



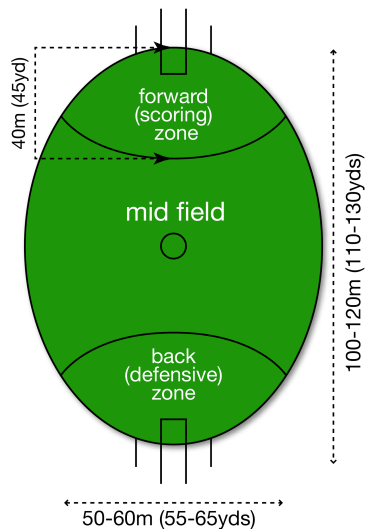
SUNS TAG FOOTY

RULES OF THE GAME

The Sacramento Suns Tag League is based on Ausball rules developed by Ausball Academy. It provides an opportunity for all Australian Football enthusiasts to participate in a game that has strong parallels with the traditional game. It is low contact and is not as physically demanding as the full game. It can be played by all ages and genders and, most importantly, has an emphasis on fun and safety. In the spirit of Australia's culture, a designation of "sheila" or "bloke" will be determined by the individual player at the time of registration.

The Field

- Oval shaped, but can be rectangular.
- 100-120 meters long x 50-75 meters wide.
- A 35 or 40-meter arc is marked at each end to indicate the area from which teams can score.
- Goal posts will be placed 7 yards (or 6.4 meters) apart.



Players

- 9 or 10 on-field players per team, as agreed upon by both team captains before the game.
- Minimum of 3 sheilas and 3 blokes.
 - **If less than 3 sheilas or blokes, the team may start with fewer. However, they will play down 1 person.
- Players who indicate their gender as non-binary will be grouped with the gender of their choice, as indicated in their registration form.
- If a team has less than 9 players they may recruit drop-in players by mutual agreement of the captains. A "drop-in" fee may apply for veteran drop-in players, as determined by the SAFC Board or League Management.

The Ball

The official football for Suns Tag games is a size 4 leather football. However, a size 4 synthetic football may be used if that is the agreed preference of both team captains.



Field Positions

- The 3 playing areas on the field defined by the scoring arcs include:
 - Offense (forward)
 - Midfield
 - Defense (backline)
- The game begins with 3 players—including at least 1 sheila and at least 1 bloke from each team—in each playing area.
- Players must be in their assigned area at the start of each period and after a goal has been scored.
- If a team is short players, the shortage will be in order from: the midfield, the forward, the defensive zones, or as agreed upon by umpires and both team captains.
- If 10 players from both teams are on the field, then there will be 4 midfielders, (ideally with an equal number of sheilas and blokes—2 and 2 per team), or as agreed upon by umpires and both team captains.
- Once the ball is in play the players can move anywhere on the field (i.e. no "offside" rule).

Substitutions

- Players may substitute at any time.
- The player leaving the field must exit near the centerline of the field along the boundary, indicated by 2 different color cones.
- The player waiting to enter the field must wait until the exiting player is completely off the field.
- If a center-field ball up is about to occur after a goal is scored or at the beginning of a period, all players entering the field must move to their assigned playing area as soon as possible (before the ball-up).
**Infractions against this rule will result in a free kick awarded to the opposing team's "ruck" at center field.

Start of the game

- The game starts with a "ball-up" (basketball style tip-off), where a player (designated ruckman) from each team stands on either side of the center cone, and the ball is thrown straight up into the air by the umpire.
- The ruckmen must be stationary but may move or jump from this position once the ball is tossed into the air by the umpire. However, players may not initiate contact with the other player nor "shepherd" (physically shield) the other player out of the drop zone of the ball-up.
- The umpire should choose similar players from each team, and where possible, choose different players at each ball-up, including sheilas. The umpire will typically alternate between sheilas and blokes every time there is a ball-up.
- The ruckmen attempt to tap or punch the ball toward a teammate, in any direction.
- The objective is to move the ball down the field to a player in a scoring position.



Length of the game

Sac Footy games are typically played in halves of 20 minutes, unless otherwise agreed upon by league managers, umpires, and team captains/coaches.

Possession of the Ball

Once a player gains possession of the ball, they are able to run a total of 30 meters in any direction with one bounce before reaching 15 meters, and then must either handball or kick the footy to a teammate or try to score.

Passing the Ball

- The ball may be passed in any direction between players with either a handpass or kick only.

- Throwing the ball is not allowed and is penalized with a free kick being awarded to the nearest player on the opposing team.

Marking the Ball

- A "mark" (free kick) is awarded to a player that catches a ball that is kicked and travels at least 15 meters to another player, on either team.
- It must be caught on the fly, that is, without touching the ground or being touched by another player on either team.

