

The Point After II

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WISCONSIN FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION, VOL. 31, No.1, SUMMER 2023



Editor: Tom Swittel • swittelt@gmail.com • 414-315-1131

WFCFA Executive Director: Dan Brunner • brunnerd@wifca.org • 414-429-3139

Assistant Editor/Executive Assistant: Charna Kelsey • PO Box 8, Poynette, WI 53955 • office@wifca.org • 608-635-7318

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Executive Director, Dan Brunner



Dan Brunner

Hopefully, this issue of *The Point After II* finds you off to a great start to what we have all been looking forward to, FOOTBALL! There is nothing that sets the tone for a successful school year, like football. The student body looks forward to those Friday Night Lights! Enjoy every minute of it.

WFCM MEMBERSHIP

The WFCM membership includes clinic registration! I am confident that no state has a better deal for their members. We are striving for 100% of the football coaches in the state to become WFCM members. We need all of you to help us achieve that goal. The WFCM membership program allows you to combine high school and youth programs for your staff rate.

The Membership Dues are:

- Small Staff (Maximum of 9 members) \$405 (\$45/member) Additional members (10-13) - \$55 each
- Large Staff (Maximum of 14 members) \$630 (\$45/member) Additional members - \$55 each
- Unlimited 15+ \$775
- In State Individual - \$55
- Out of State Individual - \$60

NOTE:

- Admission to the Annual Clinic is included in Membership Fee for the current calendar year, when you sign up prior to the clinic.
- You may combine Youth staffs and High School staffs for all 3 staff rates!
- Fees are not prorated for late sign up.
- WFCM membership is required for all Award Programs (All-State, All-Star, COY, etc...). Please see list of membership benefits, printed on page 4.

WFCM CLINIC

Please remember to set aside April 4, 5, & 6, 2024 for our Annual Gathering in Madison! I have included a couple photos taken in the UW sessions. The 2023 clinic was as good as I can remember and the packed meeting rooms tell the story. I can't wait till next year's clinic!

WFCM MENTOR MANUAL

WFCM HOF member and Past President, Bill Collar, along with a select group of current and past WFCM coaches have revised and up-

dated the WFCM Mentoring Manual. It is the finest of its kind anywhere. It is a valuable resource for coaches at all levels. Sales of copies have 100% of the proceeds going toward the Bill Collar Lineman Scholarship Fund. Ordering information is found later in this issue.

NHSACA HOF & COTY

A special congratulations to Jerry Golemiewski and Dan Juedes, who were inducted into the National High School Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame this past July. Congrats Coaches, on a well-deserved honor! In addition, we had two finalists for the National Coach of the Year and Assistant Coach of the Year. Ken Krause, Muskego and Mike Lecher, Pewaukee were both honored for being among the 8 finalists in their respective category.

CONCLUSION

One of our partner's is the Jason Foundation. Their mission is to help teachers/coaches identify young people struggling with suicidal thoughts. We, as coaches, need to educate ourselves so we can identify the signs that one of our players may be in need of help. I will continue to send you information from the Jason Foundation to help you along those lines. Keep in mind that our youth are still struggling from what they experienced during the pandemic. Keep up the good work and enjoy this year's journey with them!



UW-Head Coach, Luke Fickell
Friday evening, April 3, 2023
The Marriott, Middleton, WI

UW-Offensive Coordinator and QB Coach, Phil Longo
Friday evening, April 3, 2023
The Marriott, Middleton, WI



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President, Brian Kaminski



Brian Kaminski

Football is back!! Though I'm not sure there truly is ever an off-season for coaches. I hope everyone is doing well and eager for those Friday nights under the lights. The lessons learned on and off the field of play will last a lifetime. Those relationships you form with your team will be endless and it's always great when a former player stops in to say hi.

The WFCAs clinic and the WFCAs combine were as good as ever. Please mark your calendars now for the WFCAs clinic this year. The dates are April 4th-6th. If you haven't joined the WFCAs please consider doing that now. We are only as strong as our membership. We are here to support you!! If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to reach out to my-

self or your region representative. The combine had a total of 505 athletes participate at NX Level fitness. Thanks to everyone for helping make this event a giant success. We had over 75 coaches from the collegiate level in attendance. What a great way for our student athletes to be seen in front of at least 24 different schools.

The WFCAs All-Star game was a huge success as well. Thanks to everyone who helped make that a special week for everyone involved. We raised \$386,106 for the Wisconsin Children's Hospital. The players and coaches chosen for this honor have left a legacy that will live for generations. Together, these all-stars have raised more than \$5 million for Children's Wisconsin. Don't forget to nominate your players who you feel will represent your program in a positive way after the season.

Don't forget to enter your teams and players stats in WisSports that information is needed when conferences select who to bring forward to the all region meetings. Then who gets moved onto the all state process. We will send a reminder email out about the process and when those nominations need to be completed. We know it's a busy time of the year but we are doing it for our student athletes who deserve to be recognized.

We are in the process of gathering information for our post-season meeting with the

WIAA. You should have received a survey from the WFCAs asking for your thoughts on the state of football and questions about the postseason. It's important we get our membership to take the time to fill out the survey. We want to go into that meeting with the WIAA knowing what our coaches want to do for the postseason. This will help us make decisions at the meeting and let us know what direction our membership wants to take. The four formats for the playoffs are as follows: Keep the playoffs as is with the 224. Keep the 224 but change the criteria for qualifying. All-play, in which all teams qualify for the playoffs with an 8 game regular season. Regional hybrid proposal where all teams qualify for a regional tournament. Once we get the results we will work on ironing out all of the details about which proposal our membership wants. We want to be transparent in this process and move forward together to continue to grow this great sport.

Together let's have a great season and continue to grow football in the state of Wisconsin. There is not a better state association in the country!! I really think football is as safe as it has ever been and we are continuing to make great strides in this great game. Continue to get involved and help us grow this sport even more. Good luck on your journey with your team this year! You will continue to make memories that last a lifetime.

JOIN THE WFCAs TODAY

TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE BENEFITS:

- \$2,000,000.00 LIABILITY INSURANCE POLICY (*details on page 63*)
- Eligibility to participate in the WFCAs Grant Program
- Three issues of *The Point After II* newsletter
- All-Star games, nomination rights and free attendance
- All-State nomination rights
- Scholarship nomination rights
- Hall of Fame nomination rights
- All-State Championship rings
- Annual awards and recognition including Regional and State Coaches of the Year.
- WFCAs membership enhances professional growth and gives you the opportunity to contribute to the improvement of your profession
- A professional network of new contacts, a line of communication and a forum for the exchange of ideas and information within your profession.
- www.wifca.org, our professional website with the latest information about football in Wisconsin which provides unlimited resources to meet the needs of member coaches.

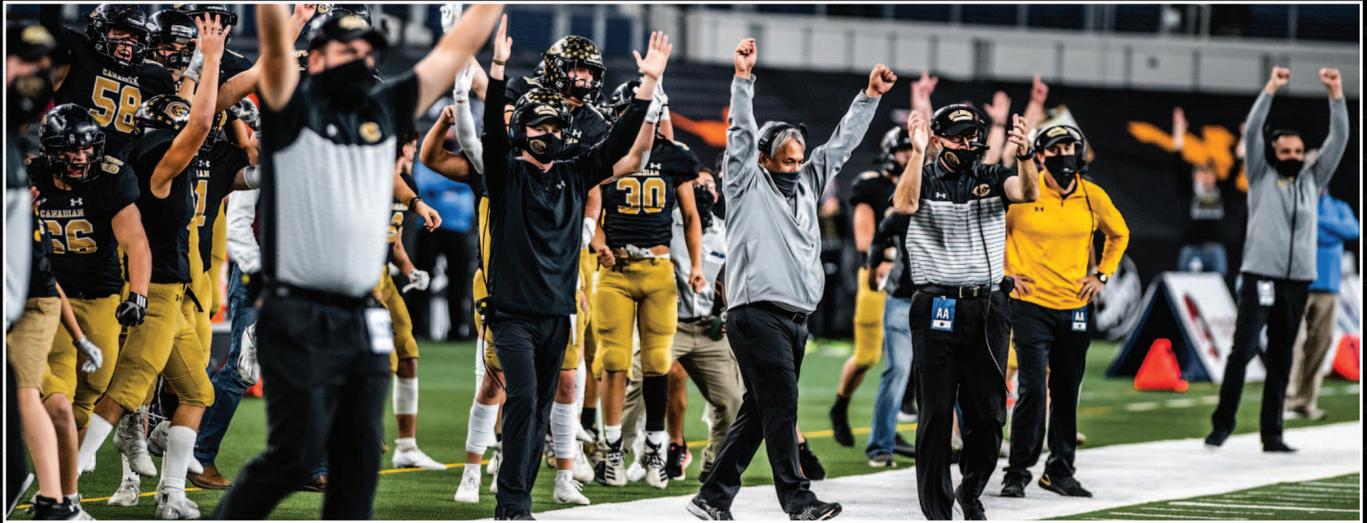


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Editor, Director of Communications and Corporate Sponsors, Tom Swittel



Tom Swittel

As I write this article, football practice is entering day three. I hope all of you have had a safe and good start to the season. I think this is a great part of the season as optimism runs high and everyone has the opportunity to achieve goals that you and your players have set for yourselves. I wish all of you the very best of luck this year.

Shortly after the Spring Clinic ended, the WFCAs Grant Program was made available to WFCAs members. As a reminder, the purpose of the WFCAs Grant is to supplement high school football budgets beyond what a typical budget will cover. So, basic equipment needs such as helmets, shoulder pads, uniforms, coach's salaries, etc. are not a part of the Grant. These items are covered, or should be,

by the typical football budget. The emphasis for the WFCAs Grant is player safety and injury prevention. Grant requests that fall into this category carry the most weight when Grant requests are reviewed. Grants up to \$3,000 are awarded, but smaller Grants are considered also. Up to \$50,000 is set aside yearly by the WFCAs for this purpose.

A total of 56 schools applied for the 2023 WFCAs Grant. Of those 56 schools, 20 were chosen for the Grant with a total of \$53,974 awarded. Some of the items bought with the Grant include: Guardian Caps, a water devise, Crash Pads, an ice maker, tackle mats, and a blocking sled. Schools from across the state and from all divisions were included in this year's Grant recipients.

A total of 92 schools have been awarded the WFCAs Grant in the three years it has been available. A total of \$214,279 has been handed out. There is no question that this is one of the most worthwhile programs the WFCAs offers. The WFCAs looks forward to offering the Grant for years to come. A huge thank you to the WFCAs Grant committee; Matt Binsfeld, Don Kendzior, and Steve Lyga, for all of their work on the behalf of the WFCAs.

The WFCAs Podcast is going strong and has posted 20 episodes since the end of January. Paul Nievinski, Tom Yashinsky, and myself, host the WFCAs Podcast. The Podcast centers on dis-

cussing all things related to football. We try to do so in an informative and entertaining way. So far, we have examined a wide range of topics including: the history of the WFCAs, Conference Realignment, the WFCAs Spring Clinic, Girl's Flag Football, the WFCAs Combine, 8-Player Football, the Competitive Balance Plan, the WFCAs Grants, Rule Changes, the Recruitment of Officials, College Recruitment of Players, the WFCAs Hall of Fame Inductees, and the WFCAs All-Star Game. An array of guests, from WIAA personnel to high school and college coaches, help us take a look at these topics. We post a new podcast every week or two for you to listen to. If you haven't already, please give the WFCAs Podcast a listen. All of the Podcasts remain available on the WFCAs website. This is a great forum for sharing pertinent information with our membership. Thank you for giving us a listen.

Thank you to coaches across the state for your articles to *The Point After II*. We could not publish this periodical without your support. If you have something to share, please send a simple word document and your photo to the Office at office@wifca.org. Charna will format and get it into the final publication.

Once again, best of luck this football season. Thank you for your continued support of the WFCAs. Please feel free to contact me at: swittelt@gmail.com or (414) 315-1131 with any thoughts or comments you may have.

THANK YOU to all who so generously submitted articles for

“The Point After II.”

If your article did not appear in this issue, please look in the next one!

Articles may be emailed to the WFCAs office at office@wifca.org, or send paper copy to: WFCAs, PO Box 8, Poynette, WI 53955. Please include the title of the article, and the name, school and title of the author, along with the author's photograph. Again, our thanks!

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Thank you to the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association for your partnership and for helping us help kids.



Kids deserve the best.

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Hall of Fame Chairman, John Hoch



John Hoch

I hope everyone had a good summer. My wife, Shelly and I had another great summer. We did some traveling – but most of the summer we have been enjoying our granddaughter. We had also been informed we will be grandparents again in February. I just finished our first week of fall football – I can tell you I really enjoy being a volunteer coach.

The WFCA Clinic was very well attended and our WFCA HOF Banquet was outstanding. I would like to thank all those involved in preparing for this event – especially Charna.

Next year our HOF Luncheon will be on Friday, April 5th. Put it on your calendar so you can attend this event. We are planning on adding a lot of memories of HOF members who attend events to our video/slide show with the help of Jerry Golembiewski's photography skills. Every year we will continue to add to the video/slide show. So if you have not done so and would like

to be included we would need a picture of you in your early years of coaching and one of you recently. I again want to thank Rob Callahan from Lancaster for producing the video/slide presentation.

We want to continue with our efforts to raise money for scholarships. Every year we are amazed at the great individual student athletes that apply for our scholarships. With your donations and the fund raising efforts by Jerry Golembiewski and his group, we can continue to provide these student athletes with significant financial support. Donating is a great way for coaches to give back to this great game of football. We will be able to give donations on line soon. Charna will send that information to all the Hall of Famers soon through email. Of course, for those of you who prefer, you can also send a check to the office at PO Box 8, Poyette, WI 53955. On page 10, there is a list of donations received at this time. We want to make sure everyone is listed, so if we missed you please let us know and we will get it corrected. This serves as a friendly reminder to help with the scholarship fund. For all of you who have already contributed – WE THANK YOU!

The 2024 class selected for the induction to the Wisconsin Football Coaches Hall of Fame is another great group of coaches. If you have time please drop them an email or note congratulating those listed for the 2024 HOF Class and Award Winners.

We lost some great individuals that have dedicated themselves to making football great. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

In Memoriam

RANDY MARSH

February 3, 1950 - July 10, 2023

On July 10, 2023, Randolph (Randy) Richard Marsh peacefully entered eternal life after a valiant 15-year Parkinson's Disease journey. Randy was born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin on February 23rd, 1950. He married Cynthia (Cindy) Lee Oestreich on August 8th, 1970. Although he was known for his barrel sized chest and ability to complete feats of strength, it was his care, compassion, and willingness to help others that he will be remembered for most. Randy was proud of Cindy and his children as they each followed his lead and went into careers that serve others. Randy's greatest joy came in his role as a grandfather (Papa). When he was able, he loved attending his grandchild-

dren's activities. When the opportunity to attend in person was taken from him, he eagerly and probably impatiently couldn't wait to hear about the activities through photos, videos, and word of mouth. Papa and Nana continue to provide and spoil their grandchildren with anything in life that brings them joy! Randy enjoyed entertaining friends and family with his guitar and harmonica, hosting cookouts, delivering a few wisecracks and one liners, and listening to music played by The Eagles. He was an avid sports fan and Green Bay Packers season ticket holder since the mid 1970's

Randy graduated from Oshkosh High School in 1968. In high school Randy was involved in football, wrestling, track and field, and played trombone in the marching band. After a year at



WFCA HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2024

Tom Chase, *Weyauwega-Fremont HS
Ripon College/Randolph HS*

John Dixon, *UW-Platteville/Park Falls,
Manitowoc Lincoln HS*

Tim Eastlick, *River Valley HS*

Nelson Edmonds, *UW-Whitewater
University of Dubuque/Northern MIU*

Paul Feldhausen, *Official*

John Galewski, *South Milwaukee HS*

Steve Jorgensen *Oshkosh N/Kimberly HS*

Mike Minick, *DeForest HS*

Tom Noennig, *Hartford/Mayville HS*

Dave Rusch, *Waukesha South/Westby
Hartford Union HS*

Tim Simon, *Middleton HS*

Patrick Wagner, *Milwaukee Riverside HS*

DAVE McCLAIN

Distinguished Service Award

Jay Benish, *Oconomowoc HS*

Nick Skretta, *Jefferson HS*

MARGE & DICK RUNDLE

Positive Influence of Coaching Award

Jeff Wallak, *St. Francis HS*

NHSACA HALL OF FAME

Joe LaBuda, *Menomonie HS*

Tom Swittel, *Whitefish Bay/Dominican
Wauwatosa East/Brookfield East
Milwaukee Tech. HS*

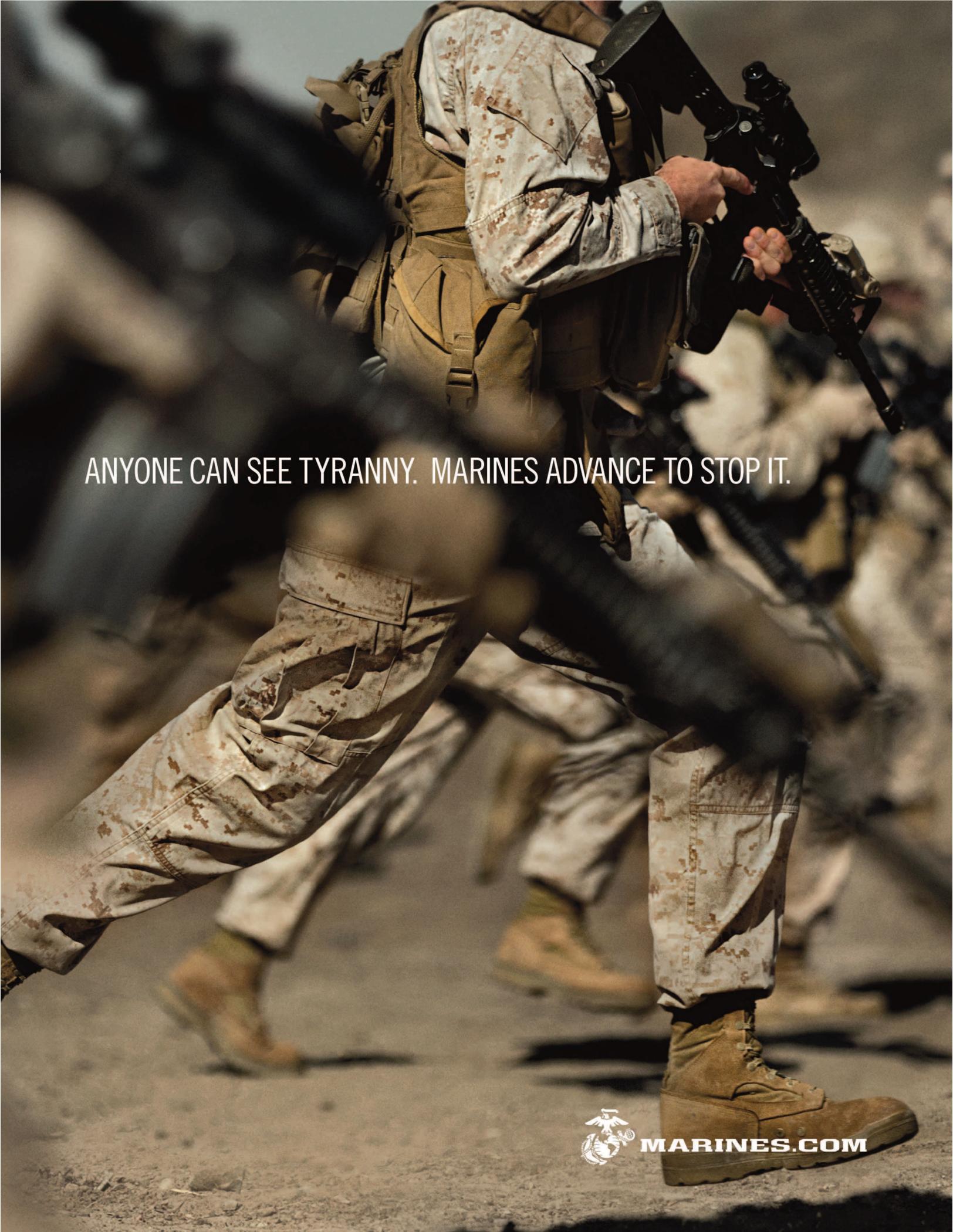
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Milwaukee Randy transferred to UW-Oshkosh to play football for his hometown Titans and reunite with the love of his life, Cindy. He would go on to be a WSUC First Team All-Conference offensive tackle. During college Randy enlisted in the United States Army Reserves.

Upon graduating from UW-Oshkosh in the fall of 1972, Randy began his professional career at New London High School during the second semester of the 1972-1973 school year. He had a tremendous impact on thousands of students during his entire career in New London as a teacher, administrator, and coach. He began as a physical education teacher and health teacher (1973-1994) where he introduced free weights and started a weight training class within the PE curriculum. He entered a career in administration as athletic director from 1989-1994. He was the assistant principal from 1994-1997. He completed his career in education as high school

principal from 1997-2005. In retirement he continued to serve the School District of New London as the initial leader of the S.T.E.P program.

He forever held a special place in his heart for the players and coaches of the 1984 team who remain as the only undefeated conference team in school history with a 9-0 record. In 1985 Randy had the honor of being selected to be an assistant coach for the North All-Star team in the annual Shrine Bowl. During his coaching career at New London High School Randy was a part of all 4 conference championship teams in school history; two as a head coach and two as an assistant coach. Randy had the opportunity to coach football at the college level where he guided the defensive line at St. Norbert College from 2001-2004. He was a part of 4 Midwest Conference Championship teams during this time. Randy was promoted and eager to lead the Green Knights as Defen-

sive Coordinator during the 2005 season, however health concerns forced him to resign. Randy returned to New London High School as an assistant coach from 2006-2018 until once again health concerns forced him to retire for the final time. He cherished the opportunity to work as an assistant coach in New London while his son, Marc, was the Head Coach. He had an incredible network of coaches throughout the state of Wisconsin and the United States, and loved sharing and furthering his knowledge of the game at clinics and during countless phone calls with coaching peers. Randy is a member of the Oshkosh West High School Athletic Hall of Fame, and also a member of the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame. He is forever remembered by coaches, players, and fans as “Coach Marsh,” “Big Daddy Bulldog,” and in his later years “Papa Marsh.”

2023 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WFCA HALL OF FAME SCHOLARSHIP FUND.

Peter Baganz	\$100.00	Bill Ehnerd	\$100.00	Carlos Kreibich	\$100.00	Bob Prahll	\$100.00
Michael Bartholomew	\$100.00	Paul Engen	\$100.00	Lance Leipold	\$1500.00	Chris Simpson	\$1000.00
Michael Bartholomew	\$100.00	Bill Forster	\$100.00	Robert Lieberman	\$100.00	Jerry Sinz	\$100.00
<i>In Memory of Bill Bartholomew</i>		Tom Fugate	\$200.00	Clayton Lynde	\$100.00	Fred Spaeth	\$100.00
Tom Bauer	\$100.00	Jerry Golembiewski	\$200.00	Jim Meckstroth	\$100.00	Dan St. Arnauld	\$100.00
Tony Biolo	\$100.00	Jerry Griffin	\$100.00	Mick Miyamoto	\$100.00	Cal Tackes	\$100.00
Brian Borland	\$1000.00	Harlan Gruber	\$100.00	Danny Mock	\$100.00	Mark Traun	\$100.00
Larry Brick	\$100.00	Doug Hjersjo	\$100.00	Ken Mueller	\$100.00	Jeff Trickey	\$300.00
Dan Brunner	\$300.00	John Hoch	\$100.00	Ken Mueller	\$25.00	Bill Turnquist	\$100.00
Frank Budzisz	\$100.00	Duane Jensen	\$100.00	<i>In Memory of Bruce Larson</i>		Carey Venne	\$100.00
Doug Chickering	\$100.00	Richard Jones	\$100.00	Paul Neivinski	\$100.00	Bob Wurdinger	\$100.00
John Curtis	\$100.00	Robert Knight	\$100.00	Brad Nemecc	\$100.00	Jim Zebrowski	\$1000.00
Mike Dressler	\$100.00	Andy Kotelnicki	\$1000.00	John Phelps	\$100.00		

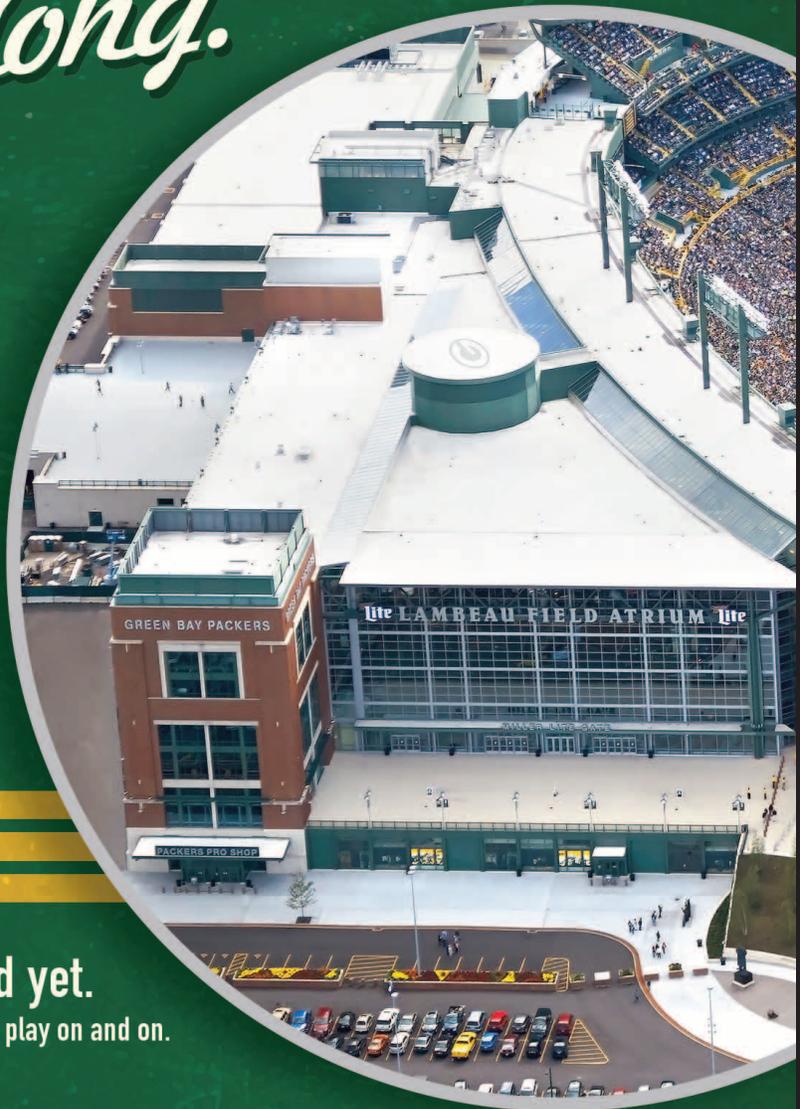
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Dear Mr. John Hoch,

Thank you again for choosing me to be one of the recipients of the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association Scholarships. I have enjoyed my first semester at Northern Michigan University as well as excelling with my grades from the fall semester. Again Thanks

Matt Cramer

TO: The WFCAs - Dan Brunner
Dad loved the WFCAs! Thank you for the floral arrangement

The Bill Rice Family.

