

# HEADSETS

WRITTEN FOR COACHES BY COACHES

VOLUME 1: ISSUE 10

LET COACHES  
COACH

*defensive*  
DRILLS

DEFENSIVE  
PRACTICE  
COMPONENTS

PLAYERS PICTURED ARE FROM RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN SCHOOL IN LOVELAND, COLORADO

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Thank you for your interest in this coaching material. I have been very blessed to connect with some awesome coaches during the past year, and putting out a collaborative work was always a goal of mine. Be sure to visit our sponsors as they have been great to support all of this work and are truly interested in coaches' education and helping coaches.

Our theme has been "for coaches by coaches" and all of the writers have been gracious to donate their time and knowledge to the coaching community. Many of them also have additional works that are great resources for coaches. Be sure to take the time to check them out.

If you have any subjects you'd like to see us address or questions you'd like to answer or even pictures to submit to make the magazine, please feel free to do so. Simply email [FBcoachsimpson@gmail.com](mailto:FBcoachsimpson@gmail.com) or the one who truly makes all this work at [Jameysimpson@gmail.com](mailto:Jameysimpson@gmail.com).

Thank you,

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# FOOTBALL 101

## OFF SEASON AND GAME WEEK BLITZ CHECKLIST



Chris Haddad  
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**viQtory**

I recently wrote an article for Hudl about how I use Hudl Beta to break down the opponent's offensive line. [You can read that article here.](#)

Understanding what the offensive line's blocking schemes are can help you get free rushers to the quarterback. Free rushers will often result in a higher percentage of sacks and pressure on the quarterback to make a poor throw.

Every coach has their own blitz philosophy. Below is a checklist that I like to run through every pre-season and before every game before I plan my blitz install.

### Where Are We Strong In Coverage?

Some years you may be strong on the edges, other years you may not. For instance, this past year we had a strong senior-heavy team. This upcoming year my team will be young.

How often do I want to put my young sophomore corners on an island in 0 coverage. If I think the kids can handle it, we'll play a high dose of cover 0 and cover 1. If the player's technique needs to be tightened up, and there's some doubt both from my end as well as the player's end, we'll play more 3 deep 3 under coverage.

Play to your player's strengths and weaknesses. Out of all the positions on the field, I want my cornerbacks to play with the most confidence.

### Have a Catalog Of Blitzes

I typically carry anywhere between 6-7 blitzes into a season. When going into a game, I'll carry anywhere from 3-4.

Once I figure out the offensive line's scheme, you shouldn't need 7 different blitz packages. Keep it simple with your guys and rep the blitzes that you think are going to be most impactful during the game

### Attack The Running Back

My philosophy when blitzing is how can I get my linebacker one on one with the running back. My linebackers are often running backs or tight ends on offense, who are athletic.

Running backs aren't traditionally good blockers, so when creating your blitzes, figure out how you can best get a linebacker in the running back's face. This will also alter the path of the quarterback's throw, as the running back will be somewhat near the quarterback on contact.

### Confuse Offensive Lineman

Offensive linemen have rules. It's our job on the defensive side of the football, to confuse the offensive lineman, to make them think more than they would like to.

In man protection schemes (B.O.B.), this requires stunting and creating confusion just based on leverage and movement.

In full-line slides, we can confuse the offensive tackle and get an overload opportunity on running back. We want their offensive coach to make adjustments in the game, which will leave their offensive lineman feeling less confident about who they're blocking.

If you want to learn more about philosophy and how to attack the offensive line, we just released a brand new "How To Blitz Course", [which can be found here.](#)

I'd love to talk more about blitzing - feel free to tweet me @ [chrsvlQtory](#) !



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# LIFE LESSONS:

## TOP TEN "DON'TS": PART 2



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### Do not wait for something to change - (learn to motivate)

*"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." Barack Obama*

Not sure how many times I've heard the phrase (and even said it), "we can't do that here because \_\_\_\_\_". It is truly a mindset change to turn around a culture. Often, we feel our success is dependent on something we cannot control and we simply give up control over areas we can make improvements. As a coach we must FIND A WAY to make things happen. I'd rather try and fail 80 times now than simply think I cannot accomplish something for whatever reason.

