

A Study on the Current Development and Promotion Path of Flag football in Mongolia

Chenhuize Gao^{1,2}, Chenmengze Gao^{1,2} and Mai Qi^{1,3,*}

¹Graduate University of Mongolia, Mongolia

²College of Sports Science and Technology, Guangzhou College of Applied Science and Technology, Zhaoqing, Guangdong, China

³Xinjiang College of Science & Technology Department of Physical Education and Research, Xinjiang, China

Email: 1601012979@qq.com

How to cite this paper: Gao, C. H. Z., Gao, C. M. Z., & Qi, M. (2025). A Study on the Current Development and Promotion Path of Flag football in Mongolia. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 1(1), 37–46. Print ISSN: 3079-5257; Online ISSN: 3079-5265.

<https://doi.org/10.63313/perd.9005>

Published: 2025-12-10

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and Erytis Publishing Limited.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Abstract

With the development of global sports diversification, flag football, a non-contact team sport combining competitiveness, fun, and safety, has gradually attracted attention in Mongolia and been introduced into some schools and communities. However, flag football in Mongolia is still in its early stage, facing challenges such as a shortage of professional talent, inadequate venues and equipment, an under-developed competition system, low social awareness, and limited policy support. This study analyzes the current development status of flag football in Mongolia and proposes a systematic promotion path, covering aspects such as talent cultivation, policy support, campus promotion, improvement of venues and equipment, competition organization, and international exchange. The study shows that by establishing a sound management system, strengthening professional training, raising public awareness, standardizing competitions, and promoting international cooperation, youth participation and competitive levels can be enhanced, supporting the sustainable development of flag football in Mongolia and providing valuable reference for the promotion of emerging sports in similar countries and regions.

Keywords

Flag football; Mongolia; Development status; Promotion path

1. Introduction

With the deepening trend of global sports diversification, emerging sports are gradually increasing their proportion in the sports systems of various countries, becoming an important force in promoting national fitness and school sports reform. Flag football, as a non-contact team sport that combines competitiveness, fun, and safety, has developed rapidly internationally and has been incorporated into the school curriculum and youth physical training systems of many countries. In recent years, driven by education modernization and sports internationalization, Mongolia has gradually begun to pay attention to this emerging sport with low barriers to entry and high participation, creating a policy and social environment foundation for its introduc-

tion and promotion. However, Mongolia is still in the initial stage of developing flag football, lacking systematic research, and its current development status and future direction urgently need further analysis and discussion.

In this context, research on flag football in Mongolia not only helps to clarify its current development conditions and main difficulties, but also provides scientific basis and practical reference for its future promotion. Especially given the prominent issues of a lack of talent training systems, insufficient facilities and equipment, and limited social awareness, there is an urgent need to propose operational optimization paths from aspects such as policy support, school promotion, professional training, event organization, and international cooperation to promote the sustainable development of this sport in Mongolia. By developing a systematic promotion strategy, not only can flag football be popularized among Mongolian youth, but it can also contribute to the diversification of the country's sports structure and the modernization of sports education. Therefore, exploring its current development status and promotion path has significant theoretical and practical value.

2. Current Status of Flag football Development in Mongolia

2.1. Introduction of the rugby

Mongolia introduced Flag football relatively early and established a national men's team, enjoying a good grassroots foundation and training atmosphere.

Currently, flag football in Mongolia is mainly concentrated at the community level and in international schools, primarily through extracurricular training camps and short-term introductory courses. However, limited by teacher shortages, an incomplete curriculum system, and limited promotion channels, the sport remains in an exploratory development stage, with a small scope of promotion and a relatively concentrated participation group. Overall, while the introduction of flag football in Mongolia has begun, a systematic and formalized development model has not yet been formed, requiring further strengthening in policy support, teacher training, and school promotion.

