



## Big 5 Lineman Game

### **Finally a game for the men up front**

**Who:** High School Linemen and only linemen (offense and defense)

**What:** A competition providing linemen enjoyable and educational training with the reward of participating in games that enhances the fundamentals and position specific rules of each lineman position.

**When:** Typically during the off-season (Spring and Summer). However, it's a game that can also be used by High School and College Coaches for fundamental training and conditioning during the regular season.

**Why:** Since the implementation of 7on7 leagues, our #1 request from High School Football Coaches has been to establish a more relevant competition for Linemen.

By nature we are driven to compete, and when we are preparing for competition we are more motivated to “work”. The Big 5 game motivates linemen to hone their skills in the off-season. In 2004 NYFO began the “Lineman Challenge”, which is great for strength, agility, and movement for the Big Boys; but it isn't enough! The typical “lineman challenge” doesn't allow coaches to transition flipping tires, obstacle courses, farmers walk, etc, into fundamentals and position specific knowledge, especially when compared to 7on7 for the skill positions.

Since 2011, the NYFO allowed Linemen to participate in 7on7 leagues, which provided the “competition” and is great conditioning, but like the “linemen challenge” doesn't allow coaches to “TEACH” linemen responsibilities, fundamentals, and the “what and whys” associated with the position and play calling. The Big 5 Linemen game does just that!

Today's linemen must master “positioning” on their opponent and that begins with proper footwork, hand placement, escape moves, gap responsibility, and understanding the play from the backfield perspective. These are all focal points of the game.

**How:** The position specific rules & fundamentals, of the Big 5 game are consistent with regular 11-man tackle football. The only caveats are limited passing and ball running. Each player will rotate to a position called “The Keeper”. While at this position, he will have the opportunity to run, handoff, or throw the ball (Passes are limited). **See rules for details.**

**Why do we pass?**

- A) To allow each player to visualize and experience “the play” from the backfield, providing him a better understanding of the game, his position and the importance of playing through the whistle.
- B) To keep the defense honest. Unlike 7on7, the players must read and play run or pass.
- C) To add a little fun. Linemen are skilled athletes too. Everybody enjoys the opportunity to be in the spotlight.

**Offense Simulations:**

Like 11 man football, all 5 linemen are on the LOS at all times with an extra player in the backfield. The rules of play allow participants to: **Pass Block, Run Block, Block up to the “next level”** and execute **Pulls** and **Trap steps**.

**Defense Simulations:**

All 5 linemen are on the LOS at all times. The rules of play allow participants to: **Pass Rush** (by rule, linemen do NOT drop in pass coverage) and **Defend the run**.

**Practice Focals:**

- Run Block (read and hole specific)
- Pass Block
- Trap steps
- Stance and Start
- Maintaining Gap Integrity (Gap Sound)
- Shade techniques and gap responsibilities
- Reach blocking
- Fighting reach block
- Squeezing down
- Cardiovascular conditioning

**Safety:**

Our goal is to assist our HS programs to have better performing athletes and leaders that are fundamentally sound and SAFE. NYFO takes every step to assure safety with our participants during practice and game play.

**Required equipment:**

Mouthpieces

Head Gear

Lineman Gloves or hand pads.

**Big 5 participants are more knowledgeable about their position and the game of football. Because of that, they are more intense and become stronger, faster, and fundamentally sound which produces better leaders, and performers**

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## **RULES**

### **Big 5 Lineman Game**

#### **I: League Rules of Play for BIG 5 Lineman Game**

1. Coin Toss - Visiting team makes call. Winner has choice of offense or defense. Second half possession belongs to opposing team.
2. Five (5) defenders and Six (6) offensive players
3. Each possession starts on the 40 yard line – going in.
4. First downs are made by crossing the 25 yard line and the 10 yard line.
5. Four (4) downs to make a first down.
6. Running and 10 passes allowed
7. Possession changes after:
  - a) PAT attempt, b) failure to make a first down, or c) turnover.
8. Two-hand touch anywhere below the neck.
9. No Fumbles. Ball is dead if it touches the ground
10. A muffed snap is NOT a fumble/dead ball
11. Two (2) Coaches may be in Offensive Huddle. Defensive Coach must remain on sidelines
12. Tournament Rules: may vary slightly

#### **II. Terminology**

**“KEEPER”** is the offensive player that receives the snap from center

**JACK-** the substitute player who fills the void of the vacant position on the offensive line when the original player (starter) rotates to KEEPER.

**CHARGING:** the movement of the ball carrier directly at a defensive player who has established position on the field. This includes lowering the head, making contact with the defender with a shoulder, forearm, or the chest.

### **III. Eligibility:**

1. All players' legal guardians must agree to the online waiver form at [PLAYNYFO.com](http://PLAYNYFO.com) for their specific league before participating.
2. All players must be an official member of the National Youth Football Organization.