One of the quotes I have started to live by is "done is better than perfectly unfinished". Not sure who said that or where it came from, but it has stuck with me. Often, we want everything to be exactly how we imagined it or hoped it would be. That isn't how life works or football. We must be willing to jump in and do the best we can with what we have instead of waiting for the perfect moment.

When the mindset of trying and pushing through failure seeps into your athletes and coaches it is amazing what can happen. No longer will you hear excuses, but you will see a team full of problem solvers. But, it all must start with the head coach. If you simply wait for things to happen, they rarely do happen. Work to motivate your players and coaches that your program will push forward even through failure before simply "hoping" for something good to happen.

One sign you have not accomplished this is if you find yourself or players/coaches saying phrases like: "we would

have won, but \_\_\_\_\_ messed it up for us". This must be eliminated for your program to be successful. Admitting failure when maximum effort was given is ok. Simply work to continue improving. When the program adopts the mentality, that everyone will do their part and not worry about outside circumstances, greatness can be achieved.

### Do not fail to Communicate (Learn to communicate)

*"No matter what job you have in life, your success will be determined 5% by your academic credentials, 15% by your professional experience and 80% by your communication skills." Anonymous*

Most coaches know what they expect from players and they understand the time commitment it will take. What we often fail to do is to communicate this vision through all the available platforms. This became increasingly difficult through the covid season of 2020. Communication with those around you will be key to all head coaches. The main focus of all leaders should be making sure those around us are "dialed-in" to our purpose and they cannot be fully dialed-in if they do not understand what the goal is or what is expected of them.

There is a reason many coaches do very well as a coordinator or as an assistant coach and then struggle with the leap to becoming a head coach. The main reason is communication. The ability to reach all those in an organization can be overwhelming. This must be done intentionally, or people will be overlooked. It must also be done daily. Communication will be the key for a head coach to be successful.

A few major concepts that must be addressed:

Communication with Coaching Staff

Communication with Administration/Bosses

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- Communication with Volunteer/Paid Staff

Communication takes work and it takes a plan of action. In short, it must be intentional and important to a coach. With the technology available today, there is really no excuse for a coach to not be able to communicate with those involved in their program. All it takes is intent and organization for a coach to get their message out.

What becomes as important is how you portray your message. Make sure that the tone of the communication represents what you want it to represent. Often emails or texts can be difficult to understand the "tone" of the message. Understand that often what you say can be used against you, but what you email/text WILL be used against you. Make sure you are calm and in control before sending any communication.

Branding your program or even yourself is done intentionally. The best in the business understand how they are perceived and how to change how they are perceived. This is done through how you communicate your message.

Those who do not care what others think are doomed to fail. Also, those who care too much what others think are doomed to fail. It is important to understand how your message is coming across. There will always be those who disagree and that is fine, but a leader must be aware at all times.

### Do not think only winning a game is what makes you a great coach - (learn to separate)

*"It's more than just the game, it's the little things. Being the leaders of this team both on and off the field. Being the first one out to practice and one of the last guys off the field. It's the mentality, the work ethic, work rate and professionalism." Brian Dunseth*

I want to be very careful in this section not to negate the importance of winning. It is very important and often will be what keeps or loses a job for many coaches. Ultimately, in the mind of many fans this is the most important part of coaching. Often in our own minds this is the ultimate mark of success.

However, this is written for coaches at the high school and college level. While winning is important, it should not be the only goal of a program. There are a multitude of coaches that have won for a variety of reasons as well as some coaches that have done a phenomenal job that have not found the same winning percentage. This does not negate or take away from honoring those that have had great winning percentages, it simply is meant to point out that many coaches are in a different circumstance than others.

Regardless of the circumstance of a coach, those who understand that their main job in working with young people is to teach them how to become better people will always be the coaches I choose to work with and allow my own children to play for. Remember when our time has come to be called to account for our actions, I feel many coaches will feel the guilt they may have inside from cutting corners in the name of "winning".

Always work to improve athletes. It is easier said than done to actually hold your great athletes as accountable as the others.