Please accept this donation to the WFCAs Hall of Fame Scholarship fund from my wife, Janis and I in loving memory of Don Barabo, my mentor and former head football coach at Janesville Parker. Don and his wife, Arloa, were great people and showed compassion for all. We are proud to make this donation in memory of Don. To play the game of football is great, to win the game is greater, to love the game is greatest! In memory.

Joe and Janis Dye

Dear WFCAs Coaches,
Thank you sincerely for choosing me as a recipient of the Hall of Fame Scholarship. It is an immense honor, and I am greatly appreciative.

Sincerely, David Nies

Thank you, Wisconsin football Coaches Association, for the very nice floral bouquet and the donation to the UW-La Crosse Foundation/Roger Harring Scholarship Fund. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated very much.

Mary Harring
and the Harring Family

Dear WFCAs,

I am gratefully honored to be a recipient of your scholarship. This will help me a lot with my future endeavors at UWP. I plan on majoring in biology, playing football and running track. Thank you for everything.

Sincerely,
Beau Kopp

Dear Mr Hoch,

Thank you so much for the WFCAs Hall of Fame Scholarship. I will be attending UW-Oshkosh as a freshman and participating in football and plan on going as strength and condition major, but that is possible to change. Once again, Thank you for selecting me as one of the few recipients for this scholarship.

Sincerely,
Brayden J Reimer

Thank you for your time and consideration for this WFCAs Hall of Fame Scholarship! I will be attending UW-Eau Claire for communications sciences and disorders in hopes to later become a speech language pathologist in elementary schools. I am very grateful for your generous help and support in my college education and I thank you again!

Anna Lindner



Dispelling the Myths of Youth Suicide

People who talk about or threaten suicide rarely die by suicide. This is untrue.

Many times, young people who are thinking about suicide make statements or threats about it. They may say, "It would be better if I weren't even here," or, "I won't be bothering you much longer." Young people who talk about suicide are thinking about it and should be taken seriously. Even if they are not suicidal, it is evident that they are not happy. We need to ask questions and find out what is wrong in their lives. They are desperately asking for help.

Why would a young person threaten suicide? Sometimes it is to see if anyone notices that they are in pain and if someone is willing to help them. When someone reaches out and offers support, it reduces their sense of isolation, demonstrates someone cares and can save a life.

Another myth many people believe is that talking to a person about their suicidal feelings may cause them to attempt suicide.

Talking about suicidal feelings can help if done compassionately and knowledgeably. Thoughts of suicide come from a feeling of hopelessness and the belief that no one can help! Helping a young person confront that pain and talk about it will relieve some of the pressure, and together you can begin to look for much better ways to solve their problems.

One thing we need to remember is that time takes care of most problems. We must give them time because time can change their circumstances. They do not wait to experience the changes that will likely come. Whatever seems unbearable today may be gone tomorrow. We must place emphasis on the fact better things are in the future.

Many people also believe the myth that suicide is not preventable. In fact, suicide is preventable.

What makes suicide preventable? People contemplating suicide often tell someone or demonstrate signs that they are thinking about suicide before an attempt. Four out of five individuals considering suicide give some indication of their intentions, either verbally or behaviorally. We need to be able to recognize signs and know how to respond.

People who are contemplating suicide often tell a friend about what they plan to do but ask them to keep it a secret. Emphasize to young people, information a friend is contemplating harming themselves must be shared with a responsible adult. This information is far too important to remain a secret.

To learn more about youth suicide visit: jasonfoundation.com

THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION'S "TEAM OF DISTINCTION"

By: Al Minnaert, President of the Wisconsin Football Foundation



Al Minnaert

The National Football Foundation initiated their "Team of Distinction" program after the 2018 football season. Each local Chapter can submit one honoree to the National Football Foundation, and that Scholar-Athlete then becomes a member of that season's "Team of Distinction."

Each player's picture, high school & Chapter are on display in a special section of the College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta, GA. Each honoree is included in a national press release, and each receives a one-of-a-kind certificate signed by Steve Hatchell, the President & CEO of the NFF, as well as Archie Manning, Chairman of NFF. Archie Manning stated that: "This honor is one of the most prestigious national awards that a high school player can receive, and it really brings into focus the phenomenal work that our Chapters do in identifying the most outstanding young leaders in their communities."

Nolan Schopp from Kettle Moraine High School, will be representing Wisconsin on the NFF "Team of Distinction" for the 2022 football season. Among the achievements that Coach Matt McDonnell cites in his nomination of Nolan were: Football Team Captain for 4 years, a 4.353 GPA, Membership in NHS, being named 1st Team All-State as OLB, FB,

and TE, playing 4 positions in the same season, and being selected the MVP for WIAA Division II for their State Championship team. Nolan was recruited and will continue his football career at Michigan Tech in Houghton, Michigan.

The Wisconsin Chapter's previous nominees for the NFF Team of Distinction were:

Logan O'Brien, Fennimore High School, 2018 season

Riley Nowakowski, Marquette University High School, 2019 season

Hunter Wohler, Muskego High School, Fall 2020/Alternate Spring 2021 season

Zach Gloudeeman, River Valley High School, Fall 2021 season:

Applicants are asked to send an essay about their experience as a high school football athlete, I have included one from Ethan Safar from a while back.

Good luck to all high school football teams through out the state this fall.

WHAT FOOTBALL MEANS TO ME... AN ESSAY FOR THE WISCONSIN FOOTBALL FOUNDATION

By: Ethan Safar, Burlington High School

Following an All-Conference junior year football season and a deep playoff run, the future looked bright as I prepared for basketball and the off-season. However, my world would soon be turned upside down. After just the second basketball practice, I suffered an excruciating knee injury. A somber trip to orthopedic specialists and MRI imaging revealed that forceful hyperextension of my knee ruptured the anterior cruciate ligament and surgery would be required.

The first opinion from the doctor's office declared that I would never see the high school football field again. More doctor visits and evaluations revealed that I had a slim chance of returning in time for my senior football season. However, that "slim chance" was all I needed to be inspired and get started on my comeback.

Since I was a little boy playing on the front lawn with my father and older brothers, I have loved the game of football. Whether it was playing in the snow during my family's annual "Turkey Bowl" or playing in the second round of the playoffs against our town's rivals, I thoroughly enjoyed every minute. My injury gave me a chance to reflect on these fond memories and the true meaning of the game. What does

football really mean to me? To me, football means excellence on and off the field. Championships are made in the weight room and leaders are made in the classroom. _

Football is metaphorical to real life in many different ways. The leadership skills I developed on the football field as a team captain led me to pursue the office of president for Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter and motivated me to be at the top 1% of my class academically. The teamwork skills and sense of communal responsibility instilled in me from the game of football inspired me to join our school's DRIVEN leadership and volunteering program. Through this program and opportunities offered from the football program, I have dedicated well over 100 community service hours. Finally, the atmosphere of competition on the football field influenced me to seek out competition through different clubs and become a state winner for Agribusiness in FBLA and Farm Businesses and Management for the National FFA Organization.

Football has influenced my life in many ways. Nine months post-surgery and countless hours of rehabilitation later, I returned to the

football field for my senior year and led the SLC Conference in touchdown receptions. With all the uncertainty due to the Coronavirus pandemic and my individual injury, I was extremely grateful for the opportunity. To me, the meaning of football transcends the playing field. Successful players and teams exhibit many attributes of successful people and companies. Football challenges people to be at their absolute best both physically and mentally. Through football, I have developed relationships with coaches and teammates that will last a lifetime. The game of football truly is more than just a game.

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— Shug Jordan

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SPECIAL TEAMS

SUPPORT & CULTIVATE YOUR TEAM CULTURE WITH SPECIAL TEAMS

By: Mike Schmitt, Special Teams Coordinator/Wide Receivers/Tight Ends Coach, Ripon College



Mike Schmitt

I would like to thank the WFCAs for the opportunity to share another article on the topic of Special Teams development and especially what we do at Ripon College. I want to thank Coach Ron Ernst, our past head coach for the opportunity to coach and coordinate our special teams since 2007, it has been an amazing journey together, ending in a Midwest Conference Championship this past season. I would also like to thank our new Head Coach Jake Marshall for asking me to share how we support our team culture through the development of some of the finest special teams' units in D3 football.

THE STANDARD FOR OUR SPECIAL FORCES

As we approach our 2023 season, we are excited to improve our Special Forces outcomes and the success of our Red Hawk football team. Our program flies under a new flag which is **"THE RED STANDARD"** and for our **Special Forces**, we can continue to strive for excellence with the same ideals and mantras. Our Red Standard is "Be **Relentless**, provide **Effort**, and be **Disciplined**." For our Special Forces, this will continue to start with setting SMART Goals that "Reflect the Nature" of our football team and program. "Set the Tone" for the team with our aggressiveness, effort level, and execution on each rep. Winning the "Hidden Yardage" field position battle to set up the success of the offense and defense, by being confident and reliable!

WHAT IS "SPECIAL" ABOUT OUR SPECIAL FORCES?

The way we break down the term "Special Forces" for our special team units is taken from the two words' definitions. The definition of **special** is better, greater, or otherwise different from what is usual. The definition of **force** is an

organized body with strength or energy as an attribute of physical action or movement. So, our program mission statement is: *We will be organized, providing greater energy, different than most, better than all, with strength & attitude to move our team's field position positively!*

ESTABLISHING OUR "SPECIAL FORCES" MINDSET!

Every member of our Special Forces Units must have the mindset that being smart, physical, disciplined & execute proficiently, are their main goals for our special teams. To establish this type of mindset we incorporate the "A.C.E. - Life's Daily Challenges" & the "3 ABILITIES of Success" mentality.

I stress to our players that we have control over "3 Things in Life" and the importance of controlling these three intangibles. Their "Attitude"; strive to make yours a positive one. The "Choices" we make; are these choices ones they will be proud they made? Last, but not least, their "Effort"; do they provide their best effort in everything that they do for themselves and those around them, including their teammates?

Then the "3 Abilities of Success" is stressed with the first being "Accountability". We stress taking ownership of the situation we are involved with, and being willing to answer for the outcomes of our choices, behaviors, and performance. Secondly, and very importantly, is "Responsibility" which is each unit member's "response-ability". This is the ability to maturely respond to the challenges and circumstances of life. Football, like life, can encourage personal responsibility and growth from within. In stressing responsibility for our thoughts, choices, and reactions, we can demonstrate this ability when faced with obstacles in life and on the field. The third quality is "Reliability" which leads others to not only believe in you but more importantly to believe in yourself. This is an extension of our actions and efforts that provide consistent results which for special teams' play is crucial.

THE CONNECTION OF MINDSET & ONE PERFECT REP THEORY:

Grit; we have all heard this term. The combination of passion and perseverance that is inside of us, but needs to be cultivated intrinsically and extrinsically. To be a complete **Operator** of Special Forces, each member must embrace the tenacity required to execute their individual assignment for their unit, sometimes in obscurity. Some of the grittiest players I've

coached battled visualizing the big picture of the importance of fundamental execution, and placing self-gratification of making highlights secondary. This doesn't diminish the value of their fortitude but rather underscores that grit perhaps is more about their attitude and mindset as the end game.

This mindset does not happen just by luck, but when opportunity meets preparation! That preparation begins for us, during the first meeting of fall camp their first year when I share with our Special Forces the concept of **"CARPE DIEM"**. In our program and special teams, "carpe diem" is about taking advantage of every second of every minute of every opportunity of every day to make a difference in improving at least one percent! Physicality, servant leadership, and competitiveness are traits that we strive to find in our young players at Ripon College. Every member of a team wants to feel valued and special to the success of his team. Special team units provide that opportunity for all athletes on your roster to experience the game at a competitive level. Many of our best **"Operators"** over the years have bought into competing as special teams' members early in their careers and have become top-notch All-Conference or even All-Region players on Offense, Defense, and Special Teams. The bottom line is they have the Grit & Mindset to place the team above their personal achievements.

THE VALUE OF SPECIAL TEAMS:

There are few ways to change the outcome or the momentum of a game as quickly as special teams play. Each unit can score, improve field position dramatically, or even create a turnover on each play. I like to use the analogy with our Special Forces Units, "Each of our plays is like a pinch hitter in baseball, with a runner in scoring position! Can we get the job done? We need to get the job done at every at bat!" Like many teams this past season, we had games that turned due to special teams play, such as blocked punts that set up offensive scores, blocked PATs, recovered onside kicks, and so forth. These happen not just by luck, but when opportunity meets preparation!

That preparation begins for us, during the Special Force's first meeting of fall camp, when we share with our players the field position drive success chart (Diagram #1). Knowing these facts is important for our cover and return units. The fact that further away an offensive unit starts from its goal line, the more difficulty they have in scoring. On the other hand, the closer that

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same offensive unit starts the more likely it will score. We share this chart with four of the seven units we install, practice, and utilize on game day. Those four are Punt, Punt Return, Kick, and Kick Return, which have an impact on the field position battle. The significance of this information is simply that our team can utilize the kicking game to give our opponents poor scoring percentages and enhance our own offense's scoring percentage.

As I mentioned, we name our special team units "**Special Forces**". This gives each unit a specific identity, which adds to their understanding of expectations of them as a member of that unit. For instance, our Punt Cover Unit is known as "Airborne", their motto is "Anywhere, Anytime, in Anything". Their identity is the ability to perform at the top of their game all the time, no matter the field position. Our Kick Cover Unit is named "Rangers", their motto is "Rangers Lead the Way". Being the unit that possibly starts the game or begins the second half, they set the tone for the entire team and game. Again, our Airborne & Rangers Units know the significance of field position, and keeping our opponent from short fields, allowing our defense a good chance of stopping them, and forcing them to punt the ball is their mission.

Offensive Unit Starts:	Unit Scores Points:	Percent
Inside -20 yard line	1 out of 30 attempts	3%
Between -20 & -40	1 out of 8 attempts	13%
Between -40 & 50	1 out of 5 attempts	20%
Between 50 & +40	1 out of 3 attempts	33%
Between +40 & +30	1 out of 2 attempts	50%
Between +30 & +20	2 out of 3 attempts	67%
Inside +20 yard line	2.5 out of 3 attempts	83%

Likewise, our "Special Forces" return units also have unique identities. Our main kick return unit is "SEAL Team One" and "SEAL Team Two" is our hands return unit. Their motto is "Ready to Lead, Ready to Follow, Never Quit!" Our punt block/return units known as Delta Force & Black Ops, have the motto "The Offense Begins on 4th Down!" Again, understanding that securing the ball and providing good field position betters the success of our offensive unit and the team's success in general.

"THE OFFENSE BEGINS ON THE 4th DOWN":

When our punt block/return units step on the field, they have been drilled to understand the following beliefs: "The offense begins on 4th down!", "We are getting the ball back...the question is where?", "Never cost the team the chance of scoring!", "Never Quit on the return...GO SCORE!". During our punt return practice segments, we stress the importance of focusing on the snap (staying outside until the snap), recognizing fake punt possibilities (field position & down/distance), no penalties, blocking the front numbers, and pressuring all kicks.

"We believe that we can block a punt on a return call & have a great return on a blocking call. We make every attempt to recreate our opponents' abilities during our practice segments. This includes having our best punt cover unit members on the scout punt team and the scout team executing our opponents' style of punt scheme and any fake punt possibilities.

THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF RED HAWK PUNT RETURN:

We practice and stress five principles of our punt return. The first principle is to **Sell The Rush**: We must make everything look the same as a Punt Block with Get-Off, Low Pad Level, and a Proper Stance. The second is **Transition**: When the blocker comes toward you to make contact, shoot the hands inside the blocker's breastplate to balance up. Cover him up! The third principle is **Hold Up**: "Time Equals Yards" We must give our returner the maximum field cushion by delaying the release of the coverage. Keep a wide base with hands inside on the breastplate of the blocker, hands above your eyes, and shuffle your feet to maintain position. Block him where he wants to go further than he wants to go! The fourth principle requires the most discipline and that is **Trail**: After the release, we run on the hip of the opponent. If we lose him, we run a midpoint path between the man and returner so that you may see him come to balance. The fifth and possibly the toughest principle to develop is **Fit & Finish**: When the cover man comes to balance to the returner, shoot the hands across the inside pad & resume the blocking position. Turn your hips inside to make him go over the top of you as the blocker.

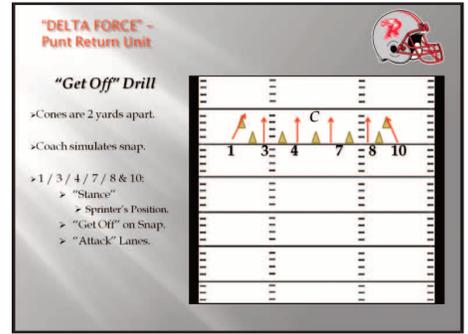
DRILLING OUR "5 PRINCIPLES"

The drills we incorporate in practice to develop these principles involve fundamental development phases: Individual Pre-Practice/Practice, Unit Pre-Practice/Practice, and then Unit Situational Drills. Examples of the different drills for these segments would include the "Get Off Drill" (Diagram #2), "Tit & Cuff Drill", "Advantage Drill", "Ball Security Drill", & "Barrel Drill" (Diagram #3) during the Indy Drills. During the Unit Drill Segments, we use our "Trail & Harass Drill" (Diagram #4), and "One-on-One Drill" to emphasize our principles. We also use the "Four Man Dogfight Drill" (Diagram #5) as a competitive drill during the Unit Practice segment.

INDIVIDUAL PRE-PRACTICE/PRACTICE:

During these segment drills, the players of our Special Forces Units work at low impact and distance on fundamentals, footwork and mental preparation to execute our principles of return. Diagram #2 is a drill that trains our players to get in a proper stance, Focus on the Snap & Attack Lanes. This can be done by players daily to improve the success of this unit. Another type of drill used during these segments is Ball Security drills. Diagram #3, represents a style of Ball Security drill. Players can work independently or with partners, or small groups to

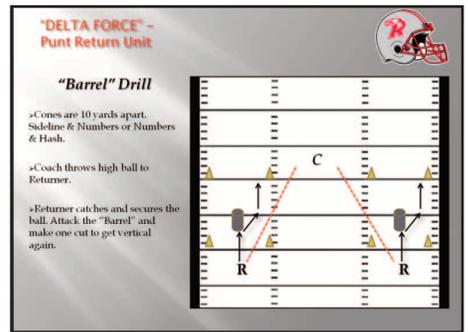
stress the importance taking care of the ball, after all "The Offense starts on 4th Down"!



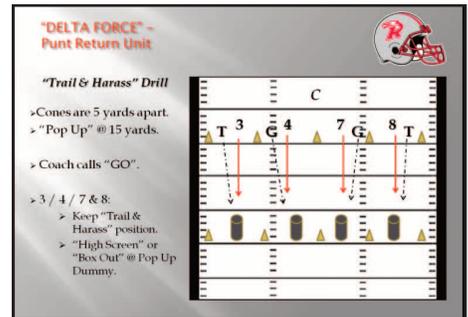
UNIT PRE-PRACTICE/PRACTICE:

The drills for these segments have the intent to raise the level of technique and start to get our athletes focusing on the third and fourth principles of our punt return. Diagram #4, represents the style of drills we use during this segment of practice. The "Trail & Harass" drill focuses our players getting in and keeping proper position to execute the fifth and final principle.

UNIT SITUATIONAL PRACTICE:



During our unit situational practice segment for punt return, we utilize competitive drills such as the "Four Man Dog Fight" Drill (Diagram #5). These types of drills are lead-up drills preparing our athletes to face our scout teams during the second segment of the punt return unit. This drill creates an opportunity for our athletes to drill putting it all together from "Get Off" to "Fit & Finish". This drill is also used during fall training camp to evaluate our players that will eventually make up our two deep and our scout teams.



RED HAWK BASE RETURN:

When we have drilled the skills and focus on the scheme of the return, we face scout teams. During, fall camp we practice facing our own punt unit scheme. Once we get thru fall



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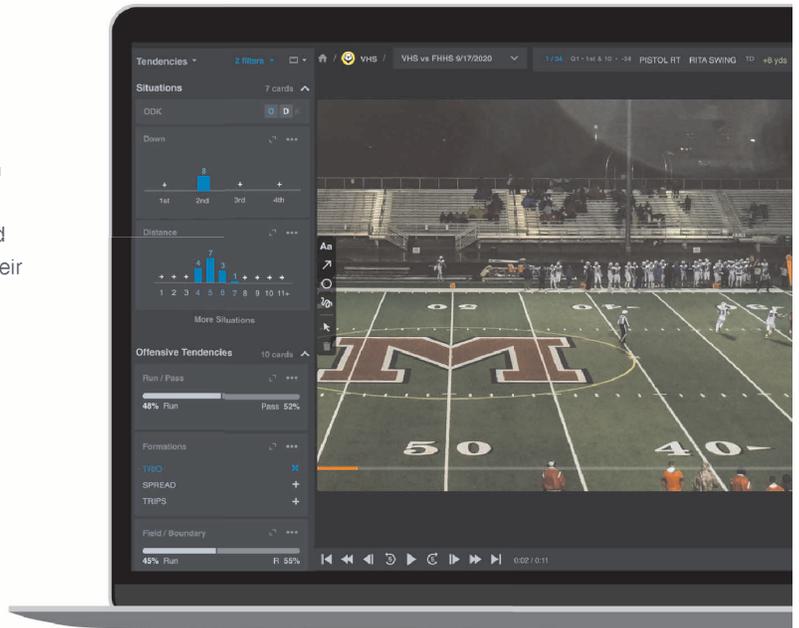
Todd Witten
Rejoice Christian High School (Okla.)

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camp, we establish weekly practice groups, that allows us to get a more competitive and organ-

ized practice segment to efficiently use every available second of the practice schedule.

Our base return incorporates a combination of rush and hold up to make sure of no fake punts, and give our returners every opportunity to put “The Offense” back on the field in the best possible field position we can. We ask our returners to field all punts deemed possible to field. Secure the ball all the way to the ground or until they hand it to the official. On the return they search for two cuff hands and make one cut and accelerate. After developing the skills of the return, adjustments to the scheme become easier

when our players have a base set of skills set upon the five principles.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to share our Red Hawk Culture/Standard, Special Forces philosophy, beliefs and drills to our punt return units. We at Ripon College take pride in our Delta Force & Black Ops Units. This past season, we averaged 19 yards per return, 3 TDs, 1 Safety, and +10 in Hidden Yardage, placing us 7th in the NCAA for D3.

If I can be of assistance to you or your staff, please feel free to contact me at Ripon College. My email address is schmittm@ripon.edu.

EXTRA POINT – MISS OUTSIDE

By: Tyler Mickelson, Head Football Coach, Fall Creek High School



Tyler Mickelson

Let’s begin with a quick thank you to all of the coaches who put these articles together! Your time is appreciated – as is your insight and knowledge of high school football.

There are two words I scream more than any other at practice. “MISS OUTSIDE!” This comment is always targeted at our quarterbacks, and it is the focal point of our entire passing game. It is such a simple and basic concept, but it has completely transformed our football program. Out, corner, fade, go, screen, bubble... whatever your route combinations call for, “missing outside” will help with your ball security. We allow no exceptions to this rule

During spring ball of my freshman year of college, I was still struggling with the transition

from high school defensive speed to college defensive speed. My head coach and QB coach at the time told me, “Your reads are right. Just miss outside.” It changed everything for me. And now, it’s leading to a ton of success for our football team. There’s no hidden meaning, and no secret football code to it. It’s as simple as it sounds. When throwing on air, quarterbacks love to show off and throw nice firm balls right to the wide-receiver’s chest. Thing is, when pads come on and there’s an offensive line in place, the error rate increases and those throws to the chest can miss by one or two feet. If you miss inside, really bad things are going to happen. If you miss outside, it’s an incomplete pass.

This all starts in the off-season. We don’t let our quarterbacks sit back like it’s Sunday afternoon and make throws with no rush. It’s not realistic training. Someone is always in their face, even if it’s mom or dad. We have them track where they’re missing. Don’t put the ball on the chest. Put the ball on the outside hand. Throws have to be made on time given the route and the drop length. This works well for hitches, quick outs, deep outs, and corners. Players catch it and can naturally turn and run. Go balls and fades are a little different because part of the responsibility falls on the receiver. They have to allow room for the quarterback to miss outside. If our players are running a fade, they’re not allowed to run outside of the numbers on the field. Mean-

ing, prior to the ball being thrown, they are NEVER found between the numbers and sideline. If they are, practice will not be enjoyable for them. The ball needs to be placed between the numbers and the sideline and the wide-receiver needs to adjust to it. This leads to natural back shoulder throws. In the past two years we’ve thrown 100+ fades and go routes in games without a single interception.

Our language changes slightly for throws over the middle. Very rarely do we target receivers between the hashes, but when we do, the verbiage changes to “miss outside of the defender.” If it’s man-to-man and the defender is trailing, lead them away. If it’s zone, make sure the ball misses in the hole of the zone, even if the receiver doesn’t make it there.

This also helps with our quarterback’s confidence. When the fear of throwing interceptions is gone, you’ll see players stand a little taller in the pocket and throw balls firmer. When quarterbacks scramble out of the pocket, they’re never throwing across their body because it’s almost impossible to throw back inside while missing outside. If they do, I assume the player is wide open.

It’s a very small detail to add into your daily routine, and if you take the time to practice it effectively, your quarterbacks will improve. As will your ball security.



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BUILDING OFFENSIVE “FAMILY” PLAY PACKAGES

By: Chase Vogler, Offensive Coordinator/Wide Receivers Coach, University of Minnesota–Duluth



Chase Vogler

Creating a weekly game plan for an upcoming opponent is one of the many reasons I think coaching football is so unique compared to other sports. Every week the defense you are going to go against will be different in some capacity than any defense you have seen so far that season. I believe it is very important as an offensive coach and as an offensive staff to find the right balance between finding a creative advantage scheme-wise while avoiding adding too much new stuff to the game plan for that specific defense.

The way we, as an offensive staff, find a balance is by finding certain formations that we like against a certain defense and building a 3, 4 or 5 play series using that exact formation and/or motion that we call a “family”. Most of the time these formations will be unique in some sort of way. The main type of formation adjustments we use for family series are: Formation into the boundary, Unbalanced formation, Overload formation or Condensed Splits/Tight Alignment. The reason we use unique formations when creating a family series is to try to create the “I’ve seen this before” thought process by the defense.