### **IV. Equipment:**

1. Mouthpieces are required for each player!
2. Soft-shell helmets or headgear is required for each player.
3. Padded Lineman gloves or hand-pads are required for all defensive players. (If the gloves don't fully cover the fingers, they must be taped as not to expose any skin)
4. Official NYFO jerseys must be worn during league play.
5. All players must be in team uniform!
6. Approved footballs are provided by each team
7. Players must wear shoes. Football cleats are encouraged; however cleats with exposed metal are not allowed and must be removed.
8. Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metals are not allowed.
9. Players must remove all watches, earrings and any other jewelry that the officials deem hazardous.
10. Players' jerseys must be tucked into the pants if they hang below the belt line.

## **V. Field:**

The field dimensions are 40 yards by 53.33 yards (*no less than 50 yards without League Commissioner approval*) with a 10-yard end zone. However, field size may vary based on field availability for each league.

Stepping on the boundary line is considered out of bounds.

## **VI. Rosters**

1. All players must be registered on the National [PlayNYFO.com](http://PlayNYFO.com) website
2. Teams must consist of at least six (6) players
3. Teams must start a game with a minimum of six (6) players. In the event of an injury, a team with insufficient substitute players may play with five (5) players on the field, but no fewer than five (5).

## **VII. Timing and Overtime**

1. Games consist of two (2) 25:00 minute halves. The clock runs continuous during both halves.
2. Halftime is five (5) minutes long.
3. Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 25 seconds to snap the ball. Teams will receive one warning before a delay-of-game penalty is enforced.
4. Each team has one 60-second time out per half. (Clock will continue to run). (1) additional time-out per overtime.
5. A “time-out” can not be used to end a game. Should the defense call a time-out that allows the official game clock to end. The offense can run one (1) final, untimed down.
6. Officials can stop the clock at their discretion.
7. In the event of an injury the clock will stop and then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
8. If the score is tied at the end of fifty (50) minutes, the game should be determined a tie. (However, some leagues may decide to institute an overtime period).
9. In tournament or playoff situations, an overtime (OT) Period will be used to determine a winner. OT format is as follows:

A) Overtime consists of 3 plays from 10 yard line. Each team has an attempt to score in each overtime period.

B) In the event of a 3rd overtime. The winning team will be determined by score or total yards gained on 3rd overtime period. Overtime periods are not timed.

## **VIII: Scoring**

### **Offense:**

1. Touchdown - 6 points
2. PAT - 1 point from 2 yard line “5 on 5 Tug of war” (Rope is evenly distributed perpendicular to the goal-line. The middle of the rope, marked with tape or a flag, is placed over the two (2) yard line. The offense is positioned in the end zone and the defense on the opposite end of the rope. If the offensive team pulls the flag over the goal line, it is rewarded 1 pt. if the defense pulls the flag over the 4-yard line. The extra point attempt is no good and no points are awarded.

### **Defense:**

1. Turnover on downs - 2 points
  2. Batted Down Pass- 1 point
- \*Official Score will be kept and reported by referee

## **IX: Coaches**

1. Coaches are expected to adhere to NYFO philosophies, coaching guidelines and codes of conduct.
2. Two (2) Offensive coaches allowed on the field behind huddle and out of the field of play, Defensive Coach must move to the sidelines before the snap of the ball

## **X: Live Ball/Dead Ball**

1. The ball is live at the snap of the ball and remains live until the official whistles the ball dead.
2. The official will indicate the neutral zone and line of scrimmage. It is an automatic dead ball foul if any player on defense or offense enters the neutral zone. In regard to the neutral zone, the official may give

both teams a “courtesy” neutral zone notification to allow their players to move back behind the line of scrimmage.

3. A player who gains possession in the air is considered in bounds as long as one foot comes down in the field of play.
4. The defense may not mimic the offensive team signals, by trying to confuse the offensive players, while the quarterback is calling out signals to start the play. This will result in an unsportsmanlike penalty.
5. Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
6. Any official can whistle the play dead.
7. Play is ruled “dead” when:
  - a. The ball hits the ground.
  - b. The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
  - c. A touchdown or PAT is scored.
  - d. The ball carrier’s knee or arm hits the ground.
  - e. Inadvertent whistle

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is spotted where the ball carrier’s feet were at the time of the fumble.

8. In the case of an inadvertent whistle, the offense has two options:
  - a. Take the ball where it was when the whistle blew and the down is consumed.
  - b. Replay the down from the original line of scrimmage.
9. A team is allowed to use a time out to question an official’s rule interpretation. If the official’s ruling is correct, the team will be charged a time out. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the time out will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.

## **XI: Running**

1. All players are eligible to run the ball
2. The ball is spotted where the ball is when the runner is tagged.
3. The KEEPER can directly run with the ball or transfer to any other player
4. “Center Sneak” play – The ball must completely leave the center’s hands on the snap and he/she must step backwards off the line of

scrimmage in order to receive a direct handoff from the QB before advancing the ball.

5. A player who takes a handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.

6. Runners may not leave their feet to advance the ball. (No diving, leaping, jumping, or charging)

7. Spinning is allowed, but players may not leave their feet to avoid a tag. Lateral moves to the left or right are permitted.

8. Runners may leave their feet if there is a clear indication that he/she has done so to avoid collision with another player without a penalty enforced.