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# ATHLETIC LEADERSHIP

## DEFENSIVE PRACTICE COMPONENTS



**Kevin Swift**  
Gold Beach HS - OR  
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[Free Materials Here](#)

I have spent a lot of time telling or explaining to all of you the structure of our defense here at Gold Beach High School. I have explained our fronts, our coverages and how we stem in our defense. I think in this issue I will explain how a small rural school on the Oregon coast practices defense and some of the components important to being successful defensively.

### Tackling

Tackling is perhaps the most important skill a defensive player needs to have in the game today and just like the batter in baseball, we will practice it every day. We will practice it whether we are in pads or not. We also are not big on tackling wheels or bags, since those apparatuses are NOT tackled in the game. We tackle ball carriers or runners, for a couple reasons. One reason is both the Tackler and the Ball Carrier need to become comfortable with contact, second reason is it allows for drill to be set up quickly with no one having to find or get bags or wheels to get drill done. Our go to Tackling Drill occurs right after our team stretching and running period that starts our formal practice time. Our six squad lines will simply move to a sideline and move from 5 yards apart to 10 yards apart to ensure we have no unwanted collisions between lines. Another reason we do it this way is it keeps best going against best. Our six-line leaders are our captains, so as they collapse to the sidelines, we know it will be best against best. Starters are the next two lines in each squad, so again as they collapse, we know we will have starters going against starters. Our youngsters will be in the last couple lines and thus will be learning against each other with more coaches' eyes on them. Once on the sidelines, they move to ten yards apart and player in front of line comes out to the bottom of the numbers on field.

The next player in line will become the ball carrier or runner, does he need to actually have a ball? We would like to have a ball and balls are placed on sidelines for them to use, but the runners having a ball is NOT a must. As the HFC and the one responsible ultimately for player safety, I will run the drill. So now we have each Tackler facing the runner on the sidelines, ten yards apart from the next tackler. On the HFC first whistle the Tackler and runner start chattering their feet, on second whistle the runner runs on a 45-degree angle to the Tackler's left. The Tackler will then take the appropriate angle and path to make the tackle. When we teach this drill, we teach it in stages and emphasize safety at each stage. We always start in no pads or helmets, which makes it easier for us to emphasize keeping the head or helmet out of the tackle. We also start at half speed, yes, I know half speed is where most of us get stupid injuries, but it is necessary here to get the skills taught correctly. We will teach our Tacklers to get downhill and slightly behind the runner to make sure we cannot be cutback on and to get down field foot on the target so the up-field foot can be driven across runner's path. When going half speed or full speed we will have tackler dip or bend in hips and knees. We will teach to drive their shoulder pads chest plate through the runners near shoulder or rib cage, keeping their heads out of the initial contact. When teaching this in half speed we want to see the feet in right position, the proper bend in knees and hips and chest making contact in correct location. When going half speed or when doing full speed with no pads, we have our Tacklers wrap arms and tap simultaneously the runners opposite side rib cage or hips, to emphasize the correct arm wrap. Years ago, I saw some coaches teach wrap the runner and lift to signify a tackle, we choose not to do this because it is not what happens in games. When going full speed and in pads, we will drive the chest and hips through the target area of the runner, violently wrap or club the arms around and drive to make runner stop. We will only take to the ground once a week while in season on Wednesdays, the rest of the time we just want to see the drive to make runner use his legs or break stride to stay upright. While we have some position specific tackling drills or stripping the ball drills, this is our TEAM tackling drill. I recall growing up and reading that to be a good hitter in baseball, one needs to take 500 cuts a day. I think to be a team that tackles great, we need to get our kids 10 to 12 tackles a day, or 25 to 35 tackles a week in season. In the Off Season, Spring and Summer, I would like to see us get 100 to 150 tackles a month. If we can accomplish this, we

are on our way to becoming a great tackling team.