2.2. Organization and Management Status

Mongolia has not yet established a complete flag football management system, and its organizational structure is still in the initial stages of development. MAFA, short for Mongolian America Flag Football Association, was founded in 2009. The Mongolian national flag football team is scheduled for formation in 2025, but it has not yet joined the IFAF (International Federation of American Flag Football). The Ulaanbaatar Warriors men's national flag football team was established in 2024, and the Khatan Warriors women's national flag football team was established in 2025. Currently, there are over 200 athletes from various professional backgrounds. An annual Independence Bowl tournament is held in Ulaanbaatar, with six clubs competing. The

champion will then participate in the PRO BOWL tournament to face the Ulaanbaatar Warriors men's national flag football team. One-on-one tournaments are held monthly during the summer. Funding for the team currently comes primarily from donations, with some sponsorship from local companies. There is a significant lack of dedicated funding and a clear development plan. Due to the lack of a unified management body, Mongolia has not yet standardized its rules, referee training, and coach certification, resulting in significant differences in teaching and training methods among various organizations and a fragmented overall development.

At the management level, because the sports authorities have not yet included flag football in their key development projects, there is limited policy guidance, resource allocation, and supervision, making the sport's development rely heavily on grassroots efforts. While this spontaneous approach provided initial impetus for the sport's introduction, in the long run, the lack of an officially supported management system hinders its large-scale and standardized development. To increase the popularity of flag football in Mongolia, it is crucial to establish a well-organized and standardized management body and gradually develop a systematic organizational structure.

2.3. Venue and Equipment Conditions

Currently, Mongolia has a certain foundation in the construction of flag football fields, but overall conditions remain relatively limited. Because flag football has relatively flexible field requirements, open spaces such as school football fields and multi-purpose sports fields can be used for marking, thus some urban schools possess the basic conditions for running the sport. However, sports facilities in many parts of Mongolia are outdated, school playgrounds are poorly maintained, and field utilization is low, which to some extent affects daily teaching and training of flag football. Furthermore, significant differences in sports field conditions between schools make it difficult to achieve balanced promotion of the sport.

Regarding equipment, Mongolia lacks a systematic supply channel for flag football equipment. The flag belts, marker barrels, and specially made football balls required for teaching mainly rely on external purchases or donations. Some schools and clubs, due to insufficient funding, cannot afford standardized training equipment and can only use simple substitutes, affecting training quality and the player experience. In addition, the lack of local equipment manufacturers makes promotion costs high, hindering widespread adoption. Overall, while the availability of playing fields is relatively high, the lack of professional equipment and the uneven quality of sports facilities remain significant factors limiting the further development of flag football in Mongolia.

2.4. Participants and Social Awareness

Currently, the main participants in Mongolian flag football are urban youth, particu-

lary university students, international school students, and some members of secondary school sports clubs in Ulaanbaatar. Due to the relatively complete playing fields in schools and the promotion by foreign physical education teachers, students are the primary group that first came into contact with and participated in the sport. In addition, some young sports enthusiasts who love emerging sports also participate in flag football through clubs or weekend training camps, but the overall scope of participation is relatively limited, and a large-scale, sustained participation base has not yet been formed.

Regarding social awareness, although flag football is suitable for promotion due to its high safety, simple rules, and high entertainment value, public understanding of the sport in Mongolia remains insufficient. Most people are not clear about the difference between traditional football and flag football, generally mistakenly believing that it is more difficult and highly competitive, leading to a skewed perception of the sport. Limited by limited publicity channels and promotional activities, flag football in Mongolia remains in its early stages of social influence, lacking widespread exposure and awareness. This lack of understanding not only reduces public participation but also hinders the level of attention given to the sport by schools and sports departments. To expand participation in the future, it is necessary to strengthen public education and awareness campaigns to improve the public's understanding of the characteristics and advantages of flag football.

2.5. Existing Problems

(1) Shortage of Professional Talent

Mongolia suffers from a severe shortage of professional talent in flag football, particularly in coaches and referees, who lack long-term systematic training. While some schools rely on foreign teachers or short-term trained volunteers for courses, the number of these personnel is limited and insufficient to cover schools and organizations nationwide. Furthermore, local physical education teachers lack sufficient professional knowledge of flag football's teaching philosophy, tactical organization, and training methods, resulting in a lack of scientific rigor and coherence in the teaching process. This talent gap not only restricts the professional development of the sport but also affects the development of youth teams and the level of competition organization, making it difficult for the project to form a sustainable long-term mechanism.