Drop Zone

- A player in the best position to mark a ball is considered to be in the "Drop Zone".
- Once a ball has been kicked, and can possibly be marked, the umpire will call "Drop Zone" and the color of the uniform of the player in the best position to mark the ball (e.g. "Drop Zone: Red"). Typically it will be the same color of the player who kicked the ball unless an opposing player is clearly established in a better position in or near the likely drop zone.
- Opposition players are able to compete for the ball in the air but cannot make any contact with the protected player in the drop zone.
**The drop zone call should be made *before* players begin to jump for the ball. If it was not called out early enough for players to react appropriately, then the umpire may either call "play on", or if some minor contact was equally made by both players, the umpire may stop play and initiate a "ball-up" between the two players involved in the marking contest.
- If any contact is made to the protected player in the drop zone, a free kick will be awarded to that player.
**However, if the "protected" player initiates unnecessary contact when the opposition player attempts to avoid contact, then the call may be reversed and a free kick would be awarded to the player who was infringed upon.

The Mark

- Once a ball has been marked by a player, signaled by the umpire blowing the whistle, one opposition player can stand on the "mark" where the ball was caught (as designated by the umpire, by either pointing to the mark on the ground and/or providing verbal instructions to the defender on the mark to move forward or backward).
- If the ball is marked (caught) by a defender or a free kick is awarded to the defending team between the goal line and the top of the goal square, the mark (and subsequently the opposition player on the mark) will be moved back "to the 9"...in line with the top of the goal square. This also applies if the mark

occurs away from the goal square, toward the “pocket” boundaries.

- The player with the ball would typically back up, in line with their team’s goal and the mark, to give themselves enough room to kick over the opposition player.
- The opposition player on the mark can move backward or sideways but cannot move forward (toward the kicker, or “across the mark”) until the ball is kicked or handpassed, or the player with the ball moves off the mark (e.g., deviates significantly from the invisible line of the mark), **and** the umpire calls “play on”.

******The defender on the mark *must wait until the umpire calls “play on”* even if the ball carrier appears to have already deviated from the line of the mark.

- If the player standing on the mark steps forward over the “mark” before “play on” is called by the umpire, then a 25 meter penalty will be awarded to the kicker (where the mark would be moved 25 meters toward the center of the goal at which the kicker wishes to kick).
- The same rules apply in the situation where a free kick is awarded to a player.
- If a penalty occurs *while* the football is being properly passed or kicked down field, then the mark will be paid “down field” if the destination of the passed ball is advantageous to the team in possession of the ball.

******For example, if a defender initiates accidental or excessive contact on the player with the ball while that player is kicking the ball, then the umpire will penalize the defender who initiated contact by awarding the mark to the nearest teammate “down field” where the ball landed or would have landed. However, if the kick or handpass only traveled a short distance, was significantly “smothered”, or traveled to a disadvantageous position, then the mark would return to the spot of the infraction.

Protected Zone

- All opposition players must move to a position at least 5 meters from the player with the ball and the player on the mark.
- If a mark has been awarded, only one defending player may stand “on the mark”. All other defenders must be at least 5 meters away from the mark, at least 5 meters away from the player with the ball, and 5 meters away from the line between the mark and the player with the ball. The only exception is if you are within 1 meter of an opposition player who is moving through the protected space of his/her teammate with the ball.
- No players, from either team, can cross the mark.

Turnovers

- A turnover is not penalized, therefore, if a player handpasses or kicks the ball and it hits the ground, it is “play on” and whoever gathers the ball next wins possession and the game continues.
- Any “lock ups” between two opposing players grabbing the ball at the same time will result in a “ball-up”.
- The ball must first be handled by a player who is in a standing position. Diving on a groundball to gain possession will result in a free kick to the opposing team.
- All disposals (kicks and handballs) must be made from two feet. Any disposals sitting, lying, or kneeling on the ground will result in a free kick to the opposing team.
- The ball cannot be intentionally kicked off the ground or in mid-air or else a free kick is awarded to the opposing team. Unintentional or incidental soccer kicks will be “play on”.
- If a penalty occurs and a free kick is awarded, the receiving team cannot play on to “advantage” if the ball is not in line with (and behind or “over”) the mark when a player takes possession of it. The player awarded the free kick must take possession of the ball and stand in line with (on or behind) the mark before disposing of the ball or playing on by running off line.

Out of Bounds

- If the ball goes out of the playing area or hits a point post, a free kick—*and it must be kicked*—is awarded against the team to last touch the ball.
- The following exceptions would warrant a “ball-up” situation instead of a free kick:
 - ****(a) If the umpire cannot determine who last touched the ball
 - ****(b) if a marking attempt was “spoiled” or the kick or handpass was “smothered”
 - ****(c) if the ball went out of bounds as the result of a *forced error* (contested situation in which players from both teams touched the ball in rapid succession).
- If the ball went out of bounds as the result of an “unforced error”, a free kick will be awarded to the opposing team
- The mark should be designated by the umpire as on the boundary line, or up to 5 meters within the field of play, in line with the mark, if there is not sufficient space for the kicker to safely kick the ball from outside the boundary (typically needs 5-10 meters of space outside the boundary).
- After the player has the ball and is standing in the appropriate position, after approximately 5 seconds, the umpire should give a 3 second warning. The ball must be kicked into the field of play within 3

seconds, or it will result in a free kick to the nearest opposition player at the same spot/mark.