### Alignment and Assignment

If tackling is the backbone of the defense, then alignment and assignment are the brains of a great defense. Set Rec periods are something all of us do to get alignment and assignment down. I do not know about all of you but at the high school level if you can be multiple up front and just get the kids lined up correctly each down you're going to make up for some talent deficiencies in my opinion. We use trash cans as offensive linemen and our youngsters are our skill kids, so they can learn formation terminology and alignment offensively. So, everyone has something to be focused in on and learning during these periods. During the Off Season / Zero Period starting in March, we will do Set Rec in our gym once a week for 20 to 30 minutes. It is during this time that we install our base defenses and coverages, we find that Wooden's old school chair drills or in our case can drills is a better way to learn than in classroom chalk talk. When Spring / Summer ball gets here, we will do this Set Rec daily. It is also during this time of year when will introduce offensive schemes or plays and how our defense should react to these schemes or plays. Again, this period in Spring / Summer will run for 20 to 30 minutes because we are NOT going to be in a hurry this time of year. This period can also be broken off with just the front seven or eight to work stemming and stunt or blitz packages, allowing the secondary to get more Individual work in. Once we get to Fall Camp, we are doing 20 to 30 minutes of Set Rec vs Scheme Concepts every morning practice in two-a-days. In the afternoon practices the front seven or eight will also do 15 minutes of a stunt & blitz period. By the time Fall Camp gets here we are stemming in all Set Rec related periods whether they be entire team or group Set Rec periods. Once the season starts Set Rec periods are done daily for 10 to 15 minutes. I would challenge coaches to go back and look at how many times you had troubles defensively because you could not get lined up right or misidentified the formations strengths.

### Defensive Pursuit

We tell our kids if you cannot run or will not run you cannot play defense for us. The willingness to run a ball carrier down who is only yards from a touchdown is the Heart of any great defense. Make them snap the ball, the more times they snap the ball the defensive odds get better, is a fact at high school level. While I would never say we are a bend but do not break

defense, pursuit is exactly that – do not let it Break! In 2007 verse a quality opponent from a classification above us, we had a Free Safety chase down a Running Back that had broken clean off tackle. The Running Back had a good 15 yard on the Free Safety, yet our kid chased him down on our own 7-yard line to stop a score. Our defense stiffened and blocked a field goal attempt. Therefore, we work pursuit, it can be a game changer! There are lots of pursuit drills out there, with lots of variations and frankly they're all good. We do our pursuit drill every morning practice during two-a-days. I think a couple things are important in doing a pursuit drill. One it is pursuit NOT conditioning, so let us not indiscriminately just add distance to make it harder. Two make it competitive, it will bring out the best in your players during practice. Three make sure you work pursuit angles of a Running Back popping the A or B Gap and getting vertical in middle of your defense. Once the season is under way, because so many of our kids rarely come off the field, we will only do pursuit on Mondays. We will, however, go over pursuit and angles as part of any Set Rec period working against an opponent's plays or schemes.

### Individual Time

Every position coach's favorite period or component and it is never long enough! This is where we teach / coach the fundamentals, techniques and skill set that our position group needs to be great at, to be successful on the field in our defense. This is something our defensive position groups get once every two weeks in Off Season, once a week in Spring / Summer practices and daily once the season starts. In the Off Season they will get 30 to 45 minutes. In the Spring / Summer Indo will be 20 to 30 minutes and then during the season 10 to 15 minutes daily. I know some of you are saying 10 minutes, what the heck! Well in 2005 our All-State DE was at summer workouts in SoCal with Bruce Rollinson's Mater Dei Monarchs, and he came up to me after an incredible great and competitive Indo period with the Monarchs and said our Indo periods were tougher! I laughed and said no way, but he said Coach Swift here there is 20 defensive linemen doing Indo for 15 minutes back in Gold Beach there is 7 of us doing Indo for 15 minutes. Holy Cow he was right! Indo was becoming too like conditioning, and I did not want that, I wanted skill development. So, in a small school 10 minutes may be truly all you need. Finally tackling is a skill that each position group should be great at and it is during Indo that other tackling drills that are safe should be worked on.