There are many ways to decide on what formation/motion you want to start with when building a family series. For us, we will always build off a run play I feel can be successful. From there, we will usually try to find another run play that counters the first run play and then a play action, boot action, screen pass or trick play. There is not maximum or minimum number of plays you need to have when creating a family. The more important thing is to figure out in what order you want to call these plays and what you are looking for when moving on to the next call in this series of plays.

Below is a basic four play family series that we would run out of an FIB formation with jet motion.

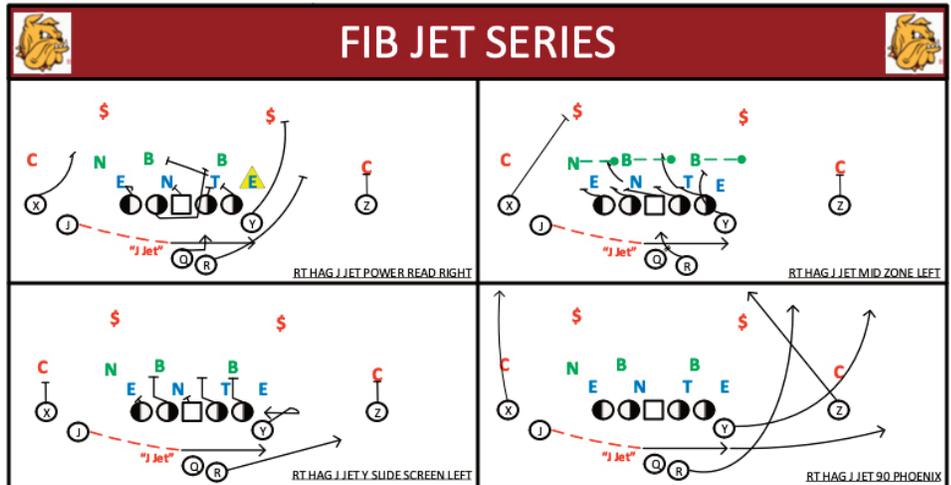
In my opinion, you can run any of these plays first and then work to the next one depending on how you felt the defense defended the play before. Also, you can run the same play several times before moving on to the next play of the series if that first play is still efficient.

I think it is important to establish the order of your family series early in the week and run

them in practice in the same order you would run them in the game. With a Saturday game, we will usually run them in consecutive order on Tuesday for our players to see the thought process and how the next play counters the one before. Then on Thursday, we will run them spaced out as we usually would call them in a game.

We will usually carry anywhere from 1 to 3 different family series into each game plan. Sometime we will copy and paste a family series from a previous season or game, and other times we will build a family series from scratch. The way I help myself get these plays called on game days is to have a specific “Play Family” column on my call card that I can check off as plays are called in the game.

This has been a great game planning tool for us over the last few years and I hope you can find a way to utilize this thought process into your game plans next season. Please reach out with any questions or if you would like to talk more about our family series thought process.



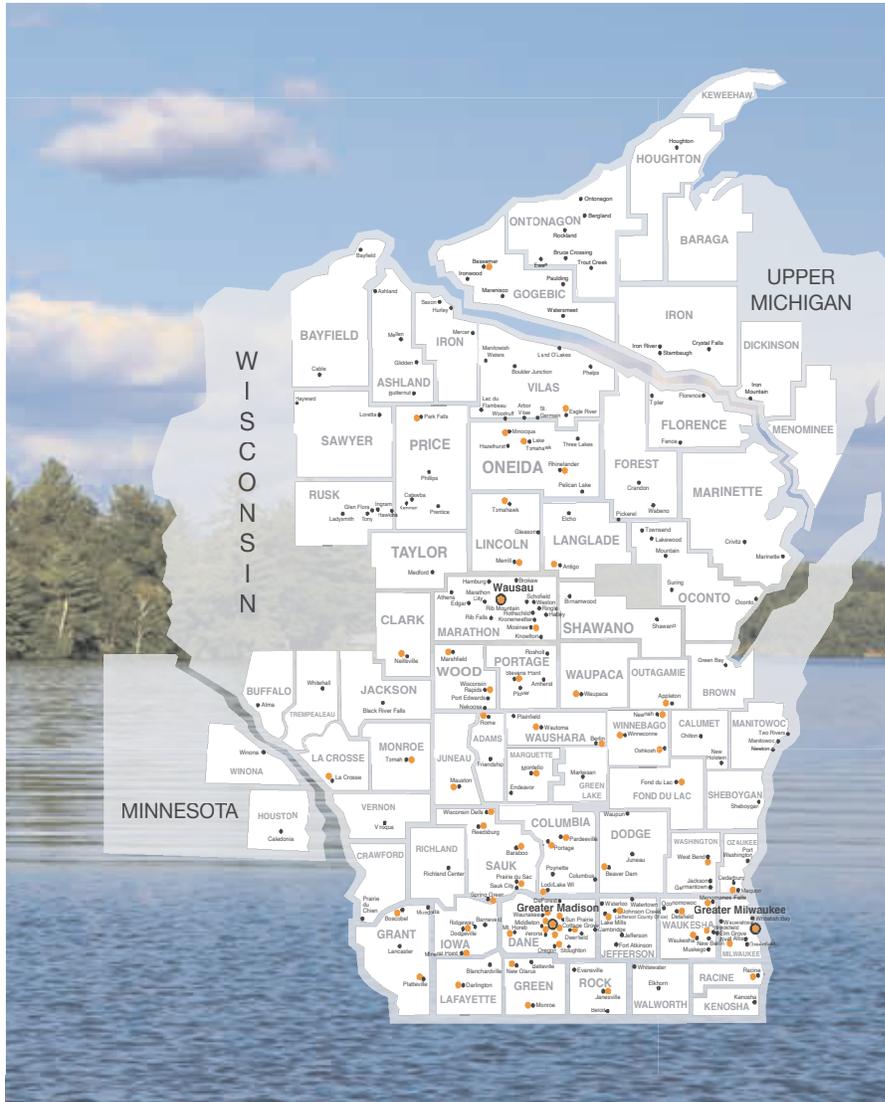
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- 🏠 Metro South
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- 🏠 East Madison
- 🏠 Fitchburg/West Madison
- 🏠 Janesville
- 🏠 Jefferson County
- 🏠 La Crosse
- 🏠 Lake Mills
- 🏠 Lodi/Lake Wisconsin
- 🏠 Mauston
- 🏠 Middleton
- 🏠 Mineral Point
- 🏠 Monroe
- 🏠 Montello
- 🏠 Mount Horeb
- 🏠 New Glarus
- 🏠 Oregon
- 🏠 Pardeeville
- 🏠 Platteville
- 🏠 Portage
- 🏠 Prairie Du Sac
- 🏠 Reedsburg
- 🏠 Spring Green
- 🏠 Sun Prairie/East Towne
- 🏠 Tomah
- 🏠 Waunakee
- 🏠 West Towne
- 🏠 Wisconsin Dells

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- 🏠 Bessemer
- 🏠 Eagle River
- 🏠 Marshfield
- 🏠 Merrill
- 🏠 Minocqua
- 🏠 Mosinee
- 🏠 Neillsville
- 🏠 Park Falls
- 🏠 Rhinelander
- 🏠 Rome Lakes
- 🏠 Stevens Point
- 🏠 Tomahawk
- 🏠 Wausau
- 🏠 Wisconsin Rapids



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INTRODUCING LONG SNAPPING TO YOUR ATHLETES

By: Kyle Stelter, Special Teams University



Kyle Stelter

Long snapping is a position that is often out of sight, out of mind, until it isn't. Good long snappers go unnoticed, while bad snaps make front page news. The last thing you want as a coach is to have your special teams units, especially your long snapper specifically, keep you up at night! Most coaches don't know much about the position, which leads to many athletes not getting the exposure to coaching needed to excel! This is where I step in.

Specializing in long snapping is not something I dreamed of as a kid. Like most, I wanted to play varsity, be a captain, play collegiately, and someday MAYBE play Pro football. While hard work helped me accomplish most of those goals, long snapping took me the rest of the way. A position that I didn't enjoy due to a lack of knowledge and confidence soon consumed my football world. Most athletes don't view long snapping as a "cool" or "sexy" position like QB! Everyone wants to score points and be in the news. It takes a special athlete to put in the work, study the craft, and go unnoticed.

Step one is finding your long snapper. At the high school level there is no need to find the prototypical athlete to handle your snapping duties. Simply finding someone who WANTS to work on it will be your best bet. You could take your best athlete and tell them they are your long snapper, however, from my experience, these athletes don't want to work at it and while they may get the job done, they won't excel at it. If you find someone who is willing to put in some extra work before or after practice, find outside training, and take it seriously. I promise you that you won't have to worry about your snapper. If you are a college coach, finding someone to fit your scheme (snap and cover, or snap and block) would be ideal. I am more a fan of adapting your scheme to your best snapper though. If your snapper can block, utilize him in protection. If he can't, don't force him to adapt. Go find what you want in an athlete, or be adaptable.

Long snapping isn't as easy as it looks. Watch any elite athlete at any position or sport and they will make their skill look easy. Snap-

ping at a high level involves the same complexity that a QB, pitching, or golf coach would apply to those athletes. During a lesson I focus on balancing the hands and stance, kinetic sequence, creating a block, transferring energy, controlling the body, putting the body in more efficient positions, etc... the list goes on. It's not an easy process. HOWEVER, here are some simple things that you can do to get your athletes on the right track.

Here are the five pillars of long snapping:

1. Grip - Balance is key! While you CAN do whatever you want to get the ball to rotate and back to the punter, there is a big difference between being effective and being efficient. A balanced grip will help eliminate variables that cause nose up ball flight, wobbling, and pushing/pulling left or right of the ball.

We look for four different variables in the grip: Grip style, Surface area, internal/external rotation, and height. These all play a big role in how the hands interact with the ball. Once you know the cause and effect of how your grip interacts with the ball flight and trajectory, it's much easier to make corrections!

2. Follow through - A balanced and even follow through is dictated by the grip. If you don't start balanced, you can't end balanced. This is extremely important because this is when you TELL the ball where to go. An unbalanced or out of control finish causes the athlete to "suggest" where the ball should go, rather than "tell" it where to go.

Body control is an extremely important component of the follow through as well. A snapper that is in control of their body is in control of the ball. However, you can't be controlled if you aren't balanced, they go hand in hand. The snapper should feel tight and squeezed as the ball leaves their hands with their entire body. Any relaxation during the finish will lead to errant snaps and slower times.

3. Stance - Stance width may vary from athlete to athlete based on size, but the general rule is that you should be just outside shoulder width. Too wide and you will have a tougher time being an athlete after the snap, too narrow and you will see snappers widening their knees while they throw.

When it comes to posture, this is extremely important to help with efficiency. A flat back is often one of the first things that young snappers struggle to create. Think of an RDL or squat. The negative created in the lower lumbar is what helps elongate the core. If we set up in an RDL or squat stance and have the snapper hinge from there while maintaining the negative arch in their lower back this will help them create length for leverage as well as the ability to create range of motion when utilizing their core.

Ball placement is extremely important when it comes to efficiency. The ball should be placed just in front of the head. Any further and you will have a tough time activating lats and shoulders, if it's placed under the head this will cause you to be too compact. We also want to make sure that the ball is not over rotated (Laces to the ground) as this will cause the dominant hand to over compensate. Over rotating the laces will cause the shoulders to be crooked as well. This visual cue will help you identify this issue with your snappers.

Finally, ball tilt is extremely important. While in the stance the ball should be tipped up to create activation of the non-dominant hand. When this hand is activated it can help flick and drive the ball to the punter or holder with BOTH hands. This will help with creating a bullet like snap instead of a nose up ball that pulls left and right. When the ball is laid flat on the ground, the non dominant hand becomes deactivated and causes the snapper to have more of a "free throw" finish rather than an equal "chest pass" feeling.

4. Movement - Most snappers think about throwing as hard or fast as they can causing them to become stiff or rigid through the throw. If you know movement, then we know that being smooth, fluid, and accelerated is what helps athletes reach their potential in other throwing/striking sports. Take a golfer for example, trying too hard, being too aggressive, or trying to move too quickly will all cause a result that is not ideal. We are looking for the same physics that a pitcher, golfer, or discus thrower uses. An efficient kinetic sequence allowing for the core to pull, the arms to delay, a block created with the core and legs, and finally a deliberate throw will help your snapper throw their best and most consistent ball. Make sure your long snapper is not using maximum effort. Whenever you use too much effort you lose control of the body. Whenever you use maximum effort you can't be efficient with your kinetic sequence!
5. Get professional help! The long snapping position has been innovated and has evolved over the last 10 years! Make sure your coaching and your long snapper isn't living in the past with old coaching cues or thoughts. I have personally innovated the position and have created drills to help athletes take their snapping to a whole new level!

My techniques and drills are used by the best at the highest levels in the NFL, CFL, XFL, USFL, CFB and HS at every level and all over the world! Check out my website to get more information for yourself and your athletes. www.SpecialTeamsU.com. You can also follow us on social media @SpecialTeamsU

MAXIMIZE SPECIAL TEAMS TIME DURING PRACTICE

By: Jeremy Gibson, Special Teams Coordinator, St. Croix Central High School



Jeremy Gibson

I want to start this article by thanking my head coach, John Tackmann, as well as the WFCB for allowing me to share my knowledge on this topic. I never expected special teams to be a passion of mine as a high school football coach. Now, three years into my role as the special teams coordinator at St. Croix Central, it is something I am extremely committed to coach, teach, and learn about year-round.

I hope to provide some insight into what we do at SCC from a practice and philosophical perspective. The results that we achieved in just

one season of implementing the following strategies were so beneficial that others could benefit from maximizing special teams time during a very packed practice plan.

One of the challenges I encountered after taking on the position of ST coordinator wasn't scheme or game planning, rather it was finding time to teach the kids the skills we want them to do for every rep during a game. We would generally plan a few practices during August camp to dedicate one or two periods to find our specialists (punters, kickers, snappers, etc.) and then run a few of the common drills generally used to evaluate players and then come up with week 1 depth charts at the end of camp.

This generally did not produce effective results early in the season as much of the teaching had to happen on game nights. During the week, we would occasionally prioritize a period to special teams time as needed, but the majority of special team time was done on Thursday during our team walk through. This was how it was done when I was hired three years prior and seemed to produce some success so I assumed we would be able to produce similar results.

After my first two seasons as the ST coordinator, my head coach took the off-season to work on making all aspects of our practice plan

as efficient as possible while still meeting the needs of our coaches and players. After working with my head coach, we decided that for our special teams to be successful, we needed the following elements: a pre-practice installation period, a daily dedicated individual time, and daily team time.

One of the most important additions we made was adding in special teams install and film time that follows the offensive and defensive install periods. This is not a new concept, but making an effort to value special teams in the same way as offense and defense greatly increases player (and coach) buy-in. We generally spend 10 minutes going over a multitude of things depending on the needs for practice that day. Topics can include: drills for practice, film from the day before, scout film of the other team, install for a new scheme, etc.

During August camp, most of our pre-practice time is done in the middle of our practice to break up the longer days. It allows our players to rest during the heat but also get some learning done and prepare for the special teams periods that they will be doing during the second half of practice. This has allowed me to take as much time as I need to go over any details on things like drill technique/setup, circuit expla-

CARROLL UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL

2023 SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	HOME/AWAY OPPONENT
9.9	6 pm	Wisconsin Lutheran University
9.16	1 pm	@North Park University
9.23	1 pm	Illinois Wesleyan University
9.30	1 pm	@Augustana College
10.7	6 pm	@North Central College
10.14	1 pm	Elmhurst University
10.21	1 pm	Wheaton College
10.28	1 pm	@Carthage College
11.4	1 pm	Millikin University
11.11	12pm	@Washington University(St. Louis)

FOOTBALL

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nations, etc. This reduces the time you spend on the field having to explain the drills and your players can get more reps. If you have the ability to work this into your fall camp routine, I would highly recommend it.

During the season, I start to use this time to install scheme changes for the week, adjust depth charts, and review film from the week before. Monday is when I will install the game plan for the week because I want to give my players a goal or an objective for the upcoming opponent. For example, if I notice our opponent for the week does not have a strong kickoff unit, I will communicate to my players that our kickoff return needs to get past the 35-yard line on every return this week. If you notice that your opponent has an unconventional punt rush, set a goal for the punt team to not allow any free rushers that week. I use Google Slides to organize and present all of these things for the players. I personally believe that if you put the time into making something that shows you are prepared, the players are going to trust you and the scheme.

The rest of the week is, at the most, a five-minute install either on film from practice or if there are any new drills that are going to be installed for that day. By this time, you should have most of your drills installed and you can spend more time on practice or scout film. I also like to pick a phase of special teams to focus on each day. Typically, Tuesdays are coverage days (kickoff/punt) and Wednesdays are return days (kickoff/punt return). Try to find something that your players can focus on for the day so that it is fresh in their minds for the drills they are about to do for the day.

The second thing we added to our practice plan was individual special teams time at the beginning of practice right after the players warm up. It is a high-intensity period that is generally 10 minutes in length. Any player that is a special teams player from freshman up to senior takes part in this time. Offensive linemen who are not on special teams do not participate and have a separate individual offensive session with our OL coach. This is where you can coach up your players at all levels to get the technique that you want them to perform on game days.

During fall camp, I want to rep the core special teams drills that are the most important to all aspects of special teams. At SCC, we have six core drills but you are welcome to add or reduce them as needed. The six drills that we use are butt side avoids, press and rip off to make a tackle, “scrape the paint” that helps avoid block in the back penalties, shed and leverage a ball carrier, dip and rip to make a tackle in attack phase, and stalk and sting while running to block tacklers in open space. These drills should be skills that you feel are utilized the most during games and you want your players to perform with perfect technique.

Utilizing circuits early during the season can be a quick and effective way to install multiple drills on the same day. Getting the kids moving and doing these drills at a fast pace puts an emphasis on technique, intensity, and effort. Spe-

cial teams is not a time to take a “play off” and if you practice with a low level of intensity, players will think that is a time to take a break on game days.

After you feel your players are able to do these drills in their sleep, then you can move on to unit or coverage-specific drills. We will typically do one to two of our core drills a week just to make sure we aren’t getting lazy or complacent. Every drill that you do during the regular season should have elements of the core drills you install in early August. This is also where you can focus on the phases of special teams. For example, for coverage days, work on getting off blocks from multiple locations on the field and locating the returner for a tackle. On return days, you can set up drills to work on cutting off of blocks. Pick drills that will translate to the game. If your drills don’t translate to the game, it might be a good idea to reconsider if it is really worth doing.

We have a small staff in comparison to other schools in our conference but involving all the coaches during indy time makes it easier to coach up players not only during practices but on game nights too. I communicate what I want my colleagues to be looking for or coaching up either prior to practice or while the players are warming up. Just like with the players, eventually, you won’t have to take as much time explaining the drills to the other coaches and you can just tell them what drill to do that day.

The final aspect we added to our plan was a full special teams team time every day. I don’t like to spend a ton of team time during fall camp because I am generally evaluating which players fit the mold of varsity special teams players. Once we start the regular season, I like to rep our full team units at least two days during the week. As mentioned earlier, I like to do the coverage units on Tuesdays and the returns on Wednesdays. In years past, we would only run through our full special teams units on Thursdays which typically consisted of me running through all units, without a scout, usually one to three times. This was an extremely inefficient use of time because we did not have any individual time during the week to coach our players up on certain aspects of the unit.

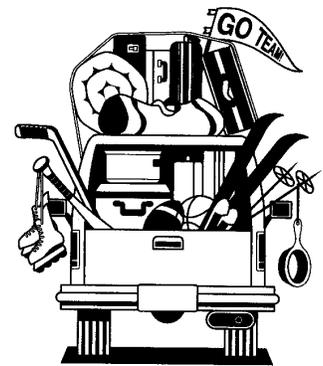
A daily team time dedicated to a phase of special teams allowed us to get multiple looks at what our opponents’ formations will look like and give them reps to work on timing as well as implement the drills from the beginning of practice. Ideally, having a full scout is going to give you the best results for your units, but not always the easiest depending on numbers. It is important to pick the players that are on the scout teams that will give your units a good look. This may include using your pre-practice time to coach up your scout team for that day. If you go with a phase focus, you only have to worry about two units for the day to have your scouts learn rather than four or more depending on your current setup.

The team time is a medium-intensity period and generally is also at most ten minutes. Use

this time to work through three to five reps of either coverage or return teams depending on your focus for the day. You should have already communicated what the opponent’s formations will look like and what they like to do on Monday. Your scouts should already know what they are doing but you can quickly tell them a direction of a return or placement of a kick between reps. You should also include one rep that is a surprise or unconventional situation. For example, for kickoff return, have the scout kicker perform a surprise inside kick. Another could be sending more scout players than you have to block on a punt. This helps keep your players on their toes and ensures that they are more prepared for these types of situations during a game.

Adding these three phases to our practice routine allowed me to have a better understanding of where we are from a special teams standpoint throughout the season. It helped the players gain a better understanding of the schemes and concepts I wanted them to execute each week, and created a sense of importance for special teams throughout our program. The support from the other coaches, especially my head coach, in implementing all of these aspects has greatly increased my confidence as a coordinator. By being intentional and setting aside daily time for special teams, we have created a culture in our program towards special teams that will not be questioned.

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THE ART OF BLOCKING FIELD GOALS

By: Stephon Healey, Defensive Coordinator, Gallaudet University



Stephon Healey

One of the challenges facing any football program is deciding how much time to commit to the various aspects of special teams. At Gallaudet University we are fortunate to have a head coach in Chuck Goldstein that provides flexibility in the practice structure to allow the coaches coordinating the special teams some freedom in teaching and practicing the relevant skills.

One can argue that a blocked kick is the biggest play in football. This is from the perspective of both the kicking team and the team attempting to block the kick. Adequate time

should be assigned to both protection and to the skills and strategies involved in rushing the kick. For the purpose of this article, the focus will be on the skills and progressions involved in blocking field goals.

There is probably no greater contrast in emotions between two teams than the moment after the “double thud” sound when a kick has been blocked. At Gallaudet University, we have had a disproportionate amount of success in blocking kicks over the past seven seasons, blocking over 40 kicks and scoring over 10 touchdowns as a result. We believe that the success is in direct relationship to the amount of time we commit in teaching and practicing the skills involved.

The first step in the process is to identify a handful of special athletes that can sprint explosively out of their stance. These players are identified through timed conditioning drills (short sprints). The identified athletes must have the prerequisite of starting speed (0-60), but it is an additional advantage to have longer arms and the agility to run an edge of the opposing team’s protection scheme. Coaches also look for athletes that possess the special skill of being able to void a one-on-one block, which we term “The Wiggle.”

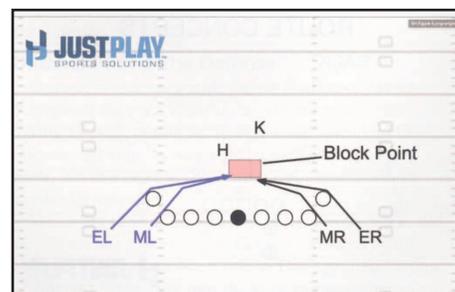
It is important to find time to work on these skills. There are two practice opportunities that we take advantage of.

The first is during pre-practice and the second is during team conditioning at the end of practice. Between four and six athletes will be identified as designated kick blockers and assigned to learning the skill. They are removed from their regular responsibilities during those two periods.

Angles To The Block Point

For the purposes of this article, we are exclusively discussing the edge rusher. We first teach the angles to the block point in the classroom. (See Diagram 1)

Diagram 1: Field Goal Approach Angles



2023

CARTHAGE FOOTBALL

GAME SCHEDULE

SEPT 2: VS ALBION

SEPT 16: AT NORTH CENTRAL

SEPT 23: AT WASH U.

SEPT 30: VS ELMHURST

OCT 7: VS NORTH PARK

OCT 14: AT WHEATON

OCT 21: VS ILLINOIS WESLEYAN

OCT 28: VS CARROLL

NOV 4: VS AUGUSTANA

NOV 11: AT MILLIKIN

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It is important to teach the importance of approaching and sprinting through the block point that is on a path that avoids contact with the kicker. Holders generally set up at 7 yards, we teach our edge rushers to sprint lat through the block point between 5 and 6 yards.

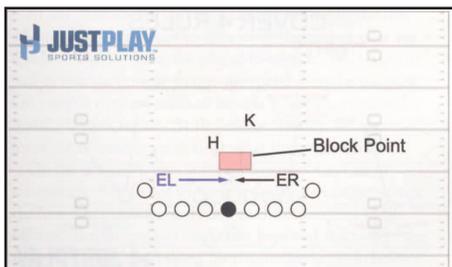
We teach four basic approaches:

1. Edge Left (EL). Dip and rip outside of wing.
2. Edge Right (ER). Dip and rip outside of wing.
3. Missile Left (ML). Straight line sprint, splitting the tight end and wing.
4. Missile Right (MR). Straight line sprint, splitting the tight end and wing.

The field goal block point does not change much from week-to-week. The block point is determined by how much lift the kicker gets. All field goal blocking paths must be between 1 and 2 yards away from where the holder tees—up the ball.

We have found it beneficial to take the time to show our edge rushers the initial path of the ball when it leaves the kicker's foot by having them watch the kicker warm up or kick field goals. This simple exercise is a valuable visual aid that helps us to teach that there is a specific block point and not just an arbitrary area that they run to.

Diagram 2: Walk/Jog through the block point (alternate to opposite side).



Field Goal Block Technique

The coaching points we emphasize are similar to a punt block. However, there are some different points we stress due to the different nature of the kick.

Eyes

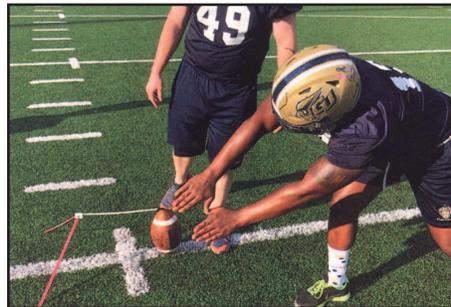
The priority in the full rush is to defeat or overcome the blocker, therefore the rusher's eyes should initially be focused on his blocking threat. Once the blocking threat is defeated, then the eyes must refocus, remain open and foxed on the football. Again, we place a coach kneeling in front of the player's path to check both his path and his eye placement.

Hands

The hand positioning is the same as the punt block with the thumbs touching, providing a large surface area. As the edge rusher passes through the block point, he turns and angles his hands and body to provide as large a surface area as possible to the rising ball. We provide the cue that we want the hands and body at a 45-degree angle. (See Image 1)

Image 1: Field Goal Block – Hand Position Run and Reach (do not dive)!

