



2023

IFL Rule Book

Indoor Football League

47987 Meadowlark Street

Suite 101

Harrisburg, SD 57032

www.GolFL.com

Commissioner: Todd Tryon

Chief Financial Officer: Robert Loving

Director of Officiating: Tom Falcinelli

Secretary-Rules Editor: Todd Evans

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Rule Changes and Clarifications for 2023

The numbers and letters to the left refer to rule and article, respectively. Changed or altered items for the 2023 season will be identified in the rules by **BLUE** font. Clarifications will be identified in **RED** font.

- 1.13.b: **the Ready for Play signal shall be given by the Referee once the Umpire spots the ball**
- 1.13.d: **between plays, only one player may go to the Team sideline to confer with a Coach (sideline warning rules apply).**
- 1.15.b: **Team A players in motion may be in the Offensive box as long as they are running parallel to the line of scrimmage. A motion man may not be in the Offensive box at the snap who entered the box and is running toward the line of scrimmage in a perpendicular movement.**
- 1.15.q: **a motion player may not block any of the three (3) Defensive linemen or be the lead blocker on a running play inside of the alley. This is a reviewable foul added in 2022.**
- 2.17: **the positive timing rule has been eliminated as an IFL timing rule.**
- 3.9.c: **a team timeout may be up to sixty (60) seconds in length.**
- 3.9.f: **timeouts in the final sixty (60) seconds of either half are up to thirty (30) seconds in length.**
- 3.11.d: **after a media timeout, the status of the clock, either on the ready or snap is dictated by the last play from scrimmage prior to the media timeout.**
- 3.12: **Injury Timeout - if the Kicker is injured, the Head Coach can use a remaining timeout, if available, to keep the Kicker in the game after he is cleared by Team Medical Personnel.**
- 6.1.1.a: **A Free Kick may be used to score a Deuce at anytime during the game (see 8.7.b).**
- 6.1.7.v: **during a successful Deuce, if the Kicking team commits a 5 or 10-yard non-personal foul during the Free Kick and the kick is good, no Deuce is scored, and the ball is automatically spotted at the twenty-five (25) yard line and belongs to the Receiving team. The Free Kick will not be repeated.**
- **If both teams foul during a successful Deuce, the Free Kick down will be replayed.**
- **Ten (10) yard and fifteen (15) yard personal fouls or unsportsmanlike fouls are enforced at the succeeding spot.**
- 7.4.g: **no originally ineligible receiver shall be or have been more than three yards beyond the neutral zone until a Passer throws a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone. A player is in violation of this rule if any part of their body is beyond the three-yard limit. (exception: If the passer is legally throwing the ball away and the ball lands near or beyond the sideline.)**
- 7.8.e: **members of the Offensive team are not permitted to use the Umpire as a “pick” in an attempt to get open from a Defender (Umpire Pick). This is now a foul and no longer a violation. *With the Umpire Pick change from a Violation to an Infraction, if another live ball Infraction occurs when an Umpire Pick is also called, this would offset any Defensive fouls and the down will be replayed by rule. If not an offset situation, regular Umpire Pick enforcement is in effect (warning, then OPI)***
- 8.7.b: **if a Deuce attempt makes contact with the goal post/uprights (includes crossbar) and bounces back into the Endzone or field of play, the ball remains live. If recovered by the Receiving team, Rouge rules apply. If the ball is recovered by the Kicking Team, they may advance the ball (this is the only exception for the Kicking team being able to advance a Free Kick). If the ball strikes the guidewires and bounces into the field of play or endzone, the ball is dead.**
- 9.2.1.b: **there is now an option for a live ball UNS being a spot foul. (e.g. if a ball carrier taunts during a scoring play, the enforcement spot is the spot of the foul. This action will bring back a score)**
- 9.4.1.h: **no previous player, whether hurt in the current or previous game(s) during the current IFL season, may participate as a Coach on the field of play.**
- 12.7.a: **new reviewable fouls: an Umpire Pick, fan interference and player bench interference**

- 12.8.d: if the challenging coach has won both challenges in a game, they will be awarded a third challenge for that game. A third awarded challenge will not carry over to any overtime periods.
- 12.10.a.vi: if a head coach requests a team timeout to challenge an on-field ruling and the play being challenged is not reviewable by rule, the timeout shall count as one of the three permitted team timeouts during that half of the game or the one permitted in that extra period and the coach loses that challenge.

Points of Emphasis

The IFL Commissioner and Owners have extraordinary pride in the IFL Football Rules and team play. The IFL Brand are these rules and the application of which create an agreement among Owners, Coaches, Players, Officials and Administrators that places each contest in an environment of fairness overseen by sportsmanship. The following rules and points of emphasis serve to protect the players and the game through consistent application.

The mission of the IFL is to consistently serve the fans, sponsors, and markets with the highest level of professional indoor football, and doing so with integrity, affordability, and passion, both on and off the field. The vision is to continually strive to be the #1 source of family-friendly sports entertainment through professionalism, sportsmanship, quality, and stability. With this, the IFL instills these basic core values:

- *RESPECT* - Treat sponsors, fans, teammates, Opponents and Officials with respect and gratitude
- *INTEGRITY* - Operate with utmost professionalism and sportsmanship
- *LEADERSHIP* - Make a positive impact in the communities we serve
- *QUALITY* - Provide premier sports entertainment

Using the helmet as a weapon

The helmet is for protection of the player. Players and coaches should emphasize the elimination of targeting and initiating contact against a Defenseless opponent and/or with the crown of the helmet.” The IFL continues to promote the targeting rule in order to promote player safety, reduce head contact and eliminate specific targeting actions from the game.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct / Taunting

For the 2023 season, this will be a point of emphasis for Officials to penalize any taunting action directed toward an opponent or the opponent’s bench. These actions take away from the IFL Brand, Teams, and is a disruptor for the fan experience of indoor football.

There shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct or any act that interferes with orderly game administration on the part of players, substitutes, coaches, authorized attendants or any other persons subject to the rules, before the game, during the game or between periods. Infractions for these acts by players are administered as either live-ball or dead-ball fouls depending on when they occur.

Specifically prohibited acts and conduct include, but are not limited to:

- (a) No player, substitute, coach or other person subject to the rules shall use abusive, threatening or obscene language or gestures, or engage in such acts that provoke ill will or are demeaning to an opponent, to game officials or to the image of the game, including but not limited to:
- (b) Pointing the finger(s), hand(s), arm(s) or ball at an opponent, or imitating the slashing of the throat.
- (c) Taunting, baiting or ridiculing an opponent verbally.
- (d) Inciting an opponent or spectators in any other way, such as simulating the firing of a weapon or placing a hand by the ear to request recognition.

- (e) An unopposed ball carrier obviously altering stride when approaching the opponent's goal line or diving into the end zone. [See 9.2.1.a for new enforcement on this foul.](#)
- (f) A player removing their helmet after the ball is dead and before they are in the team area (*exceptions*: Team, media or injury timeouts; equipment adjustment; through play; and between periods.
- (g) Punching one's own chest or crossing one's arms in front of the chest while standing over a prone player.
- (h) Intentionally removing the helmet while the ball is alive.
- (i) Dead-ball contact fouls such as pushing, shoving, striking, etc. that occur clearly after the ball is dead and that are not part of the game action. (See IFL Approved Rulings)
- (j) After the ball is dead, using forcible contact to push or pull an opponent off the pile.

Sideline Management

Coaches who are not on the field are not permitted to enter the field of play or leave the team area at any time. Doing so may subject the offending coach to an Unsportsmanlike Conduct foul. The on-field coach can ask questions of the Officials for clarity on a play. However, if the on-field coach comes in past the numbers at any time which is not during a team timeout or is in violation of Rule 9 Section 4 "Coaches on the Field", the coach is subject to a sideline violation which is a 5-yard penalty. Each team will receive one sideline violation (warning). The second and subsequent sideline violations by any coach results in a 5-yard penalty per violation of the rule, and loss of sideline privilege for the offending Coach. In addition, any coach penalized for an Unsportsmanlike Conduct foul at any time will result in the loss of sideline coaching privileges for that coach for the remainder of the game. A penalty flag will be utilized to indicate the foul and the Referee will make an announcement when the foregoing occurs.

Resuming Play after a Successful Scrimmage Kick, Safety, or PAT

In order to maintain game continuity, after a successful score (not a Touchdown), Teams will have sixty (60) seconds in which to kick the Free Kick. The following procedures will be followed by Teams and game Officials:

- after a score where no media time out is taken by the Production team, and once the ball is declared dead by rule, Teams will have sixty (60) seconds in which to kick the Free Kick.
- after a score where a ninety (90) second media time out is taken by the Production team, Teams will be expected to be ready for the Free Kick upon returning from the media timeout.

Player and Coach IFL Uniforms

For 2023, the IFL is paying special attention to the uniforms worn by both players and coaches. Players in the game with hoodies, untucked shirts or discolored undershirts, pants not to the top of the knee of the player or socks to the bottom of the knee of the player will be sent out of the game until the uniform issue is resolved. If any pant is cut in a manner not consistent with the rules, it will be declared as illegal equipment by game Officials. Players will have the dead ball time between plays to resolve any uniform issues that occur during the previous play. If the violation cannot be repaired, the player must be sent off the playing field. The uniform diagram on page 79 of the IFL rule book outlines acceptable wear by players, for Coaches refer to page 80. If a select number of players are violating the equipment rules which would disqualify enough players to impact the game being played, the game will continue, and the Team will be subject to administrative rules imposed by the IFL and the Commissioner. See 1.12 for IFL Uniform clarifications.

Rule 1: The Game, Field, Players and Equipment

The Game

Article 1.a. the game is patterned after outdoor American football, with variations adopted to accommodate playing the game indoors and in limited spaces.

b. it is a contest between two (2) teams of eight (8) players.

c. the team scoring the most points at the conclusion of the game is the winner.

d. the current NCAA Rule Book shall apply where specific IFL league rules are not called out in the IFL rule book.

e. the game shall be played under the supervision of the game Officials assigned by the IFL.

The Field

Article 2.a. The field is fifty (50) yards long by twenty-eight (28) yards wide.

b. the field may be longer, shorter, or wider due to the nature of the facility with League approval.

c. the area bordered by the goal line, the end wall, and the side walls in the end zone. The end zones are eight (8) yards deep, however may be a lesser depth with League approval.

d. the end zones or end zone walls may be rounded due to hockey board configurations, or the nature of the facility.

e. the area bounded by the side walls and goal lines is the field of play.

f. the end walls are the walls that border the back of the end zone.

g. the end walls are behind and substantially parallel to each goal line. If an end wall is not provided, an end line, four (4) inches or greater in width, will be applied to the playing surface and padding on the ground behind the end zone is mandatory. **This line is designated as out of bounds and plays involving this line are to be officiated as in NCAA.**

h. the side walls extend from end wall to end wall.

i. all side walls and end walls must be protected by a minimum of three (3) inches of padding.

j. the side walls and end walls shall serve as the boundaries of the field of play and the end zones, as well as indicate the border for out of bounds. If a loose ball occurs by fumble, Free Kick, or scrimmage kick comes in contact with a side wall or end wall or top of wall prior to being caught or recovered, the ball shall remain live until it becomes dead by rule (*exception: Onside attempt that touches the side wall within 10 yards of the kick*).

k. a legal or illegal forward pass that comes in contact with a wall prior to being caught is ruled as incomplete.

Line Markings

- Article 3.a. the field of play shall be marked every five (5) yards with lines extending from side wall to side wall and parallel to the goal lines.
- b. there shall be two (2) sets of hash marks on the field, a wide set of hash marks (NCAA) that shall be thirty (30) feet apart and a narrow set of hash marks (Pro) that shall be ten (10) feet apart. Additionally, a center hash mark in the middle of the field running parallel to the side walls is recommended. Minor adjustments for varying field widths are acceptable with League approval.
- c. hash marks shall be twelve (12) inches in length and four (4) inches wide.
- d. There shall be a line on the center hash mark at the three (3) yard line, extending one (1) yard either side of the center hash mark. This shall be the line behind which a point after touchdown (PAT) conversion is attempted, unless moved closer to the goal line by penalty. The ball may be placed at any point between the outer hash marks and on any yard line behind the three (3) yard line for the point after Try, so long as the offense chooses the spot of the ball prior to the ready for play signal.
- e. the goal line shall run from sidewall to sidewall and extends up the sidewall via white tape or paint.
- f. fields smaller than regulation size considerations - if the regulation length or width of a field cannot be configured because of limitations to a facility, the League may grant exceptions to the rules governing a regulation field. In such case, the field shall be marked as closely as possible to regulation.

Line-to-Gain and Down Indicators

- Article 4.a. the Official line-to-gain equipment (yardage chain and stakes) and down indicators shall be operated by trained staff, supplied by the home team. The equipment will be operated on the side of the field opposite the press box.
- b. the yardage chain shall join two rods not fewer than 5 feet high with the rods inside edges being exactly 10 yards apart when the chain is fully extended.
- c. the down indicator shall be mounted on a rod not fewer than 5 feet high operating approximately with numbers 1 through 4 to designate the down being played by a team.
- d. all line-to-gain and down-indicator rods shall be free of defects and deformities which could cause injury to a player or Official.

Field Goal Posts/Uprights

- Article 5.a. uprights must be centered over each end-line markings.
- b. uprights are ten (10) feet high to the crossbar and ten (10) feet wide at its inner measurement between the uprights.
- c. if the facility allows, the uprights shall be eighteen (18) to twenty (20) feet high from the crossbar.
- d. the diameter of each upright may not be less than three (3) inches or greater than four (4) inches. Goal posts may either be hung from the ceiling or may be supported by a single support post.

The Ball

Article 6.a. the Official IFL game ball, manufactured by Baden, must be used in all League games (Internal game ball code F8C).

b. the use of new or nearly new balls for a game.

c. Weight of no more than 15 ounces per ball.

d. game balls will be supplied by the home team and should be inflated between 12.5 and 13.5 (PSI) as measured by the Line Judge prior to commencement of the game.

e. thirty-six (36) game balls are to be supplied by the home team to finish a game. These balls are to be provided at least one (1) hour prior to kick off and are subject for approval and certification prior to use.

f. The ball may not be altered. This includes the use of any ball-drying or ball-warming substance outside of an Umpire towel.

Hash Mark Ball Spotting

Article 7.a. when the ball is declared dead along the right-side wall, the ball will be spotted on the right NCAA hash mark. When the ball is declared dead along the left side wall, the ball will be spotted on the left NCAA hash mark. When the ball is declared dead between the NCAA hash marks and the Pro hash marks, the ball will then be spotted at the nearest Pro hash mark.

b. on incomplete passes, the ball will be returned to the hash mark on which it was previously spotted.

c. when the ball is declared dead between the Pro hash marks, the ball will be spotted on the center hash mark. If no center hash mark is present, the Official will use their best judgment on where to spot the ball.

d. on the first play of a new possession or on a scrimmage kick, Team A may choose to move the ball on any of the five (5) hash marks. This choice must be made, and the ball spotted prior to the ready for play signal.

21 Man Roster

Article 8.a. each team may dress a maximum of twenty-one (21) players for a game, which is called the Active Game Day Roster.

b. the Game Day Roster of all dressed players shall be submitted to the Referee and the opposing team's Head Coach at least one (1) hour prior to kickoff.

c. the identity of all players may be subject to review by the Referee. Each player must have picture identification in the event such identification becomes necessary for review by the Referee. In cases where the roster is under objection by a Head Coach, the Referee in conjunction with the Director of Officials will decide the whether the player submitted will participate in the game.

Team Captains

Article 9.a. each team shall designate no more than four (4) team Captains.

- b. captains are the only players that may request an explanation from the Referee on the interpretation or application of any rule.
- c. in case of a foul, the Captain or Coach of the offended team is given the choice of the penalty or the result of the play.

Players and Equipment

Offense

Article 10.a. the Offense must have four (4) players on the line of scrimmage with their shoulders approximately parallel to the line of scrimmage.

b. of the four (4) players, three (3) players must be aligned in the alley. These three players are designated as the Snapper and two Guards (Offensive linemen).

c. the Snapper is the player who is over the ball in a position to execute a snap.

d. the two (2) guards must be located on opposite sides of the Snapper and positioned in such a way that the distance between the outside shoulders of the guards does not exceed five (5) yards.

e. the three (3) Offensive linemen must be stationary prior to the snap and are ineligible players by position.

Reminder – all Offensive players become eligible after a legal forward pass is touched by a Team B player or an Official.

f. there shall be one (1) player positioned on the end of the line for the offense. This player may be on either side of the formation. This player must be stationary at the snap and must be located at least three (3) yards outside the Guard. The End is an eligible pass receiver provided an eligible number is worn.

g. the offense may have up to four (4) backs on a scrimmage snap.

h. a maximum of two (2) backs may be in the Box at the time of the snap. **Backs must be positioned clearly with both feet inside the outside shoulder of either Guard (exception - lateral (parallel) motion man is not considered to have violated this rule).**

j. if two (2) Backs are present in the Box, one (1) of the Backs must be the player who receives the snap from the Snapper, either directly under the Snapper or in a “shotgun” formation.

k. if one (1) or fewer Backs are in the Box, the player who receives the snap may be aligned outside of the Box.

l. two (2) of the Backs may be in motion at the snap. The remaining Backs must be in a set position at the snap.

m. all Backs are eligible pass Receivers, provided an eligible number is worn. An Offensive player must declare as eligible prior to the play to the Referee on a scrimmage kick down.

Defense

Article 11.a. the Defense must have three (3) players on the Defensive line of scrimmage. These players shall be designated as Defensive linemen.

- b. Absent the reduced belt exception (Rule 1.16.j) there must be at least one (1) linebacker or Defensive back five (5) yards from the line of scrimmage in the alley prior to and at the snap. This linebacker or Defensive back must be stationary at the snap.
- c. the depth of the Defensive box is reduced when the ball is snapped inside of the defending team's five (5) yard line or at any point on the field when the Offensive team is facing a 4th down with the line to gain 2 yards or less. When this occurs, Defensive players may take a position such that the foremost part of their front foot is between five (5) yards beyond the line of scrimmage and the goal line or line to gain.
- d. the remainder of the Defensive players shall be designated as linebackers or Defensive backs.

Uniforms

Article 12.a. the Head Coach from each participating team shall confirm and certify to the Referee that all players are properly equipped according to the IFL uniform guidelines.