**However, before the umpire gives the 3-second warning, if the ball carrier steps back in bounds before kicking or attempts to “play on” by running or hand passing back into the field of play, the umpire will either:

*(1) reset the player out of bounds for another kicking opportunity (only one do-over allowed per game for the entire team)

*(2) stop the play and award a free kick to the opposing team.

- If the ball goes out, off a defensive player, within the scoring arc, the player taking the free kick cannot score directly (from out of bounds).

Defense

- Tackling is not permitted, and will result in a free kick awarded against the player who initiated contact...and likely a warning or yellow/red card would be issued as well.
- If you tag (one-handed and should also call “tag”) a player immediately after taking possession of the ball, they must dispose of it within “2 steps or 2 seconds”. If they do not, the “tagger” will be awarded a free kick.
- A score made directly by a clearly tagged player will not count and the opposition will be awarded a free kick from the place the tag was made.
- You can block or intercept a handball or kick (only in flight), but you cannot knock or grab the ball out of someone’s hands or knock or grab the ball in mid-air as the opposing player is dropping the ball to the foot for a kick. This is a safety hazard. A free kick will be awarded to the kicker/ball carrier.
- In a marking contest you are allowed to prevent an opposing player from marking the ball by “spoiling” (punching or tapping) the ball without making any contact with the player in the protected “drop zone”.
- Aggressive or reckless play and/or any excessive contact—even accidental—with an opponent will be penalized and a free kick will be awarded to the player infringed upon.

Prior Opportunity

- If a player with the ball makes a conscious decision to try and run around an opponent and they are tagged by that player, this will result in a free kick being awarded to the player that made the tag.
- If a player, while standing still, consciously decides to *not* dispose of the ball when there is an obvious available option (and sufficient time to do so) and is then tagged while looking for a different option, a free kick will be awarded to the “tagger”.

Scoring

- A goal is scored by kicking the ball, in the air or along the ground, from within the scoring arc and between the two taller, inner posts, called the goal posts.
- A goal is worth 6 points.
- Only 1 point (known as a “behind”) is scored when:
 - The ball is touched (at or above the knee) by any player on the field before crossing the goal line.
 - The ball hits any part of the goal post or the umpire believes it would have hit the post if the post were taller.
 - The ball crosses the goal line between a goal post and a point/Behind post.
- If the ball hits either point post the ball is out of bounds and the nearest opposition player is awarded a free kick from the boundary next to the point post.
 - **NOTE: if the ball hitting the point post was the result of a contested “spoil” or “smother”, then the umpire would initiate a “ball-up” 5-10 meters in from the boundary.
- Any score does not count If the ball is kicked directly from *outside* the scoring arc *and is not touched by any other player*. A free kick is awarded to the nearest opposition player to the place from where the kick was made.
 - **This rule also applies when the ball is kicked from out of bounds.
- A player who uses his or her first opportunity to score will be awarded the points *even if tagged during the motion of disposing the ball*.
- If, upon receiving the ball, a player does not make an immediate attempt to score and has been tagged, the subsequent score will not count and a free kick will be paid to the tagger where the tag was made.
- After a goal is scored, play recommences in the center of the field with a ball up.
- If a point or “Behind” is scored, the defensive team returns the ball back into play from the goal square by kicking or handpassing the ball, or may decide to “play on” by running out of the goal square.
- An opposition player can stand on the mark, which is 10 meters from the top of the goal square.
- After about 5 seconds the umpire will give a 3 second warning to the kicker. After 3 seconds, instead of whistling, the umpire will call “Play on!”, which allows the defender standing on the mark to try to tag the ball carrier.
 - **If the kicker is tagged, this will result in a free kick to the tagger at the spot of the tag.

Poor Sportsmanship (Yellow & Red Cards)

- In the event a player behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner, such as the actions described below, the umpire has the right to determine an appropriate penalty:
 - Repeated and/or excessive contact in contests to win the ball or in the process of tagging players.
 - Any form of abuse or “back chat” to umpires, game officials (scorekeepers or goal umpires), opponents, or teammates.
- In the case that an umpire is confronted with any of the situations listed above they have four options:
 - Award a free kick to the opposing team.
 - If a free kick has already been given, award a 25-meter penalty, which results in the “mark” being moved 25-meters closer to goal or to the goal line if less than 25-meters away.
 - Present a yellow card to the infringing player... and as a result this player must leave the field immediately for a 10-minute period.

- If the infringement occurs within 10 minutes of half time the remaining time will be served in the 2nd half. The player must wait for the umpire's signal before he or she may return to the field. This player can be replaced.
- Present a red card to the infringing player and as a result this player must leave the field immediately and not return during the game. This player *cannot* be replaced.

If the incident is particularly severe, occurs late in the game, or there are additional infringements beyond the issue of the red card, then league management and the SAFC Board will review the incident and may apply further penalties, such as a suspension or banishment from the league per the established SAFC League Discipline Guidelines.

...and the rest of the rules are up to the Umpire (all decisions final)...Enjoy!!