Coaches have many different approaches to the final stages of the approach. It has always made more sense to me to teach the rusher to commit the body to running and reaching



through the block point. Diving provides two potentially negative points. One, the body is out of control and there is more risk of a penalty due to a collision. Two, the feet stop running, thus killing one's momentum.

Field Goal Block Progressions

1. Block point (See Diagram 1). Left and right. Standing at the block point watching the ball. Coach or kicker can take a one-step approach. This can provide multiple repetitions.
2. Walk/jog through block point (Diagram 2). Left and right. Rusher starts approximately five steps away and runs through the block point when the kicker starts Image 1.their three-step approach. Maintains the same field goal block technique as the standing progression.
3. Full Speed from Line of scrimmage. Left and right full approach. Live repetitions or full modified approach against simulated tight end and wing.

The purpose of this article is to stimulate thought and discussion on a topic that often gets under—emphasized. We should all be analyzing our current approach to special teams, and be maximizing the playmaking potential of our players, especially with regard to such an important aspect as blocking kicks.

As an additional suggestion to the above drills, add players that are assigned to scoop and score. This is always a good time to review the rules for kicks that are blocked behind the line of scrimmage. Every year, we have to reeducate our players on the blocked kick rules.

Thank you to the AFCA for the expressed permission to republish this article which originally appeared in the March/April 2020 issue of the AFCA Magazine.



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OFFENSE

COACHING THE MULTIPLE PASS GAME

By: Drew Ambrose, Quarterbacks Coach, Franklin High School



Drew Ambrose

There is no secret that at Franklin we are primarily a pass-first offense. I am often asked by coaches why and how we are able to carry such a high volume of concepts in our passing game. One of the biggest reasons we focus so much on the pass is that we feel it makes us different from most teams and therefore a difficult

match-up. Our state, especially in the larger divisions, is currently very heavily driven by the “Power-Spread” philosophy, utilizing Gap Scheme runs along with RPOs and a fairly primitive and limited passing game. The goal of most teams is to impose their will with the run to set up the pass. We are the opposite. We view the passing game as a means to force defenses to spread out and into 1-on-1 matchups. This allows us to exploit the match-ups that are advantageous to us in the passing game but also create a light box to run the ball where we can focus on a very small core of base run concepts.

To give some context prior to diving into the weeds of our passing game, during our base install we teach 15 drop back pass concepts - this does not include any of our naked boot, sprint out, much of our play-action package nor any of our red zone & goal line specific concepts. Many coaches hear that number and immediately laugh, saying that they could never do this with their team. The reality is that 15 is a lot, and I do acknowledge that sentiment. We also

typically game plan between 2-5 new concepts for each opponent based on the coverages that they run, although there is often carryover within these against similar defenses. So when looking at the entirety of a season, we typically utilize approximately 35 different concepts at some point. Our 15 base concepts are “all-purpose” in nature, meaning we do not view any of them as being coverage specific beaters but rather good against any look a defense can give us. Some require tags and different variations against certain coverages but we never look at our base package as something we cannot carry into any game.

In 2021 we led the state in passing with 3813 yards (273 ypg) and 41 touchdowns (we also rushed for over 2000 yards and 40 touchdowns). So how are we able to do this? The answer is that we put all of our pass concepts into families which are taught and read in the exact same way. All 15 of our base concepts fit into three such families that we call **Halo**, **Scan** and **Numbers**. There are two other families which we call **Ob-**



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2023 CUW FALCONS FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 2
MARTIN LUTHER

SEPTEMBER 9
AT NORTHWESTERN (MINN.)

SEPTEMBER 16
LAKELAND

SEPTEMBER 23
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN

SEPTEMBER 30
AT CONCORDIA CHICAGO

OCTOBER 7
BENEDICTINE

OCTOBER 21
ST. NORBERT

OCTOBER 28
AT EUREKA

NOVEMBER 4
ROCKFORD

NOVEMBER 11
AT AURORA





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 1967 1981

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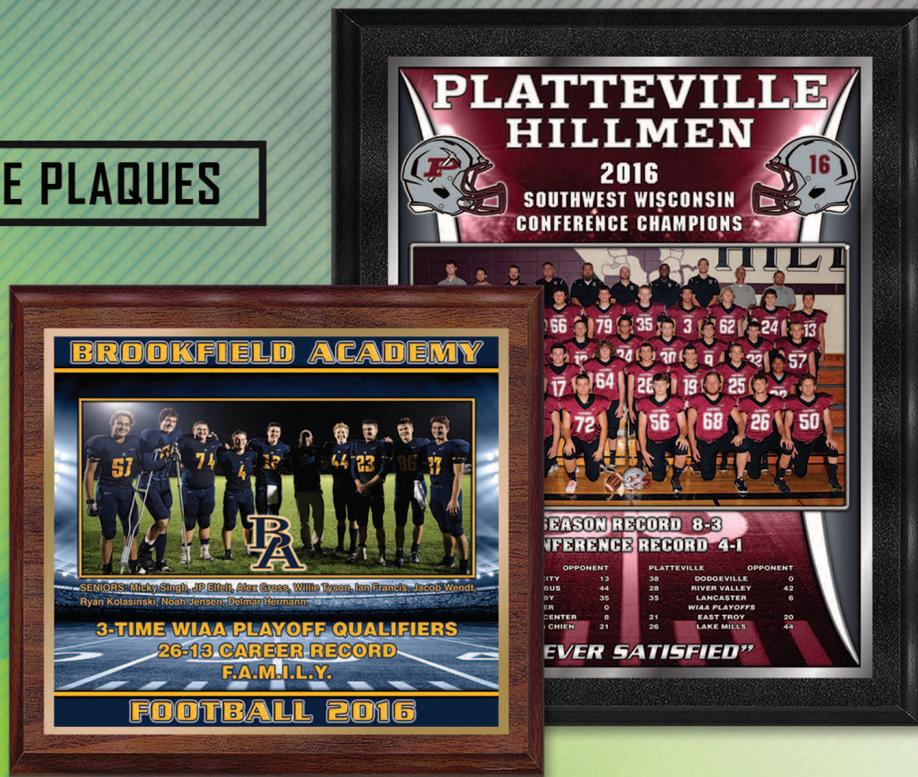
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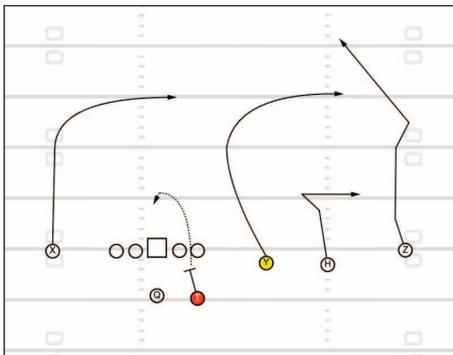
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ject and Half-Field reads, but we rarely utilize these anymore mostly due to the proliferation of pattern match coverages as well as my personal distaste for wasting 2-3 receivers on a play. My plan with this article is to give you an overview of the three main families and an example of one concept from each. If you tuned into the WFC Zoom Clinics that I lead, I made a presentation on this same topic and the video can be found on my YouTube page.

The first family and the simplest one of the three is our Scan read family. This family includes our Mesh, Drive, Shallow and Y-Cross variations. The concepts are designed to be read Horizontally by the Quarterback, starting with the outside most route to the call side and progressing 1-2-3-4-5 right/left directly across the field. One of the reasons we like Scan reads so much is that they are very effective at avoiding interceptions since routes are always moving into the Quarterbacks vision rather than him having to catch up to a route from behind. One other aspect of this family that we utilize as often as possible is to release all 5 eligible receivers. Doing this allows us to create advantageous match-ups with our Running Back or Slot Receiver on a bigger slower Linebacker.

One of our favorite variations from this family is our Bench-Drive concept. This is a concept designed to attack the Boundary with multiple high-low conflicts built in. It is a great all-weather concept that we carry into every game and is one of our most used Tempo calls. The 1-2 in the progression is a Flat-7 high-low stretch to the front side with the X and Tailback. The X must adjust his route break as needed based on the dominant position of the Corner and the ball should go here if he is able to win outside leverage on his release. The 3-4 in the progression is the Shallow-Dig combination and we finish at 5 with the Fin (Five & In) which is the outlet should the defense drain out all the underneath coverage. We are not so much concerned about reading any particular defenders on this play aside from the Corner in our initial high-low. The expectation of the other receivers is that they look for windows against zone and stay on the move against man, the QB will find them as he scans across the field.

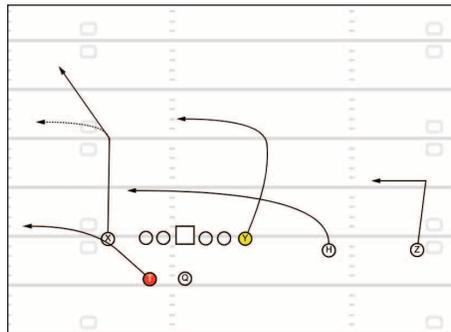


The second family is our Halo or High-Low reads, also known as 3-Level reads. This family includes all of our Flood variations as well as Post-Dig concepts. Rather than being read hor-

izontally like Scan reads, these are read Vertically top to bottom. We teach our quarterbacks to read “High defender to Flat defender” on all of these concepts. An oversimplified way of thinking about this would be to say that when we are presented a 2-High/Middle Open coverage, the high defender would be the playside safety and the flat defender would be either the Corner (Cover 2) or Nickel/Sam (Quarters). If we are presented cover 3 the high defender would be the 1/3 Corner and the flat defender would be the Nickel/Sam. If we are getting straight Man Coverage we will pure progression read high to low.

An example of a Halo concept for us would be our field-flood or often known as Sail. In this concept we have a Pressure Post that breaks between 10-14 yards (converts to a Fade vs 1-High), a 10-yard Sail route that rounds to 15 and some variation of a Flat control route. On the QB’s initial drop he will be reading the dominant position and hip angle of the high defender: is he putting himself in position to take away the Post or is he sitting on or matching the Sail route. If he is matching the Sail route and not in a dominant position to take away the Post the QB will throw the Post. Our expectation is that the receiver will beat the Corner so we do not account for him in any part of the read. If the high defender is putting himself in position to take away the post, the QB will move his eyes to the flat defender. With the flat defender we are looking at whether he is jumping the Flat control route or is maintaining his position to take away the Sail route, and we simply throw opposite him. There is obviously variation in how teams cover the flat and how disciplined the particular athlete is who performs that job, so we do have many variations and tags with the flat route in order to help facilitate the desired effect. Lastly we always have a Dig route breaking into the QBs scan path as an outlet when running the base variations of this concept.

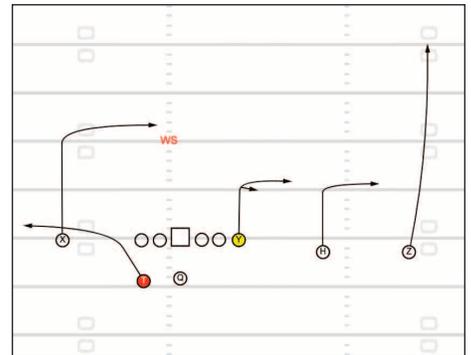
The third family is our Numbers reads. This



family is the largest and has the most variation in it and is also the most intensive to teach of the three. The initial read is very simple, but the follow on reads vary and do require repetition. The big idea with numbers reads is that we have 2 separate concepts built into each play, and are working the side of the field that we have at least equal numbers to based on the movement of a particular defender, in most cases the weak/boundary safety. This is not the old 2-high beater on one side and 1-high beater on the

other. These concepts are primarily run from 3x1 formations since we see nearly exclusively 2-high/middle-open coverages, 3x1 forces the defense to make a decision on what to do with their weak safety. The QB will check the WS position relative to the centerline pre-snap, and may very well be able to make the decision prior to the snap, but most of the time has to read his initial drop and whether he kicks towards the 3-man side or stays to the single WR side. Whichever way the WS goes, we work opposite. Each side then has either an Inside-Out, Outside-In or High-Low read.

One of our most used plays in this family is a simple Stick concept. We structure this concept with Stick to the 3-man side and a Dig-Flat with the X and Tailback to the single receiver side. The quarterback will get his numbers key off the boundary safety at the snap and work away from him. If we are working the Stick side the Go route is a man-alert (throw it if we get the look we want) and then we read outside-in, Speed-Out to Stick. If we are working the single receiver side we are reading high to low, dig to flat off the flat defender



Putting our pass concepts into read families has been a total game changer and eased both the teaching and learning burden for our quarterbacks. This is really the ‘secret sauce’ of how we are able to carry such a large and diverse package of pass concepts. If you have questions about anything, please feel free to get in touch: email or Twitter@DrewAmbroseQB.

“Courage means being afraid to do something, but still doing it.

—Knut Rockne

TEN SIMPLE OFFENSIVE LINE DRILLS

By: Mark Siegert, Head Football Coach, Potosi-Cassville Football



Mark Siegert

On behalf of the Potosi-Cassville Football Program I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association for all they do for everyone involved in this great sport at all levels. A community's football program touches countless lives as we pursue the moments that will last forever. It's through your leadership and guidance that we as coaches are able reach new heights as we lean on, learn from, and are inspired by this awesome organization. Thank you to everyone who makes up the WFC!

The focus of this article is offensive line play and the drills that we use at Potosi-Cassville; these drills are simple, but we feel they are important to our success. First off, a little back-story on how we arrived at where we are today. In 1999 as a first-year head coach, I was going to re-invent the wheel. We were a 4-wide, shotgun, single-back spread team, with a coach that had no idea how to run it (me). Pre-snap we looked awesome, but then the ball moved, and everything fell apart quickly. After a winless season in 2002, we decided something had to change. We had coaches on our staff who had previous experience with the Wing-T, and in 2003 we made the switch. In 2004, we ended a 12-year playoff drought and since then have been lucky enough to qualify for the playoffs every year since. During this 18-year period, we have averaged 1200+yards passing and 2700+yards rushing. Now obviously, the players we have running the system during this period have improved and our strength and conditioning program plays a vital role as well, but our base playbook hasn't changed. Our terminology and blocking schemes have remained constant. It's that consistency within a system which has stood the test of time and has been a part of that success. Now for the engine that drives the machine - our offensive line. We tell our kids all the

time, we could have the sweetest looking car in the state, but if you open that hood and there is nothing there, it doesn't matter.

Here are some of our favorite drills we use in pre-season and pre-practice daily that we feel help drive that engine.

Stance and Start

If your foundation isn't solid, it doesn't matter how strong or athletic you are. We drill Stance and Start all the time. It is crucial we get off the ball and into our assignment fast, physical and efficient. We are looking for these coaching points when getting into and out of our stance. Back flat, butt down, weight evenly distributed, 'Z'-in the knee, dominate foot back in the instep of weak foot, grass growing under our heels and NOT flat footed, eyes up and looking straight ahead, down hand light, and attack hand ready and not resting. As a rule, we run drills that have little to no wait time; practice time is precious and there is no need for long lines and down time.

Drill #1 - Set and Stay

We simply have our guys get in their stance on ready, and then they hold their stance perfectly while we do a check. The drill is organized so that you can see the front five in hunt of you and then everyone staggered Coaches

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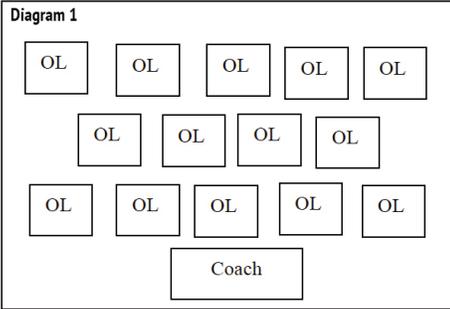


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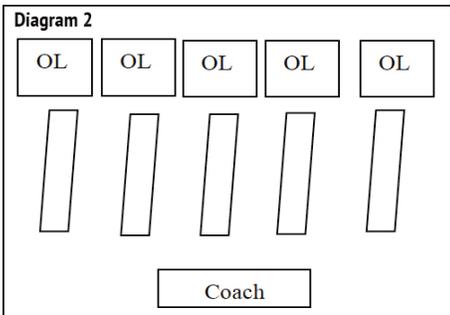
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 SEPTEMBER 9, 2023 • 1PM • CEDAR RAPIDS, IA
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BETHEL UNIVERSITY
 SEPTEMBER 16, 2023 • 1PM • EAU CLAIRE, WI
- 
UW-STEVENS POINT
 SEPTEMBER 30, 2023 • 1PM • STEVENS POINT, WI
- 
UW-RIVER FALLS
 OCTOBER 7, 2023 • 1PM • EAU CLAIRE, WI
- 
UW-OSHKOSH
 OCTOBER 14, 2023 • 1:05PM • OSHKOSH, WI
- 
UW-PLATTEVILLE
 OCTOBER 21, 2023 • 1PM • EAU CLAIRE, WI
- 
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 OCTOBER 28, 2023 • 11:30AM • LA CROSSE, WI
- 
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are tweaking and looking for those coaching points, adjusting as we go around to each player; We do about 3-4 sets of :30-:45 second holds. While the drill is being run we also do a quick balance check and try to nudge players out of their stance. If someone is out of balance, they will fall out of their stance quickly. If their stance is on-point, then that nudge really does nothing.

Drill #2 -First Movement Drills



We organize these in that same pattern as we did in the above diagram. There are 3 phases to this. Phase 1 is the Six-inch Step that replaces the down hand and hand flip. We want to make this as fast as possible and flip our hands up as fast as possible. We emphasize our hands being crossed in this drill (to hammer the point home that we want our hands inside as tight as we can). On ‘ready’ they are in their stance; on ‘go’ they are moving, but just the 6 inch step and hand flip. When done correctly, they should still be in a great stance with the ability to go in any direction, and their head level should not have changed. Phase 2 is the Two-Step with hand flip. On ‘ready’ they are in their stance; on ‘go’ they are in the 6-inch step plus movement of their hunt foot while they perform the hand flip. Again, head level should not be changing more than a few inches. Phase 3 is the Partner head level check. We execute Phase 2, but now we have a partner standing off to the side with their hand about 2-3 inches from their helmet. On ‘ready’ the O-linemen are in their stance, on go they get into the Two-Step hand flip but now they have a physical cue and if their helmet hits their partners hand, they know they have gone too high.

Drill #3 – Pull Check

In this non-contact technique driven drill, we are emphasizing pull path and getting our shoulders back to square to the line of scrimmage as fast as possible. We drill this in that same mass

organization pattern as diagram one. We simply want to open up, stay low and take 1-2-3 or how ever many steps we are instructing them to pull before getting back to shoulders square and ‘on the tracks’. We also incorporate the covered chute with this drill, as well.

Drill #4 – Board Drill

We have five boards (treated 2x10s, 8 feet long) that we lay under our chute (diagram 2). In this drill, we are in our stance; at the end of the board we have every other line going, so 3 go at one time and then 2 next. Our teaching point in this drill is ‘getting on the tracks’. We tell them we are ‘road graders’ not ‘Lamborghini,’ so our feet are pounding ground to gain ground’. We want weight on our instep as we travel through the boards. We also have the coach give direction right or left as they are coming out of the chute to assure that their eyes are up.

Drill #5 – Lean Drill

The Lean Drill is set up the same way that our board drill is, but now we move the board out past the chute and have defensive players lean on the chute. Our O-linemen come out of their stance and fit with the defender in front of them, all the while making sure their feet are on the tracks; keeping their hands inside and of course going to the whistle. Special note...our drills start with our cadence and always end with a whistle. We never want our linemen to stop until the whistle blows, no matter if it’s a drill or if we are running goal line play in the 4th quarter of a game.

Drill #6 – Stalemate

This drill is again in our chute with boards. But now we have only three lines going and lose two of the boards. This drill emphasizes leg drive, staying low and being physical. The set-up of this is we have two D-linemen right in front of the O-linemen - about a foot away. We want to limit collisions with this, and again the focus is on leg drive. On ‘go’ the offensive lineman’s job is to split the two defensive linemen, and that won’t happen unless your legs are driving and you are staying low. It looks a lot like a defensive drill, but we strive to make this an offensive drill for leg drive. When the whistle blows to end the drill, the two defensive players allow O-linemen through; the o-linemen should fall forward and be able to keep his feet. Now if the O-linemen can get through those two on the initial ‘go’, then kudos to him, as that is his goal for this drill. The defensives’ goal is to

drive the O-linemen back into the chute. A quick whistle is a must for this if that is the case.

Drill #7 – Pass Pro Point Drill

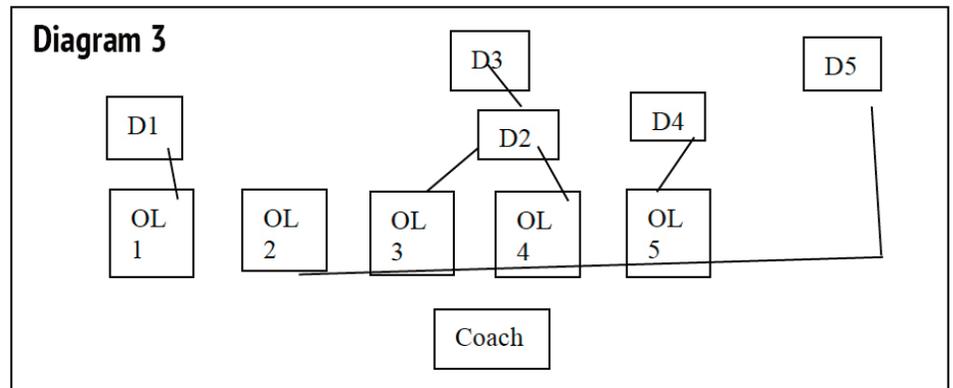
In this drill, we align our front five starting linemen and then have a defensive player right in front of them. We have a coach play the QB spot and take the snap. As a coach, we are positioned behind the OL facing the D-line. We then point to one, two or three of the D-linemen and they are the ones that are live. On the snap of the ball all the players get into their pass set and react to the live defensive player; This is a one-on-one drill, and If the D-line gets a hand on the QB before the whistle blows, the lineman does five pushups. If the O-linemen keeps the D-linemen away, then the D-linemen does five pushups. There will always be someone doing pushups. This is a highly competitive drill. The time the QB is kept clean varies; however in general, it is about three seconds. Note: If the O-linemen doesn’t have a live lineman in front of him, he is still pass setting and moving until the whistle blows, just on air and working on technique.

Drill #8 – Fit and Finish (We also call this the Double-Go Drill)

We have our O-linemen partner up for this one. We have them in a line and have every other group of two perform the drill. As one group gets back in alignment, the next group is going. Players are about 1 yard away from each other; On ‘ready’ the O-linemen get set in their stance, on ‘go’ they get out of their stance and fit to the defender. When they fit they stop. That is where we as coaches check some of the teaching points. Coaches are checking for helmet level, and if it’s below the defender’s chin strap - if they are eye to eye, then they are too high, is the back flat, are their drive angles in their lower body, where is their hand positioned. Once those are checked, and it’s only for a moment, then they hear another ‘go’ where they drive and listen for a whistle, where they will finish with a bench press off the defender.

Drill #9 – Do-It-all

This is a drill that we incorporate to get reps for our different blocks, and then we run them all together. The purpose is two-fold; obviously reps with each of those blocks, but secondarily is to make sure there is communication, and this is where we first start making some of our line calls and what we are doing together as a unit every down. The set-up is in diagram #3, and for



simplicity we will insert some of our simpler blocks we work; there are others that we rotate also. On ‘go,’ all linemen perform the different block. OL1 drive blocks D1, OL2 pulls and meets D5, OL3 and OL4 work on a double and scrape with D2 and D3, and OL 5 works on a cross-body block. Again, we can work in may different blocks and combinations. We rotate one position to the right and will have as many of these set up as we can.

Drill #10 – Team Pass Pro

This is a drill we only do once a year, but it is one of our staples for one reason.... We run this drill to prove that we can protect the OB in our drop back passing game vs. almost any blitz or stunt, if we communicate as a group. The setup is simple; we have the O-line, plus our Running

Back and Full Back aligned in their Base Wing-T spots. QB is under center. We have our receivers 10-15 yards out with the Split End and Wing back in the right or left flat area respectively; the TE is in the middle of the field. The QB simply must complete a pass to one of those receivers. If the pass is incomplete or the QB is unable to get the throw off, the offensive group does 10 pushups. Now how we create pressure is by having defenders join the snap. The first defender puts on a helmet hoodie and aligns anywhere he wants. On the snap he tries to get to the QB; if he doesn’t, he does pushups - it’s 7-on-1 so he shouldn’t win this round. We continue to add one defender until we get to 11 defenders on those 7 in protection.

We only add defenders when we protect against that number. This drill does a few things; communication is a must, of course, especially when we start out-numbering the protection we have – plus the QB must know where pressure is and must get the ball out fast!

Thanks for letting me share with you some of our favorite drills we use in our pre-practices and pre-season. Once the pads are on in August; we also have a ton of drills that we use during individual offensive sessions that focus on getting our ‘tool box’ full. Those typically are more ‘live’ and physical than that of the pre-practice and pre-season drills. If you would like to talk more about these drills or anything else, we would be happy to assist, my email is siegerm@potosisd.k12.wi.us.

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	Buffalo	Saturday Sep 2	2:30 PM
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	Georgia Southern	Saturday, Sep 16	11 AM
	@ Purdue	Friday, Sep 22	6 PM
	Rutgers (Homecoming)	Saturday, Oct 7	11 AM or 2:30/3 PM
	Iowa	Saturday, Oct 14	TBD
	@ Illinois	Saturday, Oct 21	11 AM or 2:30/3 PM
	Ohio State	Saturday, Oct 28	TBD
	@ Indiana	Saturday, Nov 4	TBD
	Northwestern	Saturday, Nov 11	TBD
	Nebraska	Saturday, Nov 18	TBD
	@ Minnesota	Saturday, Nov 25	TBD

GOOD LUCK TO ALL HIGH SCHOOL COACHES AND PLAYERS THIS SEASON

ONE CONCEPT, MULTIPLE WAYS TO MAXIMIZE EFFICIENCY

By: Craig Loscheider, Head Football Coach, Mondovi High School



Craig Loscheider

Thank you to the WFCA for the opportunity to contribute this article to *The Point After II*. We have a truly amazing community of coaches in our state. It's a privilege and honor to be a part of that community and I'm thankful for the opportunity to share some of the things we do in Mondovi offensively to try to score points and win football games.

When I became the head coach at Mondovi in 2017, it was my first opportunity as a head coach, but it was also my first opportunity to coordinate the offense. I had spent the previous four seasons as an assistant to Erich Janousky, first at Wisconsin Lutheran College and then at Milwaukee Lutheran High School. Coach Janousky had coordinated some of the best offenses in the nation while he was at Concordia Chicago, and everything I knew about running an offense I learned from him. My plan for Mondovi was to take the stuff I liked most from him and run it, and that's what we did in 2017. By the grace of God, we were somewhat effective that year, but that was in spite of my coaching, not because of it. We were blessed with some great talent at basically every position and honestly, I still get mad thinking about the potential of that group and how good they would have been had I been a little more experienced when they came through. The main problem from that first season that I've been working to improve ever since was play volume.

