized back to the 50 yard line will result in a loss of down penalty. The defense, now the offense, would be starting play with 2nd down.
- R. There will be an area referred to as the tackle box that extends 3 yards on both sides of the center and extends 3 yards deep into the backfield. No eligible receiver may align within the tackle box.
- S. No electronic communication devices or aids may be used by coaches, players, or team personnel on the field. Such devices include (but are not limited to): headsets, mobile phones, still photography cameras, video recording cameras, mobile tablets, laptops, internet devices.

6. Scoring

- A. 6 points for TD
- B. 1 point for PAT from the 3 yard line, 2 point PAT from 10 yard line.
- C. 2 points if a team returns a PAT back across the 45.
- D. Official score is kept by the field referee and game manager.

7. Tie Breaker

- A. After a coin flip to determine first possession, teams will alternate 4 down series from the 15 yard line.
- B. A winner is determined when one team scores during its possession and the other does not. (Federation rules).
- C. If a second overtime period is necessary, each team must then go for two points on the conversion attempts.

8. Time

- A. Teams will play two 15 minute halves (continuous clock for each half - see: "starting the game").
- B. No half-time (teams simply reset to 45 yd line & begin 2nd half with home team in possession)
- C. No time outs. (Exception: Injuries. All games will halt until player(s) can be removed as soon as safety dictates).
- D. Approximately 15 minutes between games - games should start every 45 minutes in SQT play.
- E. 7 on 7 tournaments require that all games start/end at the same time.
- F. Teams must be on site and ready to play when scheduled.
- G. If a team(s) are late and can not start when the tournament officially starts, they will begin play with whatever time is left on the tournament clock – not to exceed 10 minutes of 1st half.
- H. Forfeit will occur after 10 minutes of the 1st half.
- I. Injury time outs may reduce the amount of time between halves and/or between games to maintain the game schedules.

9. Secondary Coverages

- A. Coverage will be the choice of each participating team.

10. Squad Members/Tournament Fees

- A. Players: Maximum of 20 players per team. This rule will be strictly enforced in all qualifying Tournaments!
- B. Tournament Fees:
 - 1. There will be a flat fee of \$400 per team for all SQTs. This is regardless of the minimum number of players on the roster. Maximum roster size is 20 players.
 - 2. A Deposit of \$180 must be sent to the SQT host school when registering for an SQT Tournament. (This is a non-refundable deposit). Remainder of fee paid at on-site registration.
- C. Squad members must be from the same school. (No Select Teams)

- D. All participants must have at least one year remaining of high school eligibility.
- E. No out of state teams will be allowed to compete in a state qualifying tournament.
- F. The fee for the State Tournament is \$400 per team. (20 player maximum)

11. Officials

- A. 3 - Referee; Field Judge; Back Judge
- B. Timekeeper: A designated official will keep the 4 second clock.
- C. May use 2 officials in SQT pool play.

12. Coaches

- A. No high school coach may serve as a coach or stand with the team on the sideline.
- B. Each team must have a coach accompany it to any/all events to serve as a school administrator on duty for their particular team(s). This individual is responsible for the actions of those representing his school.
- C. All high school coaches present must sit in the end zone. No high school coaches are allowed on the sideline.
- D. All team coaches will wear an identifying tag for clarification purposes. A team may not have more than four (4) coaches on the sideline.

13. Failure to Pay Entry Fee

- A. In all SQT's, there will be a flat rate \$400 per team regardless of the minimum number of players. The maximum number of players is 20.
- B. Violation will result in a disqualification from advancement to the Championship Round.

14. Team Area

- A. No team shall have additional athletes on the sideline or in the team tent partially dressed in a team uniform. (exceeding the maximum of 20 that are listed on the roster)
- B. The Team Zone will be an area on the sideline where only team members may be during game play. This will be the area from the 15 yard line to the 30 yard line. Players and coaches may not be out of the Team Zone during game time.

15. Qualifying Eligibility - State Qualifying Tournament

- A. Teams are eligible to qualify for the Texas State 7on7 Tournament by qualifying through a State Qualifying Tournament.
- B. The number of teams that qualify from a Division I or Division II SQT will be as follows:
 - ** 8 team SQT = 1 qualifier
 - ** 16 team SQT = 2 qualifiers
 - ** 24 team SQT = 3 qualifiers
 - ** 32 team SQT = 4 qualifiers
- C. Division III SQT's may qualify 2 teams from specified 8 team tournaments. The qualifiers will be determined by having the top 2 teams from each pool play a semi-final game. Winner of A plays Runner-Up of B (vice-versa). The 2 semi-final winners will earn the qualifying spots.
- D. State Qualifying Teams that fail to participate in a SQT that they have registered for without "prior notice," will be eliminated from SQT play and from the State Tournament for 1 calendar year (even if they have qualified for the State Tournament in a previous SQT.)
- E. Prior Notice is defined as informing the host school by the 1st business day of the week of the SQT. (Subject to Board Review) The term of the disqualification is one calendar year from the date of the missed tournament.
- F. A school may only qualify for the state tournament once and they qualify for the respective tournament based on the SQT in which they first qualify. For example, if a Division II school first qualifies at a Division I SQT then they will be a Division I competitor at the State Tournament and may not advance past pool play in any other SQT regardless of division.

- G. Teams that MUST participate in Division I are those within 5A or 6A (public) and the SPC or TAPPS Division I (private). Teams that meet this criteria are not permitted to participate in Division II.

16. Tournament Tiebreaker

- A. In SQT play, a team that has already qualified for the State Tournament will not be involved in any tiebreaker scenarios. The results of their games shall not be included.
- B. Head-to-Head, Points Scored, Points Allowed will determine the pool winners or teams to advance.
- C. In a three way tie, only the scores of games between teams in the tie will be counted. **Once a winner has been declared, the remaining two teams will revert back to head-to-head to break the remaining tie.**
- D. A forfeit will be treated the same as a qualifying team in a bracket. The team forfeiting or the team that has qualified will not count in the tiebreaker scenario when determining head to head, points scored or points allowed. In essence, a bracket with a qualifying or forfeiting team becomes a three team bracket!

17. Fan Seating

- A. Fans MUST sit behind their team when they are playing. However, after the contest, they must relinquish their position to the fans of the team scheduled to play.
- B. Fans may not sit behind someone else's team during a contest.

TEXAS 7ON7 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

- A. The tournament will be divided into three divisions: Division I (5A-6A; SPC-TAPPS Div 1), Division II (3AD1-4A; other privates), and Division III (1A-3AD2)
- B. Division I will divide into 16 pools of 4 teams.
- C. Division II will be divided into 8 pools of 4.
- D. Division III will be divided into 8 pools of 4.
- E. All divisions play a round-robin of pool games. (3 games each team)
- F. In Division I, the top two teams from each pool will be entered into a 32 team single elimination championship tournament. The remaining 32 teams will then be entered into a single elimination consolation tournament.
- G. In Division II and Division III all teams will play in a single elimination championship bracket within their own division.
- H. If there is a tie in pool play, head-to-head is the first tie breaker, total points scored is second, total points allowed will be third. After that, we will flip a coin! Once a winner has been determined, we will revert back to head-to-head to determine the other places. Note: in a 3-way tie, only the scores of games between teams in the tie will be counted. (See Tournament TieBreaker in official State Rules)
- I. A team removed from any state qualifying tournament for fighting will not be allowed to participate in the state tournament for that particular year.
- J. Any team leaving the state tournament causing forfeiture of a scheduled game, will result in said team being kept out of all state qualifying tournaments