# DEFENSIVE LINE: 101

## BASE BLOCK DESTRUCTION



Quint Ashburn  
Defensive Line Coach: Searcy  
High School - AR  
[Defensive Line Coaching Group on Facebook](#)  
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When I begin to teach my defensive linemen how to defeat the different types of blocks they will see in their careers, I always start with the base block. In my opinion, it is a good starting point because the block is very straight forward. Most of the time, the offensive lineman will attempt to drive the opposing defensive lineman straight back or out, depending on the play.

In order to beat the block, the defensive lineman will need to base it back. Basically, they will want to drive them back into the gap they came from and secure the gap they are defending. Once they see the ball carrier make his move, they will use an escape move and pursue the football.

### Base it Back Progression:

Fire off out of stance on ball movement.

Recognize the base block and base the offensive lineman/blocker back into their gap.

See the ball carrier and finish with an escape move down the line, pursuing the ball.

### Drills Versus the Base Block:

- Quick board drill
- Prefit vs base block drill
- Beat the block drill

### Quick Board Drill:

This drill can be used to work on stance and start skills as well in your spring/summer/preseason practices. I would use this drill only on pad days with full contact. This drill is great against teams that will give you a lot of one on one aggressive blocks where you know that your defensive linemen will need to be aggressive with getting off the ball and getting their hands on the offensive lineman. I'd give my defensive linemen about two reps in this drill to set the tone for practice and get them

being aggressive out of their stance. This is not a drill you do a thousand times in practice.

### Drill Progression:

Have defensive linemen pair up.

On the snap of the ball they will both fire off and try to aggressively shoot their hands and hips into their partner and get them off balance.

Blow the whistle quickly to end the drill. You are mainly focusing on who can win with their hands and hips.

### Coaching Points:

Key the ball movement, not cadence.

Get separation from the lineman coming at you.

Make sure you don't stand straight up after the snap of the ball.

### Prefit Base Block Destruction:

This drill is a good starting point for breaking down the way to beat a base block. This drill can be performed with or without pads. If you are doing this drill without pads, you will need bags for the offensive lineman to hold though. The purpose of this drill is for the defensive lineman to get extension on the offensive lineman blocking him, keep their feet active, secure their gap, and rip off the block after the ball carrier makes a move.

### Drill Progression:

Defensive linemen will get in pods of three. One defender, one offensive lineman, one ball carrier.

The defensive lineman will prefit with the offensive lineman. If in an even technique, he will have his hands already in the chest plate of the offensive lineman. If in an odd technique, he will have his inside hand on the V of the neck and the outside hand on the outside shoulder.

The coach will start the drill by verbal command, clapping, or blowing the whistle. On the start of the drill, the defensive lineman will get extension while the offensive lineman tries to drive them back. The defensive lineman will get his feet hot and secure his gap.

Once the gap is secured, the ball carrier will choose which way to go. You can let them have freedom to choose or tell them where to step. The defensive lineman will then use an escape move and fit to where the ball carrier is going.

### Coaching Points:

Violent hands and good extension. Don't keep the blocker close to you.

Stay in a low, athletic position. If you stand up you don't have any control.

Take care of your gap first. Put the offensive lineman back into his gap (base it back).

Don't escape too early. Make sure the ball carrier chooses where he is going before you get off the block. If you guess wrong and escape too early into the wrong gap, that can hurt the defense.

Finish with a great escape move. Make sure you get off the block.

### Beat the Block Drill:

This drill is pretty straightforward. You will be repping base blocks from a three point stance and will have them try to beat the offensive lineman blocking them on the snap of the ball. I usually do two lines with a defensive lineman, a blocker, and me in between to snap the ball. I try to snap a ball over using a cadence in order to prevent false snap counts that try to get defenders to jump offsides. If you have the numbers, you could do a full offensive line in order for your defensive linemen to get a feel for where they line up but, where I coach, I rarely have those kinds of numbers.

### Drill Progression (diagram below):

Have players get into two lines.

Each line will have a defensive lineman, an offensive lineman and a coach in the middle snapping the ball. On the snap of the ball, the offensive lineman will attempt to perform a base block on the defensive lineman.

The defensive lineman will base the offensive lineman back into his gap, securing the gap he is responsible for.

