SKILL CARD

PULLING THE FLAG

LEVEL: BEGINNER

OBJECTIVE

Safely execute a flag pull to minimize incidental contact and provide a foundation for a transition to contact rugby or other flag sports.

VIEW VIDEO

COACHING CUES

CLOSE THE SPACE / FAST-SLOW-FAST / LEAD FOOT / SWOOP / REACH

Close the Space: The defender sprints forward to close the space between the defender and the ball carrier.

Fast-Slow-Fast:

- Fast: The defender closes space quickly.
- Slow: The defender slows their foot pattern to control the body and react to evasive steps from the ball carrier.
- Fast: The defender speeds up to pull the flag.

Lead Foot:

- The lead foot will react to evasive steps, cutting off the forward space of the ball carrier.
- Placing the lead foot toe-to-toe (while avoiding contact) with the ball carrier prior to the flag pull will slow and eliminate the ball carrier's available space for evasion.

Swoop: Swoop to a low, balanced athletic position before pulling the flag.

Reach:

- Execute a controlled reach for the near hip without lunging, staying balanced.
- Reach with both hands for the near flag.
- The shoulder and hip of the flag puller should be aligned with the near side of the ball carrier. This prepares the athlete for contact rugby later in life and keeps the head away from the ball carrier's body.

Hold the flag high and say "Flag"

CHECK AND CORRECT

1. Maintain position (inside, outside) during pursuit, preventing the ball carrier from cutting back and turning the defender's hips.
2. Make sure the flag puller is not placing their head across the ball carrier's body or reaching for the far hip.

FOOTWORK/MOVEMENTS

- React to evasion with the lead foot in a fast-slow-fast pattern.
- Prevent committing hips by keeping toes forward.

CONNECTED GAMES

Flag Fury • Just Score
Sharks and Minnows • Flag Rugby
Great Escape • 2v1 ; 3v2
Footwork

USA PE STANDARDS

S2.E3: Speed, Direction, Force, 2-5
S2.E5: Strategies & Tactics, 3-5
S4.E1: Personal Responsibility, K-5
S1.M11: Defensive Skills, 6-8