

What are the rules?

Mason Dixon Indoor Football League is not directly affiliated with any Maryland State League (i.e. AAYFA, RFL, MMYFCL, SECFL etc.).

The Field

Indoor football games will be played at one of several indoor facilities. The surface is approximately 165 feet long by 80 feet wide.

Equipment of Players

All players participating in this league, which is a tackle football program, must be properly equipped and said equipment shall consist of, but not be limited to the following:

- Football pants, including knee pads, thigh pads, hip pads, tailbone pad and athletic cup (a football girdle may be used instead of hip pads).
- Football shoulder pads.
- Helmet with face guard (N.O.C.S.A.E. approved, inspected when necessary). No colored visors, only clear visors are acceptable.
- Jersey (no two jerseys with the same number sequence shall be worn by the same team).
- Mouthpiece must be attached to the helmets face guard (colored only).
- Tennis shoes or molded rubber sole turf shoes only. No metal cleats (including screw-ins!)

Player Requirements:

Medical Examinations: No child shall participate in the program without obtaining a written certificate of health from a duly qualified examining physician. The exam must have occurred within twelve (12) months of March 11, 2015. Each team's organization is responsible for ensuring each child playing under their organization's name has had a physical conducted by licensed doctor; Mason Dixon Indoor Football will not collect medical forms.

Liability Release: Each player must have the liability release form signed by his parent or guardian to participate in the program. See roster/waiver agreement for further clarification.

Insurance: The League Director has found that most players are insured through family insurance; therefore, insurance is the responsibility of the individual.

Age Groups: Whatever age the athlete is by August 1st (8-1-2016) is the age group that athlete is eligible to participate for the season. Any player can play "up" but it is not recommended; no player can play "down".

7U – Second Grade

8U – Third Grade

9U – Fourth Grade

10U – Fifth Grade

12U – Middle School Football

14U – Frosh Football

16U – JV Football

Official Football:

7U/8U – K2, Nike Pee Wee, Baden 500JR, Pop Warner Mitey-Mite, Under Armour Pee Wee

9U – Wilson K2, Nike Junior, Baden 500JR, Pop Warner Mitey-Mite, Under Armour Pee Wee

10U – Wilson TDJ, Nike Junior, Baden 5000J, Pop Warner Junior, Under Armour Junior

12U – Wilson TDJ, Nike Junior, Baden 5000J, Pop Warner Junior, Under Armour Junior

14U – Wilson TDY, Nike Youth, 500Y 1001 1005 1205 3000 Lemux, Pop Warner Youth, Under Armour Youth
Or GST High School Regulation Size Ball.

16U – Must use High School Regulation Size Ball.

There is no weight limit for any of the age divisions. Some divisions may be combined depending on the number of teams per age group; there must be at least four teams in each division. 7U and 8U may have two coaches on the field at a time; 9U may have one coach on the field at a time. Coaches must be 10 yards behind the furthest player before the ball is snapped and through the duration of the play; they cannot “coach up” players once the team has broken the huddle.

Rosters and ID Cards

- All players must have a valid STATE ID for the state in which their team is located (Maryland teams must have MD State IDS, Virginia teams must have VA State IDS, etc.). A current valid US Passport, or a current valid military ID along with a current valid second form of identification indicating player’s DOB, Name and Address will also be accepted. Except as indicated no other form or combination of forms will be accepted. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.** There are to be no players on two rosters and no player can play on more than one team (meaning if there is a 9-year-old playing on an 11U team, he cannot play on the 9U or 10U team).
- No team may enter the league with fewer than eleven (11) players. Eighteen (18) players is the maximum allowed per roster.
- **DC RESIDENTS MUST HAVE A current valid US Passport, or a current valid military ID along with a current valid second form of identification indicating player’s DOB, Name and Address.**
- There will be a variety of roster certification days. The locations and times for these days can be found IndoorFootball@MasonDixonBowl.com. Roster certification will be mandatory for all head coaches/organizational reps and any player that is unable to obtain one of the above forms of identification. Each coach must bring two copies of their TYPED player roster (one of each will be put on file; the other will be handed back to the coach/organization rep) and all player’s STATE IDs or Combination of IDs as previously indicated must be brought to the certification. Team’s final roster must be certified no later than Wednesday, March 1st, 2017.
- Additions to rosters will be permitted up until the second game of the season for a \$50 fee per roster re-certification. Players cannot be subtracted from rosters and those being added must not have played on another team in Week 1. Appointments are required for roster re-certification and the original, certified roster must be returned to Mason Dixon Indoor Football before another will be distributed.
- A typed copy of the certified roster and each player’s valid STATE ID must be presented each game to the opposing coach 30 minutes before each game. Only one player may wear a given number. In the event of a jersey change, the Official and the opposing Head Coach must be notified during the ID check-in 30 minutes prior to the start of the game. Any player not on the roster or not having an ID at the time of the ID check cannot play.