- b. all players must be numbered 0 through 99.
- c. no two (2) players of the same team may participate in the same game with identical numbers.
- d. numbers may be changed during a game only in the event of a damaged jersey. However, any changes shall immediately be reported to the Referee and to the opposing team's Head Coach. Numbers may not be changed during the game to deceive the opponents.
- e. players of opposing teams shall wear jerseys of contrasting colors, and all players on a team shall wear jerseys of the same color and design. Jerseys shall cover all pads worn under the jersey. The jersey must be full length and tucked into the pants or reach the belt line when a player assumes a normal standing position. Jerseys may be hemmed to reach the belt line but must be done so in a professional manner. **Untucked jerseys or discolored undershirts noticeably showing will be replaced prior to participating in play.** Knotting or taping of jerseys is not permitted. The Umpire will decide if the uniform is in violation of the IFL Uniform rules. Any nonconforming uniform item shall be prohibited and players wearing such items **will be removed from the game.**
- f. players must have their surname on the back of their jersey, located across the shoulders and above the number. If a team has players with the same surname, each player's first initial shall appear before the surname on the back of the game jersey.
- g. all players of a team shall wear pants of the same color and design.
- h. all players must wear socks or leg coverings that are of the **same color**, design, and length. **Game pants must go to the tops of the knee of the player** and socks/leg coverings must extend **to the bottom of the knees.** Any taping or spats over the shoes and/or ankles must be either a team or neutral color (black/white/gray) and shall be the same color for all members of the same team.
- i. all players, other than a Kicker, lined up to attempt a Free Kick or a scrimmage kick, must wear shoes suitable for football or turf activities. No slippers, boots, or other shoes (not designed for football or turf activities) may be worn during the game.
- j. if worn, gloves or hand pads must be either neutral (black/white/gray) in color or the appropriate colors of the team's jerseys.
- k. all players are permitted to wear a towel. The towel must be no larger than 4 inches wide by 12 inches long. The towel must be white and may not contain any writing or decoration (*exception for team or sponsor logos*). The towel must be tucked into the front beltline of the player. Streamers are not permitted.

- l. the use of a mouthpiece is required for all IFL players.
- m. hip, thigh, tail, and knee pads (not to be worn over the outside of the pants) are recommended for all IFL players.
- n. all players shall wear the following mandatory equipment:
 - iii. game pants (**must go to the tops of the knees**)
 - iv. approved helmet (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) helmets and facemasks, with current certification and fastened chinstrap. Players of a team must wear helmets of the same color and design (*Note: Unlike the NCAA, if a player's helmet comes completely off during the play, the player does not have to leave the game for the next down*).
 - v. matching game jerseys
 - vi. shoes suitable for indoor football surfaces (**no molded or screwed in cleats**)
 - vii. Shoulder pads covered by the jersey
 - viii. **socks/leg coverings must extend to the bottom of the knees**
- o. the following will be considered illegal equipment and is not allowed by IFL players:
 - i. hard, abrasive, or unyielding substances worn on the hand, wrist, forearm, or elbow, unless covered with adequate foam padding as approved by the Umpire
 - ii. metal or other hard substances, which may be dangerous to players
 - iii. helmets, jerseys, or gloves which conceal the ball by closely resembling the ball in color
 - iv. adhesive material, paint, grease, or any other slippery substance applied to a player's body or clothing that may affect the ball or an opponent
 - v. jerseys which are taped or tied in any manner
 - vi. any visible bandana worn under a helmet
 - vii. if eye shields are worn, then the player's eyes must be visible through the shield to the player's trainer.
NOTE: for purposes of this rule, it is not a foul and will be dealt with by the League.
 - viii. any adornment to the uniform, which serves no football purpose, but only serves to highlight the individual's appearance
 - ix. **molded or screwed in cleats**
 - x. **sweatshirts with an exposed hood (hoodie)**
 - xi. any equipment which in the judgment of the Umpire is dangerous to other players.
- p. the Umpire is the sole judge of legal and illegal equipment and shall rule on such without appeal at any time prior to and during the game. **Any violations of the player's uniform in the discretion of game Officials will be sent to the bench to be repaired before they return to participate.**

Ready For Play

- Article 13.a. the Referee shall begin each scrimmage play by giving the "Ready for Play" signal.
- b. this signals the Offensive team has 25 seconds to put the ball in play by means of a scrimmage snap, Scrimmage kick, or a Free Kick. **The Ready for Play signal shall be given by the Referee once the Umpire spots the ball.**
- c. neither team may delay the Officials from spotting the ball or the Offense from snapping the ball.

d. between plays, only one player may go to the Team sideline to confer with a Coach.

Infraction: Delay of Game in b and c. In 'd' this is a sideline warning for the offending Coach

Penalty: 5 yards, dead ball foul

e. if the Referee suspends play while a player in the game has to repair equipment, the player is required to leave the game for at least one (1) play. If the player does not leave the game the team is charged with a timeout.

ef if the Referee suspends play (administrative timeout) for an injured player on the field, the player is required to leave the game for at least one (1) play. If the player refuses to leave the game the player's team will be charged with a team timeout to address the player. He may not return until 1 scrimmage down is played.

Crowd Noise, Music, or Public Address Interference

Article 14.a. the Referee shall instruct the quarterback to play on regardless of crowd noise.

b. Arena music, lights, and public address announcements must cease once the Snapper touches the ball.

c. if Arena music, lights, or the public address system interfere with a team or prevents the Offensive team from putting the ball in play, the Referee may stop the game and allow the team to re-huddle and reset the play clock.

d. the Home team shall receive one (1) warning for Arena music, lights, or public address announcements. Thereafter, the Referee shall penalize the home team for delay of game.

Infraction: Delay of Game

Penalty: 5 yards

Note: If arena music, lights or the public address system continue to interfere with the team or playing of the game, the Referee may also remove the sideline privileges of the Home team coach.

Offensive Formations

Article 15.a prior to and at the snap, Team A must be in a formation which meets the following requirements.

b. Team A players in motion may be in the Offensive box as long as they are running parallel to the line of scrimmage. A motion man may not be in the Offensive box at the snap who entered the box and is running toward the line of scrimmage in a perpendicular movement.

Infraction: Illegal Motion, live ball foul

Penalty: 5 yards

c. all Offensive players may set in a two (2), three (3), or four (4) point stance.

d. after the ready for play signal and prior to the snap, all Offensive players are either on the line of scrimmage or in the backfield.

- e. players are considered to be on the line of scrimmage if their shoulders are approximately parallel to the line of scrimmage and the player's head intersects the imaginary line passing through the Snapper's waist that runs parallel to the goal line.
- f. players are considered in the backfield if no part of their body intersects the imaginary line passing through the waistline of the nearest Team A lineman. These players will be designated as Backs.
- g. there shall be at least four (4) stationary Team A players on the line of scrimmage at the scrimmage snap, three of whom are ineligible receivers (Offensive lineman).
- h. the other stationary Team A player(s) on the line of scrimmage at the snap are called the Ends.
- i. an End is an eligible receiver that may line up on either end of the Offensive formation. The end must be lined up at least three (3) yards from the outside shoulder of the nearest Guard.
- j. a maximum of two (2) backs may be aligned in the Offensive box at the snap and must have been in a set position for a least one second prior to the snap.
- k. if one (1) or fewer backs are in the Box, the player that receives the snap may be aligned outside of the box.
- l. no stationary Offensive player, whether lined up on or off the line of scrimmage, may be set in the area within three (3) yards of the outside shoulder of the Guard on either side of the formation. This alignment rule does not pertain to men in motion or players set at the snap and greater than five (5) yards behind the Offensive line of scrimmage (behind the Offensive box).

Infraction: Illegal Offensive formation (live ball foul)

Penalty: 5 yards

- m. if two (2) backs are in the Box, one (1) of the backs in the Box must be the player that receives the snap. If a team lines up in the I-Formation or a variation, the third (3rd) back cannot be aligned inside of the box and must be lined up greater than 5 yards from the line of scrimmage. If the ball is snapped to a third person outside of the box, this is a dead ball snap infraction.

Infraction: Snap Infraction (dead ball foul)

Penalty: 5 yards

- n. all Backs and Receivers remain eligible regardless of players in motion or alignment on or off the line of scrimmage. The only requirement is that at least one End is aligned on the line of scrimmage.
- o. two (2) players of the Offense may be in lateral (parallel) or forward motion toward the line of scrimmage prior to the snap provided that:
 - i. all players, except the two motion Receivers, must set for one (1) second before any player starts in motion. The two (2) motion Receivers are not required to be set from the time the huddle breaks to the time they start in motion
 - ii. The players clearly start their motion while in their backfield
 - iii. The players are behind or on the line of scrimmage at snap of the ball. *(This act is a dead ball false start infraction, and the play will be stopped to enforce the penalty).*

iv. A motion man lateral (parallel) to the line of scrimmage may be inside the Box at the snap.

p. players in motion may take a hand off or receive a forward or backward pass as long as they are outside of the Offensive box at the snap.

q. a motion player may not block any of the three (3) Defensive linemen or be the lead blocker on a running play inside of the alley. **This is a reviewable foul added in 2022.**

Infraction: Illegal Block

Penalty: 10 yards

r. players in motion are permitted to block the blitzing Linebacker (provided they are not the lead blocker for a running play inside of the alley), Defensive backs and Linebackers on the line of scrimmage or any player downfield, provided it is above the waist, and does not constitute Offensive pass interference.

Defensive Alignments

Article 16.a prior to and at the snap, Team B must be in a formation which meets the following requirements.

b. no Team B player, other than the three (3) down Defensive linemen, may be in the Defensive box at the snap.

Infraction: Illegal Defense, live ball foul

Penalty: 5 yards

Note: Officials shall consider the circumstances which caused a Team B player, while mirroring the actions of a Team A player, to be in the Defensive box at the snap, and may not allow the offense to manufacture penalties in this manner.

c. after the ready for play signal by the Official, all Team B players must be on their side of the line of scrimmage.

d. at the snap, there must be three (3) Defensive linemen in a three (3) or four (4) point stance on the line of scrimmage and have their shoulders parallel to the line of scrimmage.

e. the Defensive lineman covering the Offensive Snapper must be in a head-to-head position with the Snapper and his shoulders must be parallel to the line of scrimmage. "Head-to-head" requires the helmet of the Defender to be aligned with the helmet of the Snapper.

f. the other two (2) Defensive linemen (Defensive Ends) may line up no wider than their inside shoulder aligned with the outside shoulder of the Offensive Guard, or with their outside shoulder aligned with the inside shoulder of the Offensive Guard, or anything in between and their shoulders must be parallel to the line of scrimmage.

g. Defensive lineman may drop into pass coverage after the snap of the ball.

h. Defensive linemen may not stunt or twist, which is defined as an act involving two (2) or more Defensive linemen which is used to confuse the Offensive line by crossing over each other. The Nose Guard may not rush outside the Defensive ends while the ball is in the alley, nor can a Defensive End rush across the front or the

rear of the Nose Guard or opposite Defensive End. This includes an Offensive lineman blocking and Defensive lineman across another player of the Defense.

Infraction: Illegal Defense

Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot for “c through f”; in “h” it is 5 yards and an automatic first down

i. the remaining five (5) Defensive players are considered linebackers or Defensive backs and may not line up in a three (3) or four (4) point stance.

j. a minimum of one Defensive player must be aligned at the back of the Defensive box at the time of the snap (*exception, when the Offense is in a scrimmage kick formation or the belt is reduced due to the ball being inside the five (5) yard line or on Fourth (4th) down when the line to gain is two (2) yards or less*).

k. the Defensive player aligned at the back of the Defensive box, declaring as the Blitz, must be stationary at the snap. Movement in any direction prior to and continuing at the snap is illegal.

l. linebackers/Defensive backs must be behind the belt, which is the area five (5) yards beyond the line of scrimmage on the Defensive side of the ball (*exception, 2.16.m*).

m. linebackers/Defensive backs may line up on the line of scrimmage, inside the belt, but outside of the alley, when they are head up or shaded to either the inside or the outside of a set eligible receiver who is not located in the Box (i.e. end, flanker, wingback, slot back). The eligible receiver does not have to be on the line of scrimmage.

n. when multiple eligible receivers are in a stacked formation behind each other (e.g. one end with one or more backs directly behind him), an equal number of linebackers/Defensive backs may line up on the line of scrimmage, or anywhere inside the belt, but outside of the alley, as long as they are within one yard laterally of the stacked players.

o. a linebacker/Defensive back may be positioned inside of the belt to mirror an eligible receiver in motion. If the Offensive player's motion is towards the line of scrimmage the Defensive player can hold his position, retreat, or approach the line of scrimmage to meet the eligible receiver. *If a motion man running in a lateral motion (parallel) with the line of scrimmage goes into and stops in the Offensive box, and a Defender is following, the Defender will be given an opportunity to back out of the Belt. (If the snap is imminent, no foul on the Defense will be called.*

p. multiple defenders may not mirror the same receiver.

q. only a linebacker or Defensive back may initiate contact with an eligible receiver with whom they are aligned with at the snap (*exception, when a Back or Receiver is a potential blocker*). The Defensive player is not required to be lined up inside of the belt in order to contact the receiver. *A Defensive lineman may not contact or align with an eligible Receiver a Back either on the line of scrimmage or in the backfield.*

r. linebackers/Defensive backs are not required to align themselves with eligible Offensive receivers but if they are not aligned with an eligible receiver or if no eligible receiver is positioned opposite him on the Offensive side of the ball, the linebacker/Defensive back must line up at least five (5) yards beyond the line of scrimmage.

s. linebackers/Defensive backs may not align themselves inside the belt with the Quarterback or other Offensive eligible receivers (Backs) who are in set positions in the alley at the snap.

t. linebackers/Defensive backs may align themselves on the goal line or line to gain when the depth of the belt is reduced due to the ball being inside the five (5) yard line or on Fourth (4th) down when the line to gain is two (2) yards or less. Linebackers/Defensive backs may take a position on the goal line or line to gain and do not have to retreat/line up past the goal line or line to gain.

Infraction: Illegal Defense

Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot for “i through t”.

Blitzing Requirements

Article 17.a. a blitz occurs when any Defensive player, other than one (1) of the three (3) Defensive linemen, crosses the neutral zone to the Offensive side of the ball to try to tackle the ball carrier, disrupt a pass attempt, or cover a receiver before the ball has left the alley during the down, (*exception, 1.17.b*).

b. the blitzing player must start at the back of the Defensive box, be in the alley, and may take a lateral position within the alley at the back of the Defensive box.

c. if there is only one (1) player present in the alley and at the back of the Defensive box, the Defensive player blitzing does not have to indicate to the Officials and Team A that he is eligible to blitz by raising his hand above his head prior to the snap.

d. if two (2) or more Defensive players are present in the alley and at the back of the Defensive box, in order to blitz on that down, one (1) of the players must declare he is the designated Blitzzer by raising his hand above his head prior to the snap. There is no penalty for not declaring as long as no blitz occurs on the play.

e. if the Quarterback/Passer leaves the alley, all blitz/stunt/twist restrictions are eliminated.

f. if a snap from the Snapper contacts the ground, all blitz/stunt/twist restrictions are eliminated.

g. it is legal for a linebacker/Defensive back to read or play run and rush up to the line of scrimmage. If the play is a running play, or the ball leaves the alley, the linebacker/Defensive back may continue the rush.

h. if the play is a passing play, including play action pass plays, and the Quarterback/Passer remains in the alley with the ball, the Defensive player may not penetrate the line of scrimmage. (*exception 1.17.b*)

i. the Defense may only blitz one (1) player stationed at the back of the Defensive box during a particular down. For instances with two (2) players at the back of the Defensive box, only the declaring player may blitz on the play.

j. a blitz must occur within the area between the Snapper and two (2) Offensive Guards, called the “A-Gaps”. In addition, blitzes may not occur outside of a Defensive End, regardless if a Defensive End drops into coverage. Any blitz that occurs outside of the Offensive Guards or the Defensive End is illegal.

Infraction: Illegal Defense, Illegal Blitz

Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot with an automatic first down for “h through j”.

Scrimmage Snap

Article 18.a. the ball shall be put in play by a legal snap by the Snapper who takes a position over the football facing his opponent's goal line unless the rules provide for a legal free kick

b. no player shall put the ball in play before it is ready for play.

c. the Snapper shall put the ball in play by snapping it back between his legs in one continuous motion to another Offensive player who is behind the line of scrimmage and in the backfield.

d. if, during any backward motion of a legal snap, the ball slips from the snapper's hand, it becomes a backward pass and is in play. the snap need not be between the snapper's legs; but to be legal, it must be a quick and continuous backward motion.

Infraction: Illegal Snap, dead ball foul

Penalty: 5 yards, previous spot

e. a Team A player may not advance a planned loose ball in the vicinity of the snapper.

Infraction: Illegal Snap, dead ball foul

Penalty: 5 yards, previous spot and loss of down

Illegal Movements

Article 19.a. The Snapper may not fake a snap or, having assumed his stance over the ball, bob his head in an intentional manner, move his shoulders, flex his knees, or make any other movement simulating a snap in an attempt to draw the Defense across its line of scrimmage.

Infraction: Snap Infraction

Penalty: 5 yards, dead ball foul

b. once the line of scrimmage is set, no player of the offense may be in or beyond the neutral zone.

c. with the exception of the Offensive player(s) in motion, all other Offensive players shall remain motionless for a period of at least one second prior to the scrimmage snap.

d. no Offensive player on the line of scrimmage may make any motion which simulates the snap. This includes the Quarterback bobbing his head, moving his shoulders, flexing his knees, making any quick movement, or any other movement or signal which is an attempt to simulate the start of the play prior to the snap.

e. a player in motion may not run forward to the line of scrimmage and stop abruptly in what is called "freeze motion." Freeze motion is an intentional/illegal act designed to pull a Defensive player offside.

f. the motion player may not be beyond the neutral zone prior to the snap of the ball.

Infraction: False Start, dead ball foul for "b through f"

Penalty: 5 yards

g. once the line of scrimmage is set, no player of the Defense may be in the neutral zone at the snap, make contact with an Offensive player prior to the snap or be unabated to the quarterback.

Infraction: Offside

Penalty: 5 yards, live ball foul

Substitutions

Article 20.a. a substitute may enter the field of play any time the ball is dead.

b. if a substitute enters the field of play so that he can communicate with a teammate on the field, he must remain in the field of play for at least one (1) play.

c. a player leaving the field of play shall proceed directly to the sideline and outside the field of play to his designated team's bench.

d. a team is not permitted to use player substitution as a means to deceive an opponent. If Team A makes any player substitution, Team B will have the opportunity to match said substitution prior to the start of the upcoming play.

e. if a team breaks its huddle with more than eight (8) players, this act is an illegal substitution.

f. if a team has more than eight (8) players on the field at the snap of the ball, the infraction incurred shall be titled "Illegal Substitution."