9. Offensive players must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball carrier.

## **XII: Passing**

1. Only ten (10) passes allowed per game. Referee will keep tally.

2. All players are eligible to receive a pass

3. All passes must be from behind the line of scrimmage.

## **XIII: Receiving**

1. All players are eligible to receive passes (including the KEEPER, if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).

2. Only one player is allowed in motion at a time. All motion must be parallel to the line of scrimmage and no motion is permitted towards the line of scrimmage.

3. A player must have a least one foot inbounds when making a reception.

4. In the case of simultaneous possession by both an offensive and defensive player, possession is awarded to the offense.

## **XIV: Rushing the Passer**

1. All players are eligible to rush the KEEPER

2. "Skunk Rule"- Once the score is 25 points , there is no "rushing". The defense must play from the line of scrimmage. Once the ball has been handed off the defense may rush.

3. A sack occurs if the KEEPER is tagged behind the line of scrimmage. (The ball is placed where the KEEPER's feet are when he

is tagged.) Unless he is not beyond the originally 40 yard line. No (yardage) penalties are assessed beyond the 40 yard line.

## **XV: Formations**

1. All **Offensive Formations** must have five (5) players on the line of scrimmage: (Left Tackle, Left Guard, Center, Right Guard, and Right Tackle) with one (1) player referred to as “KEEPER” who lines up anywhere behind the Center and receives a snap to begin each play

A) Each of the five (5) linemen are eligible to receive a pass (forward, lateral, shovel, handoff, or pitch (including all legal forms of transferring the ball from “keeper” to the “ball carrier”).

B) Each of the five (5) (starting) linemen must take a turn at the “KEEPER” position

1) When a player is serving as the “KEEPER” he can be replaced by any player and the substitute referred to as “THE JACK” will fill the void of the vacant position on the line.

2) The “KEEPER” must rotate out each possession until all five (5) players have served. (No player can play KEEPER for a second time until 5 players have played “KEEPER”

C) One player at a time may go in motion 1-yard behind and parallel to the line of scrimmage.

D) No motion is allowed towards the line of scrimmage.

E) Offensive players must come to a complete stop for one second before the ball is snapped unless he/she is the only player in motion.

F) Movement by a player who is set or a player who runs toward the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.

G) The center must snap the ball with a rapid and continuous motion to a player in the backfield, and the ball must completely leave his/her hands. The snap must be between his/her legs.

2. All **Defensive Formations** must have all five (5) players on the line of scrimmage

A) At no time can a defensive player set up as a linebacker or defensive back or any manner that positions him/her off the line of scrimmage

B) Defensive players can line up in any “Technique”, Shade, or gap within the parameters of that position.

1) “Nose-guard” or middle lineman can line up from inside shoulder (1 technique) of one offensive guard to the inside shoulder of the

opposite offensive guard. At no time can he line up as a Head up (2 or 3 technique over either offensive Guards

2) “Tackles” inside shade on center to inside shoulder of offensive tackle

3) “Ends” Outside shoulder of offensive guard to outside of offensive tackle 3-9 technique

C) Interior Defensive linemen must play from 3 point stance.

## **XVI: Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

1. If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of intentional tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player will be ejected from the game. The decision is made at the referee’s discretion. No appeals will be considered. **FOUL PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!**

2. Offensive or confrontational language is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player or players will be ejected from the game.

3. Players may not physically or verbally abuse any opponent, coach or official.

4. Ball carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position.

5. Defenders are not allowed to run through the ball carrier when making a tag.

6. Fans must also adhere to good sportsmanship, as well:

7. Fans are required to keep fields safe and kids friendly: Keep younger kids and equipment such as coolers, chairs and tents a minimum of 10 yards off the field in the end zone area.

## **XVII. Penalties**

### **i. General**

1. The referee will call all penalties.

2. Referees determine incidental contact that may result from normal run of play.

3. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage, except as noted. (spot fouls)

4. Only the team captain or head coach may ask the referee questions about rule clarification and interpretations. Players may not question judgment calls.
5. Games may not end on a defensive penalty, unless the offense declines it.
6. Penalties are assessed live ball then dead ball. Live ball penalties must be assessed before play is considered complete.
7. Penalties will be assessed half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal.

## **ii. Defensive Penalties**

Offside- + 5 yards from line of scrimmage

Roughing the Passer- + 10 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down

Taunting- + 10 yards from line of scrimmage & Automatic First Down

Defensive Pass Interference- SPOT FOUL, Automatic First Down

Holding- + 5 yards

Defensive Unnecessary Roughness/Personal Foul- +5 yards & Automatic First Down

## **iii. Offensive Penalties**

Offsides/False Start/ Illegal Procedure - 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down

Offensive Pass Interference- 5 yards and Loss of Down

Illegal Motion (More than one person moving) - 5 yards from line of scrimmage & Loss of Down

Delay of Game- Loss of Down

Charging- SPOT FOUL, -10 yards & Loss of Down

Offensive Unnecessary Roughness- SPOT FOUL, -5 yards & Loss of Down

\* If Defensive holding occurs on the same play as a sack, the defense will be penalized and the sack is void.

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