Volume was a problem in both practices and games. Because all our athletes play both ways, I have 45 minutes per practice to work on offense. We do 15 minutes of individual and small group work, 15 minutes of inside run, 10 minutes of pass, and 5 minutes of screen. That's our Tuesday and Wednesday breakdown, and there aren't any more minutes. With 10 minutes twice per week to practice our pass game, we feel that we need to really limit the number of concepts we use.

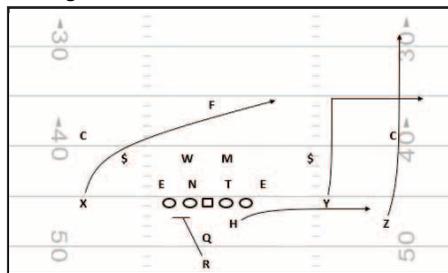
Because the high school game has 12-minute quarters, and because small high schools are primarily run teams, we get fewer offensive plays per game in Mondovi than I've had any-

where else. We average about 60 offensive plays per game. I don't script calls, but I plan on being about 2:1 run to pass so roughly 40 runs and 20 passes in a typical game. At least half of those 20 passes are screens and routes tagged to run concepts that we take if the defense gives them to us, so we're talking 10 or less snaps a week where we are looking to put receivers into a pass concept and have our QB drop back or roll out and go through some type of progression.

When you consider both the limited available practice time and the limited number of plays in a game, the only logical choice is to limit your volume of concepts. I think that first year, I probably had at least ten unique concepts between quick game, 5-step, and PA/rollout. Each program probably has to choose the right number of concepts for them based on their athletes and practice time and how much they want to throw the football, but I think it's relatively safe to say most people have too much. At Mondovi, we have settled on two; FLOOD and SNAG.

Almost everyone runs some sort of flood concept. We have number one run a vert route, number two is a 10-yard out (sail route), and number three is a flat route (we run a bubble if detached, an arrow if sniffer, and a shoot route if aligned in the backfield). The backside receiver runs a drive route if he's alone, and if it's a 2x2 formation, the backside mirrors the frontside (vert/sail). Figure 1 shows our FLOOD concept.

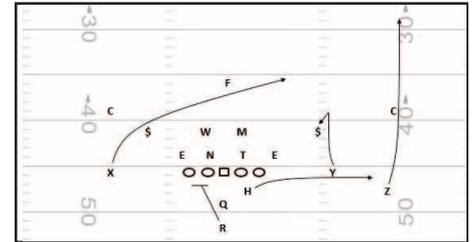
Figure 1: FLOOD



Our favorite adjustment to our FLOOD concept is the STICK tag. STICK simply communicates that number 2 is going to run a hitch route. We call it stick because it's a ghetto Y-stick concept, but we don't teach it that way to the kids. To some extent, it is learning a different concept because it's a different route combination and a different read for the QBs and I understand all that, but it is easier than installing a new play. We tell them what it means when we add the STICK tag, we tell the QB how that changes his progression, and then we start scripting it in our 10 minute pass game period so we can execute it. Right or wrong, I always try to make pass concepts either/or for our QBs. In my opinion, more than that confuses young QBs and keeps them from being decisive. On

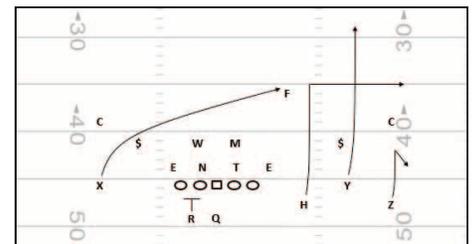
our base FLOOD, we read the flat defender hi/lo. On STICK, we read the same kid in/out. Figure 2 shows our FLOOD concept with the STICK tag.

Figure 2: FLOOD STICK



Our other adjustment to our FLOOD concept is the CHANGE tag. The CHANGE tag moves the vert/sail from 1 and 2 to 2 and 3, and 1 becomes the flat route. We call it a SIT route but it's basically a hitch. The only difference is we teach a hitch as working back toward the QB on the break and with the sit, we want the break to sit out to the sideline. We really like it against Cover 3 or 4... anytime the CB has deep responsibility. It's also really good to rollout at because the flat route is more or less stationary so it's an easier throw to the flats if the defense sinks and takes away the deeper option. Finally, if we are playing a defense that is primarily man coverage, we go to this to get their 1 and 2 cover guys covering routes we aren't planning on throwing anyway. Figure 3 shows our FLOOD concept with the CHANGE tag.

Figure 3: FLOOD CHANGE



With this basic concept and two tags, we are able to stay relatively simple and have a few different options in the pass game. In our play call, we communicate if we want the pass protection and backfield action to be pocket, sprint out, or some sort of PA fake so we have those options as well. We have rules for executing it out of 2x2 sets, but we primarily run it out of a 3x1. Throwing the 10-yard out can be a tough throw for young QBs, so if arm-strength is an issue, we formation it so the TE is number 2 and he runs the out. If we formation it so number 2 is detached, we almost always roll to that side for the same reason (shortens the throw to the primary receiver).

I hope something in this article has been helpful for you. Please reach out to me at clloscheider@mondovi.k12.wi.us if you have any questions or ideas. Good luck to everyone this fall!

TIP OF SPEAR; TENNIS BALL DRILL

By: Connor Flaten, Tight Ends Coach, UW–Stout



Connor Flaten

At the University of Wisconsin-Stout, we teach a blocking technique called the “tip of the spear” that contains numerous drills on how to approach a defender you are looking to block, and it also teaches how to punch and where the athlete’s hands should be.

One drill in particular we do is using a tennis ball and a partner who stands five yards away from the athlete doing the drill. In this drill, the athlete starts in an athletic stance squatted down slightly and duck walks towards their

partner with choppy short steps giving them the ability to change direction on a dime to get to their destination. The athlete uses the tennis ball like they are trying to roll a piece of clay into a ball. The reason the athlete does this is to promote tight hands so they can strike the defender in the chest plate where they can grab on and have more control as opposed to grabbing the defenders’ shoulders which is a common mistake regarding blocking technique.

When the athlete doing the drill gets up to their partner, they will strike their partner with thumbs up and pinkies down so that their four fingers are in between their partners chest plate and their partner’s body giving them great control to drive their partner five yards to finish the drill. After the athlete has completed their rep, they will hand the tennis ball to their partner so their partner can have a rep.

The coach running the drill can have the athletes do as many sets as desired. The coach running the drill will have to be cautious not to make the athletes too tired of it as this drill is very technical and needs to be efficient. If the athlete is doing this drill exhausted, they might go through the motions and make their technique worse instead of bettering it.

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OCT 28	NOV 4	NOV 11	

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DEVELOPING YOUR QUARTERBACKS THROUGH POSITION WARMUPS

By: Chris Greisen, Head Football Coach, West De Pere High School



Chris Greisen

Two seasons ago, we decided to change up our warmup in practice. We had been running the traditional dynamic warmup that I had done while I was playing 10 years earlier; high knees, butt kicks, A-skips, etc.. After watching another local team practice during the Covid spring season (we played in the fall), I decided we were going to warm up in our position groups. In a sense, we combined our warm up and our individual sessions. To me, this would be a win/win situation. My players were going to be warming up with the movements that they were going to be asked to do in practice and a game while

simultaneously freeing up more time in practice for other needed drills.

Here at West DePere, as the Head Coach, I am also the QB's coach, so I especially loved this idea. I implore each of the coaches to run the daily/mundane drills that ensure we get the base fundamentals correct in every competition. Whether it is a drop back or a backpedal, I want my QBs to get those reps so they don't implode when it counts. In changing to this format my QBs are doing the same daily routine in their warm ups, getting hundreds if not thousands of repetitions. Here are the movements we ask our QBs to do each day as part of a simple warmup.

- 1. Continuous Drop:** Drop back on a line from the sideline to the hash; push and reach with the legs but stay relaxed in the upper body
- 2. Continuous Drop looking left (for right handed QBs):** Make sure your QBs turn their toes; their feet control everything, their hips, their shoulders, and eyes.
- 3. Hitch drill:** They will stimulate a shotgun snap, do a 3-step drop with a gather (hitch); they practice landing in a balanced position (I call this position "Alpha"); they should do this drill looking straight ahead, to the right, and to the left.

- 4. Shuffle drill:** They will practice shuffling backwards, being ready to stop when I clap; then we practice shuffling forward being ready for the "dip" call (dip is when you dip your right shoulder and bring the ball forward to work on protecting the ball from oncoming outside pass rushers).
- 5. Interior Pocket Movement (figure 8 drill):** This always starts with a 5-step drop then, we slide to one side, either in front or behind us, then shuffle back, slide, shuffle back, slide, shuffle up, slide, shuffle up; the QB will then be back in the spot he started his first slide.
- 6. Exterior Pocket Movement:** Start with a 5-step drop again, hitch, and escape outside the pocket over the top, do the same thing coming back to the left; some coaches call this going out the front door and the back door.
- 7. Exterior Pocket Movement (with a step up):** This simulates stepping up under the DE and then escaping outside the pocket; work to the right (this is where you can incorporate the dip) and then work to the left.

Again, this is what our QBs do at the beginning of every practice. There were many times that our QB showed these very skills on the playing field which allowed us to make it all the way down to Madison this past season. Hope this can help you and your program.

BUILDING AN OFFENSIVE GAME PLAN

By: Michael McGuire, Offensive Coordinator, Quarterbacks Coach, UW-La Crosse



Michael McGuire

Football is a very diverse game. From different offensive and defensive schemes to specifics on how a team blocks power or plays Cover-3, there are multiple ways to teach the same concepts. That also applies for building an offensive game plan. This article will discuss the things we look for when building a game plan.

Who are we?

In order to put a successful game plan together you must first identify who you are and

what you want to accomplish? Are you a triple option or spread team? Do you want to be a 21 personnel team that is run heavy or a No Huddle Air Raid system? At UW-L we are a No Huddle team that wants to play with great tempo. We like to use formations, personnel, shifts, and motions to create mismatches. We are primarily in the gun or pistol and are heavily invested in the RPO game. Most importantly we are always evolving based on strengths and weaknesses of our current team.

A large part of understanding our identity is our self scout. As much as we would all like to think we don't have glaring tendencies, we do. Self Scouting allows us to see ourselves through the same lens as the defense does. We can then adjust as necessary or even game plan situations or plays based off our past tendencies.

Balance, Balance, Balance

At UW-L we want to be balanced on the offensive side of the ball, but not in the traditional sense. Usually when offenses discuss being balanced they are talking about being 50/50 run/pass, or close to it. When we talk about being balanced we mean it in multiple ways.

The first way we want to be balanced is by the ability to run and throw the ball. That doesn't

mean we are striving to be 50/50, it means we want to be capable of doing both. If we need to throw the ball 45 times to win a game we can do that, and vice versa. With the RPO game it allows us to do both, and the defense will often effect what we do by box numbers, fronts, coverages, etc. Take what the defense gives you.

The second way we want to be balanced is in our run game. We want to have multiple ways to attack you in the run game:

- Zone and gap schemes
- Inside (IZ, Power, Iso, Trap) and Outside (OZ, Sweep, Option, etc) Schemes to our RBs
- Designed QB runs along with QB postsnap reads
- Jet Sweep runs to our WRs

Along with these different ways to attack in the run game we also have an RPO element to almost every run scheme we have. This enables us to be efficient and not run into stacked boxes.

Being balanced in the pass game is also very important to the success of our offense. When putting together our game plan for the passing game there are multiple concepts we want to include:

- 1/2 Field Concepts, Quick game (1 high, 2 high beaters)
- Full Field Concepts, Drop back (progressions)
- Sprint out
- Play Action (naked, boot, vertical)
- Shot Plays (max protect)
- Screens (slip, jailbreak, bubble)

The most important part of the pass game is the protection. We want to keep our protections as simple as possible while also giving the defense multiple looks and keep the QB as a moving target. Some of the protections we have in our library are:

- Big on Big
- 1/2 Slide
- Full Slide
- Sprint out
- Naked, Boot
- Play Action

Every run scheme, route concept, pass pro will be run every week but we will discuss these different options on a weekly basis when putting together our plan!

Personnel is also a consideration when discussing balance. Every offense wants to get the ball in their playmakers hands as much as possible. Although this is a great plan, there is a

fine line between getting a player his touches and overworking them. This especially is true at the high school level where you'll frequently see RBs with 40+ carries. By being balanced in all these different areas it allows everyone on the field to get involved, and thus must be defended. We try to balance the touches between our playmakers while also making sure our best players get touches in important situations.

Weekly Game plan, what we look for!

When building our weekly game plan there are many different things we breakdown on opposing defenses. The first thing we look for is:

- **Formation Alignment** – How do defenses align to 2x2 vs 3x1 formations? Do they have fronts or coverages they prefer and how do we attack those. Are there formations we can get matchups that favor us? Are they sound in their alignment to formations?
- **Adjustments** – How does a defense adjust to shifts & motions? Do they check when motioning from 2x2 to 3x1 and vice-versa? Do they have auto checks? Do they tip pressures/coverages with motion?
- **Personnel** – Who are their best and weakest players? Where are our best and worst matchups? Can we dictate it with our personnel?

- **Situational Football** – Do they change who they are in the RZ or on 3rd or 4th down? What are their blitz tendencies? What's their strategy on short yardage and GL? 2-minute philosophy?

As discussed, there are numerous ways to game plan. Hopefully, this has provided you with ideas to either add to an existing process, or create your own! mmcguire@uwlax.edu.

“The worst mistake a coach can make is not being himself.”
— Charlie McClendon

UW-LA CROSSE EAGLES

2023 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

 8/31 AT DAKOTA STATE	 10/14 AT UW-PLATTEVILLE
 9/9 VS HARDIN SIMMONS	 10/21 VS UW-OSHKOSH
 9/16 AT NORTHERN MICH.	 10/28 VS UW-EAU CLAIRE
 9/30 VS UW-STOUT	 11/4 AT UW-RIVER FALLS
 10/7 AT UW-WHITEWATER	 11/11 AT UW-STEVEN'S POINT

#THEEXPERIENCE

WING-T FOOTBALL COACHING AND GAME PLANNING FOR YOUR RUNNING BACKS

By: Jim Matthys, Head Football Coach Brodhead-Juda Football



Jim Matthys

I would like to start by thanking the WFCAs for all of the opportunities this great organization has provided for the coaches of the State of Wisconsin. We are very lucky to have the opportunities to better the game of football in our state. This past season was my 25th year coaching football here in Wisconsin. I have had the opportunity to work and learn a lot from some great coaches who have run the Wing-T offense. When I came to Brodhead - Juda in 1996 Hall of Fame coach, Gary Larsen, had been running the offense for several years and we have continued that today. While it may not always look the same as it did back in 1996 the same principles apply. I will share some thoughts over time of running the Wing-T and some things that have helped us over the years.

WING-T PLANNING

You need to have a staple play or series.

As many of you know the Wing-T is broken down by series such as the Buck/Belly/Down/etc. Each series compliments each other with a run play, a counterplay, and a play-action pass. Choose what you want to hang your hat on for a series and run that series every practice against

multiple defensive looks. We may run a specific play or series of plays 10 to 12 times in a single practice. This gives players a sense of confidence that they can run a set of plays against any defense and at any time during the game. Make it a priority.

Design the run game to hit inside, off tackle, edge, play-action, off everything. Keeping these four items in mind will aid play calling for the Wing-T. Teams will come into games and take away something your offense is trying to run. Having the ability to attack the defense in multiple ways to run the ball is extremely important. The base Wing-T offensive series will attack these areas. The key to success is making sure you efficiently practice all the plays attacking the 4 areas every practice. There have been several games in which we thought one or two plays will be great and find out that our opponent has taken them away and we have to attack them in a different way.

Formations should not dictate the plays you plan to run in the Wing-T. When running any offense a formation should not handcuff you from running your entire series of plays. Be careful when designing formations that you are not tipping defenses off to what you will run from the formations.

Practice Organization

1. Film practice as much as possible. Also, focus on as many reps as possible. We always film as much of our practices as possible. In a typical week we will try to film our team segments either on Tuesdays and Wednesdays or even both some weeks. This has proven to be even more important than how much we watch our opponent's film. Our team segments are all scripted with all coaches knowing the situation (the play, the offense, the defense). Our coaches then have 24 hours to comment on the films prior to the athletes viewing them before practice.
2. Practice break down.

Indy Time

We try to have individual time in our schedule at least 2 - 3 days per week once games begin. In preseason we will schedule it daily. (Blocking drill, Footwork drill, Ball drill).

Goal Time

- Carpet Drill (Scripted) - Backs and QB on Spacing Carpet - We run 2 groups through our scripted run game script. Running each play twice gets 6 RBs a rep. (Backs and QB)
- Buck Drill - No Ball - Yellow for Guards Back
- Option Drill - We run this drill once per week and make a point to run all of our option game with a skeleton only. Making an emphasis on the players we plan to option off of that week.

Unit Time

Our unit time is only used 1 to 2 times per week. In this time we focus on any combo blocks that entail the use of TE or tackles in combo with our backs. In our scheme, we run a lot of combination blocks which takes time to work with backs and linemen to ensure we get to the second level.

Team Time

All scripted - Coaches watch their position. We try to limit the number of do-overs, especially on the days when this segment is filmed. We can show the mistakes in film sessions.

In conclusion, it's our belief that the more quality reps we can give our backs the better in practice. Our coaches are constantly preaching ball security as well as always carrying out fakes when not receiving the ball. The thing we enjoy about the Wing-T is the multiple ways in which we can get the ball to any number of our

AQUINAS OFFENSIVE PLAY CALLING – MORE IS MORE

By: Steven Kramer, Offensive Coordinator, Aquinas High School

I would like to thank the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association for the opportunity to contribute to this issue of *The Point After II*.

On offense, I believe there are two main strategies used to move the football. One is to execute a small number of plays near perfection with built-in adjustments and tags to counter all the different defensive strategies to stop the play. The second is to have many plays, instead of having multiple adjustments simply call a different play. I have used both strategies at dif-

ferent points throughout my play calling career and have had the most success when using a large playbook.

Our philosophy on offense is to force the defense to adjust to us, instead of us having to adjust to the defense. Our playbook consists of a combination of Wing-T, Spread and Single Wing plays each with multiple formations. Throughout the season we ran 35 different pass plays, 8 different run schemes, 6 different screen plays and over 10 trick plays. With the amount of different looks we give the defense,

we feel we can be successful on offense by running these plays above average.

In games, we aim to keep the defense uncomfortable to cause them to play a step slower and from playing downhill. We accomplish this by using plays the defense hasn't scouted or practiced against that week. This can be a new wrinkle, new formation, motion, trick play, or a play we didn't run the past few weeks. Anything to make the defense think instead of reacting. Having the ability to select from a large playbook keeps the defense guessing.

Here are some strategies we use to help our players to play with confidence when running many plays.

1. Use simple concepts. To make plays simple we run fewer RPOs now.
2. Give our players ownership and explain why we have the play in the playbook. Most of our plays we teach the players how to start the play and then how to end the play. We teach them techniques to use during the play but want them to use their creativity to do their job during the play much like backyard football.
3. Keep it simple for Offensive Line by using the same schemes. Our base run scheme in our spread sets is GT counter Trey. We also run Counter Criss-Cross from our Wing-T sets. This is the same run scheme for our linemen, just the TE pulls instead of the backside tackle.
4. One direction plays. We found our players were able to retain more secondary type plays when they knew the play was only run to one side.
5. Package plays for an exceptional athlete. When we have a new player or one that has difficulty remembering plays, we first package a group of plays to highlight the players skill set. Once this player has a role in the

offense, we hope they gain confidence and can learn more of the playbook.

6. Personnel packages. Last season we aligned in both our Wing-T and Spread sets equally around 45% of the time. For players struggling to learn the whole playbook, we first have them learn the plays for one of the sets.

This cuts the learning from the whole playbook to 45% of it.

We continue to evolve and look for ways to add more variations to our offense while keeping it simple for our players. Thank you for the opportunity to share some ideas we use at Aquinas. Go Blugolds!

GOOD LUCK TO ALL PLAYERS & COACHES!




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**GOOD LUCK TO ALL WI
HS TEAMS THIS FALL!**







WINNING WITH THE WING-T OFFENSE

By: Robbie Smazal, Offensive Coordinator, Colby High School



Robbie Smazal

I would like to start by thanking the WFCAs for asking me to write an article for *The Point After II*. Furthermore, as a coach for 18 years, I have observed the many things that the WFCAs does for its coaches and players, this organization is absolutely amazing and top notch.

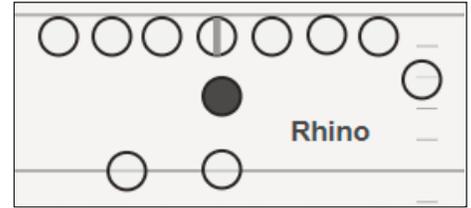
Colby High School has been running the Wing T on offense since 1992 when Hall of Fame Coach Jeff Rosemeyer took over the program. When Jim Hagen became head coach in 2017, he named me the Offensive Coordinator and he wanted to keep running the Wing T. During much discussion between the two of us, we talked about expanding it by running it out of the shotgun, along with under center. I think a great deal of our success through the years has been consistency on how we practice and run our offense, etc. Our players starting in 7th grade begin to learn the basic Wing-T offense and by the time they get into high school, a lot

of the terminology and blocking assignments are the same. Certainly once they get to playing on the varsity team, we add a lot more plays, diversity, and some formations, but the blocking rules etc. are really all the same. The reason why I like the Wing-T are as follows:

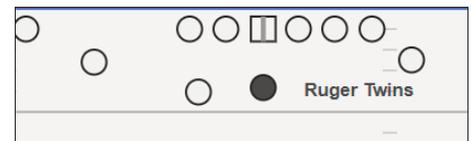
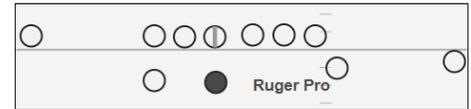
- Has been a proven offense for many years and can be run successfully at any age level
- Simple offense to teach and players can catch on quickly (our players flip depending on if Wing Right or Wing Left so their assignments are always consistent and the same)
- Diversity from week to week
- Offense can be deceptive
- Can use different variations and formations but keep blocking assignments consistent
- Utilizes a lot of down blocks with good angles
- Spread out the defense to create more space and make defense adjust to formations
- It is something I feel comfortable coaching.

Several points that we really emphasize in practice while working in offensive units and team offense are:

- Wide receivers need to block
- Blocking effort and emphasize what happens away from point of attack
- Butt between the defender and whoever is running the ball
- Communicate on the line of scrimmage
- Use motion to create mismatch/opportunities and get the defensive players' eyes to go elsewhere and many times get them to take that false step away from where the ball is actually going
- Be unselfish – what is best for the team.



Our Rhino formation is our base offense and this is where we start on the first days of practice. Once players learn and get comfortable with base plays such as trap, sweep, bootkeep, counter, dive, give, waggle, etc., we will then branch out into our shotgun formations.



Our Ruger Pro and Ruger Twins formations were implemented for several reasons: Spread the defense out, hopefully takes another defender out of the box, get to the edge on wide side, deception, gets quarterback more involved in the run game, run play action pass and combination routes, etc. Furthermore, we can still run all of our base plays in these formations but the key is also branching off more plays such as jet sweep, zip, option and using tailback as lead blocker and using quarterback as the runner.

If you have any questions about our offense, please email me at rsmaza65@yahoo.com

THE SINGLE WING SPIN OFFENSE

By: Matt Dunlap, Head Football Coach, Luck High School



Matt Dunlap

I would like to thank the WFCAs for all of the hard work they put in year round to ensure the state of Wisconsin puts out the best product possible. From Friday nights, to the clinic, and the publications of *The Point After II*, we are

truly very fortunate as coaches in this state.

On a Friday night watching the Luck Cardinal football team one can rest assured that they are going to see at least one of the teams run the ball, over and over and over again. If we throw the ball on a Friday night in Luck more than five times a game, everyone is surprised. When asked why we don't throw the ball more, the answer is simple...we haven't needed to. My mentor, Don Kendzior has always said four things can happen when you throw the ball, and three of them aren't good. In Luck, our coaching staff for the past 20 plus years has preached to our linemen to get off the ball and our ball carriers to hit the hole.

When Don Kendzior took the head coaching job in Luck he decided to implement the double wing. This meant heading up to Northwestern to learn from Coach Andy Lind and later heading down to Somerset to talk to Bruce Larson. When Luck decided to head to 8-man we took

the double wing and modified it slightly; we got rid of the fullback and the tackles. We then looked into different options of the double wing specifically inside of 8-player football, and decided on implementing our version of the "spin series" that Westfork Iowa was running so successfully.

The Luck Cardinal version of the single-wing spin series is a power counter set that sees us line up double tight with two wings and our spin back (quarterback) 3.5 yds off the line of scrimmage in the strong side A gap. There are some very simple rules that must be followed for us to be effective. Our line must get off the ball and our guards must pull hard with their heads up field. (Don Kendzior is writing an article specifically on offensive line play.) Our backs must be willing blockers and they must carry out their fakes.

In our version of the offense we have three base plays that all work off the 3-back going in

motion and aiming at the hip of our spin back. The spin back will complete a full spin and hit the 2 hole vertically, and our strong side back will either block on the strong side or hit the 5 hole on the quick side. The secondary advantage we have seen in Luck is the difficulty of replication with this offense. When talking to opposing coaches the big complaint about getting ready to stop the spin is finding a scout backfield who can run it well enough to give the defense a glimpse of what they will see on Friday nights. The starting play of our “big three” is the 36. This play has the exchange going to the motion back with the spinback completing the spin and hitting the 2 hole vertically. The blocking back will either fake the 25, which has our strong side back aiming ½ yard in front of the spin back, or our 12 which has the backs carry out fakes inside of the opposite defensive ends and our spin back completes the full spin and carries the ball up the 2 hole. When we do need to throw the ball there are some very easy to run

play action passes that look almost identical to the run plays when done correctly. The line will have the same action and the backs will also be on the same paths.

The success of these plays as far as the backfield is concerned, starts with a good mesh leading up to a clean exchange. When we are running this correctly, all three backs will hit the strong side A gap simultaneously and exchanges will be on the cusp of not being made. If we are able to do this it puts a tremendous amount of pressure on the eye discipline of the defense. If we are able to create enough confusion in the backfield to hold the linebackers for 1 count, we like our odds.