Infraction: Illegal Substitution

Penalty: 5 yards

Teams A and B

Article 21.a. Team A is the team that is designated to put the ball in play, and Team B is the opponent. The teams retain these designations until the ball is next ready for play.

b. the Offensive team is the team in possession or the team to which the ball belongs. The Defensive team is the opposing team.

Linemen and Backs

Article 22.a. a lineman is any player legally on their scrimmage line.

b. a player is legally on the line of scrimmage when facing their opponent's goal line with their shoulders parallel to that line of scrimmage.

c. for Team A, they are either the Snapper or the Guards in which the Guard's heads must break the plane of the waistline of the Snapper.

d. an interior lineman may be on the end of the line of scrimmage.

e. covering a receiver on the line of scrimmage does not make him ineligible (*see 7.4.d*)

d. a back is any player who is not a lineman (2.21.a) and whose head or shoulder does not break the plane of the waistline of the nearest teammate.

e. For Team A, a Back is also the player in position to receive a hand-to-hand snap.

f. a Back may be stationary or in motion at the snap. More than three in motion at or before the snap is a false start by team A.

Infraction: False Start

Penalty: 5 yards

Rule 2: Definitions

Alley

Article 1. the alley is the area bordered by the outside shoulders of the two (2) Offensive guards which is a maximum of five (5) yards wide and runs from end line to end line. The alley is established at the snap and does not move during the down. The alley disintegrates when the ball leaves the alley.

Belt

Article 2.a. the belt is located five (5) yards beyond the Defensive line of scrimmage and runs from side wall to side wall. The belt disappears at the snap and is never extended beyond the goal line.

b. the depth of the belt is reduced when the ball is snapped inside of the defending team's five (5) yard line or at any point on the field when the Offensive team is facing 4th down and with the line to gain 2 yards or less. In this situation, Defensive players may take a position such that the foremost part of their front foot is between five (5) yards beyond the line of scrimmage and the goal line or line to gain.

Blitzer

Article 3.a. the Defensive player (linebacker or Defensive back) who identifies to the Offensive team and Officials as a potential Blitzer by his alignment and/or by raising a hand. If two (2) or more Defensive players are present in the alley at the back of the box, then one player must identify as a potential blitzer.

b. the Blitzer must be located in the alley, at the back of the Defensive box, and stationary at the snap.

Blocking Below the Waist

Article 4. a. a block below the waist is a block in which the force of the initial contact is below the waist of an opponent who has one or both feet on the ground. When in question, the contact is below the waist (9-1-13-a).

b. A blocker who makes contact above the waist and then slides below the waist has not blocked below the waist.

Block in the Back

Article 5. a block in the back is contact against an opponent occurring when the force of the initial contact starts and is from behind and above the waist. The position of the blocker's head or feet does not necessarily indicate the point of initial contact

Defensive Box

Article 6.a. the Defensive box is defined as the area bordered by the outside shoulders of the two (2) Offensive Guards (the alley), the Defensive line of scrimmage, and the distance five (5) yards beyond the Defensive line of scrimmage (the belt).

- b. a minimum of one Defensive player must be aligned at the back of the Defensive box at the time of the snap (*exception 2.4.b*).
- c. the Defensive box disappears at the snap and is never extended beyond the goal line.
- d. the depth of the Defensive box is reduced when the ball is snapped inside of the defending team's five (5) yard line or at any point on the field when the Offensive team is facing 4th down and with the line to gain 2 yards or less. In this situation, Defensive players may take a position such that the foremost part of their front foot is between five (5) yards beyond the line of scrimmage and the goal line or line to gain.

Drop Kick

Article 7.a. a dropkick is a legal action by a player who drops the ball toward the ground and kicks the ball simultaneously with it hitting the ground.

- b. a drop kick may be used for a kickoff, scrimmage kick, or Free Kick following a safety. If made from a scrimmage kick formation, the kick must be made immediately upon control of the snap or backwards pass, otherwise it is an illegal kick.
- c. it is an illegal kick if the Kicker contacts the ball with his foot prior to it having contacted the ground (a punt), or after it is already contacted the ground and bounced.

In the Bank

Article 8. 'In the Bank' is defined as a penalty which is elected to be enforced on the subsequent Free Kick rather than the point after Try (PAT). Any 'In the Bank' enforcement will be enforced on the first scrimmage down following the Free Kick or kicks.

Kicked Ball

Article 9. a kicked ball is the intentional striking of the ball by a player's foot or leg below the knee. If a ball accidentally strikes a player's foot or leg, it is not ruled as a kick.

Kicker

Article 10. the Kicker is any player who drop kicks or place kicks according to rule. This player remains the Kicker until they have had a reasonable time to regain their balance after a kick.

Line of Scrimmage

Article 11.a. the line of scrimmage is an imaginary line which traverses across the width of the football field, from sideline to sideline beyond which a team cannot cross until the next play has begun legally.

- b. its location is based on the spot where the ball is placed after the end of the most recent play and following the assessment of any penalty yards.

- c. a line of scrimmage is parallel to the goal lines and touches each edge of the ball where it sits on the ground prior to the snap.
- d. there are two (2) lines of scrimmage at the outset of each play: one (1) that restricts the offense and one (1) that restricts the Defense.

Neutral Zone

Article 12.a. the area between the two (2) lines of scrimmage (representing the length of the ball as extended to both sidelines) is called the neutral zone.

- b. only the Snapper, the Offensive player who snaps the ball, is allowed to have any part of his body in the neutral zone at the time of the snap.

Offensive Box

Article 13. the Offensive box is defined as the area bordered by the outside shoulders of the two (2) Offensive Guards (the alley), the Offensive line of scrimmage, and the distance five (5) yards behind the Offensive line of scrimmage. The Offensive box disappears at the snap.

Pass (Forward or Backward)

Article 14. a. a pass is forward if the ball first strikes the ground, a player, an Official or anything else beyond the spot where the ball is released. All other passes are backward passes. When in question a pass thrown in or behind the neutral zone is forward rather than a backward pass.

- b. When a Team A player is in control of the ball in order to pass it forward toward, any intentional forward movement of the Passer's hand with the ball firmly in control starts the forward pass unless the player clearly starts to bring the ball back with firm control into the Passer's body. If a Team B player contacts the Passer or ball after forward movement begins and the ball leaves the Passer's hand, a forward pass is ruled regardless of where the ball strikes the ground or a player.

- c. When there is doubt, the ball is passed and not fumbled during the attempted forward pass.

- d. A snap is a backward pass after the snapper releases the ball other than via a hand-to-hand exchange

Passer

Article 15.a. the Offensive player who throws a forward pass is called the Passer. This player is also an eligible receiver.

- b. the Passer does not need to be the first player to receive the ball (scrimmage snap) from the Snapper.

Place Kick

Article 16.a. a place kick is a legal action made by kicking the ball after it has been placed in a fixed position on the ground. A place kick may be used for a kickoff, scrimmage kick, or Free Kick following a safety.

b. on a kickoff or Free Kick, the ball may be placed on a one-inch tee.

c. on a scrimmage kick attempt, a kicking tee may not be used, and the ball must be held on the ground by a teammate of the Kicker.

d. no substances or devices may be used to improve the Kicker's footing.

e. the Kicker may choose where to spot the ball for the snap prior to the kick. A piece of tape no larger than 2 inches by 2 inches may be used to mark a spot on the field for the scrimmage kick attempt.

Punt

Article 18.a. a punt is an illegal action by a player who contacts the ball with his foot or lower leg after first having possessed the ball and prior to it hitting the ground.

b. there is no punting in the IFL. When the Offensive team faces Fourth (4th) down, the offense must either attempt to achieve a first (1st) down or attempt a scrimmage kick (field goal attempt).

Snapping the Ball

Article 19. legally snapping the ball is when the Snapper hands or passes the ball backward from its stationary position on the ground with a quick and continuous motion by using the hand or hands.

Team A

Article 20. 'Team A' refers to the players of the team in possession of the ball (offense) at the snap or members of the kicking team.

Team B

Article 21. 'Team B' refers to the players of the Defense at the snap or members of the receiving team.

Rule 3: Timing

Starting the Game

Article 1.a. the game shall start promptly at the scheduled time after the coin toss is completed with the opposing team captains.

b. if a team is late appearing on the field at the start of the First (1st) or Third (3rd) quarters the team shall be penalized for delay of game.

Infraction: Delay of Game

Penalty: 5 yards – placed 'In the bank' (also subject to a fine from League Office)

Coin Toss

Article 2. prior to the start of the game the captains of both teams shall meet the Referee at mid-field for a coin toss. The Referee or a dignitary shall toss a coin with the visiting team Captain making the call. The captain of the team winning the coin toss will have the following choices:

- i. To receive or to kick
- ii. Which end of the field to defend
- iii. Defer choice to second (2nd) half
- iv. Unless the team winning the coin toss defers, the captain of the team losing the coin toss shall have first choice at the start of the Second (2nd) half.

Playing Periods

Article 3.a. the length of the game is sixty (60) minutes of actual playing time, divided into four (4) quarters, each fifteen (15) minutes in length. The scoreboard clock is the Official time for the game and shall be operated by a timekeeper under the direction of the Referee.

b. halftime is twenty (20) minutes in length unless otherwise approved by the League Office.

Second and Fourth Periods

Article 4.a. end zones shall be changed at the end of the First (1st) and Third (3rd) periods. At the start of the Second (2nd) and Fourth (4th) periods the ball shall be put at a point corresponding exactly to the point at the other end of the field where the ball became dead at the end of the previous period. It shall be put into play in exactly the same manner as if play had not been interrupted.

b. the time between the First (1st) and Second (2nd) Quarter and between the Third (3rd) and Fourth (4th) Quarter may not be longer than ninety (90) seconds.

c. overtime periods are authorized in the event neither team has scored more points than the other at the conclusion of the four (4) quarters.

d. if at the end of a quarter, time expires during a play in which a Touchdown is scored, the PAT will be attempted at the Endzone in which the score occurred. The PAT will be an un-timed down and once completed any scheduled media or promotional timeouts will occur.

e. if at the end of a quarter, time expires during a play in which a foul occurs, the offended team may:

- i. decline the penalty and accept the play
- ii. the Officials will, depending on the option of the offended team, enforce the penalty and complete any play(s) via an un-timed down (*exception, unless the penalty includes a loss of down or is declined by Rule*).
- iii. after an un-timed down scoring play which ends a Quarter, the Try will also be an un-timed down.
- iv. Once the play or Try is completed, the Officials will take any end of quarter media or promotional timeouts.

Play Clock

Article 5. each Arena shall have a visual play clock available for both teams. The play clock must be capable of counting down from 25 seconds. It should automatically default to 25 seconds and start immediately upon being set by the play-clock operator when the Referee gives the ready for play signal.

Starting and Stopping of the Game Clock

Article 5.a time shall start by an Official when the ball is legally touched in the field of play by either team following a Free Kick at the start of each half or following a score and shall continue until the ball is ruled dead and an Official signals time shall stop.

b. when a period begins with a scrimmage down, the game clock shall be started when the ball is legally snapped.

Starting the Clock

Article 6.a. if the clock is stopped for any reason, the clock will normally start again on either the ready for play signal of the Referee or when the ball is legally touched in the field of play during a Free Kick down or upon a legal snap.

b. the clock will continue to run until the final sixty (60) seconds of either half in which timing rules will go into effect (*refer to Article 8, Stopping the Clock*).

c. unless the game clock is under sixty (60) seconds in 2nd and 4th quarters, the clock shall continue to run anytime the following occurs:

- i. an incomplete pass
- ii. a player out of bounds
- iii. a First (1st) down (*exception, not following a change of possession*)
- iv. a score by touchdown (*exception - in the final sixty (60) seconds of the 2nd and 4th quarters of the game*)
- v. for changes of possession, Free Kicks and Scrimmage Kicks which occur with more than 4 minutes remaining in either half, the game clock will be started by the Referee when the Umpire places the ball on the field (*except 3-7-iv*).
- vi. When the Kicking team recovers a loose ball in the Receiving team's endzone, the game clock shall be started by the Referee on the Ready for Play signal to start the Try (*exception 3-4-e-iv*).

Clock Starts on the Snap

Article 7. if the clock is stopped for any of the following reasons, time will start on the snap:

- i. team A commits a delay of game foul while in scrimmage kick formation
- ii. following an Official's timeout due to arena music, lights, or PA announcer
- iii. following a team timeout, a media timeout ([exception 3.11.d](#)), or a promotional timeout
- iv. following a play during which possession changed in the final sixty (60) seconds of either half
- v. following an incomplete legal forward pass in the final sixty (60) seconds of either half
- vi. a Team A ball carrier, a fumble, or a backwards pass that is ruled out of bounds in the final sixty (60) seconds of either half
- vii. anytime under sixty (60) seconds in either half if a running clock is stopped solely for the treatment of an injured player. The injured player's team shall be charged with a timeout. If the team has no timeouts remaining and the injury occurs to a player of the team trailing on the scoreboard, a mandatory ten (10) second runoff from the clock is required prior to resuming the game
- viii. when under sixty (60 seconds) in either half and the clock is stopped because of a penalty, the clock will start on either the snap or the ready for play signal at the option of the offended team

Stopping the Clock

Article 8. after scoring plays (*except a score by Touchdown outside of the final 60 seconds of a half*) the clock will be stopped by the Officials. However, if the touchdown occurs in the final sixty (60) seconds of the half or game, the clock will stop, and the Try will be an un-timed down (*exception 3-4-e-iv*).

- i. for the application of a penalty
- ii. for a player injury
- iii. when time expires at the end of each period
- iv. when a player goes out of bounds, either by force of a Defensive player into the walls or by giving themselves up, in the final sixty (60) seconds of either half.
- v. on incomplete passes in the final sixty (60) seconds of either half
- vi. for a first down to reset the chains in the final sixty (60) seconds of either half
- vii. when an available team timeout is requested and granted
- viii. on a change of possession
- ix. for the sixty (60) second warning timeout. If the ball is dead when the clock reaches 1:00, the sixty (60) second timeout will be taken by the Referee. If the ball is live when the clock reaches 1:00, the clock runs throughout the down and the sixty (60) second timeout occurs immediately following the down ending or after completion of any penalties for fouls which occurred during that down
- x. when the referee suspends play for any reason.
- xi. with less than sixty (60) seconds remaining in either half and before a change in possession, a foul is committed that causes the clock to stop immediately, the offended team will have the option of a 10 (ten) second run-off. The offended team may accept the yardage penalty and accept the run-off but may not decline the yardage penalty and accept the run-off. If there is a run-off, the game clock will start on the ready for play signal. If the run-off is declined, the game clock will start on the snap. If the run-off is elected, the offending team may use a charged team timeout to avoid the application of the 10 second run-off. (*Examples of fouls that stop the clock immediately include, but are not limited to; false start, Defensive offside where the play is stopped, intentional grounding, any incomplete illegal*

forward pass, a backwards pass thrown out of bounds to conserve time, and any other fouls committed with the intent of stopping the clock)

- xii. when the coach initiates a challenge/replay review.

Timeouts

Article 9.a. in each half, both teams are permitted three (3) timeouts.

b. a timeout may be requested by a player or coach on the field.

c. a team timeout may be up to **sixty (60)** seconds in length.

d. during timeouts, one (1) coach may come to the center of the field to consult with the team, or the team may assemble in front of the team bench and consult with more than one (1) coach.

e. timeouts do not carry over from the second half or from any previous overtime period.

f. timeouts in the final sixty (60) seconds of either half are up to thirty (30) seconds in length

Promotional Timeouts

Article 10.a. promotional timeouts are not permitted during any overtime period and team timeouts may not be extended for promotional purposes.

b. in case of multiple overtime periods occurring, teams may have promotional timeouts in between the overtime periods, but not during.

c. during each quarter, two (2) promotional timeouts may be utilized to conduct on-field promotions, contests, performances, or for radio and/or television advertisements.

d. the First (1st) and Third (3rd) quarter promotional timeouts will be at or near the nine (9) minute and four (4) minute marks.

e. the Second (2nd) and Fourth (4th) quarter promotional timeouts will be at or near the nine (9) minute and sixty (60) second marks.

f. all promotional timeouts will be taken on the Referee's direction and will be directed towards change of possession, after a PAT, or field goal kick.

g. all promotional timeouts may start as early as two (2) minutes prior or past the actual time mark.

h. a promotional timeout is treated the same as a team timeout and is ninety (90) seconds in length. The clock will start on the snap following a promotional timeout.

i. promotional timeouts are not required and can be waived if both teams agree. If promotional timeouts are to be eliminated or modified, the Officials must be informed.

Media Timeouts

Article 11.a. media timeouts will be taken on the Referee's direction and in coordination with the "Red Hat" game day manager.

b. media timeouts will be directed towards change of possession opportunities and will be timed by the production manager through the "Red Hat" to the Referee or Back Judge on field.

c. timeouts lasting longer in 90 seconds in length will be reported to the Coordinator of Officials who will inform the League Office. Repeat offenders of media timeouts going longer than 90 seconds may be subject to League discipline.

d. after a media timeout, the status of the clock, either on the ready or snap is dictated by the last play from scrimmage prior to the media timeout.

Injury Timeout

Article 12. In the event of an injured player(s), an Official will declare a timeout and the player(s) must leave the game. The injured player(s) must remain out of the game for at least one down, even if the Team is granted a Team timeout (*exception: if the Kicker is injured, the Head Coach can use a timeout, if available, to keep the kicker in the game after he is cleared by Team Medical Personnel*).

Helmet Off

Article 13. if a player's helmet comes completely off through play, other than as the direct result of a foul by an opponent, the player does not have to leave the game. This is due in part given the small rosters of an IFL team. The Referee can delay starting the play clock to ensure the helmet is on and affixed by rule.

10-Second Runoff Summary

Article 14. the following is a summary of when the 10-second runoff process applies in the IFL.

- i. injury timeout (Rule 3-7-ix)
- ii. foul (Rule 3-8-xii)
- iii. instant replay (Rule 12-5-b)

Extra Periods

Article 15.a. if the score is tied at the end of regulation, there shall be a two (2) minute intermission followed by extra periods until a winner is declared.

b. prior to the start of the overtime the captains of both teams shall meet the Referee at midfield. The Referee shall toss a coin with the visiting team captain making the call. The captain of the team winning the coin toss shall choose one of the following options:

- i. offense,
- ii. Defense, or

- iii. the end of the field to be used for both teams during the first (1st) overtime period.
- c. the winner of the toss may not defer his choice.
- d. if the score remains tied at the end of an overtime period, the end of the field used for the subsequent extra periods will be changed.
- e. the loser of the overtime coin toss shall exercise the remaining option for the first overtime period and shall have first choice of the option to go on offense or Defense first for subsequent even-numbered periods.
- f. the winner of the coin toss shall have first choice of the options to go on Offense or Defense first for subsequent odd-numbered periods.
- g. no additional coin toss is conducted for any subsequent extra periods.

