MOUNTAIN TOWN SHOWDOWN 2026

QUICK RULES & REF GUIDE

Based on NFL FLAG rules + tournament adaptations

Oct. 10, 2026 | Summit High School
5v5 | Rookie (2/3) | Junior (4/5)

1 GAME FORMAT

- **5v5 flag football**
- **Two 15-minute halves** (running clock)
- **3-minute halftime** (switch sides & possession)
- **1 one-minute timeout** per team, per half
- **Rock Paper Scissors** decides opening possession
- **25-second play clock**

2 FIELD, SCORING & DRIVE BASICS

- Offense starts at own **5-yard line**
- **4 downs** to cross midfield
  4 downs to score (once past midfield)
- **No-run zones** are 5 yards before midfield and 5 yards before the goal line
- **Touchdown = 6 points**
- **PAT:** 1 point from 5 yards, 2 points from 10 yards
- **Safety = 2 points**
- **Interceptions** may be returned
- **On 4th down** before midfield, offense may go for it or declare a punt; declared punt gives opponent the ball at its own 5

3 CORE GAMEPLAY (BOTH DIVISIONS)

- Running plays are allowed outside the no-run zones
- One forward pass per play, thrown from behind the line of scrimmage
- The player who receives the snap is the QB for that play and cannot run across the LOS
- After a legal handoff / backward pitch / lateral behind the LOS, the ball carrier may run and all defenders may cross the LOS
- 7-second pass clock applies to the snap receiver until a legal handoff / backward pitch / lateral
- No blocking or screening
- Ball is spotted where the ball is when the flag is pulled
- No live fumbles; ball is dead where it hits the ground
- Catch = one foot or other body part in bounds with possession
- Runner may spin or jump-cut, but no diving, jumping, or hurdling to advance
- Mouthguards required; jerseys tucked; flags visible and unobstructed

4 DIVISION NOTES

Rookie Adaptations (2nd/3rd Grade)

- 1 bad-snap redo per possession (no loss of down)
- No defensive QB rush before a legal handoff / backward pitch / lateral
- Refs may give extra teaching/help
- Focus on flow, learning, safety, and success

Junior Notes (4th/5th Grade)

- Same core rules as above
- Normal NFL FLAG rush rules apply
- Rushers start at least 7 yards off the LOS and rush immediately at the snap
- No snap redo

5 COMMON PENALTIES

OFFENSE

INFRACTION	YARDAGE	RESULT
False start / illegal substitution	-5 yards	Replay down
Delay of game	-5 yards	Replay down
Illegal forward pass	-5 yards	Loss of down
Illegal motion (more than one player moving)	-5 yards	Loss of down
Impeding the blitzer	-5 yards	Loss of down
Screening / blocking / charging	-10 yards	Loss of down
Flag guarding	-5 yards	Loss of down
Offensive pass interference / illegal contact	-10 yards	Loss of down
Unsportsmanlike conduct	-10 yards	Loss of down
Taunting	-5 yards	Loss of down

DEFENSE

INFRACTION	YARDAGE	RESULT
Offsides / illegal rush	+5 yards	Replay down
Roughing the passer	+5 yards	Automatic first down
Defensive pass interference	+10 yards	Automatic first down
Illegal flag pull (before catch)	+5 yards from spot	Replay down
Holding	Spot foul	Automatic first down
Stripping	+10 yards	Automatic first down
Unnecessary roughness / unsportsmanlike conduct	+10 yards	Automatic first down
Taunting	+5 yards	Automatic first down

Most penalties are enforced from the **line of scrimmage** unless noted as a spot foul.
Half-distance applies near the goal line. A half/game cannot end on an accepted defensive penalty.

6 REF / TOURNAMENT NOTES

- Keep the game moving and be consistent
- Prioritize safety and obvious advantages; don't hunt every minor technicality
- Only the head coach / captain should ask for rule clarification
- Pinnies and extra flags available if jersey colors are too similar
- Spectators should stay clear of team sidelines

LET THE PLAYERS PLAY, COACHES COACH, REFEREES REF, AND FAMILIES CHEER.