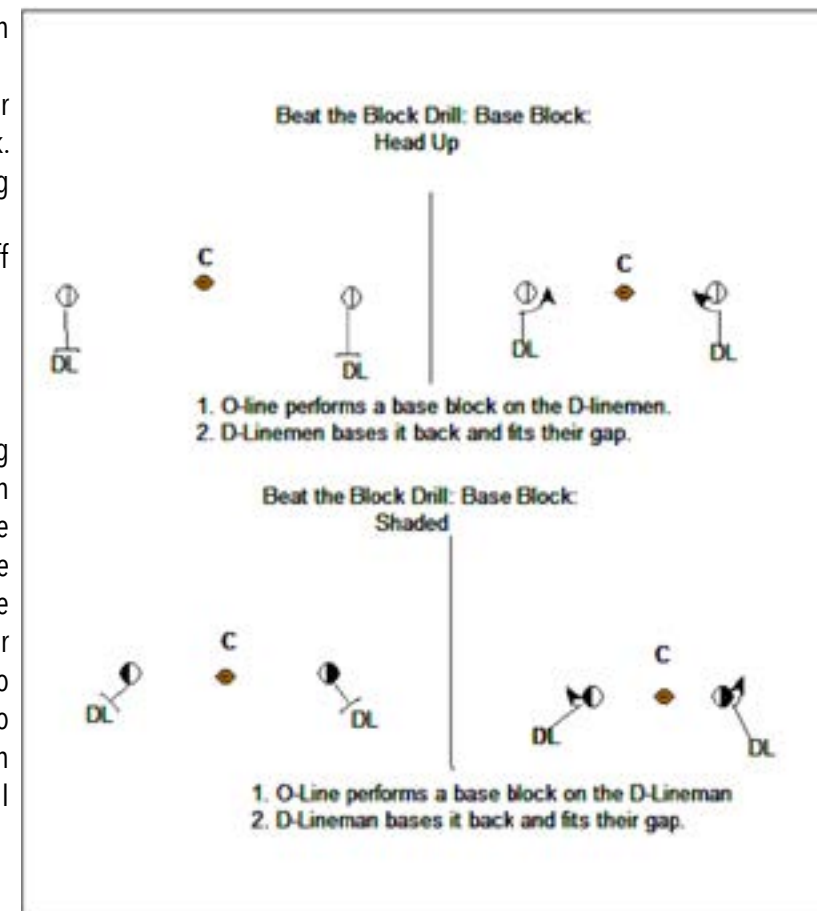
After securing the gap, the defensive lineman will perform an escape move and fit his gap.

### Coaching Points:

Get off the ball low and with good steps.

Beat the block before escaping. Don't guess

Don't go too far upfield.



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Head Football Coach  
[@BrentMo03800724](#)

Typically my article is geared more towards offense, but this one will be more focused towards workload distribution. I specifically remember walking into my first coaches meeting at every job as an assistant coach.

I looked around the room and

saw all the other coaches with more experience and tenure than me and thought I would be getting coffee for everyone else. As a coordinator and head coach it is our responsibility to develop these coaches and give them a clear role. When I first took over as the head coach I was also the offensive coordinator, strength coach, QB coach, youth camp coordinator, booster liaison, recruiting coordinator, social media director, academic coordinator, equipment manager and the list keeps going on and on.

After the first season, I was truly exhausted and needed a change. Over the years I have learned to let go of all these things and allow others to take ownership of them. Most head coaches have very controlling personalities and struggle to let go of these things but for longevity, health, development of staff and family time, I encourage you to let others take on some of these roles.

Think about your typical practice set-up and there are probably position coaches working with groups all over the field and you have to trust them. They have to be able to communicate and teach so those players are able to perform as part of the whole. As the head coach or the coordinator you can not be everywhere at once and coaches need to be trusted. I typically tell coaches that the less time I spend around your drills, means the more trust I have in you. In order for coaches to develop, it is important to start the process in the off-season. I have all my new coaches clinic me on their position in our system. So the coach will give me at least an hour session explaining his philosophy along with drills, coaching points, etc. Some of the other coaches are typically in the audience and will ask questions and chime in with their thoughts. It typically turns into a discussion and best

practices session at the end. Then myself or the coordinator will sit down with them and discuss what we liked and didn't like from the presentation. I would advise you to approach this with an open mind because they may know techniques or strategies that are better than what you are currently doing. Next we ask coaches to submit practice plans for their individual time prior to the start of the week. Each drill needs to specifically address football specific needs, no random drills just because they see them on youtube. Once the coach becomes established in the program we no longer need to have plans submitted.