Extra Periods Team Series

- Article 16.a. an overtime period shall consist of an Offensive possession by each team.
- b. each team's Offensive possession starts with the ball put in play on their opponent's twenty (20) yard line.
 - c. there shall be an equal number of series in each extra period per Team. However, if Team B (the team first on Defense in a given period) scores during that period, other than on a Try.
 - d. the Offensive team may choose to place the ball on any hash mark. This spot remains once the Ready for Play signal is given by the Referee.
 - e. the Offensive team retains the ball until they score or fail to make a first down.
 - f. if the teams remain tied at the end of an overtime period, a subsequent overtime period is played.
 - g. beginning in the third overtime period, teams scoring touchdowns must attempt a two (2) point conversion. A one (1) point Try, although not illegal, will not score a point.
 - h. the ball remains live after a change of team possession until it is declared dead. However, Team A may not have another first down if the team regains possession of the ball after a change of team possession.
 - h. each team will have one (1) timeout in each extra period **which will be thirty (30) seconds in length.**

Fouls After Team B Possession in Extra Periods

- Article 17.a. distance penalties by either Team are automatically declined and scores by any Team committing a foul are cancelled by rule in extra periods. *(exception: Dead ball fouls and live ball fouls enforced as dead ball fouls).*
- b. scores by the fouling Team are cancelled if there are offsetting fouls, whether one or both occur after Team B possession and the down is not replayed.

Rule 4 - Ball in Play, Dead Ball, Out of Bounds

Dead Ball Becomes Alive

Article 1.a. after a dead ball is ready for play, it becomes a live ball when it is legally snapped or legally Free Kicked.

b. the ball remains live and does not become dead because of an injury to a player or to impose a penalty.

Once the ball is declared dead, an injured player may be attended to, or a penalty may be enforced.

Possession

Article 2.a. possession means having the ball firmly in the players hands or arm(s).

b. when players of opposing teams have joint possession of the ball, it belongs to the player who first gained possession or who has not lost possession. If both players are not touching the ground with anything other than their feet or hands and are inbounds, gaining joint possession does not result in the ball becoming dead.

c. if players of both teams legally gain possession of the ball simultaneously it belongs to the team which last had possession.

d. a ball that is not in possession of a player is still in play. A ball is considered to have been fumbled if the player last in possession has lost control of it.

e. if the ball is fumbled out of bounds or touches a player in the field of play and then goes out of bounds, it belongs to the team which last possessed the ball. If the ball is fumbled backwards, the ball shall next be snapped at the point the ball went out of bounds. If the ball was fumbled forward, the ball is spotted at the point where the ball was fumbled.

Live Ball Becomes Dead

Article 3.a. a live ball becomes a dead ball as provided in the rules or when an Official sounds their whistle (even though inadvertently) or otherwise signals the ball dead.

b. If an Official sounds their whistle inadvertently or otherwise signals the ball dead during a down:

- i. if ball is in player possession, the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where declared dead or repeat the down.
- ii. when the ball is loose from a fumble, backward pass, or illegal pass, the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or repeat the down.
- iii. during a legal forward pass or a free or field goal, then the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down repeated.
- iv. after Team B gains possession on a Try or during an extra period, the Try is over or the extra-period possession series is ended.
- v. if a foul or violation occurs during any of the above, the penalty or violation privilege shall be administered as in any other play situation.

Ball Declared Dead

Article 4. when a live ball becomes dead by rule, an Official shall sound their whistle or declare it dead:

- i. when the ball goes out of bounds
- ii. when any part of the ball carrier's body, except the hand or foot, touches the ground or when the ball carrier is tackled by a Defender
- iii. when a player of the kicking team catches or recovers any Free Kick or a scrimmage kick that has crossed the neutral zone.
- iv. there are no fair catch signals in the IFL. When this occurs during a free or scrimmage kick by any Team B player, the play is dead when the ball is possessed
- v. when a forward pass is ruled incomplete
- vi. on a 4th down fumble rule (live ball not recovered by player who lost possession)
- vii. when there is a simultaneous catch or recovery of a live ball
- viii. when the ball becomes illegal while in play
- ix. when a live ball comes into possession of an Official
- x. when a ball carrier's helmet comes completely off
- xi. when a ball carrier obviously begins a feet-first slide
- xii. when an Official signals a score
- xiii. if Team A (kicking team) gains possession of a scrimmage kick that has traveled beyond the neutral zone, untouched by Team B, the ball is declared dead and belongs to the receiving team at the recovery spot.
- xiv. when the force of contact from an opponent causes the ball carrier to make contact with the wall, or when an opponent is touching the ball carrier who is in contact with the wall, the ball is declared dead at the point of contact with the wall
- xv. when a kicked ball strikes the opponent's goal post assembly in flight, without first touching the ground, a player or an Official, and the kick is ruled no good
- xvi. when a ball carrier is not attempting to advance the ball, the Official shall declare the ball dead
- xvii. fan interference

Player Out of Bounds

Article 5.a. a player is out of bounds when any part of their body touches a wall only after being forced into the wall by a Defensive player

b. when an Offensive player under sixty (60) second in the 2nd and 4th quarters intentionally puts the ball over the wall

c. all walls are in play for a player, when catching a pass, recovering a fumble, muff, backward pass, blocked kick, or fielding a scrimmage kick.

d. all walls are out of bounds for any forward pass. The ball is dead, and the play shall be blown dead immediately anytime a forward pass, strikes any wall.

e. a player who stands on the top any wall or utilizes a wall to enhance his vertical height shall be ruled out of bounds.

f. a player is out of bounds if no part of his body contacts the wall prior to going over the wall either by their own or by force of a defender. A player is still in bounds if any part of a player's body contacts the wall prior to going over the wall, regardless of whether Defensive contact was the cause for going over the wall.

g. if a scrimmage kick contacts the end zone, side wall, or end wall in Team B's end zone untouched by Team B, it is dead by rule.

Out of Bounds During Final Sixty (60) Seconds of Either Half

Article 6. an Offensive player may give up purposefully by contacting the wall and holding the ball over the wall with arm fully extended without Defensive contact in an effort to stop the clock and preserve time.

Loose Ball

Article 7.a. a loose ball occurs when the ball is kicked, a pass, fumble, or muff. It continues to be a loose ball until a Player secures possession of the ball or it becomes dead by rule (e.g. Fan Interference).

b. a loose ball is a live ball not in Player possession during:

1. A running play.

2. A Scrimmage or Free Kick before possession is gained or regained or the ball is dead by rule.

3. The interval after a legal forward pass is touched and before it becomes complete, incomplete, or intercepted. This interval is during a forward pass play, and any player eligible to touch the ball may bat it in any direction.

c. force is a consideration and must be determined on ruling whether a loose ball which goes out of bounds in the end zone is a touchback or a safety. If it is ruled a touchback, the ball is put in play on the five (5) yard line. If it is a safety, two (2) points are scored, and the team scored upon shall kickoff to the other team.

d. a loose ball by the offense across the line of scrimmage does not interrupt the continuity of downs.

Fourth Down Fumble Rule

Article 8.a. on fourth down, only the Team A player who was in possession and fumbled the ball may recover and advance the ball for Team A.

b. any Team B player may recover and advance a fumble by the Offense on fourth down.

c. if another Team A player recovers the fumble, the ball shall be blown dead immediately and Team A shall retain possession at the spot of the fumble, unless the spot of the recovery is behind the spot of the fumble, at which point Team A shall retain possession at that point.

d. a Try for point (PAT) following a touchdown is considered a fourth down play.

Fan Interference

Article 9.a. fan interference occurs when a fan enters the field of play, catches, tips, or bats a loose ball or ball in player possession in the field of play, throws an object onto the field of play, hinders a player by touching him, touches the ball while inside the outside plane of the wall or interferes with an Official. Fan interference immediately ends the down and the play shall be blown dead.

b. when Fan Interference occurs, it is handled as follows:

- i. if interference occurs while the Home team is in possession (including a pass play), no violation occurs, and the ball is dead and there is no replay of the down.
- ii. if the interference occurs while the Visiting team is in possession (including a pass play), it is a ten (10) yard penalty and an automatic first down. If the interference occurs against the Visiting team in the end zone, the ball will be spotted at the one (1) yard-line with an automatic first down.
- iii. if the interference occurs during a loose ball (not a Scrimmage Kick – see 4.9.a.viii below) following a fumble, muff, or free kicked ball, prior to a team gaining possession, the down shall be replayed.
- iv. if the interference occurs while the ball is in a player's possession (a run), the ball becomes dead at the spot of interference.
- v. if the Home team was in possession, the ball shall next be put in play by the Home team at the spot the ball was ruled dead.
- vi. If the Visiting team was in possession, the ball shall next be put in play following the administration of a ten (10) yard penalty from the spot the ball was ruled dead, and with an automatic first down.
- vii. fan interference on all Free Kicks will result in a re-kick with no penalty. If time expires only in either the 2nd or 4th period, the period will be extended for one un-timed down.
- viii. if the interference occurs during a loose ball following a scrimmage kick, the enforcement will be:
 - a. if the Visiting team kicked the ball, the Home team is awarded possession at the spot of the foul. (exception, if the spot of the foul is in the End Zone, a Touchback will be awarded and the ball will be placed at the 5 yard line). There is no re-kick
 - b. if the Home team kicked the ball, the Visiting team is awarded possession after enforcement of a ten (10) yard penalty from the spot of the foul (exception, if the spot of the foul is in the End Zone, a Touchback will be awarded, and a 10-yard penalty will be enforced from the succeeding spot). There is no re-kick.

Rule 5 – Series of Downs

Line to Gain

Article 1.a. the line to gain for a series shall be established 10 yards in advance of the most forward point of the ball. If the line to gain is in the opponent's end zone, the goal line becomes the line to gain.

b. The line to gain is established when the ball is made ready for play before the first down of the new series.

c. there are no yardage measurements in the IFL. The runner or receiver either was short of or made the line to gain as decided by the calling Official.

Forward Progress

Article 2.a. the most forward point of the ball when declared dead shall determine to yardage need to achieve a first down.

b. when an airborne pass receiver completes a catch (control) inbounds and after an opponent has driven the receiver backward, the forward progress is where the player gained and maintained the firm control of the ball.

Penalty Declined

Article 3. if a penalty is declined, the number of the next down shall be whatever it would have been if the foul had not occurred.

Fouls by Both Teams, Offsetting

Article 4.a if offsetting fouls occur during a down, the down shall be repeated

b. any player who commits a foul that mandates disqualification or ejection must leave the game.

c. when there is a change of team possession during a down, and the team last gaining possession had not fouled before last gaining possession, it may refuse offsetting fouls and thereby retain possession after completion of the penalty for its foul.

Series of Downs

Article 5.a. the Offensive team shall have a series of four (4) downs to gain ten (10) yards.

b. a down shall be repeated following the application of a penalty, unless the penalty requires a loss of down, an automatic first down, or application of the penalty results in a first down.

c. if in a series of four (4) downs the Offensive team has not gained the required ten (10) yards, the ball is awarded to the opponents at the point where the ball became dead.

d. if the required ten (10) yards is gained, a new series of downs is awarded to the Offensive team.

e. a series of downs may end when the Offensive team kicks the ball out of bounds, or the ball crosses the Offensive line scrimmage, or when the ball is intercepted or recovered by the Defense.

f. a new series shall be awarded to the team in possession at the end of the down if a player of Team B first touches a scrimmage kick that has crossed the neutral zone (*exception: when the down is replayed*).

Rule 6 – Kicks

Section 1

Free Kicks

Article 1.a. a Free Kick is used to begin each half, after a successful or unsuccessful point after touchdown, after a successful field goal, or after a safety. A Free Kick may be used to score a Deuce at any time during the game (see 8.7.b).

b. the kickoff always occurs from the goal line and at any point between the sidewalls.

c. the goal line is the kicking team's restraining line. The receiving team's restraining line is the ten (10) yard line. The area between the two restraining lines is the neutral zone.

d. The clock shall start when the ball is legally touched by either team in the field of play between the goal lines.

e. a Free Kick is a live ball after it has traveled ten (10) yards or is touched by a member of the Receiving team and thus can be recovered by the Kicking team. The ball may not be advanced by the Kicking Team (*exception: when a Free Kick Deuce hits a goalpost/upright (includes the crossbar) and bounces into the field of play*). If the ball strikes the guidewires and bounces into the field of play or endzone, the ball is dead.

f. if the Kicking team recovers an onside kick, they may not advance the ball (*exception 8.7.b*). If the Kicking team recovers a fumbled kick return, K may advance the ball.

g. if a Receiving team player signals for a fair catch, either legal or illegal, the ball becomes dead immediately when any player gains possession of the kicked ball. Since there are no fair catch signals in the IFL, this is a foul. On a Free Kick, a Rouge is scored once the ball is possessed by the Receiving team in their endzone.

Infraction: Fair Catch Signal

Penalty: 5 yards from the dead ball spot

h. there are no limitations on using wedge formations on kick returns. Holding hands or interlocking arms by teammates during a play is allowed but is illegal once one (1) of the players is engaged with an opposing team player.

i. during a Free Kick, a player of the receiving team may block a player of the kicking team from the moment the ball is kicked provided the contact is made legally above the waist and from the front or side. Blocking below the waist is an illegal act.

Infraction: 6-1-h- through i - Illegal Block

Penalty: 10 yards

Free Kick Restrictions

Article 2.a. a member of the Receiving team must be given an unimpeded opportunity to catch a Free Kick. There are no fair catches allowed on Free Kicks.

b. if a ball is driven into ground, or touches the ground at any time, this protection ends.

c. if contact by Team A is deemed to be a foul for targeting or any other personal foul interfering with a Receiver's opportunity to catch a kick, this action will not be considered as interference if the ball has touched the ground.

Infraction: Kick Catch Interference for impeding a Receiver's opportunity to catch a Free Kick

Penalty: 10 yards from the spot where the dead ball belongs to Team B

Infraction: Targeting or Personal Foul/UNS

Penalty: 15 yards from the spot where the dead ball belongs to Team B

Free Kick Out of Bounds

Article 3.a. the first ten (10) yards of wall beyond the Kicker's restraining line is out of bounds. The ball is dead immediately if a Free Kicked ball touches the sidewall and the ball belongs to the receiving team at the out of bounds spot. Once the ball has traveled ten (10) yards or has been touched by the receiving team, the wall reverts to being in-bounds.

b. when a Free Kick is declared dead in possession of the kicking team in their endzone as a result of the kick (*no contact by the Receiving team, e.g. an awkward bounce off of the turf*) the ball will be awarded to the Receiving team at the Kicking team's one (1) yard line. No Safety is awarded.

c. when a Free Kick is declared dead in possession of the Kicking team in the Kicking team's endzone or goes over the Kicker's end wall as a result of the ball contacting a player of the Receiving team, a touchback is awarded, and the ball will be put in play by the Kicking team at their five (5) yard line.

d. if a Free Kick goes out of bounds through the Receiver's endzone after first touching the ground or a player of the receiving team it shall belong to the Receiving team at the Receiving team's five (5) yard line. A Free Kick is out of bounds through the endzone when the ball goes over the wall. The back or top of the wall is not out of bounds in the endzone on a Free Kick.

e. a Free Kick in either endzone remains alive.

f. if the Receiving team catches the ball in the endzone or in the field of play and simultaneously goes through a sidewall, end wall, or any door/gate, the play shall be immediately declared dead and there shall be a re-kick.

g. a Free Kick is only out of bounds when the ball goes over the wall. This applies to all walls within the field of play and applies throughout the entire Free Kick down.

h. if the kicked ball is simultaneously recovered by players from both teams or simultaneously touched by players from each team before going out of bounds, the ball belongs to the receiving team at the spot of recovery or at the spot where the ball went out of bounds.

Special Ball Spotting on Free Kicks

Article 4.a. when a Free Kick goes out of bounds through the endzone in the air before touching the ground or a player of the receiving team, on the first occurrence, the ball belongs to the Receiving team at the Receiving team's twenty (20) yard line. Any and all subsequent Free Kicks which go out of bounds through the endzone in the air before touching the ground or a player of the receiving team will result in the ball being placed in play by the Receiving team at the twenty-five (25) yard line.

b. if a Free Kicked ball goes out of bounds through the sideline, on the Kicking team's side of the receiving team's twenty (20) yard line, before touching the ground or a player of the Receiving team, it belongs to the Receiving team at the spot where it went out of bounds.

c. if a Free Kicked ball goes out of bounds through the sideline, on the Receiving team's side of the Receiving team's twenty (20) yard line, before touching the ground or a player of the Receiving team, on the first occurrence, the ball belongs to the Receiving team at the Receiving team's twenty (20) yard line. Any and all subsequent Free Kicks which go out of bounds through the sideline, on the Receiving team's side of the receiving team's twenty (20) yard line, before touching the ground or a player of the receiving team, will result in the ball being placed in play by the Receiving team at the twenty-five (25) yard line.

d. if a Free Kicked ball goes out of bounds through the sideline, after touching the ground or a player of either team and before possession is gained, the ball belongs to the Receiving team at the spot the ball went out of bounds. *(in this situation, at no time is the ball to be spotted inside the Receiving team's five (5) yard line following the Free Kick, unless a penalty enforcement requires the ball to be spotted inside the five (5) yard-line).*

e. if a Free Kick hits the ceiling, or any object suspended from the ceiling of the facility, while over the field of play, it is immediately dead, and it belongs to the Receiving team at the Receiving team's twenty (20) yard line on the first occurrence. Any and all subsequent Free Kicks hitting the ceiling will be placed in play by the Receiving team at the twenty-five (25) yard line.

Touching and Recovery of a Free Kick

Article 5.a. no Kicking team player may touch a free-kicked ball until after:

- i. the ball must also travel ten (10) yards before striking the wall
- ii. if touches a team B player
- iii. it breaks the plane of and remains beyond the Receiver's restraining line
- iv. it touches any player, the ground, an Official or anything else beyond the Receiver's restraining line

Once after the above, all players of the Kicking team are eligible to touch, recover or catch the kick.

b. Any other touching by the Kicking team is deemed illegal touching and is a violation which will allow the Receiving Team the opportunity to take the ball at the illegal touch spot.

c. If a penalty is accepted by either team for a foul occurring during the down or if there are offsetting fouls, illegal touching choice is canceled by rule.

d. illegal touching in the Kicking team's end zone is ignored.

