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# All you bone-crunchers, beware: intramural football has new rules

Amber and rouge leaves desperately clinging to near naked branches, hot, slow and muggy afternoons and a refreshing dampness and nip to the morning air — these add up to fall.

And fall means football. And football means bone-crunching body blocks, full speed collisions and numerous aches, pains and bruises, right?

Not any longer, at least not in the University's recreation and intramural football program, says RIM's director, Karla Rice.

Beginning this fall, the intramural league is adopting the rules of the National Flag Football League, she says, and those rules penalize contact.

The reasons for the change are twofold: reduce the possibility of injury, and help make flag football a lifetime sport, says Rice and intramural assistant Bob Moss.

Former high school football players have used the league as a means to continue physical contact activities, says Moss. Consequently, a program that was designed to provide recreation and promote involvement has produced injuries.

"We're trying to eliminate any type of roughhouse," says Moss.

More and more city leagues, such as in Eugene, and colleges across the country are switching to the same rules so a person can make flag football a lifetime sport.



Emerald photo

University intramural flag football this fall will be more flash and dash than crash and bash.

In fact, so many teams are adopting the NFFL rules, Rice refers to the switch as part of a national trend.

Where leagues have changed, there has been a "noticeable decline in injuries," she says.

Something else designed to reduce injuries will also begin this fall. Athletic trainers will be on duty before and during events that are likely to produce injury.

Students will be able to receive such attention as getting ankles taped before games and having bumps and twists attended to at the field.

Another change in football being considered by RIM is scheduling some games on Saturday afternoons. However, Rice is quick to point out that no games would conflict with University home football games at Autzen Stadium.

The reason for adding games on Saturdays is that the fall weather shortens daylight and dampens fields, thereby shortening the football season, she says. The extra day would provide extra games.

One other change will affect all programs in the future. RIM, which has 20 events on tap for fall term, plans to make manager's meetings mandatory this year. No team will be scheduled that has not sent a representative to the manager's meeting, according to Rice.

This change has been made to improve communication between the RIM office and the teams, she says, adding that it's important to stress the communication this year because of the changes and new rules.

There is a 'loophole,' though, for those teams that miss the manager's meeting. A second meeting will be held, but those people missing the first meeting miss the first game, says Moss.

A final difference in activities offered this fall is the amount of racquet events available. Because of the tremendous positive student response, RIM will double the amount of tournaments it sponsors each term in those areas, according to Rice.

Despite RIM's efforts, the pair admit one aspect of participating in intramurals has not changed. That is the difficulty of an individual getting involved in a team sport, especially newcomers.

Rice and Moss offer no concrete advice for people new on campus, other than to be aggressive, outgoing and to take the initiative to find a team that needs players.

Moss does suggest an alternative, though.

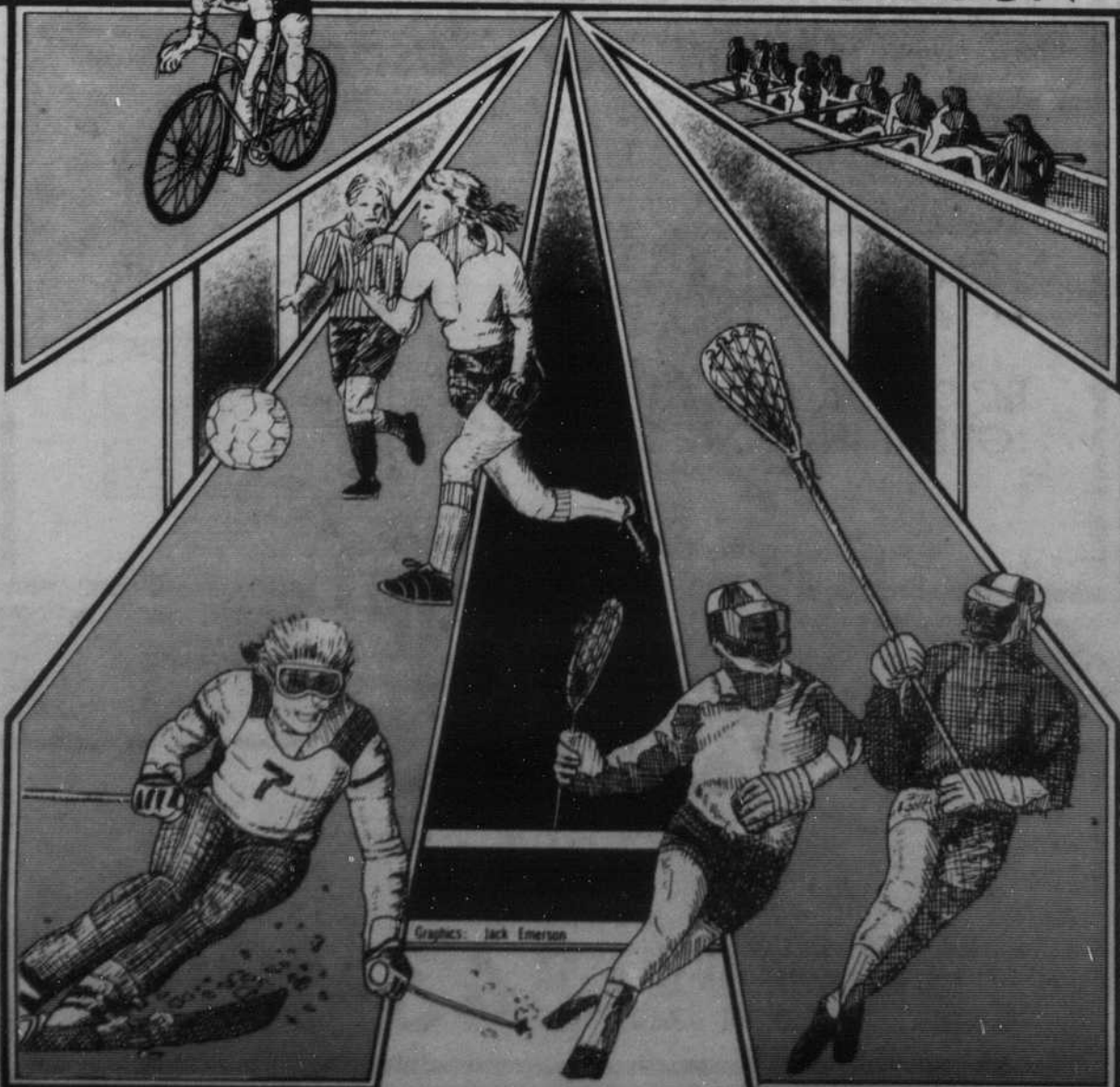
"We're definitely looking for some good officials," he says with a broad smile.

By Jim Moore

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