Any coach that is found to have used a player that is not on his certified roster, or has a player on more than one roster will forfeit that game and will be subject to further disciplinary action per the Mason Dixon Indoor Football Rules Committee.

Players, Formations, and Game Play

Please note that the purpose and intention of the league rules are to generate offense. All High School rules are in effect in accordance the National Federation rules book with the following exceptions:

The Mason Dixon Indoor Football League reserves the right to modify, add, or remove rules as they deem fit for the improvement or safety of the league at any point during the season.

Starting of the Game

- There will be two (2) Referees assigned per game. All Officials are on duty from the time they get out of their car to the time they get back into their car. Each coach will pay the referee \$35 right before the game, on the field- cash only!
- For the safety of the players and fair competition, each team must field eight players at all time. A forfeit will be called if a team cannot field eight players at any time.
- The visiting team shall take possession of the ball at their five (5) yard line to start the game.
- The home team shall take possession of the ball to start the second half at their five (5) yard line. Home team is also responsible for providing a volunteer to run the clock. Clock volunteer cannot coach, call out plays, or taunt opposing team while operating the clock.

Coaching

- Only coaches on the official team roster, one media person per team, and the clock operator are permitted on the sideline/bench area. The media individual and clock operator may NOT coach and if found to be doing so will be removed from the sideline/bench for the remainder of the season. The media personal must remain on the opposite side of the field from the team and may only film and/or photograph from the corner. If a coach for a team is acting as the clock operator in addition to their role as coach, then they are permitted to coach as normal.
- If, at ANY TIME, an individual is discovered on the sideline who is not on the official team roster the team will incur the following consequences: first offenses by a team will result in an official warning to the team. Second offenses will result in suspension of the individual at fault as well as the Head Coach from the next game of play. Third offenses will result in suspension of the Head Coach indefinitely and removal of the team from post-season play. Any further offenses will result in the team's removal from the league.
- All coaches are permitted on their side of center field. No coach for the opposing team can cross the center field.
- No coaches are permitted on the field unless a time out is called (exception is 7U, 8U, and 9U).
- No one other than coaches, players, Mason Dixon Indoor Staff and Rules Committee Members, or clock operator is allowed on the field before, during, or post-game.

Offense

- The offensive team shall consist of eight (8) players on the field
- Offensive Formation: The offense can consist of four (4) or five (5) players on the line of scrimmage. Once they have set into either one of these formations, this is to be considered their "Initial Formation". Offense can shift their

line set from 4 to 5 or vice versa, but doing so allows the defense the option to shift their line set from three (3) to four (4). If the offense shifts from 5 to 4, then the defense can maintain the 4th defensive linemen for the duration of the play.

- Acceptable line formations are: [G C G E], [G C G G E], [E G C G], [E G G C G], and [E G C G E]. In these formations, the end may not be split more than One (1) yard from the last downed man [G]. The [E] can be in a down or upright position; guards must be in the down position.
- With the five man line, only one end may be split further than One (1) yard from the base formation, example: E G C G E. You can have an unbalanced line.
- The guards and center are ineligible receivers and remain so through the down. The principals of one Center, two Guards and one End/Receiver make up the base offensive structure. Only the single End/Receiver is eligible. All basic football rules apply to eligible receivers and covered ends.