Rouge

Article 6.a. a Free Kick either possessed or loose in the endzone remains live and either team may recover. The Receiving team must advance the ball out of the end-zone, or a Rouge will be scored for the Kicking team.

b. in the event of a Rouge, the ball will next be put in play by the Receiving team at their own five (5) yard line, unless a penalty enforcement requires the ball to be spotted inside the five (5) yard line.

Fouls by Kicking Team

Article 7. the Offended team has options for fouls committed by the Kicking team during a Free Kick play. The Receiving team may:

- decline the penalty and take the result of the play
- replay the Free Kick down with the 5-yard penalty “in the bank”
- take the result of the play and have the penalty enforced from the succeeding spot
- Note: If the Kicking team is called offside on an onside kick attempt and the Kicking Team recovers the kick, the penalty is accepted, and the ball belongs to the Receiving Team at the spot of the recovery.
There is no re-kick, and no yardage penalty is enforced.
- During a successful Deuce, if the Kicking team commits a 5 or 10-yard foul during the Free Kick and the kick is good, no Deuce is scored, and the ball is automatically spotted at the twenty-five (25) yard line and belongs to the Receiving team. The Free Kick will not be repeated.
- If both teams foul during a successful Deuce, the Free Kick down will be replayed.
- Fifteen (15) yard fouls will be added to the succeeding spot.

Onside Kick

Article 8. a kicking team player may not touch a Free Kick prior to the ball traveling ten (10) yards or having been first touched by a member of the Receiving team.

Infraction: Illegal Touching

Penalty: Receiving team may take possession of the ball at the point of illegal touching or may take the result of the play.

Free Kick Live Ball Fouls

Article 9.a. no member of either team may violate their respective restraining lines prior to the ball being kicked. (an exception is permitted for the Kicker or Holder)

Infraction: Offside, Live Ball Foul

Penalty: 5 yards. The offended team has the option to decline the penalty and take the result of the play, replay the Free Kick down with the 5-yard penalty “in the bank”, or take the result of the play and have the 5 yards enforced from the succeeding spot. Note: If the Kicking team is called offside on an onside kick attempt and the Kicking Team recovers the kick, the penalty is accepted, and the ball belongs to the Receiving Team at the spot of the recovery. There is no re-kick, and no yardage penalty is enforced.

b. no member of the kicking team may block a member of the receiving team until the ball has traveled ten (10) yards or been touched by the receiving team.

Infraction: Team A blocking during a Free Kick

Penalty: 5 Yards. The Receiving team can take the result of the play, accept the foul with a five-yard penalty "in the bank" and re-kick, or tack on the five-yard penalty at the end of the run.

c. if off-setting fouls occur during a Free Kick, the down will be repeated.

Fouls by the Receiving Team

Article 1.a. fifteen (15) and Ten (10) yard penalties for personal fouls and for unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are carried over and/or banked on the succeeding spot.

b. five (5) and ten (10) yard non-personal foul penalties are enforced by rule.

Section 2

Scrimmage Kicks

Article 1.a. a scrimmage kick is a kick by the Offense during one of its scrimmage downs.

b. a scrimmage kick can only be used for a field goal attempt or a point after touchdown attempt. There are no punts in the Indoor Football League.

Infraction: Illegal Kick

Penalty: 5 yards from the previous spot and loss of down if committed by Team A.

c. a team may fake a scrimmage kick from a scrimmage kick formation. A team may not fake a scrimmage kick from a drop kick formation. (exception, A team may only perform a scrimmage kick as outlined in 6-2-1.b)

d. the kicking team may request the ball to be spotted on any hash mark for a scrimmage kick play.

e. Defensive players may not initiate contact with the snapper until one second has elapsed after the snap.

f. when a failed field goal attempt becomes dead in the end zone, it is a touchback, and the ball belongs to the receiving team and is placed on the receiving team's five (5) yard line.

g. if the kicked ball is not touched and there is no effort by either team to recover the ball, the covering Official may declare the ball dead and award possession to the Receiving team at the spot of the dead ball.

h. if a player of the Kicking team is the first to touch the ball, it is "illegal touching", and the ball shall be awarded to the Receiving team at the point of the illegal touching, or the Receiving team may take the result of the play.

i. if the kicked ball becomes dead inbounds in the field of play beyond the line of scrimmage or goes out of bounds after first touching a player or the ground, whether behind or beyond the line of scrimmage, it belongs to the receiving team at that point.

Offensive Scrimmage Kick Formation

- Article 2.a. an Offensive scrimmage kick formation consists of five (5) linemen, a personal protector, a Kicker, and a Holder. The offense must be in a balanced formation.
- b. the Offensive linemen are limited to splits of no greater than twenty-four (24) inches.
 - c. the personal protector may line up anywhere inside the tackles or within one (1) yard of the outside shoulder of either tackle.
 - d. the Kicker/Holder must be in a standard/natural kicking formation and the Kicker, as designated by the Head Coach, must be in the game.
 - e. if a Kicker intends to attempt a drop kick, no Holder is required. The Holder will then be considered a second personal protector with the same alignment rules as the other protector which is lined up on the opposite side of the Offensive scrimmage kick formation.
 - f. no Offensive player may be in motion prior to or at the snap.
 - g. the Kicker/Holder may use a spotting aid (piece of tape) to mark where the Holder should place the ball.
 - h. no kicking pad or tee is permissible.
 - i. a player who kicks a scrimmage kick or a player who holds for a scrimmage kick cannot be contacted until the player is no longer considered a Kicker or Holder and the player is able to defend themselves. A Defensive player blocked into the Kicker or Holder will not be penalized unless, in the opinion of the Official there was no effort to avoid the contact. The restriction on contacting the Kicker or Holder is removed if the scrimmage kick is blocked, partially blocked, or touched by the Defensive player who tipped or blocked the ball unless in the judgment of an Official, such contact could have been avoided by the Defensive player.
 - j. a scrimmage kick formation is a formation with no player in position to receive a hand-to-hand snap from the Snapper and with at least a potential Holder and potential Kicker seven or more yards behind the neutral zone in position for a place kick. ***To qualify as a scrimmage kick formation, it must also be in accordance with Rule 6-2-1-b governing when scrimmage kicks can occur.***
 - k. when attempting a scrimmage kick, if the ball is spotted inside the Offensive team's four (4) yard line, the kicking team may request to have the ball moved to the four (4) yard line. In addition, the Kicking team may request the ball to be spotted on any hash mark. If the ball is moved to the four (4) yard line for a scrimmage kick, the Kicking team may not execute a planned fake scrimmage kick. ***NOTE: If there is a broken play because of a bad snap, muff, or bad placement, the Kicking team may attempt to reach the line to gain line, and the play will then be ruled as a run.***

Infraction: Planned Fake Kick - Illegal Procedure

Penalty: 5 yards, live ball foul, original spot enforcement.

Other Team A fouls once the ball has been relocated - Any Team A fouls will be carried over to the succeeding spot to include fouls after the ready for play signal and fouls during the kick play.

For Team B Fouls, the enforcement will be from the original spot before the ball was relocated by rule.

Scrimmage Kicking Team Restrictions

Article 3.a. pass eligibility of players in a kicking formation are determined by their position and number.

b. each player on the end of the line and any player in the backfield is an eligible pass receiver provided they are wearing an eligible receiver number. A player lined up in the backfield may not be made eligible by virtue of reporting to the Referee.

c. any player wearing an ineligible number and positioned at the end of the line may also become eligible by reporting to the Referee prior to play and the Referee shall announce such eligibility over the stadium microphone.

d. a Team A player wearing an eligible number may enter the game at an ineligible position on a scrimmage kick formation, however, he remains ineligible regardless of number (*Example: long snapper*).

e. a member of the Receiving team must be given an unimpeded opportunity to catch a Scrimmage kick. There are no fair catches allowed on Scrimmage Kicks.

Infraction: Kick Catch Interference for impeding a receiver's opportunity to catch a scrimmage kick

Penalty: 10 yards

f. if a Receiving team player signals for a fair catch, either legal or illegal, the ball becomes dead immediately when any player gains possession of the kicked ball. *Since there are no fair catch signals in the IFL, this is a foul.* On a Scrimmage Kick, once the ball is possessed in their endzone by the Receiving team, the ruling is a Touchback and the enforcement is from the 5-yard line. A scrimmage kick that hits the ground in the endzone, the net, upright or anything beyond the outer portions of the wall is dead.

Infraction: Fair Catch Signal

Penalty: 5 yards from the dead ball spot. it is illegal if a drop kick is not immediately completed after possession of the snap or backwards pass.

Infraction: Illegal Drop Kick

Penalty: 5 yards and loss of down from the dead ball spot if committed by Team A.

Defensive Scrimmage Kick Formation

Article 4.a. a Defensive scrimmage kick formation consists of four (4) linemen and four (4) linebackers/Defensive backs. There must be at least four (4) Defensive players on the line of scrimmage for the Scrimmage Kick.

b. there is no belt or box during any scrimmage kick attempt.

c. any Defensive linemen must be down in a three (3) or four (4) point stationary stance.

d. Team B must have a defender aligned head to head across from the Offensive Guards and Tackles on the line of scrimmage.

e. no Defensive player may line up directly over the Snapper. Defensive linemen are allowed to stunt or twist in an effort to block the scrimmage kick attempt. They may also drop into pass protection.

f. Defensive linemen aligned across from an Offensive Guard or Tackle must have their shoulders parallel to the line of scrimmage.

Infraction: Illegal Defensive Formation

Penalty: Live ball foul, 5 yards

- g. the remaining four (4) defenders may line up anywhere as long as they remain behind the Defensive line of scrimmage during a kick attempt. Players may leap or otherwise attempt to block a scrimmage kick while behind the Defensive line of scrimmage, but at no time may they use a teammate or opponent to enhance vertical height. The Defense may return or block for a return on an unsuccessful field goal attempt.
- h. during a scrimmage kick formation, only the four (4) down linemen may rush the Kicker and permitted to stunt or twist only on kicking formations to include rushing any gap or outside the Offensive End.
- i. if a Defensive player, other than the four (4) down linemen rushes the Kicker/Holder, it is a live ball foul for an illegal blitz and the Kicking team shall have the choice of accepting the result of the play or enforcing the penalty. *(exception, if the scrimmage kick is faked or the snap is fumbled or muffed, any restricted Defense may now blitz or rush the Kicker/Holder).*

Infraction: Illegal Scrimmage Kick Rush

Penalty: Live ball foul, 5 yards from the previous spot and an automatic first down.

Blocked Scrimmage Kick

Article 5.a. a blocked kick occurs when a kick from scrimmage is contacted by a member of the Kicking or Receiving team in such a way that prevents the ball from crossing the neutral zone.

- b. if the kick is blocked without going out of bounds, and does not cross the neutral zone, it may be recovered and advanced by a player of either team. If a Kicking team player recovers and advances the ball, it is considered as any other play from scrimmage.
- c. touching of a scrimmage kick by Team B in an attempt to block the kick within three (3) yards of the neutral zone is ignored.
- d. if a kick is blocked in the field of play or in the Kicking team's end zone and the ball goes out of bounds in the end zone, it is a safety for Team B.

Scrimmage Kick Out of Bounds

Article 6.a. if a scrimmage kick goes out of bounds through the receiving team's end zone it is a touchback, and the ball belongs to the Receiving team at their five (5) yard line.

- b. if a scrimmage kick goes out of bounds through the sideline beyond the receiving team's twenty (20) yard line, without touching the ground or a member of the Receiving team, the ball belongs to the Receiving team at its twenty (20) yard line.
- c. if a scrimmage kick goes out of bounds before reaching the Receiving team's twenty (20) yard line, the ball belongs to the Receiving team at the spot it went out of bounds.

- d. if a scrimmage kick goes out of bounds, through the sideline, after touching the ground or a member of either team and before possession is gained, it belongs to the Receiving team at the spot the ball went out of bounds.
- e. if a scrimmage kick contacts the end zone, sidewall, or end wall in Team B's end zone untouched by Team B, it shall be considered dead by rule.
- f. if a scrimmage kick hits the ceiling, or any object suspended from the ceiling of the facility, the ball is immediately dead and it belongs to the Receiving team at their twenty (20) yard line, or the Receiving team may choose to have a re-kick. Exceptions will be made for an obstruction suspended ten (10) or more feet from the general ceiling level inside of the fifteen (15) yard line. If a field goal or conversion attempt hits the obstruction, the attempt may be judged to be good if the Officials conclude that the attempt would have been successful in the absence of the obstruction. If the attempt is judged to be no good, then the ball is spotted at the five (5) yard line (*This exception is only applicable if the League Office and both teams mutually agree prior to the game and the League Office confirms the agreement with the Referee*).

Scrimmage Place Kick or Drop-Kicked Ball Striking the Uprights

- Article 7.a. if the kicked ball strikes the upright in flight and caroms between the two (2) uprights and over the cross bar, it is a successful scrimmage kick for points.
- b. if the kicked ball strikes the upright in flight and returns to the field of play, the ball is dead and the ball is awarded to the Receiving team at their five (5) yard line.
- c. if a kicked ball strikes a player or Official, provided it did not hit the ground, it is in play.

Fouls by Defensive Team

Article 7. the Offended team has options for fouls committed by the Defense during a scrimmage kick play. The Kicking team may:

- i. decline the penalty and take the result of the play
- ii. replay the down with the 5-yard penalty "in the bank"
- iii. take the result of the play and have the 5 yards enforced from the succeeding spot

Fouls by the Kicking Team

Article 1.a. fifteen (15) and Ten (10) yard penalties for personal fouls and for unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are carried over and/or banked on the succeeding spot.

- b. five (5) and ten (10) yard non-personal foul penalties are enforced by rule.

c. fouls for illegally kicking the ball on a Field Goal or Point After Try (PAT) are declined by rule, no retry.

Rule 7: Passing

Forward Pass

Article 1.a. a legal forward pass is a pass thrown by an Offensive team player from a point in or behind the neutral zone towards the opponent's end line to any eligible receiver.

b. a pass is forward if it first strikes the ground, a player, an Official, or anything else beyond the spot where the ball was released. All other passes are backwards passes. When in question, a pass thrown in or behind the neutral zone is forward, rather than backwards.

c. a pass is illegal if it is thrown by a player whose entire body is beyond the neutral zone when the ball is released.

d. it is thrown by a Team B player.

e. it is thrown after team possession has changed during the down.

f. it is the second forward pass during the same down.

g. it is thrown from in or behind the neutral zone after a ball carrier's entire body and the ball have been beyond the neutral zone.

Infraction: Illegal forward pass

Penalty: 5 yards from the spot of the foul and loss of down if by Team A prior to a change of possession

d. the Offense may make only one forward pass during a scrimmage down.

e. during a forward pass play, the ball is in the possession of the Offense until the pass is ruled complete, incomplete, or intercepted.

f. a forward pass is considered complete under the following conditions:

- i. when caught by an eligible receiver or by two or more such receivers simultaneously
- ii. when caught by a Defensive player or simultaneously by Defensive players
- iii. when caught simultaneously by players of both teams who maintain possession until the play is dead.
The ball will be awarded to the Offense

Backward Pass

Article 2.a. a backward pass is a ball thrown, batted, or fumbled by a player parallel to or in the direction of their goal line.

b. a backward pass striking the ground is not dead and may be recovered and advanced by either team.

c. when a backward pass goes out of bounds in the field of play, the ball shall be put in play by scrimmage snap at the outer hash mark perpendicular from the point where the ball went out of bounds.

Handoff

Article 3.a. a handoff occurs when the ball is handed by one Offensive team player to another behind the Offensive line of scrimmage.

- b. there is no restriction on the number of handoffs that can be made on any one scrimmage play.
- c. the player receiving a handoff behind the line of scrimmage must be an eligible Offensive receiver.

Eligibility of Receivers

Article 4.a. eligible Offensive players, whether on the line of scrimmage or in the backfield, must wear an eligible receiver number.

b. eligible receivers shall be numbered 0-49 or 80-99 (*exception: A player numbered 50-79 may declare as an eligible receiver prior to the play. The player must notify the Referee at start of every series*).

c. ineligible receivers shall be numbered 50-79. A player occupying the position of Snapper or Guard and is wearing a number other than 50-79 shall be declared ineligible through the down.

Infraction: Illegal Numbering

Penalty: 5 yards

d. receivers on the line of scrimmage may be covered up by another eligible receiver as long as the covered receiver meets the obligations in 7-4-a through c.

e. any Defensive player, whether or not the forward pass is legally thrown, is eligible.

f. if a forward pass is touched by or touches a Team B player or an Official, all players of both teams become eligible receivers.

g. no originally ineligible receiver shall be or have been more than three yards beyond the neutral zone until a Passer throws a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone. A player is in violation of this rule if any part of their body is beyond the three-yard limit. (*exception: If the passer is legally throwing the ball away and the ball lands near or beyond the sideline.*)

Infraction: Ineligible downfield

Penalty: 5 yards from previous spot

Complete Pass

Article 5.a. if an eligible receiver of either team catches a pass while off the ground and in bounds but is carried or pushed by the opponent in a manner which causes the player to land out of bounds in possession of the ball, but prior to landing out of bounds contacts the wall with any part of his body.

b. if an eligible receiver of either team catches a pass near the sideline and touches the ground in bounds, the team of the player receiving the ball shall retain possession even if the receiver's next step takes him out of bounds over the wall.

c. an airborne player who was inbounds, has control of a pass and lands over the wall and out of bounds must touch the wall and maintain possession for the pass to be complete.

Incomplete Pass

Article 6. when a forward pass is declared incomplete by rule, the ball will next be put in play at the point of last scrimmage snap by the passing team, with downs continuing, under the following conditions:

- i. the ball strikes the ground, the wall, a fan, or any overhead obstruction, etc.
- ii. the ball goes out of bounds, even if touched by a player in the field of play
- iii. when the Passer has commenced his forward passing motion with the ball moving forward and as a result of contact with an opponent, the ball leaves the Passer's hand in firm control and strikes the ground

Illegal Forward Pass

Article 7.a. a pass is illegal if:

- b. it is thrown by the Offense whose entire body is beyond the neutral zone when the ball is released.
- c. it is thrown by a member of the Defense after team possession has changed during the down.
- d. a second forward pass is thrown during the same down.
- e. the Passer, to conserve time throws the ball directly to the ground (1) after the ball has already touched the ground or (2) not immediately after controlling the ball.
- g. the Passer, to conserve time throws the ball forward into an area where there is no eligible Offensive receiver
- h. the Passer, to conserve yardage throws the ball forward into an area where there is no eligible Offensive receiver (*exception, it is not a foul if the Passer is or has been outside the alley and throws the ball so that it crosses or lands beyond the neutral zone. This applies only to the player who controls the snap or the resulting backward pass and does not lose possession to another player before throwing the forward pass*).