The single wing spin will be successful if you put in the work. The “spin” needs time to implement; we dry run the backfield motion over and over and over at every practice from the first day of minicamp in the summer, to the snow flying in the playoffs. Just when you

think the timing is spot on, the line will enter the equation and adjustments will need to be made. If you are looking for an offensive set that can set you apart from the rest of your conference, look at the single-wing spin. If your staff buys into it, your players will; and with buy-in you will see results. You need to look no further than our overall record of 86-17 in Luck since converting to 8-man with 7 conference titles. Since officially being recognized by the WIAA we have 2 state runner ups, (2018, 2021) and 1 state title in 2019. When looking at the career rushing records in 8-man you will see 3 of the top 4 rushers are from Luck and the single season record holder is also from Luck. When you decide to go to the spin your coaching points will be simplified: get off the ball, and hit the hole. If you have any questions at all about implementing the single wing spin, please do not hesitate to reach out to matt.p.dunlap@gmail.com

UW-RIVER FALLS FOOTBALL

2023 SCHEDULE




VS		SEPT. 2
@		SEPT. 9
@		SEPT. 16
VS		SEPT. 30
@		OCT. 7
VS		OCT. 14
@		OCT. 21
@		OCT. 28
VS		NOV. 4
@		NOV. 11

DEFENSE

STOP THE RUN – PARTY ON 3RD DOWN

By: Pat Sheehan, Assistant Football Coach, UW-Platteville



Pat Sheehan

To begin, I want to thank the WFCA for allowing Tyler Reinhardt and myself the opportunity to speak at this year's event and writing this article on defensive line play.

My name is Pat Sheehan, I am the Special Teams Coordinator, Defensive Line Coach and Recruiting Coordinator at UW-Platteville. I played for the Pioneers back in 2013-16 as a slot WR/TE hybrid under Coach Munz as OC. I am entering what would be my 6th season with the Pioneers after the playing days. I am the Defensive Line Coach as of 2022 spring. I asked Coach Munz to be moved to Defensive Line last spring because I have always believed it is the most important position on the field behind the QB.

Before I get into this, I'd like to thank Phil Micech for helping make the transition from my previous positions to DL easier. He was a great help in many facets of 2022. I am positive my philosophy will change as I continue to work in the trenches. For now, I see the position in two parts: Stopping the Run, Party on Third Down.

Stopping the Run:

We take a very old school approach to drills that set up majority of what we do on a day to day basis. Our guys at the position, just like many teams probably hear too many clichés about being tough or being what I call “pricks” at the position. Our plan here is to put it into action with what we do in Drills.

- Different Variations of hitting the sled (Everyday)
- Run Pods (Run Rec)
- Slant footwork
- Board drills
- Chutes

We talk about how 85% of what we do in practice will be stopping the run in different variations. That includes drills that focus on technique or just mentality. The goal is to get to 2nd & Long or 3rd & 5 plus to bring the quick bodied pass rushers on the field for the “party down”.

What We Do:

We align predominantly in an “Over Front” (5,3,2i,5). We talk about aligning “thick” in our technique to where it is hard to tell if we're really just in 2s in the inside. It helps us hit our primary when we shoot from the hips to create what we call “Knock back” on the offensive line. It is also very helpful because we do quite a bit of slanting and it hides where we are going or if we have a game called. Mentality wise we like it because your head up looking the Guard in front of you going toe to toe all game.

big cue our guys hear. We also teach our stunt principles as essentially changing lanes with different players.

Two very common moves for our guys are the speed bull and push-pull to make the lanes clean. Also, it continues that “prick” mentality.

Our guys will practice our run stopping stunts and pass stunts during Special Teams. That is an everyday deal. We like to change things up and keep OL guessing if we're playing straight up or not. All our primary practice time for Pass rush.

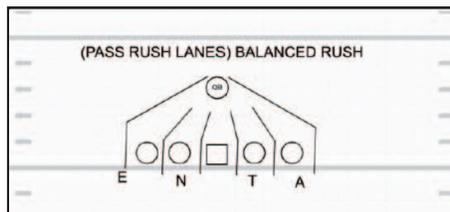


(Thick Alignment)

We shoot out of your stance from the hips and mirroring your primary's movement, keeping shoulders square. We aim for the “choke”/“pit” (V of neck and armpit) with our hands when playing in a shade and “pit/pit” when head up. Gap and a half players always.

Party on 3rd Down

We want to party on third down. The only way we have this opportunity is to stay in 3rd & 5+. This allows us the opportunity to pass rush effectively. We like to get OLB/LB/BS/TE bodies out there on these downs. Put the best athletes on the team for this down. I personally don't care if they have ever played the position before. The guys need to be able to get off the ball, move laterally with their moves/stunts, use their hands, and feel the balance for the rush. If they are all true Defensive Lineman, cool, if not then we go find our guys who can do it.



Our pass rush lanes are a big teaching point in what we do. “Stay in your Lane” is a

- VIKING (1 on 1 Pass Rush)
- VIKING (2 on 3 Pass Rush)
- Stunts on scout
- Primary/Secondary Move, with partner
- Escape move

Our plan if you are an outside rusher is to pick your spot where the Tackle usually sets, race him to that spot, work your move primary “edge” move with the counter move ready when he over sets. We teach never to take the inside too soon. “1,2,3,4 – No More” going up the field, never inside move too early and never rushing outside pass the QB- Cardinal sin.

Expanding your Tools

My hope is to reach any younger coach just getting started with coaching or really whoever in this portion. I played WR/TE in college and thought I would do that for my primary spot as a coach when I was getting started. In my time, I have coached multiple positions (WR, OLB/LB,TE/H, now DL) in my career. My advice is not to pigeonhole yourself. I found out quickly the skills across the position are similar. It is about adapting to the terminology and connecting with different types of kids. If you think you can coach it doesn't matter what you're teaching, learn it and go. You'll be better off for it if you have some humility in the beginning.

Again, I want to thank the WFCA for this opportunity. If anyone has questions or wants to connect to talk ball, please contact me at sheehanp@uwplatt.edu. #SWINGTHEAXE.

DEFENSIVE LINE TECHNIQUES & DRILLS FOR DEFENDING THE RUN

By: Jeff Trinka, Defensive Coordinator & Defensive Line Coach, Racine Horlick High School



Jeff Trinka

I want to thank Head Coach Brian Fletcher and the WFCAs for allowing me the opportunity to contribute an article to *The Point After II*. I have always enjoyed reading *The Point After II* and learning from some of the best coaches across the state of Wisconsin. I am grateful for this opportunity to share some of my thoughts.

At Racine Horlick we run an Even Front Defense where regardless of our call and stunt

our defensive linemen are single gap players. We do not ask our players to be two gap players, and I believe allowing our players to know their single gap responsibility allows them to play fast and confident. This article will be about some of the techniques and drills we use to have our defensive linemen be successful at block destruction and defending the run.

KEYS TO STOPPING THE RUN:

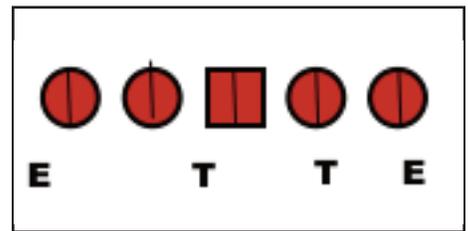
- Stance and Alignment
- Hit Key and Initial Movement
- Block Recognition
- Pursuit and Tackling

STANCE AND ALIGNMENT:

We hold our players to a high standard when it comes to all techniques especially with our stance and alignment. We focus on our DL stances everyday. How we do that looks differently throughout the season. Beginning with our contact days and August camp, we will start our Indy time by putting our players in stance lines. A good stance provides important benefits to any defensive lineman. Benefits of a proper stance are:

- Allows us to have forward movement, and on an angle off the ball
- Heel toe stagger with the feet will allow for movement with T Board Angle Steps and Straight Steps
- Effective on Run and Pass, No need to “Change Stance”
- Good balanced base on take off. Allows strong, balanced base even on slick fields

We will change up our shades for our D-Line depending on a situation in a game and our players are coached up from August on those. However, our base shades we teach to take our key and split that person in half, or simply half a man. My hand that is down is the hand closest to my key and the foot that is back is the foot closest to the foot that is in the middle of my key.



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2023 SCHEDULE

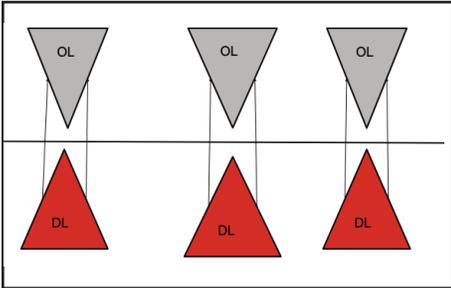
	<p>WEEK 3 9/16 VS MICHIGAN TECH 1 P.M.</p>	<p>WEEK 6 10/7 VS UW-STEVENS POINT 1 P.M. HOMECOMING</p>	<p>WEEK 7 10/14 VS UW-LA CROSSE 1 P.M.</p>	<p>WEEK 10 11/4 VS UW-OSHKOSH 1 P.M.</p>	<p>WEEK 11 11/11 VS UW-STOUT 2 P.M.</p>
<p>WEEK 1 8/31 AT LAKELAND 6 P.M.</p>	<p>WEEK 2 9/9 AT DUBUQUE 6 P.M.</p>	<p>WEEK 5 9/30 AT UW-RIVER FALLS 1 P.M.</p>	<p>WEEK 8 10/21 AT UW-EAU CLAIRE 1 P.M.</p>	<p>WEEK 9 10/28 AT UW-WHITWATER 1 P.M.</p>	

HIT KEY AND INITIAL MOVEMENT:

Ball get off and pad level make this successful. We practice our take off within our everyday drills at practice. A couple drills that we do to practice our take off, striking key and initial movement are below:

Knock Off

- Lock on O-Lineman with inside hands
- Elbows with slight bend
- Wide base and sink your hips, Head below bottom of facemask
- On whistle grab ground with 6-inch step
- Extend arms out knocking OL off you,
 - Lock Elbows

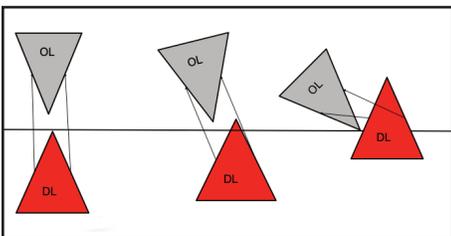


COACHING POINTS

Grab ground 6” steps slide feet across grass maintain leverage, keep top of head below facemask, wide base knock-back 2-3 yards

Steer Rip

- Partner Drill: Taught from the knees, can progress to 2-point stance
- Lock up on OL with inside hands to the breast plate
- Wide base, sink hips
- Knock leveraged shoulder back, steer into pressure (push/pull)
- Rip through OL
- Violent rip to the back of the helmet
- Maintain leverage – Top of helmet below the facemask, and on steer rip get your head to your gap.
 - Standing
 - Steer (Fight Pressure)



COACHING POINTS

Steer – Work your knock back feet. Finish with rip to back of head. Be violent with movements. Head to your gap

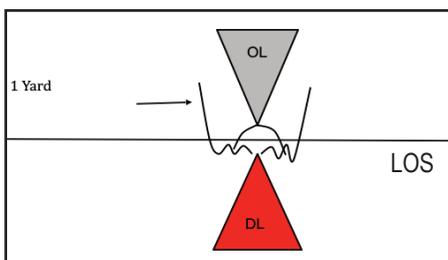
BLOCK RECOGNITION:

The Defensive Line is about feeling and reacting. We feel pressure and fight that pressure to play gap sound and defeat blocks. We work on block recognition and defeat everyday at practice. In a football game we really only see four different types of blocks and have to teach recognition and defeat to them.

- Reach/Zone Block
 - Hard outside movement
 - Flat down the line
- Reactions from DL:
 - Continue to get vertical push
 - Fight to gain outside advantage with feet and hands (Steer/Rip)
 - Steer rip and make sure outside arm is extended, while keeping feet moving to gap
 - Must set the edge
 - Force RB to bounce or cut inside
 - If reached: continue to push vertical and shed the block with pull through technique
- Down Block:
 - Hard inside movement
 - Either reading DE or trap block
- Reactions from DL:
 - Get good punch and grab cloth, do not let him get to the ILBs
 - Surf down the line
 - Keep hips square to LOS
 - Hip to Hip with down block
 - Inside arm attached to OL
 - Squeeze any pulling guards or fullbacks
- Base Blocking:
 - Straight up field step
 - Drive blocking for movement
- Reactions from D - Line:
 - Fight pressure
 - Push Pull
 - Fight for hand placement
 - Maintain gap and constrict adjacent gap, working at a 45° angle
 - Keep shoulders and hips square to the LOS (inside foot forward)
- Kick Set (Pass or Draw)
 - Hard kick slides for pass blocking
- Reactions from DL:
 - Close distance to OL
 - Work outside 1/3 of man
 - Play gap sound on rush
 - OL eyes up you work underneath pass rush move, if OL is hunched down or eyes down we work over the top move

DRILLS FOR BLOCK DEFEAT:

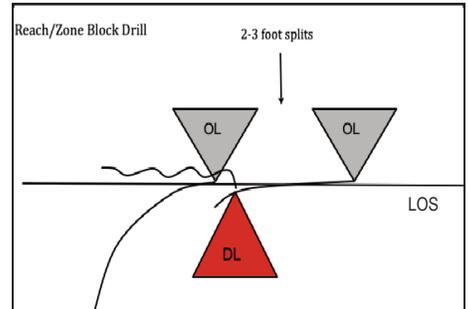
Base Block Drill - Be sure to get off the ball low, hard, with your feet and hands simultaneously. Aim your down hand to the OL's sternum and up hand to his shoulder pad to control the outer half of the man. Always work a ½ man. Control him and squeeze him down away from your gap responsibility. Play parallel to the line of scrimmage, and make sure to occupy the gap that is your responsibility. Get extension and get rid of the blocker.



COACHING POINTS

Strike the target. Fight pressure on movement. Steer, rip off block into the LOS

Reach Drill - Always work to remain square to the line of scrimmage and be sure to fight the hard shoulder of the blocker. Keep a strong hand. The man hand on is the hand that is locked out on your offensive lineman. It is the hand that you would have on the sternum of the offensive lineman. If we get reached, work to open the blocker's shoulders and get back to the gap. With a reach block one's gap keeps moving. Work hard to work down the line of scrimmage and work across lineman's face.

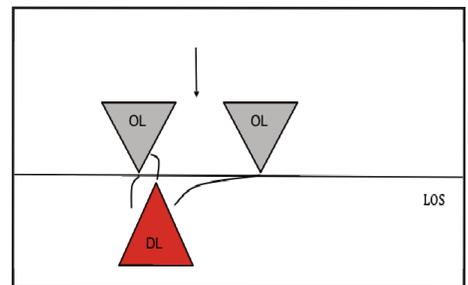


COACHING POINTS

Keep hands on shaded man. Stay square and fight pressure. Use Steer - Rip technique if starting to get hooked. hip into combo keep feet moving! Steer rip run feet.

Double Team Drill - Your first move is always to hit your key. Take off, knock your key back with a knock off. Once you have hands on and feel that non-key hit you, the reaction and feel will be to steer. Drill with a hip drop and knife through the double team.

Once you feel the double team, turn your back towards your non-key and drop your butt to a seated position (sit on a chair). As you drop your butt, you are going to punch/knife through with your arm closest to the backfield. This will allow you to split that double team. Once you feel you have control, you can attempt to dip and rip into the backfield to make a play.

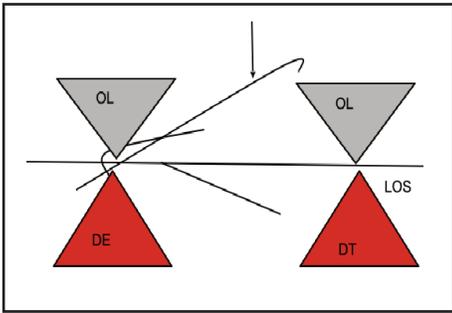


COACHING POINTS

Strike the target with knock off. Feel pressure turn shoulders with knife and drop hip level through to find the ball.

Taking on Power Drill - Nose will be double teamed by PSG and Center. Nose must feel out that double team and split the double team using the technique taught. Key is they cannot get moved. DE will strike their key (OT or OG) and have eyes inside. See the down block and

puller coming. Strike puller with inside shoulder keeping body and shoulders parallel to LOS and squeeze puller into the inside gap



COACHING POINTS

DE will strike target and look at the OL. Shoulder parallel and squeeze. Collide with puller, keep outside shoulder free and squeeze puller.

PURSUIT AND TACKLING

Pursuit Does the following: It eliminates a long TD, discourages your opponent, covers up mistakes and makes us the best defense in the state. Pursuit takes the following: visualizing pursuit angles, executing pursuit angles, making plays, speed/explosiveness, being in shape, getting off your blocks, and most importantly effort. Effort takes no skill; it just takes that want to. Our D - Line is expected to finish the ball

and make those turnovers causing hits. We work this effort in practice with our team time and when we run pursuit drills.

When stopping the run, I really want to keep it simple. We will be gap sound, have good stances, great take off and be physical against our keys. I am a firm believer in simple drills and repping them non-stop. Play fast, play physical and have fun!

I hope that coaches find this article helpful and can utilize it with their players. If anyone wants to reach out to talk more about defensive line play or defensive play, please reach out to me via email at jeffery.trinka@rusd.org.

THANK YOU to all who so generously submitted articles for
“The Point After II.”

If your article did not appear in this issue, please look in the next one!

Articles may be emailed to the WFCFA office at office@wifca.org, or send paper copy to: WFCFA, PO Box 8, Poynette, WI 53955. Please include the title of the article, and the name, school and title of the author, along with the author’s photograph. Again, our thanks!



St. Norbert College Green Knights Football



19
 CONFERENCE
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13
 NCAA DIV III
 PLAYOFF
 APPEARANCES

2023 schedule

- Sat., Sep 2 **Ripon College**
- Sat., Sep 9 **at UW-Stevens Point**
- Sat., Sep 16 **Wisconsin Lutheran College**
- Sat., Sep 23 **at Eureka College**
- Sat., Sep 30 **at Lakeland Univ.**
- Sat., Oct 7 **Rockford Univ.**
- Sat., Oct 14 **Aurora Univ.**
- Sat., Oct 21 **at Concordia Univ. Wisconsin**
- Sat., Oct 28 **at Concordia Univ. Chicago**
- Sat., Nov 11 **Benedictine Univ.**

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STRATFORD'S SIX TACKLING STATIONS

By: Jason Tubbs, Head Football Coach and Marshall Lehman, Defensive Coordinator, Stratford High School



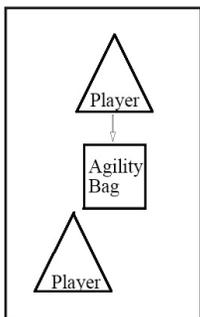
Jason Tubbs



Marshall Lehman

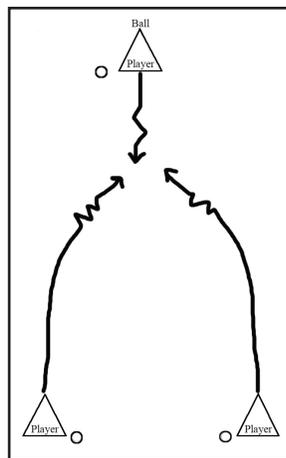
We would like to start off by thanking the WFCAs for the opportunity to write an article and share some of what has worked for us at Stratford. Historically, Stratford has been an “across the bow” and “bite the ball” tackling team. However, the past two seasons, we have pivoted towards the rugby style tackling with an emphasis on attacking “near hip” and sliding our helmets behind the ball carrier’s hips. We have always been a physical football team that tackled very well within the tackle box, but football is a full field game now with open field tackling a must. Our new strategy on tackling has improved our open field tackling in space as well as lowered our amount of injuries! Of course, we still stress keeping our heads up when we are tackling and continue to run our feet on contact. Every Tuesday our 9-12th graders will break into their six groups and go through these six tackling stations. Every station has a coach running their drill and about two and half minutes at each station.

Drill 1: Gator Roll description:



This drill is designed to break down the gator roll tackle in a controlled setting. We teach our players that one of their best options to tackle the ball carrier when trailing them is to gator roll. For this drill the tackler is on his knees with his partner, the partner is holding an agility bag vertically. The tackler on his first rep will fit up to the bag on his knees with his head to one side of the bag. He will then squeeze the bag to his body and fall forward. On his next rep he will do the same thing, but instead of falling forward, he will violently roll his shoulder away from the bag to the ground and roll one full revolution while squeezing the bag to his chest.

Drill 2: Vice Drill description:



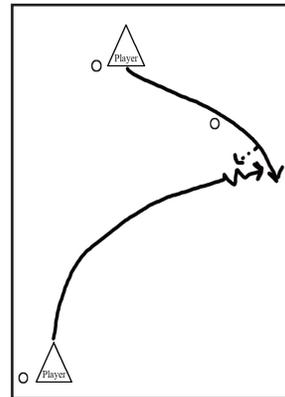
We teach our players to tackle the near hip, and we want our players to attack the ball carrier. Many times during a game, two players will be attacking the ball carrier in the open field at the same time. This vice drill is practicing just that. The ball carrier will run forward and the two defenders will take banana angles from outside in towards the near hip of the ball carrier. The defenders are also taught to attack hard and when they get one to two yards from the ball carrier they do what we call a shimmy until they contact the near hip. The shimmy is basically short chop steps on the balls of their feet. If the defenders contact the ball carrier at the same time, they will just drive for five, which is to run their feet for five steps that they count out loud. If the defenders get to the ball carrier at different times, the second defender will attack the ball to force a fumble. As the season goes on, we do add twists to the drill by speeding up the runner and allowing the runner to increase the amount of moves they can make.

Drill 3: Drive for 5 description:

In the previous drill I mentioned drive for five on the tackle. We preach

for our players to stay on their feet as much as possible when making a tackle. This drill focuses on driving through the tackle. The defender will start five yards away from a vertical tackle bag. The heavier the bag the better. The players will pick a side of the bag and attack the bag with two shimmy steps and then explode through the bag squeezing it to their chest and picking up the bag for five steps that they must count out loud.

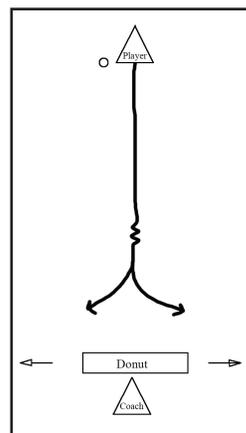
Drill 4: Open Field Shimmy description:



For this drill, we focus on open field tackling a ball carrier that is at an angle out in front of the defender. One of our main teaching points in this drill is taking a banana angle to the near hip and if the ball carrier cuts back we fit

up and drive for five. Another main teaching point is if he continues to try and run around us, we then gator roll. We will not do the actual gator roll in this drill, but tag the hip instead to limit going to the ground in practice. Early in the year the ball carrier will not cut back at all and as we get a few weeks in, we allow the ball carrier to cut back or hesitate. We also add a sideline in the drill at times to work on tackling near a sideline by using the sideline in our favor.

Drill 5: Tackle Wheel Description:

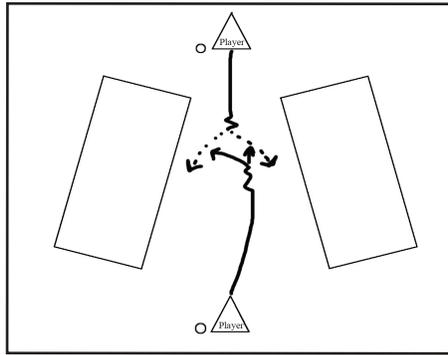


We use this drill to give our defenders a chance to make a drive for five tackle or gator roll tackle low at the near hip using a tackle donut. The idea with this drill is to roll the donut slow or fast. If the donut is rolled slowly, the defender will tackle the donut with his head behind the front edge of the donut (inside front edge of the donut) and try to count out five steps as they drive through the donut. If the donut is rolled fast, the defender will tackle the back outside edge of the donut and squeeze the donut and roll doing a gator roll tackle. Early in the year, we will only do slow or only fast rolls to rep a specific tackle concept. As we get a few weeks in,

we will then start mixing it up so the defenders have to react to get more of a game like rep.

Drill 6: Port a Pits Description:

For this drill, our players get to tackle an actual ball carrier. We set the crash (high jump/pole vault) pads up at an angle to show a smaller hole if the defender attacks hard, or more of an open field tackle if the defender waits too long. The ball carrier starts three-four yards behind the crash pads and the defender is lined up even with the other end of the crash pads. The ball carrier will run and then cut to-



wards one of the crash pads. The defender is coached to attack the ball carrier by picking a hip to attack. The defender will start to shimmy as he gets one to two yards from the ball carrier and continue his shimmy until he makes contact with the near hip. On contact he will drive for five the ball carrier into the crash pad the ball carrier has cut towards. Early in the year, the ball carrier can only make one cut so we can really focus on the tackling technique. As we get a few weeks in, the ball carrier can now make more than one move.

FUNDAMENTALS OF PRESS COVERAGE

By: Michael Zweifel, Co-Defensive Coordinator/Special Teams/Defensive Backs, UW-La Crosse



Michael Zweifel

Playing press with our corners is a core philosophy of our defensive system at UW-La

Crosse. It fits into our aggressive mindset and allows us to challenge WRs and QBs to consistently get released and fit the ball into small windows.

Let's start with WHY we play press...

First, we like press because it reduces the route tree an offense has at its disposal. With off coverage, an offense has the whole passing game to deploy, but in press the pass concepts shrink.

Depending on if we get an inside vs outside release, there are only a few things a receiver can do in each. Get an outside release, the route tree shrinks to basically 3 routes – hitch, come-back, fade. Get an inside release and we look for slant, dig, post.

Now obviously, WRs can do more than that, but it becomes much more difficult to accomplish many of these routes because of our disruption from the press and the leverage we're

able to gain. Not many high school Wide Receivers, even college for that matter, are going to take an outside release to win a dig back inside, and if they try to, we have inside leverage and the advantage.

So playing press simplifies what our DBs look for and allows them to play faster.

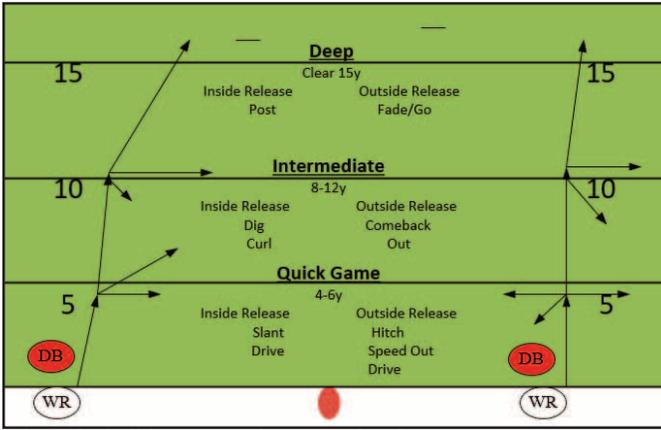
Next, we play press because we want to force difficult throws. We want QBs to throw into tight windows and down the field. We also want QBs to throw to WRs on the move with a defender closely behind, again forcing very accurate throws to be successful.

