

BAFA Flag Football rule changes 2024

Version 1, February 2024



This list contains all BAFA flag football rule changes adopted for 2024, including those made by IFAF in 2023.

1 Introduction

The International Federation of American Football has recently introduced a new set of rules for flag football. IFAF 2023 rules are to be used for all flag football games played in Britain from 1st March 2024.

2 Changes from 2021

Important changes compared to the 2021 version are:

- Flag 7 on 7 (big field 50 x 30 yd) added
- Field surface requirements added
- Jersey number 0 is now legal
- Team areas regulations to allow flexibility in the location introduced
- Pants and Flag specifications changed
- Glasses non-breakable redefined
- Diving definition improved
- Timeouts length, shortening and handling changed
- Illegal kick by runner, illegal run and illegal run play now carry LOD
- Illegal touching of own pass now applies to all passers not just QB
- Backward pass being batted forward by passing team as new foul
- Contact between runner and defender responsibility defined more precisely (with AR)
- Safety/Touchback enforcement changed
- Extension of penalties that can carry over on a try
- Summary of Penalties is restructured

3 British amendments to IFAF Rules

Additionally, the IFAF rules allow National Federations (such as BAFA) to make changes for their competitions. All games in BAFA-affiliated competitions shall be played with the following changes:

3.1 Down box, scoreboard and pylons (rule 1-1-1)

The use of a down box, scoreboard and pylons is very strongly recommended. However, they are not mandatory for British games.

3.2 Rosters & mixed-gender teams (rule 1-1-1)

There is no limit to the number of participants who may appear on a British roster. Competitions may allow the entry of mixed-gender teams.

3.3 The ball (rule 1-2-1)

Adult teams who wish to participate in IFAF-sanctioned competition are strongly advised to use leather balls when they are in possession, because these are the only

balls that will be allowed in IFAF games. However, they are not mandatory for British games. **In mixed adult competitions, youth-sized balls may be used.**

3.4 Mouthpiece (Rule 1-3-1-d)

For adult competition, a mouthpiece is strongly recommended. For all other competition it is mandatory.

3.5 Head coverings (Rule 1-3-2-b)

Players may wear an entirely soft head covering to protect their head from the elements. However, any head covering that has any stiff or rigid part is illegal equipment.

3.6 Game timing and number of time outs (Rules 3-2-1 and 3-3-2)

At their discretion, competitions may vary the duration of the game and the number of time outs.

4 Questions and feedback

Questions regarding the interpretation of the flag rules may be addressed by email to the Chair of the BAFA Rules Committee at rules@britishamericanfootball.org.

Note that both IFAF and BAFA are looking to improve the rules; both in the way in which the game is played, and editorially in the way the rules are expressed in writing. Suggestions in either of these regards are welcome, also to the above email address.

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