Infraction: Intentional Grounding

Penalty: Loss of down at spot of foul (point at which pass was thrown). If the pass is thrown from the Offensive endzone, a safety shall be awarded to the Defense.

Offensive Pass Interference

Article 8.a. pass interference restrictions start for the Offense at the snap.

- b. Offensive pass interference is contact by an Offensive player that interferes with a Defensive team player after the scrimmage snap during a legal forward pass crossing the neutral zone.
- c. Offensive team ineligible player contacts with Defensive team players within one (1) yard of the Defensive line of scrimmage is **not** Offensive pass interference.

Infraction: Offensive Pass Interference

Penalty: 10 yards

- d. once the pass is completed, any Offensive player may interfere with an opponent anywhere in bounds.
- e. members of the Offensive team are not permitted to use the Umpire as a “pick” in an attempt to get open from a Defender (Umpire Pick).

Infraction: a warning is given for the first team occurrence, with the Defense having the option to accept the result of the play or replay the down.

Infraction: each subsequent occurrence will result in Offensive Pass Interference against the Offense.

Note: if, in the judgment of the Officials, the Defense intentionally creates contact with the Umpire to draw a foul against the Offense, the Officials can issue an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty on the Defensive player.

With the Umpire Pick 2023 change from a Violation to an Infraction, if another live ball Infraction occurs when an Umpire Pick is also called, this would offset any Defensive fouls and the down will be replayed by rule.

Defensive Pass Interference

Article 9.a. pass interference restrictions start for the Defense when the ball is thrown, provided it is a legal forward pass.

- b. Defensive pass interference is interference caused by or contact initiated by a Defensive player on an eligible Offensive player while a legal forward pass crossing the neutral zone is in flight.
- c. such interference ruled as intent by a Defensive player to impede an eligible Offensive player or prevent an eligible Offensive player from catching a catchable forward pass.
- d. Defensive live ball fouls on an unsuccessful Try when there is no change of possession are penalized half the distance to the goal line and the down is repeated, or if the Try is successful, the penalty is declined by rule and the score is good or may be accepted by cancelling the score on a one (1) point Try and enforcing the penalty half the distance to the goal for a replay of the Try for two (2) points (*exception UNR/UNS fouls may be placed in the bank*).

Infraction: Defensive Pass Interference

Penalty: Automatic first down and the ball is placed at the spot of the foul if the spot is less than 15 yards from the previous spot. If the spot is more than 15 yards from the previous spot, the distance penalty is 15 yards from the previous spot.

When the ball is snapped on or inside the Team B-17-yard line and outside the Team B two (2) yard line, or if the foul occurs on or inside the two (2) yard line, then the penalty from the previous spot shall place the ball at the two (2) yard line with an automatic first down for the Offense.

No penalty enforced outside the two (2) yard line may place the ball inside the 2-yard line.

If the previous spot was on or inside the two (2) yard line, first down halfway between previous spot and the goal line

Intentional pass interference may be ruled by the game Officials, and an additional 15 yards penalty may be assessed.

d. it is not Defensive pass interference if

- i. the pass does not cross the line of scrimmage
- ii. Prior to a pass being thrown beyond the Defensive line of scrimmage, a Defensive player occupying a position beyond the line may use their hands or arms to ward off an opponent who threatens the Defensive position as a potential blocker
- iii. During the pass, Offensive and Defensive players make contact in a simultaneous attempt to catch or bat the ball
- iv. during the pass, the ball has previously been touched by an eligible player
- v. the pass is uncatchable
- vi. the pass does not cross the line of scrimmage
- vii. a Defensive player “face guards” without making interference or contact

e. when a pass has been intercepted by the Defense, any Defensive player may block an opponent anywhere within bounds provided that contact is made legally above the waist of an opponent.

Illegal Contact

Article 10.a. a Defensive player may not contact an eligible receiver who is more than five (5) yards beyond the Defensive line of scrimmage and is not a potential blocker.

b. a Defensive player may not initiate contact with a receiver in which they are not aligned with inside of the belt. This is regardless of whether the Passer is in the alley or not.

c. once an Offensive receiver reaches the same yard line as the Defensive player. They are no longer a threat to block the Defensive player. The fact the ball is not thrown in that direction does not alleviate the Defensive player from this rule. *Note: It is not a foul if two receivers cross at or close to the line of scrimmage in order to draw an illegal Defensive contact foul on the Defense.*

d. it is not a foul for a Defender to make contact on an eligible Offensive receiver within the first five (5) yards of the line of scrimmage as long as they are aligned with at the receiver at the snap. The Defensive player is not required to be lined up inside of the belt in order to contact the receiver.

Infraction: Illegal Defensive contact

Penalty: 5 yards and automatic first down

Illegal Touching

Article 11.a. it is illegal for an ineligible Offensive player to deliberately touch or catch a legal forward pass until an defensive opponent or an Official has touched the ball.

Infraction: Illegal touching or catching a forward pass

Penalty: 5 yards from previous spot, loss of down

Interception in the Goal Area

Article 12.a. an intercepted ball, which is downed in the Defensive team’s end zone, is a touchback.

b. an intercepted ball that is fumbled in the Defensive end zone may be legally recovered by the Offense for a touchdown.

c. any personal fouls by the Offensive team in the field of play or in the Defensive end zone that occur after the Defensive team intercepts a pass in their own end zone, where the ball is ruled dead, are administered from the succeeding spot (e.g. 5-yard line).

Infraction: Personal Foul

Penalty: 15 yards from the 5-yard line

Momentum Rule

Article 13. if a loose ball or kick is recovered by a Defensive player between the goal line and their five (5) yard line, and the player's momentum carries the player into their own end zone and the ball becomes dead, the ball is put in play at the point of control by the player. It is not ruled a safety.

Team B Personal Foul During Legal Forward Pass Play

Article 14. penalties for personal fouls by the Defense during a completed legal forward pass play are enforced at the end of the last run when it ends beyond the neutral zone. If the pass is incomplete or intercepted, or if there is a change of team possession during the down, the penalty is enforced at the previous spot.

Rule 8 - Scoring

Scoring plays

Article 1.a. the following points are awarded for scoring plays:

- i.Touchdown: Six (6) points
- ii.Field Goal by placement: Three (3) points
- iii.Field Goal by drop kick: Four (4) points
- iv.Safety: Two (2) points
- v.Safety on two-point conversion attempt: One (1) point
- vi.PAT by running/passing: Two (2) points
- vii.PAT by drop kick: Two (2) points
- viii.Returned PAT by Defense to Team A's end zone: Two (2) points
- ix.PAT by place kick: One (1) point
- x.Rouge (kickoff downed in end zone): One (1) point
- xi.Deuce: Two (2) points.

b. the team scoring the greater number of points during the regulation game and the overtime period(s) shall be declared the winner.

Types of Scoring

Article 2. **Touchdown** - a touchdown is scored when a player in possession of the ball is in the opponent's goal area or crosses/touches the plane of the opponent's goal line before the player is declared down.

Article 3.a. **Field Goal** - a field goal is scored when a player kicks the ball, whether by place kick or drop kick from a scrimmage kick formation, between the opponent's uprights and over the crossbar. When the field goal posts/uprights are suspended from a ceiling using chains extended from the uprights, a field goal is also scored when the legally kicked ball passes above the cross bar and uprights and between the support chains or wires.

- b. after being kicked, the ball cannot touch the ground before breaking the plane of the uprights.
- c. the ball in flight during a field goal attempt may be caught in the field of play or in the end zone and returned by a player of Team B (receiving team).

Article 4.a. **Safety** - a safety is scored when the ball becomes dead behind Team A's goal line, except from an incomplete forward pass, or becomes dead in possession of a player on, above, or behind his own goal line, or becomes dead by rule, and the defending team is responsible for the ball being there. (Responsibility means the ball is anywhere on, above or behind the defending team's own goal line by a member of the defending team's carry, kick, fumble, bat, backward pass, or snap.) *(exception: 6-2-3-f: a fair catch signal, when possessed by a member of the Receiving team in their end zone after a fair catch, there is no Safety.)*

b. a safety is also scored when there is an intentional grounding or illegal forward pass while in the end zone or any accepted penalty for a foul that leaves the ball on or behind the offending team's goal line. This includes penalties on Free Kicks committed by the Receiving team that occur in the Receiving team's end zone after the ball has been advanced out of the end zone.

Article 5.a **Point After Touchdown** (PAT or Extra Point) - after scoring a touchdown, the Offense will have an attempt to score again by run, pass, or kick from no closer than the three (3) yard line.

b. a two (2) point attempt may be tried from a scrimmage formation or may be attempted by a fake scrimmage kick formation. Two (2) points are awarded upon running or passing the ball successfully into the end zone from the opponents three (3) yard line.

c. if the Defense gains possession of the ball by fumble recovery, pass interception, or recovery of a blocked kick during a point after touchdown attempt, they may score two (2) points by advancing it into the Kicking team's end zone.

d. if the Defense or the Offense forces a safety on a PAT, the Defensive / Offensive team will be awarded one (1) point.

Article 6.a. **Rouge** - a rouge may only be scored on Free Kicks and is scored when a member of the Receiving team is unable to advance the Free Kick out of their own end zone, or a member of the Receiving team is declared down with the ball in possession in their own end zone following a Free Kick.

b. a Rouge will be awarded to the Kicking team if the Receiving team commits a penalty in the Receiving team's end zone and the ball has not been advanced out of the end zone. One (1) point will be awarded to the kicking team and the ball will be placed in play at the Receiving team's two and a half (2½) yard line (administration of half the distance to the goal for penalty).

c. if the ball is recovered by the Kicking team in the receiving team's end zone, this shall result in a touchdown for the Kicking team.

Article 7.a. **Deuce** - on any Free Kick during the game, if the ball passes through the goalposts/uprights(including the crossbar), two (2) points are awarded to the Kicking team. The ball will then be spotted at the B-5 as the touchback spot. If the ball strikes the guidewires and bounces into the field of play or endzone, the ball is dead.

b. if a Deuce attempt makes contact with a goalpost/upright (not the guide wires) and bounces back into the Endzone or field of play, the ball remains live. If the ball strikes the guidewires and bounces into the field of play or endzone, the ball is dead. If recovered by the Receiving team, they must advance the ball out of the Endzone (Rouge rules apply). If the ball is recovered by the Kicking Team, they may advance the ball (*this is the only exception for the Kicking team being able to advance a Free Kick*). If the ball hits any other structure or object (beyond, above, below, or outside) the goalposts/uprights or is not successful, regular Free Kick rules apply (*See Rule 6 Section1*).

c. If the kick is not good, regular Free Kick spotting rules will apply (*See Rule 6, Section 1*).

d. if the Kicking team commits a 5 or 10-yard non-personal foul during the Free Kick and the kick is good, no Deuce is scored, and the ball is automatically spotted at the twenty-five (25) yard line and belongs to the Receiving team. The Free Kick will not be repeated. For ten (10) yard and fifteen (15) yard personal fouls or unsportsmanlike fouls, they are added on to the succeeding spot.

e. if the Receiving team fouls during the kick and the kick is good, 5 and 10-yard fouls are declined by rule and the ball will be spotted at the five (5) yard line for the Receiving team. *(exception: UNR/UNS fouls and banked fouls will be enforced half the distance from the five (5) yard line).*

f. **If both teams foul during a successful Deuce, the Free Kick down will be replayed.**

Touchback

Article 8.a. a touchback occurs when:

b. a Team A player loses possession of a ball from the field of play over Team B's goal line, the ball goes out of bounds or is declared dead in Team B's possession in the goal area, and a new force was not imparted on the fumbled ball in the field of play by a Team B player. The ball is awarded to Team B at its five (5) yard line.

c. if a ball becomes dead in Team A's end zone or goal area and a Team A player is responsible for the player is responsible for putting the ball, other than by a scrimmage kick or a pass over the wall, from the field of play over Team B's goal line where a Team B player catches or recovers it prior to the ball going out of bounds in the goal area, the ball is awarded to Team B at its five (5) yard line. **If in an attempt by Team B to run the ball out of the goal area and Team B commits an infraction and the ball is declared dead in the goal area, this is a safety.**

Safety

Article 9.a. a safety occurs if a Team A player is responsible for the ball being ruled dead in Team A possession in their own end zone by an Official or with the ball going out of bounds not in player possession.

b. after a Safety, the ball belongs to Team A which will be Free Kicked from their goal line. There are no punts in the Indoor Football League.

Rule 9 – Conduct of Players and Coaches

Section 1

Personal Fouls

Article 1.a. all fouls in this section (unless specifically notated) and any other acts of unnecessary roughness are deemed to be personal fouls. Personal fouls in the Indoor Football League may carry either a 15-yard or 10-yard penalty for the foul.

b. a player shall be penalized for any personal foul or act of unnecessary roughness against an Opponent except if that contact, in the opinion of the Officials, is caused by the movement of the opponent.

c. personal fouls/acts of unnecessary roughness are live ball fouls and may be any other act of roughness or unfair play provided it is not excessive to warrant disqualification.

Contact Against the Snapper

Article 2. Defensive players may not contact the Snapper during a scrimmage kick until he has a chance to defend himself from the contact.

Infraction: Personal Foul

Penalty: 15 yards and an automatic first down

Contact to the Kicker/Holder

Article 3. when in a kicking formation, it is illegal to contact the Kicker/Holder when in the act of kicking from scrimmage.

Infraction: Personal Foul, Roughing the Kicker or Holder

Penalty: 15 yards and automatic first down.

Infraction: Running into the Kicker/Holder

Penalty: 5 yards

Exceptions to Roughing or Running into the Kicker include:

- i. If prior to kicking the ball, the Kicker has recovered a loose ball on the ground or made a motion to pass or run with the ball then the Kicker is not entitled to protection in these instances.
- ii. A Team B player who blocks or touches the ball may not be penalized for contacting the Kicker.
- iii. A Team B player may not be penalized when a blocker of the kicking team causes the Team B player to contact the Kicker.
- iv. If, in the Referee's opinion, a Team B player attempting to block the kick makes slight and incidental contact which does not affect the Kicker or the play, and the Kicker is only dislodged, it is penalized as running into the Kicker.

Roughing the Passer

Article 4.a. no Defensive player shall unnecessarily rough a Passer. When it is or should be obvious the ball has been thrown, the following acts are illegal (but not limited to):

- i. Targeting
- ii. high forcible contact to the head or neck area
- iii. forcible contact that is avoidable after it is obvious the ball has left the Passer's hand except is a Defensive player is blocked by Team A with a force so there is no opportunity to avoid the contact.
- iv. Low hits to the Passer at or below the knee area.

Infraction: Roughing the Passer

Penalty: 15 yards and an automatic first down

Tripping

Article 5. a player may not use his leg below the knee to hinder the progress of any opponent

Infraction: Tripping

Penalty: 15 yards and an automatic first down

Blind Side Block

Article 6. no player shall deliver a blind-side block by attacking an opponent with forcible contact. (exceptions: the runner or a receiver in the act of attempting to make a catch.) *Note: In addition, if this action meets all the elements of Targeting, it is a blind-slide block with targeting.*

Infraction: Personal Foul, Unnecessary Roughness

Penalty: 15 yards if by the offense, and 15 yards and automatic 1st down if by the Defense.

Removing Helmet

Article 7. any player who removes his helmet and uses it or uses any other object as a weapon will be penalized for unnecessary roughness and ejected from the game. Additionally, the player shall be suspended by the League for the remainder of the season.

Infraction: Personal Foul, Unnecessary Roughness

Penalty: 15 yards if by the offense, and 15 yards and automatic 1st down if by the Defense.

Helmet and Face Mask Fouls

Article 8. no player shall continuously contact an Opponent's head, helmet (including the face mask) or neck with hand(s) or arm(s) except against the Runner.

b. No player shall grasp and then twist, turn, or pull the face mask, chin strap or any helmet opening of an Opponent.

Infraction: Personal Foul, Unnecessary Roughness

Penalty: 15 yards if by the offense, and 15 yards and automatic 1st down if by the Defense.

Targeting

Article 9.a. no player shall target and make forcible contact against an opponent with the crown (top) of his helmet. This foul requires that there be at least one indicator of Targeting (see Note 1 below). When in question, it is a foul for Targeting.

b. no player shall target and make forcible contact to the head or neck area of a Defenseless opponent (see Note 2 below) with the helmet, forearm, hand, fist, elbow, or shoulder. This foul requires that there be at least one indicator of targeting (see Note 1 below). When in question, it is a foul.

Note 1: Targeting means that a player takes aim at an opponent for purposes of attacking with forcible contact that goes beyond making a legal tackle, a legal block, or playing the ball. Some indicators of targeting include, but are not limited to:

Launch – a player leaving his feet to attack an opponent by an upward and forward thrust of the body to make forcible contact in the head or neck area.

A **crouch** followed by an upward and forward thrust to attack with forcible contact at the head or neck area, even though one or both feet are still on the ground.

Leading with the helmet, shoulder, forearm, fist, hand, or elbow to attack with forcible contact at the head or neck area.

Lowering the head before attacking by initiating forcible contact with the crown of the helmet.

Note 2: Defenseless player:

- i. a player in the act of or just after throwing a pass.
- ii. a receiver attempting to catch a forward pass, in position to receive a backward pass, one who has completed a catch and has not had time to protect himself or has not clearly become a ball carrier.
- iii. a Kicker in the act of or just after kicking a ball, during the kick or the return.
- iv. a kick returner attempting to catch or recover a kick, one who has completed a catch or recovery and has not had time to protect himself or has not clearly become a ball carrier.
- v. a player on the ground.
- vi. a player obviously out of play.
- vii. a player who receives a blind-side block.
- viii. a ball carrier already in the grasp of an opponent and whose forward progress has been stopped.
- ix. a Quarterback any time after a change of possession.
- x. a ball carrier who has obviously given himself up and is sliding feet-first.

Infraction: Targeting

Penalty: 15 yards without a Disqualification

Clipping

Article 10.a. blocking an opponent, except the ball carrier, from the rear in such a manner that the blocker contacts across the back of the opponent's legs. It is not Clipping if the block:

- i. occurs in the area between the Offensive Guards, within two (2) yards of either side of the scrimmage zone and is executed by an Offensive player who, at the scrimmage snap, was positioned within this area
- ii. the initial contact is made on the side of the opponent
- iii. the opponent could see the blocker approaching and deliberately turned their body in order to be contacted from behind.