All of these are the most difficult throws for a QB. Throwing to stationary WRs, sitting in zones, in clean windows is the exact opposite of what we aim to achieve. We want teams to throw the ball down the field on fades or posts (which also allows more time for a pass rush)

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where the ball has to travel over our heads. We acknowledge this means we will give up more explosive plays, but these are also very low efficient throws compared to throwing 5-10-yard routes with space to run that often happens from zone or off-man.

For these reasons, we feel playing press allows our players to play fast and confident. It also allows us to focus a lot of time and effort in our press technique and into the development of our players because they're focused on one technique.

PRESS TECHNIQUE

When teaching our press technique, we focus on a few main points.

First is our stance. We want our DBs to play with a square stance, feet underneath their armpits, knees slightly inward and weight on our insteps. We want a relaxed stance, with arms in a comfortable position, whether it's up by our chest or hanging loose. Eyes should be focused on the belly button of the WR.

From our stance, we play with inch back technique. Our DBs will inch away from the WR at the snap, maintaining disciplined eyes and leverage on the WR. We inch back with quiet and controlled feet, staying on our insteps and losing ground. We try to lose around 4-10" on each "inch" depending on the situation. We use an inch back because it forces the WR to make the first move and it keeps our feet active. A common mistake DBs make during press is letting their feet die and get "stuck in the mud". By inching back we are keeping our feet active which allows us to stay ready to react.

An important concept we teach is to know what WRs try to do on releases. Typically, WRs are taught to "step on our toes" when releasing, so by changing where that is via an inch back, we often get WRs doing a release in-place, while we are gaining ground and able to kill such a release with our space.

Most WRs are impatient or go to the LOS with a pre-set release, so by inching back we change the "point of conflict" and force the WR's release to change. We want to vary this "point of conflict" by subtly inching back with more or less tempo/distance, so a WR can't get a good feel for our technique. If we used the same exact inch back tempo/distance every play, a WR could get comfortable and adapt their release accordingly.

During this inch back, we try to stay as square as we can, for as long as we can. Playing press is a battle of who can be more patient and we have the advantage because the WR has to eventually get to a specific location at a specific time, so we want to be patient and let the WR declare first.

A cardinal sin of playing press is "opening the gate" and giving the WR free access to beat us with speed or attack our blind spot. So staying square and patient as the WR dances on their release is paramount.

As the WR releases, we want to disrupt their vertical path by punching their pec. We ALWAYS want to punch with the opposite hand of the direction of the release. So if a WR releases to our right, we will work to punch with our left hand. If we punch with the same hand, it locks that same side hip, and we can't turn and flip our hips to run with the WR.

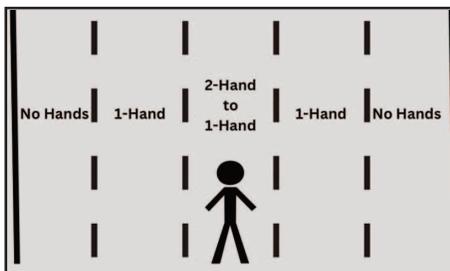
This is a punch, NOT a reach or just placing a hand on the WR. It needs power behind it, and it needs to recoil. Again, good WRs will use our hands against us if we just place and keep our hands on them.

If a WR takes a wide release, we do not want to chase them just to try to land a punch. They've already done our job for us, so we can just open and calmly work to cut them off.

A lot of DBs actually get themselves into trouble by going out of their way to punch/disrupt a WR or thinking that press coverage is all about getting an aggressive jam on a WR. Playing press coverage is about positioning yourself to be in-phase as the WR works down the field. More often than not, that means winning with your feet and finesse than trying to be overly aggressive with an initial jam.

The only time we go with a 2-hand punch is if the WR tries to go through us with a power release. Then we punch with 2-hands (for more strength) and transition to 1-hand as the WR declares right or left.

We use a Highway Lane analogy for our players, as you can see below.



After the release, we then want to "play through the phases". As mentioned earlier, we try to patiently play through each phase of the passing game. After our inch back and punch,

we DO NOT want to just rush into a sprint down the field where a WR could slam on the brakes and catch us flying by.

So we play through quick game and intermediate game with grip on our speed and eyes on the hips so we can stop on a dime.

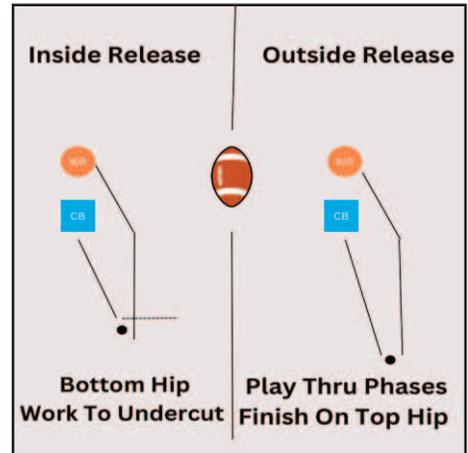
In order to do this, we need to keep our hips square to the sideline (on an outside release), with our back shoulder low, eyes glued to the WRs hip, and our foot over the brakes. As the WR clears each phase – quick game then intermediate – the DB can now open up and run into phase with the WR.

On outside releases, we eventually want to finish on the top shoulder by locating and hooking the hip, leaning and maintaining contact into the WR and finishing by rewarding yourself by looking for the ball and making a play.

We tell our DBs they have to earn the right to look, so unless we've gotten into the WRs hip and can feel the WR, we don't get to look. What you can't feel, you can't see, so if you haven't located and aren't leaning into the WR, you haven't earned the right to look for the ball.

If a DB finds himself in this situation, they must play TO & THRU the WRs hands. We need to take our hands INTO the WRs body with violence. Too many DBs throw their hands straight up, but by the time the WR shows his hands, it's too late and the ball will be by us.

On inside releases, we work to the bottom hip of the WR to undercut throws and make the ball go over our head. Again, we don't want the QB to have clear window throws, so we don't stay high where the WR can just box us out and the QB has a clean lane to throw.



That is the basis of how we teach press coverage at UW-La Crosse. After we install the basics of playing press, we work a ton of applying this technique in live release reps, learning situational tendencies, and developing nuances in playing this technique. Playing press coverages fits our philosophy and our players buy in and get really comfortable playing on islands during their time here.

If you ever have any questions or want to connect feel free to reach me at mzweifel@uwlax.edu.

EASY WAYS TO GET UNBALANCED

By: Jeff Koenig, Head Football Coach, Stanley-Boyd High School



Jeff Koenig

I would like to thank the WFCAs for asking me to write this article. I appreciate all of the work the WFCAs does for football in our state and am glad to contribute. I also always look forward to reading the different ideas presented in *The Point After II*.

Unbalanced formations are nothing new to football but recently have become more and more popular on the professional and college

levels. Our program has been running unbalanced formations for over 20 years.

An unbalanced alignment on offense can: allow a team to outflank the defense; create a numbers advantage at the point of attack; move a defender away from the point of attack; force the defense to adjust from their base look; force a defense to understand who is eligible and who is not on a given play; create the potential run fit issues for the defense; as well as create many more challenges to defensive alignment, communication, and responsibility. When combined with a fast tempo, it is even more effective.

Adding unbalanced alignment for a team can be as easy or complicated as the offense wants to create it. If you keep the same basic rules and run your same basic plays, it can be a very low-cost installation. For many years before RPOs existed, we ran a basic unbalanced read for our QB who would either give on ISO or throw the bubble to the extra receiver side. It required very little time in practice to install.

At Stanley-Boyd, we have multiple ways to adjust our alignment to get the looks we want on offense while changing who is eligible as a

receiver in the same look. Our three basic methods for starting in an unbalanced formation are Tackle Over, Split End/Tight End Over, and Wing/Slot Over. We move our tackle on the offensive line because his blocking rules are very similar to the Tight End. For many years I had just called that Heavy and it moved our backside tackle to our strong side. Now we use different terminology to put our tackles on either side. Over is our call to move our End. We will have our backside End move and lineup inside of our other End. Depending on the week or the formation they may line up as a TE or a split position. Our Wing/Slot over position is just a normal formational call for us like Trips or Trey.

As I mentioned earlier, it can be as simple or advanced as you would like to make it. Our alignments fit well within our system and have helped us in many game situations.

It has been a pleasure to contribute something to this organization and publication. If you have any questions or would like to discuss any other aspects of football please contact me at jkoenig@s-bschools.org.

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SEPT. 16



UW-OSHKOSH

OCT. 7



UW-STEVENS
POINT

OCT. 14



UW-RIVER
FALLS

OCT. 28

PRESSURE WITH A PURPOSE

By: John Steger Associate Head Coach, University of Minnesota–Duluth



John Steger

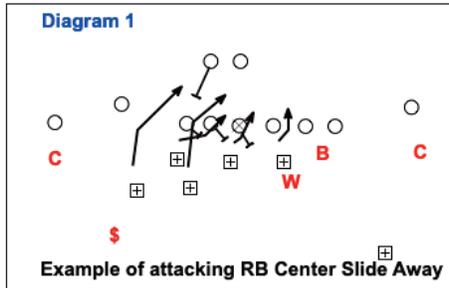
On behalf of the coaching staff at the University of Minnesota Duluth we would like to thank the Wisconsin high school football coaches association for the opportunity to contribute to *The Point After II*. Much of the success our program has enjoyed; 2 National Championships, 12 NCAA D2 playoff appearances, and 15 straight seasons of 8 or more wins, has come from recruiting the state of Wisconsin.

All defensive packages include some type of pressure package to attack the passing game. The purpose of this article is look at pressures (Blitzes) that attack pass protections. Understanding pass protections and how to attack them is critical to winning on third down and critical end of game situations, when you are protecting a lead and feel the need to heat up the QB.

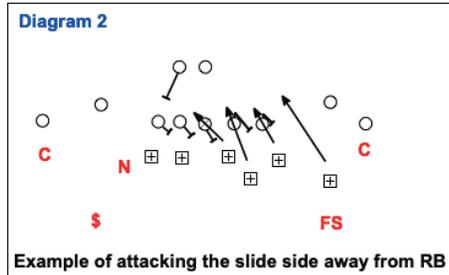
In our view, pressure packages need to include pressures that allow us to attack all types of pass protections. With these types of tools in your tool box it gives you specific pressures each weak to attack an opponent. It makes in game adjustments easier if you are getting a pass protection that you had not seen from your opponent on film. In other words we have a group of pressures that don't change, which makes it easy for our guys to learn and repeat in practice over and over. As defensive coaches it's our responsibility to match the correct pressure vs a protection, it's the chess game within the game.

Scouting Pass Protections

Because of the limited space I have for this article, I will limit my thoughts to attacking Shotgun pass protections. One of the easiest things to look at is the center in relationship to where the RB aligns. A common look in pass protection is that the RB will work away from the center. If this is a look a team will give you the majority of the time then you can look at pressures which will attack the side that the RB is on (Diagram #1) or if you want to attack the

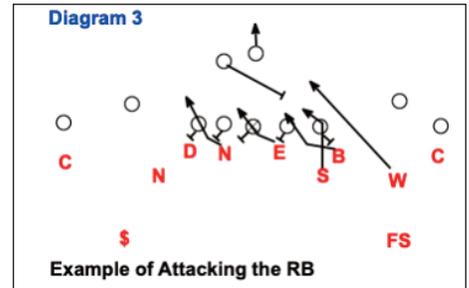


slide side, then you will pressure away from the RB (Diagram #2). The goal in these pressures

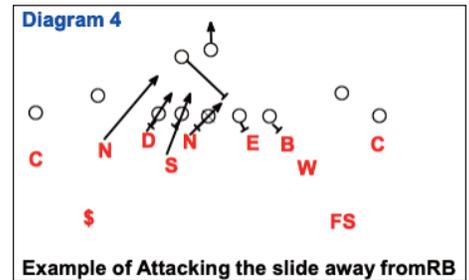


is to get a free rusher by creating a two on one situation either on the RB or a lineman, like in the diagram, or to get a match up you like, possibly your best pass rushing LB on their RB instead of vs a lineman.

In this group of pressures vs the center away from the RB offenses will commonly adjust by having the center slide to the RB with the RB blocking across the protection. We call this cross-country protection. In this case you want to use your pressures that attack the RB and run them away from where the RB aligns. (Diagram



3) or if you want to attack the slide call the pressure to the RB. (Diagram 4)



Other areas to look at in regards to the RB in protection that may give you a clue about how to attack an opponent's pass protection:

- Is the RB in the protection to or away from the TE?
- Is the RB in the protection to the field or the boundary when the ball is on the hash?
- Is the RB in the protection to or away from the passing strength?

Coverages

By attacking protections it allows you not to have to bring all out Cover 0 type pressures. This article is geared towards pass protections but the coverage you can play behind these pressures can vary based on your scheme, man free, 3 deep 3 under, or quarters concepts away from the pressure.

I would again like to thank the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association for giving me the opportunity to provide information on attacking protections. If you have any questions please (I always like to talk ball) feel free to contact me anytime at jsteger@d.umn.edu



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TACKLING SKILLS AND DRILLS

By: Matt McKinley, Assistant Coach, Belmont High School



Matt McKinley

I would like to thank the WFCa for the opportunity to write an article in The Point After. The work our organization and its reps do for the sport of football in Wisconsin is unmatched. I would not be anywhere close to the coach I am today without the knowledge I have gained through reading articles in this publication and attending the WFCa Clinic every year.

The information I am going to share in this article was by no means created by me. Everything I know about coaching I learned, borrowed, took, or stole from other coaches throughout the years.

Many of you have probably heard of or already teach Hawk Tackling. This tackling technique was made popular by Pete Carroll and the Seattle Seahawks to help keep the head out of tackling. In this article, I will describe our teaching progression with Hawk Tackling and the tackling drills we use throughout the season.

These are the keys we teach our players for tackling form:

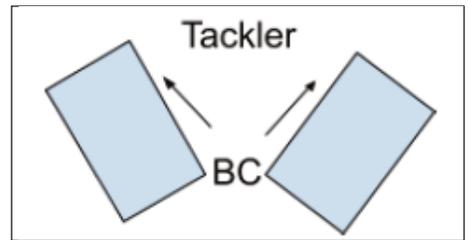
- Track the near hip. (Eyes should be focused on the hip closest to them while they are pursuing the ball carrier.)
- Eyes through the thighs. (When making contact with the ball carrier they need to keep their head up and eyes focused through the ball carriers thighs.)
- Wrap and squeeze. (Players should hit with the top of their shoulder pad, their head on the backside of the ball carrier, use their hands to grab the jersey as soon as they make contact, and pull the ball carrier into their body.)
- Drive for five. (Never stop their feet until the ball carrier is on the ground, run through the tackle, and do not dive!)
- Roll (If it feels natural finish with a roll.)

I am a coach for Belmont High School which plays 8-player football. Our average roster size is usually in the mid-twenties and most

of our players play both ways and special teams. Trying to limit contact in practice and keep our players healthy and fresh throughout the week is important for us. The tackling drills we use in practice are designed to limit contact.

We use circuits and have four different stations because it works well with our numbers to have roughly six to seven guys per group to maximize reps. We try to have two varsity groups and two JV groups if our numbers are fairly even. We will sometimes change the drills we use each week if we feel we need to emphasize something different based on the game film from the previous week but we mostly use the same four circuits each week. Here are the drills we utilize:

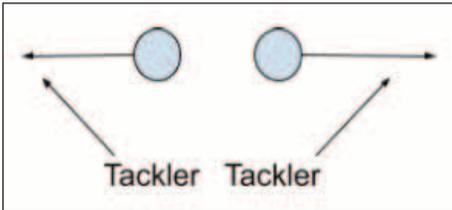
TACKLE MATS: angle the mats out and have a ball carrier start between them. BC decides which way to run and the tackler comes up and tackles them onto the mat BC using the proper hawk tackling technique.



2023 WARHAWK FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

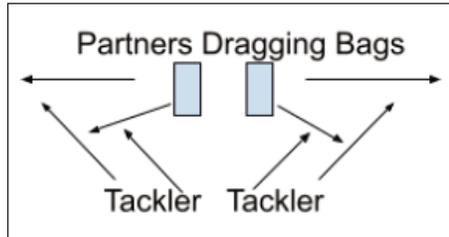
9.2	9.9	9.16	9.30*	10.7*	10.14*	10.21*	10.28*	11.4*	11.11*
JOHN CARROLL	SAINT JOHN'S	UMHB	UWO	UWL	UWRF	UWS	UWP	UWSP	UWEC

■ HOME ■ AWAY * DENOTES WIAC CONTEST



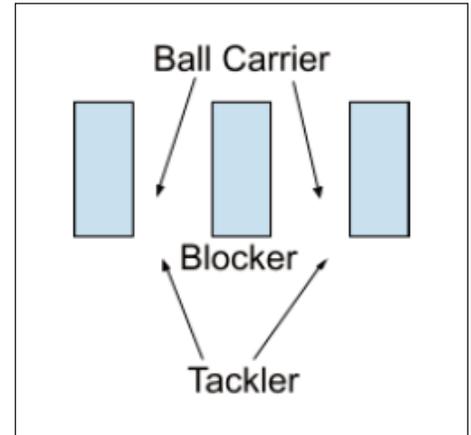
TACKLE WHEELS: Head on the back side, top of shoulder pad into the wheel, wrap and squeeze, drive for five, roll. Go two at a time with tacklers in the middle facing out and guys holding the tackle wheels on each side.

ANGLE TACKLE: Partner runs at a full sprint at a 45-degree angle or a 90-degree angle dragging a stand-up bag behind them. The tackler closes the gap and runs through the tackle using proper hawk tackling form. Go two at a time with tacklers in the middle facing out and guys holding the bags on each side.



DEFEATING BLOCK: Set up three big bags on the ground. The blocker starts in front of the middle bag holding a hand shield. Tackler starts in a defensive position across from the blocker (DL up tight, LBs and DBs five yards away). The ball carrier runs to a hole and the tackler must defeat the block and wrap him up using good Hawk Tackling technique but not taking him to the ground.

I hope you can find something useful from this article to help benefit your team. Again,



thank you to the WFCAs for allowing me to write this article. If you have any questions about these drills feel free to Contact me at mckinley@belmont.k12.wi.us.

PREVENTING THE BIG PLAY 2

By: Bryant Brenner, Head Football Coach, Eau Claire Regis High School



Bryant Brenner

It is well-known how impactful big plays are in determining the outcome of games. Not only is it vital to make big plays, it is just as important not to give up big plays. So often, when two teams of similar ability are competing, often the team that makes the most number of big plays (or even one big play) that wins the game. We would like to share some key points we emphasize in order to limit our opponent's chances of making a big play.

Keep your schemes simple. Don't be too complicated. Have a solid plan. Believe in something and get your kids to execute it. Too much thinking makes people slow. Clarity of purpose allows people to execute quickly and precisely.

- Be great at the fundamentals. Be great tacklers. We spend a lot of time teaching tackling circuits and mostly use the Seahawk roll-tackling technique. Some of our best tacklers have been our wrestlers.
- For the first three years at Regis, we were a man-coverage team. We changed to being primarily a cover-3 team. Since that change, we have given up far less big plays in the passing game. We like to be in cover 3 about

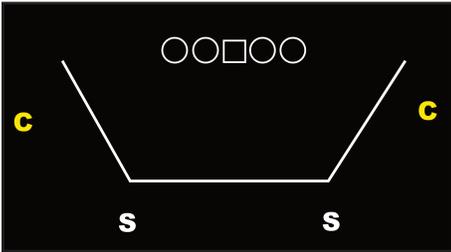
75% of the defensive snaps. Once in a while we do give up a short throw to the flat. However, if you study the average high school team and average high school QB, about one-third of those short throws are incomplete anyway.

- Try not to be a one-layer defense. Instead, be a two or a three layer defense. Back when we were primarily a man-coverage team, we often gave up big plays in the running game because we didn't have multiple layers to our defense. We have also gashed teams with big plays often because they were playing a one-layer defense. At the HS level, it is hard for teams to consistently execute 15 plus play drives. When you consistently blitz or put a lot of people near the LOS, you become a 1-layer defense. Think of it in terms of waves. They may get through the first wave, but not the 2nd and 3rd.
- Pursuit must be non-negotiable. Great pursuit/effort can overcome a lack of execution and a lack of ability. We don't play kids who don't burst to the football. **LOAF = TRAITOR.** If you loaf, go play for the other team. Like many of you, we grade our kids every defensive play. Each player gets an assignment grade and a pursuit grade. Our goal for each game is to have a team defensive pursuit grade of at least 93%. We feel that anything below 93% is unacceptable when it comes to playing good defense. We must see a burst to the football. Never follow your own color when taking an angle to the ball carrier. We also are constantly showing examples of good pursuit to emphasize what we are looking for. It might be us, other high school teams, college, or NFL teams. You can't show enough of this stuff. We will point out examples of bad pursuit too on occasion.

- When selecting who should play, we focus on two things. Play fast kids who you can trust to do their job. If we cannot trust you to do your job on every play, we are putting our defense in a vulnerable position. Speed is often the "separator" when two kids are both able to be trusted. When we say speed, it is more than just straight line speed. Quickness, reaction time, anticipation, etc are all important. Play speed and quickness over size. There is an old saying that we often refer to. DBs become LBs. LBs become DL. DL become milk drinkers. Size may dazzle the eyes, but it is speed that wins.
- Alignment – you must be aligned to the other teams formations. It is a pure math game. We spend a lot of time each week on alignment. Missed alignment is on us as coaches and is unacceptable. Alignment is controllable. It takes no talent to align correctly.
- Plan for the specific opponent. How do they get their big plays? What downs do they come on? Who are their big-play guys? Come up with a plan to limit these and practice it.
- Backside LB must not over-pursue. Most big runs in football occur on the cutback when the backside LB over pursues. This is true no matter what level of football you are at. The next time a big run occurs, take a look at the reason why. Oftentimes you see that it is because of the backside LB over pursuing the ball carrier. Train him to stay on the backside hip.
- Make sure your BCR player knows who he is and executes his job. He is the player that is responsible for checking for Boot, Counter, Reverse on any runs away. Also, make sure he executes the back shoulder drill when rushing the passer. We practice

this drill every week in one of our circuits

- Backside safety must check for receivers sneaking out on run away. This helps to identify halfback pass. Practice this once every team period.



- DBs must stay out of the trapezoid until they know the tackle is secured.
- Play your best players on special teams. This will allow you to make big plays in the kicking game and more importantly not give up big plays. Keep your schemes simple.
- Finally, big plays will happen. It is imperative that you preach Next Play Mentality that allows your players and coaches to turn the page so you don't give up another big play. E + R = O. Big Plays will happen (events). It is our collective and individual response that often determines the outcome. It is very common during a game, for our players both

on the field and on the sideline to be yelling “next play” after the other team makes a big play. This allows everyone to be where your feet are and focus on what is most important and that is the next play.

Thank you to the WFCA for allowing us at Regis to contribute to this great publication. We have learned so much through the years from the many great articles. It is an honor to be part of such a great coaching network and give back in a small way. We hope you can take away one thing from this article that will help you in preventing the big play. If we can be of any help or if you have any questions, please reach out at bbrenner@regiscatholicschools.com.

INDY FOR DEFENSIVE BACKS

By: Derreck McAfee, Defensive Backs Coach, Milwaukee Riverside University High School



Derreck McAfee

I want to thank the WFCA for allowing me to share our defensive back philosophy and practice plans. My name is Derrick McAfee and

I am the defensive backs coach and JV defensive coordinator at Milwaukee Riverside University High School. I've had the honor of coaching 5 All-State defensive backs. All of whom are playing college football. So we have been fortunate with some very good talent.

We run a 4-2-5 defensive scheme that allows us to transition our look to a 4-3 or 4-4 depending on the offense we face. This defensive scheme is designed to be balanced to stop the run and pass.

Within this defense we play two cornerbacks, one free safety, one strong safety and a hybrid outside linebacker/safety. We do cross-train our defensive backs because of match ups. So everyone will go through the same training process. I believe every DB in any defense should be confident and meticulous.

One of our main points of emphasis is take

aways. Either interceptions or forced fumbles. We work on this as a whole team and in individual periods. To drill that mind set into our defensive backs we call them “The Takers”. We believe that our defense is most successful when focused on taking the ball.

To start our indy, we begin with our footwork Angle Drill. Each rep consists of a set of 4 DBs. As my 4 DBs backpedal, they focus on my throwing shoulder to determine which side I will open up to. As I open up for the pass, they will break on the ball at a 45, 90, 135, and/or 180 angle. Each angle represents coverage for a route such as:

- 45- curl
- 90- In/Out
- 135-Post/corner,
- 180- Fly

During this drill I like to highlight: high

	Lake Forest 9/2
	Carroll 9/9
	St. Norbert 9/16
	Concordia Wisconsin 9/23
	Rockford 9/30
	Lakeland 10/7
	Eureka 10/14
	Aurora 10/21
	Benedictine 10/28
	Concordia Chicago 11/4

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pointing the ball, back pedal, plant foot placement, hip movement, and blocking for any player that is not the interceptor during the drill.

In my next drill we begin our press man technique. This drill is worked in groups of 2. We begin this drill with a WR and DB. The DB is aligned with their outside leg splitting the WR in half. With a cone placed at 5 yards, the DB's goal is to disrupt the release of the WR. Ideally forcing the WR toward the sideline while staying on top of the route.

During this drill I like to highlight: stance, jam, motor feet, mirroring the WR's initial movement, and controlling the direction of the WR's release.

With the jam we will punch with the inside hand and move our feet accordingly toward the action of the wide receiver. We want to keep ourselves between the ball and the receiver so keeping inside leverage is our focus.

Next, we move on to the Off Man technique. This drill is similar to the press man drill. Difference is we begin from 7 yards from the WR. Still aligning inside the WR, but with my DB's outside foot aligned with the WR's inside foot. The DB's goal in this drill is to Mirror the WR's release and stay on top of the route.

During this drill I like to highlight: Eye on WR's hip, Back pedal, Physicality in space, foot

placement when changing direction, firing out of breaks, hip movement, and angle attacking pass (if short).

Ball drills are next. We start with pass knock-down first. In this drill we have the DBs stand right next to each other and back pedal for a few yards. I will turn my shoulder to throw and the DBs will react towards my throwing motion. The outside DB becomes the wide receiver and the inside DB works the defensive technique. We want the inside hand used to knock down the ball and outside hand to wrap around the waist or grab jersey. We want to be able to secure a tackle if a catch is made.