(2) Insufficient Funding

The promotion of flag football in Mongolia lacks stable financial support. Schools and organizations have limited investment in equipment procurement, field maintenance, training camp organization, and competition hosting, with many activities relying on self-raised funds from individuals or volunteers. Because the project has not yet been included in the national key sports support program, there is a lack of dedicated funding, resulting in short promotional periods and small scales. Insufficient funding not only limits equipment upgrades and venue renovations but also affects the in-

roduction of professional coaches, the frequency of student training, and the level of event organization, thus restricting the speed and breadth of the sport's popularization among young people.

Lack of a Competition System Mongolia has not yet established a systematic flag football competition system. Currently, there are only sporadic intra-school or club friendly matches, lacking support from regional, national, and tiered leagues. The limited number, low level, and lack of standardization of competitions result in students and young people lacking sustained training goals and competitive motivation, and also prevent the formation of an effective competitive evaluation system. The lack of a competition system not only affects the improvement of the sport's competitive level but also limits public and media attention and social awareness of the sport, while hindering the cultivation and selection of young flag football talent teams.

(4) Insufficient Social Awareness

Despite the advantages of flag football, such as high safety, low barriers to entry, and high entertainment value, awareness of this sport in Mongolian society is still in its early stages. Most of the public lacks sufficient understanding of the rules, characteristics, and differences between flag football and traditional football. Some parents and schools even worry about the risks or consider it "too unfamiliar." Limited media coverage and insufficient experiential activities result in low exposure and acceptance of the sport at the social level, leading to insufficient motivation for youth and family participation. This lack of awareness directly restricts the popularization and promotion of the sport and also affects policy support and the investment of social resources.

(5) Limited Government Policy Support

Flag football has not yet been included in Mongolia's official sports development plan, lacking systematic policy guidance and specific support. The sports authorities do not attach sufficient importance to the sport, resulting in schools and social organizations lacking clear development directions and reliable resource support. The lack of policy support not only affects funding, teacher training, and event organization but also forces promotional activities to rely on spontaneous grassroots efforts, making it difficult to form a nationwide promotion network and standardized management mechanism, thus restricting the long-term sustainable development of the sport and the increase in youth participation. In conclusion, the development of flag football in Mongolia still faces multiple constraints. Insufficient professional talent, limited funding, a lack of a comprehensive competition system, insufficient public awareness, and inadequate government policy support have resulted in a weak overall foundation for the sport's development and a fragmented and unsystematic promotion model. These problems interact to form a complex bottleneck hindering the widespread adoption of flag football in Mongolian schools and society. To achieve the long-term sustainable development of the sport, it is essential to address multiple aspects simultaneously, including talent cultivation, financial support, competition

organization, social promotion, and policy guidance, and to formulate a scientific and reasonable promotion strategy to lay a solid foundation for the healthy development of flag football in Mongolia.

3. Optimization Path for Promoting Flag football in Mongolia

3.1. Strengthening Policy Support and Institutional Development

The promotion of flag football in Mongolia requires a foundation of clear policy support and institutional guarantees. Currently, the sport is not included in the national sports development plan, lacks dedicated funding, promotion targets, and official guidance documents, resulting in a lack of clear direction for schools and social organizations in its promotion. Therefore, it is recommended that sports authorities include flag football in the pilot program for school sports, formulate a medium- and long-term development plan, and clarify the goals for youth promotion, coach training, and the timetable for the construction of the competition system. Furthermore, a special support fund could be established for equipment procurement, venue renovation, coach training, and competition organization, providing institutional guarantees for the sport's promotion in schools and communities.

Regarding institutional development, the project management system and standards should be improved. This includes formulating unified competition rules, referee standards, and a coach training system, so that schools and organizations have clear guidelines to follow in teaching and training. Simultaneously, a project evaluation and supervision mechanism should be established to regularly check and provide feedback on school promotion, participation, and competition organization, ensuring the sustainability and scientific nature of the promotion work. Driven by both policy guidance and institutional guarantees, the promotion of Mongolian flag football can create a stable development environment, laying a solid foundation for youth participation and large-scale popularization.