Defense

- The defensive team shall consist of eight (8) players on the field.
- A coach is free to use whatever base defensive formation he wants as long as he adheres to the defensive line restrictions and the four yard restrictions for second level players.
- There is no requirement that a team use a safety as long as all "second level" players are at least four yards off the line of scrimmage.
- Three (3) defensive players must be on the line of scrimmage. The three-man defensive line is used against an offensive four-man formation. Defensive lineman can drop into coverage after the snap of the ball.
- ALL three defensive linemen must be in a down position – 3-point stance.
- A fourth defensive lineman can be used against a five man in the 'box' formation. This formation now consists of two (2) D Tackles and two (2) D Ends; the two D Ends may now be in a 2-point stance. In the four man, defensive front, the two (2) interior linemen must be in a down position.
- In all defensive formations, once the offense has set into their initial position the ends must be within one yard of the down offensive personnel.
- All non-defensive linemen, i.e. Linebackers, Safeties and Corners are to be at least four (4) yards off the line of scrimmage, and cannot move forward until the snap of the ball. Exception: if the ball is within the five (5) yard mark from the goal line, non-defensive linemen may now squeeze in one (1) yard behind the defensive line to defend the run and/or quick passes to eligible receivers, but still cannot rush the QB on a pass play.
- NO BLITZING is permitted. For the purpose of Arena Football, a blitz is defined as a non-defensive lineman penetrating the line of scrimmage during play where the QB is passing the ball. Specifically, the only defensive players that can penetrate beyond the line of scrimmage are the defensive lineman identified above. Non-defensive linemen can either have pass coverage or "spy" responsibility on the QB in the event the QB crosses the line of scrimmage and runs the ball, but those players cannot penetrate the line of scrimmage. Eight-man Indoor Football limits the protection that a QB has, so the "no blitzing" rule is necessary for safety and to encourage the passing game.
- "Blitzing" is permitted if someone other than the QB attempts to pass the ball (i.e. halfback pass). The QB is defined as the first player that touches the ball immediately after snap. Blitzing is permitted if the QB attempts a pass after another player has touched the football, for example if the QB throws a backwards lateral to a receiver and the receiver throws another backwards lateral to the QB, and the QB attempts to throw the ball.

- When the QB “tucks” the ball all non-defensive linemen can “blitz” to stop the advance of the ball. For the purpose of Indoor Football, a pass play occurs when: (1) the QB is in possession of the football after the initial snap, (2) the QB has not tucked the football, (3) the QB has not transferred the ball to another player and (4) the QB has not crossed the line of scrimmage.
- When the ball touches the ground, it is live, even if the QB is able to recover the ball the non-defensive linemen can still rush after the ball touches the floor.

Time Limits

- Two (2) twenty-four (24) minute halves of running time, with a three (3) minute break between halves.
- Each team has one (1) time-out per half. If the time-out is not used in the first half, it will not carry over to the second half. Time-outs are essentially clock stoppages. After thirty (30) seconds a whistle will blow and the clock will automatically start.
- Referees will be responsible for keeping the play clock of 25 seconds. Referees will work with coaches and players in the 7U, 8U, and 9U divisions to keep the game moving.
- In the case of an injury the clock will stop for a maximum of two minutes total. Past the allotted two minutes, the clock will start running again; stoppage time is based on the discretion of the referee, depending on the game and schedule situation (two-minute stoppage is for the entire game). The injured player must be removed from the field of play and not participate for one (1) down.
- Games may start up to ten (10) minutes early if the field is available in order to keep games on schedule throughout the day.
- Game time is forfeit time; any team that forfeits a game once will lose \$100 of their Referee Deposit; a second forfeit by any team will result in an additional \$100 loss of their Referee Deposit and the team’s removal from the schedule for the remainder of the season. (The deposit will not be returned to the team/organization at the end of the season in this case). If a team does not forfeit any games, they will be returned their Referee Deposit in full at the end of the season.
- A player arriving after the start of the clock must be listed on the opposing team’s roster, present a valid STATE ID, and wait for halftime verification from the opposing teams coach.
- No player arriving after the start of the second half will be allowed to participate in the game.

Moving the ball and Scoring

- Four (4) downs are allowed to advance the ball to midfield for a first down. If a team advance to midfield or further within four (4) downs than that team is given an additional series to score.
- Should a team fail to cross midfield within four (4) downs, thus not acquiring a first down, or in the case of earning a first down fail to score, then the ball will be place on the opposing teams five (5) yard line and the ball will be considered turned over on downs.
- A turnover will be marked as a first down at the spot of the ball for the team awarded possession.
- Six (6) points are awarded for a touchdown.
- One (1) point conversion from the three (3) yard line.
- Two (2) point conversion from five (5) yards.
- Two (2) points awarded for a safety.
- Colored lines will mark the out of bounds on all sides of the field.