Our strip drill is next. In this group we need to work in groups of 3 and 4. First time around a ball carrier walks and our DB comes up and secures the ball carrier and tries to strip the ball over the top of the ball carrying arm. The next time we will do a punch underneath. The problem we run into is that on occasion the player does not use their best judgment and simply tries to strip the ball without making sure the ball carrier is secured. The third player in the drill picks up the fumble. We do this also with a four-man drill where the ball carrier is being held up by our DB, and the 2nd DB comes in and executes the strip or punch. Then the 4th DB comes up and picks up the ball.

Now we go to one-on-ones. If we run out of time in the individual session, we will do the following during inside run session. During one-on-ones, we bring together all of the information from each of the drills practiced previously. One-on-ones should be high energy and very competitive. We start with stalk block and block destruction. We have a few drills that we do to work with the wide receivers and tight ends to work on blocking in space and how to destroy those blocks. We are not really a spill team so we always want to cut the blocker in half and keep the outside shoulder free to push the ball carrier back into the area where our defense is.

Next we will go into routes. Depending on the day we will work both open field routes on one day and red zone routes on another day. We will also go 2-on-2 so that the DBs and safeties have to communicate and switch.

Tackling is done as a team circuit every day we have contact. Which is usually Tuesday and Wednesday. We do pursuit as a whole team with the offense running plays at us. We will also get 10 minutes of what we call team take off period where we can put more tackling in if we need it. The whole team works on the following tackling types: seahawk, goal-line, angle, and open field.

If you have any questions about our defensive back play please reach out to me at mcafeed@milwaukee.k12.wi.us

“You must learn how to hold a team together. You must lift some men up, calm others down, until finally they’ve got one heartbeat. Then you’ve got yourself a team.”

—Bear Bryant



From the entire JTQB family, a sincere hope that you, your families and your teams are well and looking ahead to 2023 with great expectation. Thank you for all of your hard work and the tremendous impact you have on kids. We're looking forward to seeing you this summer and helping your QBs and WRs take the next steps.

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GENERAL

WARHAWK FOOTBALL

By: Colton Zimmerman, Head Football Coach, Weyauwega-Fremont High School



Colton Zimmerman

Football is and forever will be the most impactful scaffold in creating great young men. There is no other sport with such calculated adversity that demands intricate comradery, discipline, and sweat equity. Football is relevant

to any modern day struggle while still compounding in value to push through future hardships. This mindset is how we approached a struggling program.

Weyauwega-Fremont has had ebbs and flows since 2005, when Weyauwega-Fremont was one game short of a state appearance. The results have not been due to coaches who didn't care, a community that doesn't love, nor a talentless student body.

Weyauwega-Fremont had and continues to have these qualities, in excess. We are blessed to have extremely dedicated coaches, a community that is eager to support, and an unbelievable supply of talent and heart.

One may read the former paragraph and ask, "Then how does a team not win?" This is a question I am sure every coach reading this has asked themselves at least a dozen times. As much as we all hope it's an easy shade adjustment or slight wrinkle in the offense, we all

know that isn't the case. For us it was much deeper, our deficit was belief.

Upon arriving in Weyauwega-Fremont it was very clear the talent pool was rich, but the mindset was wayward. It was clear what we had to do-build a culture of belief. So, we kept the same offense, wrinkled some of the defensive looks, and kept special teams simple. This may seem counterintuitive to most, but for us it was necessary. We need(ed) to believe in each other and play for each other if we were to stand a chance in this game that so closely emulates life.

How? Well, we are still working on it. Though I am not a coach that comes from the Valley or the Marawood, I do come from a culture of grit, passion, and competition. That's all I am really bringing to the table here in Weyauwega-Fremont. We are still in the laboratory trying to balance the equations of rigor and enjoyment in efforts to retain and recruit the

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modern day athlete. Gone are the days of blind, unquestioned compliance and effort. Just as any modern day learning regimen there needs to be application, relevance, and gratefulness within every step of the process. The Gridiron is not above this cultural shift. So, as coaches we adapt to keep players on the field and to keep the game alive.

With that being said, it is no surprise that we emphasize with great passion to get in the weight room, but rapport is an essential ingredient in the recipe of training. I believe in never asking someone to do something that I can't do with them. So, we train with our athletes. The reasons are twofold. Not only do we show the team we are not above the work, but we also show proper technique and intricate intensity. We used this as our recipe throughout, practice, team meals, and within the community. Compassion and cohesion expanded throughout the team and staff.

The growth in compassion and accountability we witnessed was great, but we still compete in a very difficult conference. So, we had to expedite the grit process, while still keeping players safe. We devised a practice plan that provided rigor while also providing optimal recovery. Efficiency was our strength. This is where our team began to come together on the field.

As we continued to foster the mentality of care for each other, providing team time, and recognizing what hard work can yield, the boys started to believe in the process. Positive player coaching, carpooling, and written thank you letters to our community supporters were just a few of the actions demonstrated.

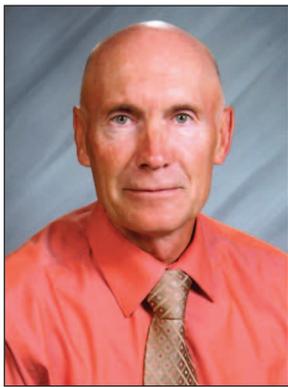
All of that work and its results put us on a trajectory to accomplish a season that hadn't been achieved in 17 years. Nonetheless, in our conference it was inevitable to meet a team(s)

that had been depositing that sweat equity longer than we had, and it showed. All skills are tested when the chips are down. Old habits arose, and the coaches again had to lead with patience, love, and tactful accountability. Our goal was to have fun, give great effort and continue to believe in each other.

Many elements came together last season that allowed us to accomplish our goals. I am lucky to have an administration that acknowledges the importance of well-rounded student athletes and the positive impact they have within the school and the greater community. I am fortunate to have a coaching staff and community that cares about the young men we are developing for this world. I have tremendous athletes that have great talent and an unmatched heart. I am blessed to have a wife that LETS me coach football, weight train, and mentor athletes.

SHARED LEADERSHIP AND CREATING A PLAYER LED TEAM

By: Jerry Sinz, Hall of Fame Head Football Coach, Edgar High School



Jerry Sinz

We have discussed the concept of “Shared Leadership” and creating a player led team for the past seven or eight years at Edgar. Our Staff make-up is basically one old guy (me), and eight men I consider young guys (25-40 year olds). Five of the eight are former Wildcat players and most were captains during their playing days.

For the first 40 years of my coaching career we have had four captains chosen by the players. For 25 of those years the captains were chosen on the first Saturday of Fall practice after five or six days together on the field. This allowed everyone to witness first hand who they felt were the most positive and caring leaders in the locker room, in the weight room and on the practice field. Somewhere around 2000 we decided to allow the players to vote for captains at our annual Spring player interview-evaluation meetings. As a Staff we agreed this would allow our captains to display greater leadership throughout the Spring and Summer. Captains could now encourage teammates to participate in Spring sports, attend summer camps, participate in 7-on-7 leagues, and be a part of our Fit for Life Summer school program.

All of these methods seemed to produce similar results, but I never really thought much

about how the player felt who finished 5th or 6th in the Captain voting. We did designate the 5th and 6th players as 1st and 2nd alternates should one of the four captains be injured, sick or unable to attend a game for some reason. In recent years we have experienced some situations where the best player may not have been chosen as a captain and a captain may have been chosen who was not even a starter. We did feel that this may have created some unwanted tension or lack of chemistry in the locker room. Also, I have become aware in recent years that some players who the team and coaches have considered a top candidate for a captain position were not really interested in being a leader.

Thus, we have experimented with a variety of leadership methods or models recently. One year we rotated the entire senior class throughout the season as captains. We were sure to have two of our four elected captains serve each week with the other two spots changing. The athletes and parents liked this and it seemed to work quite well. We have attempted to follow some of the guidelines promoted by former outstanding coaches such as Bruce Larson-Somerset and Steve Jones of Kimberly.

I should also mention that when we began sharing with our players what “real” leadership meant some of them were no longer that excited about being a leader. I would discuss with the team who some of the greatest leaders of all time were and what qualities or characteristics they shared in common and it became apparent to several of them that they no longer wanted to be a leader. Things like always being the first to practice and the last to leave; helping the managers and coaches with equipment, picking up the locker room after practice and games, getting the best grades and being the most respectful to teachers and officials at all times.

We also clearly pointed out the five signs of “Toxic Leadership” as explained by author John Maxwell and it became apparent that some players were not well suited to be great leaders

and would likely not contribute to the culture we were trying to establish. Those five signs are:

1. Gossip,
2. Pouting when things don't go your way,
3. Displaying “Poor Body Language”
4. Negative reaction to adversity during games or at practice,
5. Using the “Martyr Complex” and blaming everyone and everything else for their problems.

We have all had excellent players through the years who have displayed one or several of these toxic leadership qualities. Many times parents also fail to see that their son is exhibiting behaviors that are not conducive to a positive team culture.

In summary you can see that we have not solved the question of what is the best leadership style to use to create the culture we want to establish and maintain in our program. We have all likely seen examples where our team has overachieved and we are searching for the keys as to how this happened. We have also seen examples where teams with great talent have not reached their potential and again we are asking “Why”. A couple things I am sure of are; All great teams somehow developed a player shared leadership culture that everyone (players, coaches and parents) were happy with and supported, and most teams that failed to reach the potential they, their coaches and the community expected likely suffered from inadequate quality player leadership.

Thank you to the WFCFA for allowing me to contribute a bit to *The Point After II*. Keep up the tremendous work of promoting the great sport of football in our state. We must never lose sight of the important role our sport plays in developing America's leaders of the future.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HEAT ACCLIMATION & HYDRATION IN INJURY PREVENTION

By: Paige Byrnes, MS, LAT, ATC, OPE-C



Paige Byrnes

Over the last several years, there has been a steady increase in athletes suffering from illness due to exercising in the heat. Preventing these illnesses from occurring is the easiest form of management that anyone who works with young athletes should be educated on. The primary management techniques that can be employed are establishing set heat acclimation periods, monitoring heat, and implementing a strong hydration program.

Phase 1—Establish an acclimation period that allows for all athletes to adjust to the extreme temperatures of the summer months. The minimum acclimation period for fall sports is as follows:

- Practice Day 1: Helmets and mouth guards only; no pads permitted
- Practice Day 2: Helmets and mouth guards only, no pads permitted
- Practice Day 3: Helmets, mouth guards, shoulder pads, and girdles worn with shorts
- Practice Day 4: Helmets, mouth guards, shoulder pads, and girdles worn with shorts
- Practice Day 5: Helmets, mouth guards, shoulder pads, and girdles worn with shorts

Once an athlete has completed 5 days of heat acclimation, they may begin practice without clothing restrictions (weather permitting). If an athlete arrives late to the start of pre-season workouts, they must still complete the 5 days of acclimation before they can join the rest of the team in full practice gear. This acclimation period does not replace athletes exercising out-of-season and all athletes should be expected to

complete workouts during the summer prior to the start of official pre-season activities.

Phase 2—Develop a system for monitoring the temperature and humidity outside. To determine the safety of weather conditions, as it relates to the temperature and humidity, readings should be taken 30 minutes prior to the start of any outdoor activity and 60 minutes after the start of activity. All readings should be taken at the site of the activity and should be recorded. A wet bulb globe temperature device, such as a Kestrel 5400, or a digital sling psychrometer are recommended to determine the heat index at your specific location—relying on weather reports will not be as accurate.

Regulations regarding heat index are as follows:

- Heat index Below 95 degrees: Provide ample amounts of water. Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for at least 10 minutes in duration. Ice towels available for cooling. Watch and monitor athletes carefully for any heat illness symptoms.
- Heat index 95-99 degrees: Same regulations as above. Remove helmets and other equipment when not involved in contact activity. Reduce time outside to 2 hours or postpone 3 practice. Re-check heat index every 30 min.
- Heat Index 99-104 degrees: Same regulations as above but with mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes for at least 10 minutes in duration and outdoor activity to one hour.
- Heat Index Above 104 degrees: All outdoor activity is suspended and all athletes must move indoors until heat index lowers to a safe level.

NOTE: When air temperature is below 80 degrees, there is no potential for the heat index to impact activity outdoors.

Early signs of heat-related illnesses to be aware of include cramping, dizziness, nausea and/or vomiting. When in doubt, have an athlete sit in a cool, shaded area while hydrating to prevent the heat illness from progressing. Any athletes who are more prone to heat-related illnesses should be monitored closely and given additional water breaks as needed.

Phase 3—Implement a strong hydration program that is easy for athletes to follow. Hydrating and staying hydrated is the easiest way to prevent heat illnesses and injuries. In general, if an athlete is thirsty, they are already dehydrated to a level that can impact performance and increase risk of injury. Athletes should be weighing in before and after any outdoor activity to determine fluid loss due to sweating. Determine how much weight an athlete has lost by calculating the percentage.

Regulations regarding weight loss during activity are as follows:

- Less than 1% weight loss: Continue to hydrate as normal. No restrictions on activity.
- 1-2% weight loss: Athlete must rehydrate so their body weight is below 1% weight loss before the next practice. If they do not reach this goal, they cannot practice outdoors.
- Greater than 2% weight loss: Athlete must rehydrate and should not practice outdoors for the rest of the day. Re-assess weight before practice the following day. Athlete must be back below 1% weight loss in order to practice.

To determine the amount of water an athlete should be drinking daily, divide their body weight in half.

Example: 150lbs = 75oz of water

This is the amount they should be drinking outside of any practice or activity. For every 20 minutes of practice or activity, athletes should add 10 ounces of water to that amount.

Example: Two hours of practice = 60oz of water. This is the amount of water they should be drinking during that practice. Athletes should also increase their water intake by 20 ounces for every pound of weight loss during activity.

Example: 3lbs of weight loss = 60oz of water.

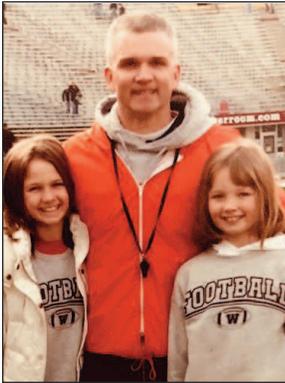
Summary: For an athlete who weighed 150lbs before 2 hours of practice outdoors and then lost 3lbs during practice—195oz of water should be consumed that day (1 gallon = 128 ounces). Following these guidelines will be an adjustment for most athletes. Encouraging athletes to avoid energy drinks, sodas, or other caffeinated beverages is also recommended.

While these recommendations provide athletes with the best chance of avoiding the effects of heat-related illnesses, they are not fully preventative. Certain health conditions, medications, and other factors make an athlete more susceptible to dehydration and symptoms related to exercising in the heat. Having access to an AED and methods for cooling an over-heated athlete in an emergency situation are imperative for any teams who do not have access to a licensed medical professional on a daily basis.

For questions or if you would like a copy of an electronic weight tracking spreadsheet, contact Paige at paige.byrnes@mpark.net

WHAT 32 YEARS OF VARSITY FOOTBALL HAS TAUGHT ME – NO REGRETS

By: Jack Batten, Assistant Football Coach, West De Pere High School



Jack Batten

I have always read with great interest I might add, every issue of *The Point After II* from cover to cover. I would like to thank all of you who have contributed to the publications as well as those who spend countless hours putting it together. No doubt, I have stolen many great ideas from those articles and the talented authors who wrote them.

To a certain extent I have always been a little intimidated to share my ideas based upon the ultimate comparison of those enlightening misadventures. I am always humbled when I listen to other coaches speak at our clinic and I have often wondered if I truly “belong”. Perhaps others have felt that way at some point in their careers? I guess in some respects we are always trying to prove ourselves to a higher order.

After 32 years of coaching varsity football in the state of Wisconsin I decided to hang up my coaching whistle in 2019. And although I have learned a ton from the likes of Bill Turnquist, Pat Prochnow, John Kronkowitz, and most importantly John Kolstad, I would still like to sit down with Steve Jones and talk offense (he has shared a bunch already), with Ken Krause and find out just how he gets his defense to function as one entity, with Steve Jorgenson and learn his motivational techniques (he gets the most out of his talent), and with Pat Rice to see just how much emphasis he puts on special teams because they are simply amazing. No doubt there is an almost infinite amount of coaching talent in our state and as a young coach, you need to tap into these minds!

For me coaching has been an exercise in extremes - too much of this or too little of that. One thing I do know for sure, if you want to be a head coach be ready to have your soul exposed to everyone. There is simply no getting around it. As a bit of an introvert, that was something I was not prepared to handle. You better have a belief system, a plan for everything, the ability to adjust on the fly, and the character and integrity to stand up for what

you truly believe in because you will be tested at every turn. And that statement does NOT depend upon whether you win or lose although losing surely brings about a higher degree of scrutiny.

We are all hyper competitive by nature, that is simply in a football coach’s DNA. But to what extent? Someone once told me “If you aren’t cheating you aren’t trying.” Really? Within the confines of competition I think we are all trying to educate young men and that is the ultimate goal of football - a true extension of the classroom. What does using “extra” contact days, deleting plays from an exchange film, teaching an illegal technique (“It’s not illegal unless they call it”), changing roster numbers, swearing at them, perhaps returning them to action from an injury prematurely, etc. teach young men about the approach to life? Trust me I have made my share of mistakes however as I matured in years I always tried to think about what message my decisions were sending to my players, directly or indirectly. Do I just talk the talk or do I actually walk the walk? As difficult as this is, we cannot tie our self worth to our win/loss record. I am not sure I always understood that point and that connection, more than any other motivator, caused me to lose my value system.

I have always espoused the value in fundamentals and their importance. Again, maybe a little too much but one thing that we never crossed off the practice sheet were fundamental periods. Regardless of scheme and on both sides of the ball, as the season progressed the natural tendency is to keep adding to your repertoire of plays, coverages, fronts, etc. Our most successful seasons paralleled just the opposite approach. As the successful season progressed we actually reduced what we ran and allowed our players to get comfortable with fewer schemes and the fundamentals that accompanied what they needed to do to be successful. As a defensive driven coach, in every important high stress situation, when I ask the players what they would want to call it was always “BASE”. Why is that? They wanted the opportunity to do what they had been trained to do, as they developed confidence in their abilities AND your ability to ask them to do something that was in their realm of capabilities. I am sure those decisions are somewhat driven by talent level. I also came to the realization that my ability to out-think or outcoach the other sideline was something that I had way overrated.

I honestly believe the most important thing a high school coaching staff does in terms of wins and losses is to recruit the talent in your school, create a special program so that kids want to be a part of it, and then get the kids in

the correct positions. Your staff cannot talk about personnel enough, you just can’t. Knowing your offensive, defensive, and special teams schemes inside and out you can determine where to put your best players to maximize their talents. You also know where you can cheat a little bit and use maybe a little lesser ability kid and get similar results. Early in my coaching career we probably overused our best players. Ken Golomski sold me on the importance of platooning and getting as many young men on the field as talent would allow. Sometimes a lesser kid who has spent an inordinate amount of time practicing a few specific things is better at the end of the game than a tired, more talented player. And if the goal is to play 14 games, the more players you play the more likely you will have your best players available to you at the end of the season - that’s just simple injury statistics.

As exhausting as it may seem, and I saw several assistant coach’s eyes roll throughout the years, we tried to go through a depth chart almost every day during the early season and a couple of times a week during the season. The best linebacker I ever coached was a backup defensive end who was forced into service 5 games into his senior year because of injury. I often wondered what we could have been if he had started playing the position early in his career? Playing more kids also has the added advantage of getting more kids to come out. Players aren’t naive and older players do not want to go through all the things we ask of them without at least the possibility of getting some playing time. In effect they will cut themselves unless there is hope.

I do think one area that gets overlooked, regardless of how many times we as coaches talk about it, is special teams. That is one area I think I could gain an edge on an opposing coaching staff, not necessarily because of scheme but rather because of emphasis. Your special teams should have fundamental periods during your regular practice schedule. Although we rarely ran them live we did have time built into the week to practice special teams at least twice, punt and punt coverage was covered every day to some degree. With a platoon system we could use our best players at key special teams positions (punters blockers, punt personal protector, ball men on coverage units, returners) and fill in with back ups in some situations. They also need to be scouted the same as offense and defense. Oftentimes, if you are playing a more talented opponent, special teams are a place to gain an edge. A blocked kick, converted fake, recovered pooch or onside kick, botched long snap, or long return are game changers. We would practice all our special plays starting at

the beginning of the year and pull them out as needed. We would also place our special teams at the beginning of practice to let the players know we were not trying to squeeze them in at the end of practice when both players and coaches are tired. You get what you emphasize!

I was lucky enough to coach in state championships. There are many talented coaches who do not get that same opportunity as we as high school coaches have to play the hand we are

dealt. I was often blessed with talented players and colleagues. Through the years what impressed me most as a coach was how a team played the game, how they responded to adversity, and how they treated their opponents, the referees, and one another. More so than any other sport I believe a high school football program is a direct reflection of the head coach and the value system he has instilled. In big moments I would often talk to my players about having

NO REGRETS, to simply do the best they could for as long as they could and then accept the outcome. I would try to emphasize and enjoy the process more than the actual outcome. After 32 years it is the personal relationships I developed that are most vivid in my mind and the thing I miss most about the game. I learned to live by that credo in my advanced years and only wish I could have gotten there sooner. Best of luck this fall and may you too have no regrets!

IF I KNEW THEN WHAT I KNOW NOW ABOUT OFFENSIVE FOOTBALL

By: Dave Richardson, Retired Head Coach, Verona High School



Dave Richardson

I want to thank Dan Brunner and Bob Berenzowitz for asking me to speak at the 2023 WFC A Spring football clinic and to write this article for *The Point After II*. I also want to thank all the coaches I have met along the way that contributed to these thoughts. Please know that if I ever listened, saw, or talked to you, I took something away to help me become a better coach and teacher.

The 2022-23 school year was my first school year in 50 consecutive years that I wasn't either a football player or football coach. In this first "year off", I had time to look back at my years of playing and coaching football, to think about the things I would have liked to have known sooner. So, over the course of several months I jotted down a few thoughts, things I would have liked to have known sooner in my life as a coach.

Here are 15 of my coaching specific "If I'd known then" thoughts:

- Systems beats Plays! Every play must have at least 3 companion plays. For example - PAP, Counter, RPO, RRO, Draw or Screen.
- In Crunch-time, run plays to YOUR Sideline. It's easier to control the pace, communication, and sideline influence and motivation. We won a lot of key games running plays to our sideline in the last minutes.
- Overload vs. Evens & Balance vs. Odd, and Neat Freak DCs vs. Chaos Addict DCs.

Make the defensive coordinator uncomfortable. Get to know whether their basic instinct is very structured or unstructured.

- Create Tendencies so you can break Them! Think 3 games ahead and build tendencies that you can break in key moments and in key games.
- Establish an Offensive identity...What Play **MUST** they Stop? Answer this question — "What would your opponents say about your offense"?
- ALL Centers ALWAYS Snap! Every center in your program from grade one on, should have their own ball they bring to every drill. Always be sure that your centers are snapping a ball in all drills.
- If it takes more than 90 Seconds to Install and Execute a new play...Throw it OUT! Too often, we force a "play" into our system.
- Run influence or misdirection plays (naked, influence, counter etc.) Early and OFTEN. By running something that influence reads early and often, you might plant a seed of doubt in the defense. A quarter-second of hesitation can be a difference maker.
- Points or Yards Per Play is all that Matters...+.2 point differential per Play or +1.5 YARD Differential per Play! Points per play was 100% accurate for us when determining a win or a loss. In addition, breakdown only the stats with opponents that you played that were playoff eligible each year. The blow-out wins or losses will make your stats unreliable.
- Don't ALWAYS do anything...Mix-up Days and Sequence! Your practice days should never be "routine". Players should never know exactly what to expect at every practice.
- Condition Football Specific 18 Perfect Plays in 4 Minutes/Mirror Fade & Waggle Route Drills, Bird Dogs, etc. Don't just run to run, run with a purpose. Always have a finish line, end zone or specific outcome in every drill and segment of practice.
- Random Pressure Cooker in Practical Each day have at least 2 "situations" that are

unannounced to any one including your coaches. Last play of the game, 15 second FG, 4th and 1 for the win, etc.

- Use Barrels for install, Timing, Conditioning and Play Perfection! Limit practicing plays on "air".
- Use Different Speeds Throughout the Game, Huddle, Huddle to a quicky snap, Huddle to a shift, No Huddle to No Play, NASCAR (wrist band), Turbo (one-word plays).
- Do your best to appreciate the MOMENT... When I took over the Verona Football Program, all we wanted to do is build a program that kids wanted to play in and the community would be proud of.

The following is our list of items that we wanted to accomplish to promote that goal:

1. Hit the ground running by making the youth football program a part of the high school program
2. Then, 24 hours per-day, 7 days per-week promote your program. Be everywhere all the time
3. Then, let's have a winning season and get to the playoffs
4. Then, let's promote our players for All-Star, All-State and to play college football
5. Then, let's win a conference championship
6. Then, let's win multiple conference championships
7. Then, let's have deep runs in the playoffs
8. Then, let's get to the state championship

BE ALL IN in that moment. As I look back, we absolutely loved the moment we were in each year as we built the program. So, do your best to **'BE ALL IN'** in that moment with those kids, parents, and coaches. Lastly, the final goal of any coach should be to leave the space better than you found it. All the best, in hopefully your long career as COACH!

Coach Richardson spent 40 years at 5 Schools as an Assistant and Head Football Coach the last 22 Years at Verona Area High School, Hall of Fame Class of 2014, Retired after the 2021 Season.



GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE PROGRAM

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- ❖ This insurance does not apply to members that coach at an All-Star game that is not approved by your state coaches association.
- ❖ This insurance does not apply to any loss, cost or expense arising out of infectious or communicable disease.

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As a member benefit of your state coaches association, all members in good standing have a \$1,000,000 per occurrence General Liability policy limit that provides coverage for their coaching activities. In order to protect the General Liability policy from potential claims, the insurance company has mandated that all coaches must obtain signed waivers and provide Participant/Accident insurance for their participants.

In order to obtain a certificate of insurance showing proof of insurance or naming an additional insured, the following must be in place:

- ❖ **Waivers:** Signed waivers showing indemnification language
- ❖ **Participant/Accident Insurance:** You must have Participant/Accident coverage in place for all participants attending sports camps.

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- ❖ Camp Insurance Request form is available on our website: www.loomislapann.com

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Lori George
Karen Boller

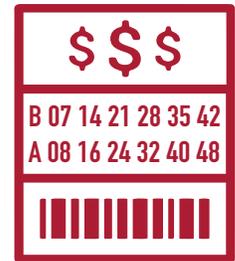
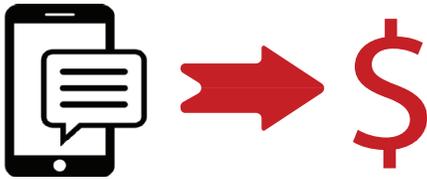
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lgeorge@loomislapann.com
kboller@loomislapann.com

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