3.2. Improving Coach and Teacher Training Mechanisms

The development of Mongolian flag football relies heavily on professional talent. Currently, local coaches and physical education teachers lack experience in flag football teaching, training methods, and event organization, hindering the depth and breadth of the sport's promotion. Therefore, a systematic coach training mechanism should be established, including basic training, advanced training, and regular assessments, enabling teachers to master scientific teaching methods, tactical guidance, and safety knowledge. Simultaneously, the International Flag football Federation or experienced foreign coaches can be invited to participate in training, introducing advanced concepts and training methods to improve the professional level of local teachers and provide high-quality teaching support for youth development.

In addition to teacher training mechanisms, attention should also be paid to the con-

tinuous development and incentive mechanisms for school physical education teachers. By offering certification courses, establishing training subsidies and incentive policies, more teachers can be encouraged to participate in flag football teaching and training, and training results should be incorporated into the professional evaluation system to form a stable talent pool. In addition, regional or national coach exchange platforms can be established to promote experience sharing and skills improvement, enabling teachers and coaches to continuously update teaching concepts and optimize training programs, thereby improving the quality and participation of flag football in Mongolian schools and communities.

3.3. Establishing a Campus Promotion System

At the basic education level, schools should incorporate flag football into elective physical education courses or extracurricular interest courses. Through systematic teaching, students should be guided to understand the rules of the sport, master basic skills, and cultivate teamwork and competitive interest. Interest courses should incorporate gamification and tiered training models, allowing younger students to gradually become familiar with the sport in a safe and relaxed environment, forming a long-term participation habit. Simultaneously, schools can regularly organize small-class competitions or intra-school demonstrations to stimulate student enthusiasm, increase the visibility and awareness of the sport on campus, and lay the foundation for the project's future development.

At the higher education level, flag football clubs can be established to provide systematic training and extracurricular competition opportunities, promoting deeper student participation. Clubs can regularly organize intra-school training, teaching demonstrations, and friendly matches, while establishing exchange mechanisms with other universities to gradually form a regional campus league. Through inter-school competitions and league activities, not only can students' competitive level be improved, but the project's exposure and social influence can also be increased. Establishing a systematic campus promotion system helps to form a continuous development chain from basic education to higher education, making the popularization of flag football among Mongolian youth more stable and sustainable.

3.4. Improving Equipment and Field Conditions

The development of flag football relies heavily on adequate equipment and field support. First, the standardization and safety of equipment should be improved. Schools, clubs, and training bases should be equipped with flag football equipment, protective gear, and training aids that meet international standards, such as the iconic flag, football ball, and training markers. These should be regularly maintained and updated to ensure athletes can train and compete safely. Simultaneously, corporate sponsorship or government investment can be encouraged to reduce equipment costs for youth and grassroots clubs, thereby increasing participation rates.

Second, field construction and optimization are crucial for promoting the popularization of flag football. Schools and communities should establish dedicated or semi-dedicated fields based on their actual conditions, ensuring the fields are flat, well-drained, and meet the spatial requirements for matches and training. On existing fields, functionality can be improved by marking lines, adding protective netting, or providing portable goals. At the same time, indoor training spaces should be rationally planned, especially during winter or inclement weather, to provide continuous training support for youth and ensure year-round participation in the sport. Finally, a scientific management and sharing mechanism for equipment and fields should be emphasized. By establishing a public equipment warehouse and a venue reservation system, resource utilization efficiency can be improved, and idleness and waste can be avoided. Simultaneously, equipment usage training can be conducted to ensure athletes and coaches master the correct usage methods, extending equipment lifespan and ensuring safety. Through comprehensive measures of equipment standardization, venue optimization, and standardized management, a solid foundation can be laid for the healthy development of flag football, promoting simultaneous improvement in sporting levels and participation scale.

3.5. Conducting Competitions and Promotional Activities

(1) Regularly Holding the National Youth Flag football Invitational Tournament

Regularly holding the National Youth Flag football Invitational Tournament can not only improve the athletes' competitive level, but also help to improve the competition system and standardize management. By inviting youth teams from different regions to participate, a stable exchange platform can be formed, allowing athletes to accumulate experience in actual combat and enhance their teamwork ability and tactical awareness. At the same time, the holding of the competition can also attract coaches, referees, parents and other related groups to participate, thereby promoting the professional talent reserve and training system construction of flag football.