Other Rules

- Tie Breaker for All Games – Tie games are allowed. There is no time allowed for tie breakers. The indoor season is a 6-game round robin. Playoff overtime rules will be four plays from the ten-yard line.
- Mercy Rule- If up by 32 points margin, the losing team gets the ball at mid-field with four plays to score. Once the losing team closes the margin to under 32 points then they must start back at the five-yard line like normal.
- Slaughter Rule- Once a team reaches a 48 point margin the losing team will continue to get the ball back at mid-field with four plays to score. If the losing team does not score they receive an additional four plays to score starting at mid-field. This will continue until the clock runs out no matter how many times they start again at mid-field.
- Stalling Rule- If, in the last three minutes of the game, the winning team is on offense and commits two penalties of any kind (offsides, unsportsmanlike conduct, etc.) the ball will be immediately given to the opposing team on the opposing team's 5-yard line.
- Stalling Rule (Defense) In the last three minutes of the game, if the winning team is on defense and commits a penalty it will be assessed as normal; however, if they incur a second penalty the ball will be placed on the mid-field line (or assessed as normal if the ball already crossed mid-field). If a third penalty is incurred the ball will be placed on the 5-yard line.
- A half or game cannot end on a defensive penalty.
- In the event that the ball touches the overhead net or ceiling, the ruling is a dead ball and a loss of down for the offense.
- If both teams have the same jersey color, and either team has an alternative jersey, please be flexible and change jerseys and/or wear pennies to accommodate the other team; however, it will be the home team's ultimate responsibility to wear an alternate jersey color and/or pennies.
- No one can have gum, candy, food, or colored/flavored drink on the field of play. Any player, coach, or spectator with any of these items on the field will be asked to leave the facility. NO warnings are necessary.
- Any team that forfeits a game once will lose \$100 of their Referee Deposit; a second forfeit by any team will result in an additional \$100 loss of their Referee Deposit and the team's removal from the schedule for the remainder of the season. (The deposit will not be returned to the team/organization at the end of the season in this case). If a team does not forfeit any games, they will be returned their Referee Deposit in full at the end of the season.
- Teams who must forfeit a game must immediately email IndoorFootball@ MasonDixonBowl.com so that they may notify the other team, referees, facilities, and other necessary parties.
- Forfeits in Week 5 or 6 will result additionally in a 100-point penalty against the team and will nullify any possible head to head advantages in post-season qualifiers or seeding.
- Head coaches are responsible for the conduct of their parents and players, ANY inappropriate interaction between opposing team's players, coaches, parents, referees, etc. deemed inappropriate by the referee or a Mason Dixon Indoor Football Staff or Rules Committee member can result in a penalty, ejection, or suspension.
- Players CAN line up over then center, but are not forced to.
- Sportsmanship is a MUST; teams found guilty of displaying poor sportsmanship will run the risk of forfeiting games or being removed from the league.

Updated Indoor Facility Shoe requirements

Due to slight difference infield surfaces at the indoor facilities, please follow the guidelines listed below. It is recommended that ALL players bring a pair of athletic tennis shoes as a backup to each indoor facility. NO metal cleats are allowed at any facility.

Soccer Dome I, II

- Rubber sole cleats, turf shoes, and tennis shoes. No plastic cleats.
- **Parents/spectators must remain OUTSIDE the nets at all times for all Soccer Dome Fields. Coaching staffs and players ONLY are permitted inside the nets.**

Freestate Sports Arena

- Rubber sole cleats, turf shoes, and tennis shoes. No plastic cleats
- **Parents/spectators must remain in the BLEACHERS OR BLEACHER AREA WINDOWS of all fields. Only coaching staffs and players are permitted in the box, behind the box, or outside the field on the side of the field with the box.**

Carroll Indoor

- Tennis shoes or turf shoes. NO cleats of any kind.
- **Parents/spectators are only permitted in the general viewing area. Only Coaches Staffs and Players are permitted on the field or in the bleacher box on the far side of the field.**
- **Penalties**
- Normal five (5) to ten (10) yard penalties will be considered to be five (5) yard penalties.
- Normal fifteen (15) yard penalties will become ten (10) yard penalties.
- ALL unsportsmanlike penalties shall be 10 yards.
- Any player or Coach can be removed from the game by a referee or NG365 Rules Committee member.
- Any ejection of a player, or Coach, will result in review by the NG365 Rules Committee with a mandatory, minimum one (1) game suspension, and can include forfeits and expulsions from the League, without refund.
- All disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the Mason Dixon Indoor Football League Rules Committee, without exception.
- Suspensions will be documented formally, in writing, with a copy to every Head Coach in the corresponding division, and to their corresponding League Heads.
- Any game protest must be filed with the league in writing within 24 hours of the game to IndoorFootball@MasonDixonBowl.com.
- ALL appeals must be made in writing addressed to Mason Dixon Indoor Football, 5811 Allender Road . White Marsh MD 21162 or via e-mail to IndoorFootball@MasonDixonBowl.com.