Infraction: Clipping

Penalty: 10 yards

Horse Collar Tackle

Article 11. all players are prohibited from grabbing the inside back collar of the shoulder pads/jersey or the inside collar of the side of the shoulder pads/jersey, or nameplate and immediately pulling the ball carrier down in any direction. **If a player pulls on an Opponent's hair, this is not considered a horse-collar tackle.** Additionally, this rule does not apply to a ball carrier or potential Passer who is inside the alley on the Offensive side of the ball.

Infraction: Horse Collar Tackle

Penalty: 10 yards and an automatic first down.

Leverage / Leaping

Article 12. no Defensive player, in an attempt to block, bat or catch a kick or apparent kick, may:

- i. step, jump, or stand on a teammate.
- ii. place a hand(s) on a teammate to get leverage for more height.
- iii. be picked up by a teammate, elevated, propelled or pushed.

Infraction: Personal Foul (Elevating Player)

Penalty: 10 yards and an automatic first down

Block Below the Waist

Article 13.a. blocking below the waist is contacting an opponent at or below the waist.

b. a Running Back stationary and in the Alley at the snap, may block the blitzing Linebacker or Defensive Ends below the waist while the ball is in the alley. **This is allowed on a running or passing play.** The running back may never block the Nose Guard below the waist.

c. the running back may not execute a block below the waist on a Defensive player if they are already engaged with another Offensive player.

- d. Offensive Linemen and Running Backs may never block below the waist on a Defensive player down field beyond the Line of Scrimmage. All blocks below the waist must occur behind or within one yard of the Offensive line of scrimmage and within the alley. *(exception: Offensive Guards may execute a block below the waist on their opposing Defensive lineman immediately following the snap provided the block occurs within two (2) yards of the outside of the alley).* This is the only situation in which a block below the waist that occurs outside of the alley is deemed legal.
- e. an Offensive lineman may only execute a block below the waist on the Defensive lineman lined up directly across from him. They may not execute a block below the waist on the blitzing linebacker.
- f. no blocking below the waist is allowed once the ball leaves the alley.
- g. no blocking below the waist on kick plays or change of possessions.

Infraction: Illegal Block

Penalty: 10 yards

Crack Back Blocking

Article 14.a. no Offensive player in motion or moving laterally (parallel) with the line of scrimmage may block a Defensive lineman. *(exception: an Offensive player in motion may legally block a Linebacker or Defensive back downfield).* A motion player may not block any of the three (3) Defensive linemen or be the lead blocker on a running play inside of the alley. *This is a reviewable foul added oin 2022.*

Infraction: Illegal Block

Penalty: 10 yards

Chop Block

Article 15. a chop block is an illegal act that occurs when two (2) or more players of the same team are engaged with an opposing team's player, one of whom is blocking at or below the thigh. Chop blocking is prohibited in all situations any place in the field of play.

Infraction: Illegal Block

Penalty: 10 yards

Section 2

Unsportsmanlike Fouls

Article 1.a. there shall be no unsportsmanlike conduct or any act which interferes with game administration on the part of players, coaches, or any other persons subject to IFL rules. This activity before or during the game or between periods will be penalized by Officials. Infractions for these acts by players are administered as either live or dead-ball fouls, depending on when they occur.

b. the penalty for an unsportsmanlike foul is enforced by rule depending on whether it is a live or dead ball foul.

If there is an unsportsmanlike foul called against each team, the fouls will cancel and there will be no yardage enforcement.

c. if the foul occurs by the Offense during a scoring play, the enforcement spot is the spot of the foul for live ball unsportsmanlike fouls. For dead ball unsportsmanlike fouls, the offended team can choose the following spots:

- i. After a touchdown, the penalty may be enforced on the point after touchdown or placed “in the bank” upon choice of the offended team
- ii. After a successful point after touchdown, the penalty is automatically placed “in the bank”

d. all kickoffs shall be from the goal line, and any penalty which would move the kickoff to another yard line shall be enforced on the first scrimmage play after the kickoff.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct – Contact fouls

Article 2.a. a player shall be penalized and may be disqualified from any further game participation for any unsportsmanlike contact foul against an Opponent. Unsportsmanlike fouls can be either live or dead ball fouls.

b. These fouls include, but are not limited to:

- i. Striking or swinging at an opponent with a fist, hand, knee, or elbow in any manner whether or not physical contact is made.
- ii. Kicking or kicking at an opponent whether or not physical contact is made.
- iii. Any act or action resulting in contact that the Referee considers warranting disqualification.
- iv. Taunting an Opponent.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct – Non-Contact Fouls

Article 3.a. a player or coach may be penalized for any act that, in the opinion of the Officials, is unsportsmanlike conduct. This includes, but is not limited to:

- i. Verbal abuse or objectionable gestures directed at opponents, Officials, or spectators.
- ii. Removing the helmet on the field play other than during a timeout, between quarters, while an injured player is being attended to, or to make repairs to the helmet which occurred during play.
- iii. Throwing the ball at an opponent, Official, or an occupant in the opponent’s bench area
- iv. Interfering with the placement of the Official’s flag marking the spot of a foul.
- v. Any ball that is put into the stands in a forceful manner (thrown or kicked), as determined by the Officials, into the stands will result in an Unsportsmanlike penalty against the team whose player threw the ball. Any player or coach on the visiting team keeping or giving a ball away to a fan after a play will result in a delay of game penalty. (A spiked ball after a score by the Visiting team will not result in a delay of game penalty)

Infraction: Unsportsmanlike Foul for a forceful throw into the Stands. Delay of game for handing/tossing a ball to a fan or keeping a ball.

Penalty: 15 yards and an automatic first down or 5-yard penalty. This foul can be carried over and/or banked.

- vi. Blatant and unfair acts designed to take time off the clock. The Referee will convert the foul or act to an Unsportsmanlike conduct foul (For purposes of disqualification, if committed by one player, the unsportsmanlike conduct foul will be credited to that player. **If committed by more than one player, the unsportsmanlike conduct foul will be credited to the Head Coach.**

Infraction: Unsportsmanlike Foul

Penalty: 15 yards and an automatic first down.

- b. a second Unsportsmanlike foul for a player or coach will result in a disqualification.
- c. if, in the judgment of the Officials, the Defense intentionally creates contact with the Umpire (Umpire Pick) to draw a foul against the Offense (pick play), the Officials can issue an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty on the Defensive player.

Infraction: Unsportsmanlike Foul

Penalty: 15 yards and an automatic first down.

With the Umpire Pick 2023 change from a Violation to an Infraction, if another live ball Infraction occurs when an Umpire Pick is also called, this would offset any Offensive fouls and the down will be replayed by rule.

Disqualifications

Article 4.a. any player or coach may be disqualified for any flagrant Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty.

b. a player or coach shall be disqualified for a second foul in the same game for Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

c. any player who is ejected during the season for fighting will be, at a minimum, suspended without pay from the next scheduled team's game at the discretion of the League. Additional fines and or suspensions can and will be distributed if deemed necessary by the League Office. If a player is ejected for fighting in any other game during the remainder of the season he will be fined and suspended as determined by the League Office.

d. any player who leaves his team box during a fight on the field will be ejected for the remainder of the game and suspended for a minimum of one (1) game. Teams can designate one (1) coach as a "peacekeeper" who is allowed to enter the field in the event of an altercation to help restore order. In the event this coach intensifies the altercation in the judgment of the Officials, the coach will be ejected and suspended a minimum of one (1) game. Any additional Coaches entering the field will be ejected from the game and suspended a minimum of one (1) game.

e. for purposes of this section, the definition of fighting is the swinging of arms or legs at an Opponent regardless of if contact is made, in a violent manner unrelated to football activity.

Infraction: Excessive Misconduct or Unsportsmanlike Infraction

Penalty: 15 yards and an automatic first down if committed by the Defense, plus disqualification.

f. any player or coach, who leaves the field, into the spectator area or engages a spectator in an aggressive or physical manner while on the field, will be ejected for the remainder of the game, and subject to suspensions and or fines as determined by the League Office.

g. any player or coach disqualified from the game must leave the visual confines of the arena and may not return. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action at the discretion of the League Office, including but not limited to, fines, suspensions, and forfeit of the game for the offending team.

Section 3

Holding

Article 1.a. holding is defined as using the hands and/or arms to grasp, encircle, or hinder an opponent, other than the ball carrier.

b. holding hands or interlocking arms during a play is prohibited. (exception: There are no limitations on using wedge formations on Free Kick returns. Holding hands or interlocking arms by teammates during a play is allowed but is illegal once one of the players is engages with an Opponent)

Infraction: Holding

Penalty: 10 yards

Block in the Back

Article 2.a. a block in the back is blocking an Opponent, except the ball carrier, from behind in such a manner that the player contacts the opponent's back, above the waist.

b. initial contact, which must be observed by the Official, and may not be called, if, in the Official's judgment:

- i. the block occurs in the area between the Offensive guards, within two (2) yards of either side of the line of scrimmage and is executed by an Offensive player who, at the snap, was positioned within the alley.
- ii. the initial contact is made on the side of the Opponent
- iii. the Opponent could see the blocker approaching and deliberately turned his body in order to be contacted from behind.

Infraction: Block in the Back

Penalty: 10 yards

Holding, Use of Hands/Arms

Article 3.a. Defensive players may use hands and arms to push, pull, or ward off Offensive players attempting to block them. A Defender when attempting to:

- i. reach the runner, may use their hands or arms to ward off or block an opponent in an attempt to reach a loose ball.
- ii. during a backward pass, fumble, or kick that they are eligible to touch.
- iii. during any forward pass that crossed the neutral zone and has been touched by any player or Official.

- c. when making no attempt to get at the ball or the runner, Defensive players must comply with Article 3, paragraphs a and b above.
- d. Defensive players may not use hands and arms to tackle, hold or otherwise illegally obstruct an Opponent other than a runner.
- e. Defensive players may ward off or legally block an eligible pass receiver until the player occupies the same yard line as the Defender or until the Opponent could not possibly block him.

Infraction: Defensive Holding

Penalty: 10

During a legal forward pass play in which the pass crosses the neutral zone, if before the pass is touched there is a contact foul by the Defense beyond the neutral zone against an eligible receiver (other than pass interference), the penalty includes an automatic first down.

Aiding the Runner

Article 4. it is illegal for an Offensive player to assist in the forward progress of the ball carrier by providing a pulling force.

Infraction: Aiding the Runner

Penalty: 5 yards spot of the foul

Section 4

Coaches on the Field

Article 1.a. during a team timeout, one (1) Coach is allowed on the field in the huddle. If a team comes to the sideline in front of the team box, there is no limit to the number of Coaches who may coach the players/team.

b. during live play, one (1) coach from each team is allowed on the field. The Coach must be at least ten (10) yards behind the Offensive team's line of scrimmage and be within a reasonable distance of the wall one (1) to two (2) yards at the snap and throughout the entire down. If an Official contacts a Coach more than one (1) yard off the wall during live ball play, this is sideline interference.

Infraction: Sideline Interference

Penalty: 15 yards and automatic first down if by the Defense

- c. between plays, the coach may come out to the numbers to converse with his team, but never beyond the numbers. [Only one player may go to the sideline to confer with the Coach \(see 1.13.d\)](#)
- d. special team Coaches are allowed on the field for scrimmage kicks. During the down, the Coach must be against the side wall.
- e. no coaches are allowed on the field during Free Kicks.

f. under no circumstance may a coach come inside the numbers to consult with players or protest an Official's call.

g. Coaches shall remain on their own team's sideline if the team benches are on opposite sides.

h. no previous player, whether hurt in the current or previous game(s) during the current IFL season, may participate as a Coach on the field of play.

i. if both team benches are on the same sideline, the Home team shall determine the side of the field the home team shall use.

i. if Coaches address Officials in a professional manner, Officials may respond to questions and offer explanations.

j. the second or subsequent sideline violations or Unsportsmanlike Conduct foul against a coach forfeits that sideline privilege for that coach for the remainder of the game.

Infraction: Sideline Violation

Penalty: first infraction is a 5-yard penalty; second or subsequent infractions by any Coach is a 5-yard penalty and a loss of sideline privileges for remainder of the game for that coach. This foul is a live ball foul treated as a dead ball foul.

Infraction: Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Penalty: 15 yards and automatic first down if by the Defense if not in violation of dead-ball enforcement.

k. if in the judgment of the Officials, a Coaches action are egregious, the Officials may penalize as an Unsportsmanlike Conduct foul which includes the forfeiture of sideline privileges for the first violation for that coach.

l. when sideline privileges are forfeited, a Coach may not stand on the walls to coach.

Infraction: Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Penalty: 15-yard live ball treated as a dead ball and loss of sideline privileges for the offending coach

m. if a Coach or bench player/personnel interferes or causes interference with the game, the ball, or a player because of being on the field or a non-player reaching into the field of play and interfering with the play, the team shall be penalized for interference. The game Officials may determine the penalty, which will be:

Infraction: Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Penalty: a minimum five (5) yards, or placement of the ball or forward progress where in the judgment of the Official, the player would have advanced, or the Officials may award a score where appropriate.

Rule 10: Penalty Enforcement

Overview

Article 1.a. in general, IFL penalty enforcement procedures are consistent with the college football game and rules. Any penalty or game situations not covered in this Rule book will be handled in accordance with college football rulings.

b. the Referee has the authority to rule on any situation not specifically defined in the IFL Rulebook. This is referred to as a “command decision” and is based on what the Referee believes is in the best interest of the game, teams, and the IFL. This action may also warrant a conference with the crew or another Official.

c. Loss of Down means that the down upon which the foul occurred is not repeated.

d. Spots - The enforcement spots are the:

- i. previous spot
- ii. spot of the foul
- iii. succeeding spot
- iv. spot where the run or scrimmage kick ends

3-and-1 Principle

Article 2.a. the Three-and-One Principle of penalty enforcement applies when the penalty statement for a foul does not specify the enforcement spot.

b. for the following fouls committed by the Offensive team behind the neutral zone, the penalty is enforced at the previous spot: illegal use of hands, holding, illegal block and personal fouls (*exception: If the foul occurs in Team A's end zone the penalty is a safety*).

c. when the team in possession commits a foul behind the basic spot, the penalty is enforced at the spot of the foul.

d. when the team in possession commits a foul beyond the basic spot, the penalty is enforced at the basic spot.

e. when the team not in possession commits a foul either behind or beyond the basic spot, the penalty is enforced at the basic spot.

Enforcement Spots

Article 3. for many fouls, enforcement spots are specified in the statement of the penalty. When the enforcement spot is not specified in the statement, the enforcement spot is determined by the 3-and-1 principle.

- i. **Dead ball:** the enforcement spot for a foul committed when the ball is dead is the succeeding spot
- ii. **Snap:** the enforcement spot for fouls occurring simultaneously with a snap is the previous spot
- iii. **Free Kick:**
 - a) the enforcement spot for Team A fouls occurring simultaneously with the Free Kick is the spot where the subsequent dead ball belongs to the Receiving team. (*exception – when the Kicking commits a 5 or 10-yard foul on a successful Deuce - see 8.7.c*)

- b) Fouls by Team B are enforced by the 3-and-1 principle.
- c) Banked penalties are enforced at the subsequent spot after the Free Kick.
- d) when double live ball fouls occur during a Free Kick down, the fouls off-set by rule and there will be a re-kick.
- iv. **Running plays:** The enforcement spots for fouls that occur during a running play in the field of play or end zone are as follows:
 - a) when the run ends behind the neutral zone, Previous Spot.
 - b) when the run ends beyond the neutral zone, End of the Related Run.
 - c) on running plays that have no neutral zone, End of the Related Run.
- v. **Running plays when the run ends in the End Zone after change of team possession** (not on a Try).
 - a) Succeeding spot, when a foul occurs after a change of team possession in the end zone and the result of the play is a touchback.
 - b) Goal line, when a foul occurs after a change of team possession in the field of play and the related run ends in the end zone.
 - c) **the basic spot is the five (5) yard line for fouls that occur after a change of team possession (not on a Try) in the end zone and the ball remains in the end zone where it is declared dead.**
 - d) Goal Line, for fouls by the opponents of the team in possession after a change of team possession in the end zone (not on a Try) when the run ends behind the goal line and any subsequent loose ball is recovered in the field of play.
- vi. **Pass plays:** The basic enforcement spot for fouls during a legal forward pass play is the previous spot.
- vii. **Roughing the Passer:**
 - a) on plays that result in an incomplete forward pass or with a change of team possession, previous spot
 - b) on a completed forward pass, the end of the last run when that run ends beyond the neutral zone
 - c) Offensive team facemask, illegal use of hands, holding, illegal blocks, and personal fouls behind the Offensive line of scrimmage are enforced from the previous spot. A Safety is scored if the foul occurs behind the Offensive team's goal line.
 - d) Scrimmage kick plays: The basic enforcement spot for fouls that occur during a legal scrimmage kick play before possession is gained or regained or the ball is declared dead by rule is the previous spot.
 - e) Post scrimmage kick enforcement: The enforcement spot is the spot where the kick ends when Team B fouls occur during a scrimmage kick play in which the ball crosses the neutral zone.
 - f) Team B fouls, behind the post scrimmage kick spot, are spot fouls.
- vii **live ball unsportsmanlike fouls are spot fouls in the IFL.**

Fouls during or after a Touchdown, Field Goal, or Try

Article 4.a. fouls by the non-scoring team during a down that ends in a touchdown:

- i. Ten (10) and fifteen (15) yard penalties for Personal Fouls and for Unsportsmanlike Conduct fouls are enforced on the Try or are placed "in the bank" at the option of the scoring team.
 - five (5) yard and ten (10) yard non-personal fouls are not enforced on the Try or the succeeding kickoff. Such penalties are declined by rule unless enforcement is made possible by illegal touching of a kick during a down.

- b. Defensive live ball fouls on an unsuccessful Try when there is no change of possession are penalized half the distance to the goal line and the down is repeated, or if the Try is successful, the penalty is declined by rule and the score is good or may be accepted by cancelling the score on a one (1) point Try and enforcing the penalty half the distance to the goal for a replay of the Try. (*exception, UNR/UNS fouls may be placed in the bank*).
- c. live ball fouls on scoring plays (Touchdowns and Field Goals) will be penalized by rule. To accept a score, the penalty must be declined. A successful Field Goal may be cancelled, and the penalty enforced by rule.
- d. when the Field Goal is successful, Team A shall have the option to decline the penalty or accept the score. Team A also has the option of canceling the score and to have the penalty enforced from the previous spot and replay the down. Team A may accept the score with penalties for ten (10) and fifteen (15) yard personal fouls and unsportsmanlike conduct fouls 'banked' and enforced at the succeeding spot including an extra period.
- e. penalties for live-ball fouls treated as dead-ball fouls and those for dead-ball fouls after a Field Goal down are enforced at the succeeding spot.
- f. penalties for fouls during and after a Try are administered under Rule 10.5.
- g. live ball personal fouls by the Defense on scoring plays shall be enforced and the scoring team may choose to enforce on the PAT or place the foul "in the bank". If the penalty occurs in Overtime, it may be enforced at the succeeding spot.
- h. dead ball fouls by either team after a Try are automatically put "in the bank".