(2) Promoting through Social Media, Sports Festivals, and Community Activities

To improve the social awareness of flag football, social media platforms can be fully utilized for promotion, such as publishing match highlights, training anecdotes, athlete stories, etc., to form online interaction and dissemination effects. At the same time, flag football demonstrations and interactive experience sessions can be added to school sports festivals, community sports meets and other activities, allowing the public to intuitively experience the fun and competitiveness of this sport. Through a combination of online and offline promotion, the mass base of flag football can be gradually expanded, forming a good public opinion atmosphere.

(3) Incorporating experiential elements into festival activities to enhance public awareness and participation. Integrating flag football into various festival activities, such as youth sports festivals, national fitness days, and community cultural festivals, not only increases the fun of the activities but also allows more young people and

families to participate in the sport. Setting up short-term introductory courses, fun competitions, or interactive games can lower the entry barrier, allowing beginners to quickly grasp the basic rules and stimulate their interest in participation. In the long term, this experiential promotion helps cultivate young people's sustained interest in flag football, laying a solid foundation for the popularization and development of the sport.

3.6. Promoting International Cooperation and Exchange

Promoting international cooperation and exchange is an important way to improve the development level of flag football. First, connections can be established with the International football Federation and youth football associations in other countries to conduct joint training and friendly matches, allowing athletes and coaches to learn advanced training methods and management experience. Second, outstanding foreign coaches and referees can be introduced, and through short-term or long-term exchanges and guidance, the professional level of local coaches can be improved, and the refereeing standards for matches can be standardized. Meanwhile, organizing outstanding young domestic athletes to participate in overseas exchanges and competitions not only improves their competitive level but also broadens their horizons and enhances their international communication skills.

In terms of cultural exchange, hosting international flag football summer camps, training camps, or seminars allows domestic and international athletes, coaches, and referees to share experiences and training insights, promoting mutual learning in sports culture. Furthermore, cooperation with international media can promote events and activities overseas, enhancing the international profile of Chinese flag football. Through institutionalized and regular international cooperation and exchanges, not only can the sport's level be improved, but advanced concepts, technologies, and management experience can also be brought to the development of domestic flag football, achieving sustainable development.

4. Conclusion

Although flag football has been initially introduced in some schools and clubs in Mongolia, it is still in its early stages of development, facing multiple constraints such as a shortage of professional personnel, limited equipment and facilities, a lack of a competition system, low public awareness, and insufficient policy support. To achieve the sustainable development of this sport, a comprehensive approach is needed, encompassing policy support, talent cultivation, school promotion, equipment and facility improvement, competition development, and international exchange, to form a systematic and standardized promotion path. By establishing a sound management system, strengthening professional training, raising public awareness, holding regular competitions, and conducting international cooperation, not only can youth participation and competitive levels be improved, but the diversi-

fication of Mongolia's sports structure and the modernization of education can also be promoted, laying a solid foundation for the long-term development of flag football in the country. Furthermore, it can provide valuable experience for the promotion of emerging sports in similar countries and regions.

References

- [1] Huang, R. (2025). Research on the promotion path of college flag football with competition as the core. *Sports Goods and Technology*, (9).
- [2] Liu, G., & Xu, Y. (2025). The development value of flag football after its inclusion in the Olympics: Correlation, process and development path. *Sports Vision*, (9).
- [3] Tian, J. (2024). Theoretical research on the promotion of physical and mental development of youth by campus flag football. In *Proceedings of the Conference on the Inheritance and Development of Sports Culture* (August 2024).
- [4] Tang, R., & Zhong, Y. (2024). High-quality development strategy of youth flag football under the perspective of sports and education integration: Based on SWOT analysis. In *Proceedings of the 5th National Fitness Science Conference - Special Report (III)*(November 2024).
- [5] Han, Y., Gao, F., & Wang, Q. (2024). Research on countermeasures for popularizing and promoting flag football in primary and secondary schools in China. In *Proceedings of the Academic Symposium on School Sports Work in Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei* (February 2024).