Note: banked and non-banked fouls may offset in distance, but, because the indoor field is smaller, it is important to enforce the distance in the order of occurrence, as most likely one or more of the enforcements will be a half the distance penalty.

Fouls after Team B possession on a Try

Article 5.a. penalties against either team are declined by rule (*exception: Penalties for Flagrant fouls, Unsportsmanlike Contact and Dead Ball Personal Fouls are placed "in the bank"*).

- b. a score by the team committing a foul during the down is cancelled (*exception: Live-ball foul treated as a dead-ball foul*).
- c. if both teams foul during the down and Team B had not fouled before the change of possession, the fouls offset, the down is not replayed and the Try down is over. If fouls that would normally offset and result in repeating the down occur, the penalties offset, any score is cancelled and the Try down is not repeated.

Half the Distance Enforcement Procedures

Article 6. no distance penalty, including on a Try, shall exceed half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line.

Penalty Enforcement Fundamentals

Article 7.a. any penalty may be declined, but a disqualified player must be removed.

- b. fouls for Illegal blitz, twist, or stunt will carry a five (5) yard penalty and an automatic first down for the Offense from the previous spot or acceptance of the result of the play. This enforcement does not pertain to Defensive alignment fouls which, if accepted, are penalized five (5) yards from the previous spot.
- c. when a foul is committed, the penalty shall be completed before the ball is declared ready for play for the next down.
- d. a foul that occurs simultaneously with the snap or Free Kick is considered as having occurred during that down.
- e. when two (2) or more live ball fouls are committed by the same team, they are called multiple fouls, and the Referee shall explain penalty options to the field captain of the offended team, who may then elect to accept only one of the penalties.
- f. if live ball fouls are committed by both teams, they are called double fouls and each such foul is an offsetting foul. The penalties cancel each other, and the down is replayed. *(exception: When there is a change of possession during the down or at the end of the down by rule, the team last gaining possession may decline offsetting fouls and thereby retain possession after completion of the penalty for its infraction if it had not fouled before its last gaining possession).*
- g. when Team B's foul calls for post scrimmage kick enforcement, Team B may decline offsetting fouls and accept post scrimmage kick enforcement.
- h. **any dead ball fouls, or live ball fouls which are administered as dead-ball fouls, will offset.**
- i. when a live ball foul is committed by one team and one or more dead ball fouls are committed by either team, both the live ball and dead ball fouls are enforced, in the order of their occurrence, provided that the live ball foul is enforced first.
- j. if either half ends with a penalty that can be placed "in the bank", the offended team may:
 - a) Accept the penalty and enforce it on the Try.
 - b) Place the penalty "in the bank", thereby extending the half with an un-timed Free Kick or kicks, followed by a scrimmage down as necessary to enforce fouls that are by definition "in the bank".
 - c) Elect to have the foul banked and carried over to the second half or overtime.
 - d) Decline the penalty.
- k. when penalties are to be enforced for fouls that occur during or after Free Kick downs when there is a penalty "in the bank", all banked fouls shall be completed last and may not offset non-banked fouls.

Note: banked and non-banked fouls may offset in distance, but, because the indoor field is smaller, it is important to enforce the distance in the order of occurrence, as most likely one or more of the enforcements will be a half the distance penalty.

Rule 11: Officials Duties

Article 1.a the Officials' jurisdiction begins 90 minutes before the scheduled kickoff and ends when the Referee declares the game has ended.

b. it is expected that a minimum of two Officials will take the field 60 minutes before kickoff or when both teams take the field or according to the game day management sheet provided by the Home team.

c. at 90 minutes before kickoff, both the Home and Visiting Coaches meetings will take place in their respective locker rooms by the Referee and the Umpire.

d. officiating responsibilities and mechanics are specified in the current version of the IFL Official's Manual, revised annually under the guidance of the Supervisor of Football Officiating and the IFL Commissioner. IFL Officials are responsible for knowing and applying the material in the Manual and this Rule Book.

Rule 12: Instant Replay

Purpose

Article 1.a. instant replay is a process whereby video review is used to confirm, reverse, or let stand plays which are reviewable when made by the game Officials.

b. the instant replay process operates under the fundamental assumption that the ruling on the field is correct.

c. the replay Official is the Referee. The Referee can seek input from one member of his crew in the replay decision process. This additional Official may view the video along with the Referee and provide input.

d. the time to conduct the review shall not exceed two minutes from the start of the film review, as timed by the assistant Official. If the review has end of game impact or has multiple aspects as a part of the review, it should be completed efficiently but will have no stated time limit.

e. the Referee will reverse a ruling if and only if the video evidence convinces him that the ruling was incorrect. The IFL uses the standard if the video supports changing the call, the Referee will change the call. Otherwise, the call is confirmed or stands.

Reviewable plays

Scoring

Article 2. a potential touchdown, field goal, or safety (*exception*: Safety by penalty for fouls that are not specifically reviewable).

Passes

Article 3.a. pass ruled complete, incomplete, or intercepted anywhere on the field of play or in endzone.

b. forward pass touched by any player or Official, including whether the touching is beyond or behind the line of scrimmage.

c. forward pass or forward handing when a ball carrier is or has been beyond the neutral zone, or after a change of possession.

d. pass ruled forward or backward. If pass is ruled forward and is incomplete, the play is only reviewable if there is a clear recovery of a loose ball in the immediate continuing action after the loose ball. The clear recovery may be reviewed on video or confirmed by the on-field Officials. If the call is reversed to a backwards pass and there is a clear recovery, it belongs to the recovering team at the spot of recovery and any advance is nullified.

e. [Illegal contact by a defender not aligned, only if the contact occurs inside the defensive belt.](#)

Dead Ball and Loose Ball

Article 4.a. loose ball by a potential Passer ruled a fumble.

b. loose ball by a Passer ruled incomplete forward pass when there is a clear recovery in the immediate continuing action after the loose ball. If the Referee does not have video evidence of a clear recovery or does not have confirmation of the recovery by the Officials on the field, the ruling of incomplete stands. If the Referee rules fumble and the ball is recovered, the ball belongs to the recovering team at the spot of recovery and any advance is nullified.

c. live ball not ruled dead in possession of a ball carrier.

d. loose ball ruled dead or live ball ruled dead in possession of a ball carrier when the clear recovery of a loose ball occurs in the immediate continuing action. If the ball is ruled dead and the Referee does not have video evidence as to which team recovered or does not have confirmation of the recovery by the Officials on the field, the dead ball ruling stands. If the Referee rules that the ball was not dead, it belongs to the recovering team at the spot of recovery and any advance is nullified.

Pre-Snap or Fouls at the Snap

Article 5. certain fouls in the IFL are reviewable by the Referee if challenged by a Coach. The following are the reviewable fouls prior to or at the snap:

- linebacker not stationary at the snap
- Illegal blitz
- Illegal twist
- Belt violations to include alignment fouls
- **Motion man in the Box at the snap who entered the box and is running toward the line of scrimmage in a perpendicular movement.**
- False start *(must be visible to the eye. A frame-by-frame reference will not be utilized to detect a foul by replay.*
- Defensive lineman not down in stance at snap. Frame by frame reference will be used to detect this foul by replay.
- Kicking or receiving team offside on any free kick.

Kicks

Article 6.a. upon any challenge of an onside kick, all aspects of the kick will be reviewed (e.g., Kickers/Receivers off-side, blocking before the ball goes ten (10) yards, illegal touch, etc.)

b. illegal scrimmage kick rush

c. Defensive alignment on a Scrimmage Kick

Post Snap Fouls

Article 7.a. an Umpire Pick

b. fan interference

c. player bench interference

d. a motion player may not block any of the three (3) Defensive linemen or be the lead blocker on a running play inside of the alley.

Miscellaneous

Article 8.a. with less than one minute in either half and a replay review results in a reversal, and the correct ruling would not have stopped the game clock, then the clock will be reset to the time the ball is declared dead by replay. The Referee will subtract ten seconds from the game clock and the game clock will restart on the Referee's signal. Either team may use a timeout to avoid the clock runoff.

b. if time expires at the end of the half or game, and the clock would start on the Referee's signal after review, there must be at least 3 seconds remaining when the clock should have been declared dead to restore time on the clock. With less than 3 seconds remaining on the game clock, the half or game is over unless Team A has a timeout remaining. This does not impact situations when the clock is stopped and will remain stopped until the snap such as an incomplete pass or a ball carrier out of bounds.

c. unless the challenge is an onside kick, where all aspects of the kick will be reviewed, the Head Coach must be specific as to which aspect of the play is being challenged, as this is the only aspect that can be reviewed by the Referee. Replay review will not create a foul unless the Head Coach's challenge is specific to whether a foul occurred or not.

d. it is the intent of this rule to permit the Head Coach to challenge situations which arise during the game. For purposes of this rule, the game includes any overtime period. The Head Coach is permitted two (2) challenges per game, including overtime. The challenging team must have a timeout remaining to initiate a challenge. *If the challenging coach has won both challenges in a game, they will be awarded a third challenge for that game. A third awarded challenge will not carry over to any overtime periods.*

e. by rule, a replay review will not create a foul which was not called on the field during the play. The replay must be initiated by a Coach and specifically challenges either the foul and or what was or was not called by an Official on the field. In any event, if at any time during the review process an additional foul is discovered, the review process will not create this additional foul (*exception being during an onside kick review*). The additional foul will be ignored and will not be enforced.

f. under 60 seconds of either the 2nd or 4th quarters, a Coach may challenge whether the time on the game clock should have been stopped when a player is ruled down or is out of bounds by rule.

g. a team Coach is not permitted to challenge a ruling where if a foul is created or reversed, it would permit his team to benefit from its own mistake.

Official Initiated Replay

Article 9.a. an Official may stop a game and initiate a Replay to review any aspect of the ejection to include, but not limited to, whether the action occurred, and the number of the player being ejected.

b. timing or spotting in the final sixty (60) seconds in either half.

Initiating the Replay Process

Stopping the Game

Article 10.a. the Head Coach of either team may request that the game be stopped, and a play be reviewed by challenging an on-field ruling. The following process should be followed by Officials and Coaches.

- a head coach initiates a challenge by calling a timeout and throwing the red challenge flag prior to the ball being snapped for the next play. Once the challenge flag is thrown, the challenge must go forward and may not be withdrawn by the Coach.
- after an Official signals time out, the Referee will approach the Head coach. The Head Coach must immediately inform the Referee which aspect of the play is being challenged. The Head Coach must be specific as to what is being challenged (exception 12-5-f).
- after the review has been completed, if the on-field ruling is reversed, the team's timeout will not be charged. Despite a reversal, this still counts against the team's two (2) challenge count for the game or overtime.
- If after a review has been completed, and the on-field ruling is not reversed, the charged team timeout counts as one of the three (3) permitted to the team for the half and/or one (1) permitted in an extra period.
- A Head Coach may not challenge an on-field ruling if all the team's timeouts have been used for that half or in any overtime period (*exception – 12.8.c*).
- If a Head Coach requests a team timeout to challenge an on-field ruling and the play being challenged is not reviewable by rule, the timeout shall count as one of the three permitted team timeouts during that half of the game or the one permitted in that extra period and the coach loses that challenge.

Procedure for an Initiated Replay

Article 11.a. if the game has been stopped due to a Head Coach challenge, the Referee shall announce: "The (Team Name) Head Coach has challenged the ruling of (reason for the challenge). The play is under further review."

b. all reviews shall be based upon video evidence provided by the arena replay center, the challenging coach's iPad, or the arena tele-screen if necessary. The Official may use any video available to the Official in order to make a ruling on the challenge.

c. the Referee and the designated Communicator crewmember will move across the field to a pre-determined area away from the team benches. There shall not be a player or coach within 15 yards of the replay viewing area. Violation of this 15-yard cushion will result in a dead ball Unsportsmanlike foul against the coach, 15-yard penalty and a loss of sideline privileges.

d. on-field Officials should keep note of the down, distance, and game clock time for the next play, should the play stand. All Officials will ensure that any on-field coaches from either team remains at least 15 yards away from the Referee and Communicator, while they are reviewing the play. The Referee's key in conducting the review is to ensure the post-challenge ruling is correct, given the available technology provided by sources listed in (b) of this section. If an unforeseen situation arises, the Referee will make a decision based upon the IFL Rules "Command Decision" under Rule 10.1.b of the IFL Rulebook.

e. after the Referee has reviewed the play, the Communicator will return any iPad to the team providing the video. The Referee will then make one of the following announcements:

- i. If the video evidence confirms the on-field ruling: “After further review, the ruling on the field is confirmed.”
- ii. If there is no evidence to reverse the on-field ruling: “After further review, the ruling on the field stands.”
- iii. If the on-field ruling is reversed: “After further review, the ruling is [followed by a brief description of the video evidence followed by a brief description of the impact of the ruling].”

Standard for Replay Reviews

Article 12. to reverse an on-field ruling, the Referee in his discretion must be convinced by the video replay provided that a reversal is warranted. Discretion does not mean the Referee must be convinced “by indisputable video evidence through one or more video replays provided to the monitor” which is the NCAA standard. Rather, the Referee will use his discretion and if the call needs to be changed based on what the Referee sees, the Referee will change the call. The Referee will utilize a “get it correct” standard to the best of his ability, utilizing IFL Philosophy and review of the play.

Appendix A: Summary of Penalties

Automatic First Down Penalties

- Defensive Pass Interference (spot or 15 yards)
- Illegal Contact with eligible receiver (5 yards)
- Defensive Holding (10 yards) on legal forward pass
- Unsportsmanlike penalties, against the Defense
- Personal Fouls, against the Defense
- Illegal Scrimmage Kick Rush
- Fan Interference (when Visitors have possession)
- Illegal Blitz
- Illegal Twist
- Horse Collar tackle
- Illegal Player Elevation on Kick
- Block Below the Waist
- Clipping
- Tripping

Loss of Down Penalties

- Illegal forward pass or handing
- Intentional grounding
- Illegal Batting or Illegal Kicking
- Illegal Touching by an Ineligible Player
- Illegal Kick

5-Yard Penalties

- Delay of Game
- Illegal Substitution
- Illegal Motion
- Offensive motion man in the Box at the snap is a motion man in the Box at the snap who entered the box and is running toward the line of scrimmage in a **perpendicular** movement (Illegal Motion).
- Defensive man in box at the snap
- Blitzing/Twisting
- Illegal Formation, Offense
- Illegal Defense
- Illegal planned fake scrimmage kick when ball moved to Team A's 4
- Illegal Defensive contact with an eligible receiver
- Illegal numbering
- Illegal Procedure

- False Start
- Snap infraction
- Offside, Defense
- Coach or bench interference/field violation (warning first)
- Illegal forward pass/handing
- Illegal scrimmage kick rush
- Ineligible downfield player
- Illegal touching by an ineligible receiver
- Running into Kicker/Holder
- Aiding the runner (pulling force)
- Illegally tossing, handing, keeping or giving away a game ball to the crowd or not surrendering the ball to an Official (Vising team enforcement) (*A spiked ball after a score by the Visiting team will not result in a delay of game penalty*)
- Illegal Kick
- Illegal Substitution
- Illegal Team A block on a Free Kick (Onside)
- Handing/Tossing a ball by Visiting team into the stands

10-Yard Penalties

- Holding (Offense and Defense)
- Block in the Back
- Fan interference (when Visitors are in possession)
- Illegal block (BBW, CHB, Cut, Crack)
- Clipping
- Kick Catch Interference
- Offensive Pass Interference
- Illegal Kicking or Illegal Batting
- Horse Collar Tackle

15-Yard Penalties

- Personal Fouls
- Late Hits, Pulling opponent off a pile
- Blindside Blocks
- Contacting an Opponent out of bounds
- Roughing the Passer
- Roughing the Kicker, Holder, or Snapper
- Face Mask (grab and twist)
- Unnecessary Roughness
- Fighting
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct, including contact with an Official

- Live and/or dead ball unsportsmanlike
- Defensive Pass Interference, if the spot of the foul is greater than fifteen (15) yards from the previous spot
- Intentional Pass Interference, in addition to any other distance penalty assessed against the Defense
- Tripping

Disqualifying Fouls

- Fighting
- Two (2) Unsportsmanlike fouls
- Contact with an Official
- Flagrant live ball fouls
- Player or Coach entering spectator area in aggressive/angry manner

Special Enforcements

Fouls on Free Kick Downs

- For Kicking team offside fouls, and when the Receiving team recovers, the Receiving team has the option to: decline the penalty and take it where it lies, re-kick the ball with the penalty “in the bank” or take the result of the play and have the 5-yards enforced from the succeeding spot.
- If the Kicking team is called offside on an onside kick attempt and the Kicking Team recovers the kick, the penalty is accepted, and the ball belongs to the Receiving Team at the spot of the recovery. **There is no re-kick and no yardage penalty is enforced.**
- if the Kicking team commits a five (5) or ten (10) yard non-personal foul during the Free Kick and the kick is good, no Deuce is scored, and the ball is automatically spotted at the twenty-five (25) yard line and belongs to the Receiving team. The Free Kick will not be repeated.
- Ten (10) and fifteen (15) yard personal fouls or unsportsmanlike fouls are added on to the succeeding spot.
- If both teams foul during a successful Deuce, the Free Kick down will be replayed.

Fan Interference

- Home team may receive no benefit and receives no replay
- Visiting team receives ten (10) yards and an automatic first (1st) down.

Penalties occurring after a change of possession in Overtime

- By Team B: No score for B can occur
- By Team A: Penalties automatically declined, and Team B awarded its possession on twenty (20) yard line (*exception, Flagrant Fouls, Dead ball fouls and live ball fouls enforced as dead ball fouls, enforced at succeeding spot*).

- By both teams: Penalties automatically declined, and the down is not replayed

Banked Penalty

- Any penalty which cannot be enforced on a Free Kick, but that will be administered prior to the first scrimmage down following a Free Kick or kicks.

Banked fouls are enforced in order of occurrence and after any live ball fouls which occur on subsequent plays.