As a head coach and coordinator it is important to constantly be evaluating and giving feedback to your coaches. There should be no surprises during the end of year meeting. As you watch them coach and they show competency begin to let up on the reigns and give them space. Obviously everything has to mesh with your big picture of the offense/defense and the team. We have all read about the concepts of small group cohesion and how it positively impacts a football team, so allow the assistant coaches to lead the small units.

In your program there are a lot of non-coaching items that can be distributed among your coaches as well. Find your coaches strengths and give them tasks. As long as they are getting the job done, allow them to put their own spin on it. Here are some of the most time consuming tasks that I have given to assistant coaches.

**RECRUITING:** There are lots of documents, graphics, emails, grade checks, film work, etc that can easily be done by an assistant coach. This is a great task for a younger coach that has been through the process as a player or has aspirations to coach at the collegiate level and wants to establish contacts. Obviously college teams will want to talk to the head coach at times, but so much of the other work can be performed by anyone.

**EQUIPMENT:** This is probably the biggest headache of mine. Find the most organized coach on your staff and let him take this on. This is a huge financial responsibility and should not be taken lightly.

**TECH/FILM:** I actually have one guy on offense and one on defense that takes charge of this. They make sure headphones, endzone cameras, sideline film, etc are all set-up and functional. Then they load the film and make sure it is distributed and tagged appropriately.

**YOUTH CAMP:** If you have an elementary school teacher on staff, then may be the best option. This typically involves planning the camp, coordinating field use, distribution and marketing.

**APPAREL:** I can not believe how grown men act about coaching apparel. Seriously, it is impossible to please everyone. Between coaching and player apparel you are dealing with 1000s of items each season.

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Some of my assistant coaches have done this in the past, but we actually have a program with student managers and the goal is to get one in the program for a few years, build trust and then let them make graphics and other things to be posted. If your school offers graphic design or some other class that works in this field, then you may be able to use it to your benefit.

**FUNDRAISING/BOOSTER:** In my program I handle all booster communication but I know some teams that have coaches with business backgrounds that become very involved with the process.

**STRENGTH COACH:** An assistant coach is a much better option as a strength coach. The head coach has so many things that pop up during weight training sessions that it is nice to have one person that can dedicate themselves to that cause. They should be the person that has the ability to raise the intensity level of your program very quickly.

**ACADEMIC COORDINATOR:** In our program we have a few teachers in the building that are given this responsibility. We give each of them a few student's to build relationships with, check grades and try to intervene and help when needed.

As a head coach some of these items get pushed back on me from time to time but I save myself 100s if not 1000s of hours of work, emails, phone calls because I have trust in my staff to handle the majority. I was very reluctant to hand over some of these items but I made sure to clearly communicate my expectations and frequently check up to make sure things are being done the correct way. If you go to a collegiate program or any successful business there is probably a collaborative environment of trust. Use those models at the high school level to distribute the workload and get the best from all of your staff and help them develop.

**WORKLOAD DISTRIBUTION:**

**RECRUITING**

**EQUIPMENT TECH/FILM**

**YOUTH CAMP**

**APPAREL**

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

**FUNDRAISING/BOOSTER**

**STRENGTH COACH**

**ACADEMIC COORDINATOR**



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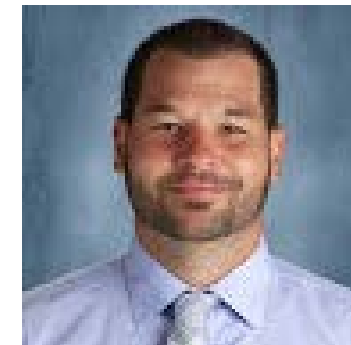


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## POUND THE STONE

### CREATE AN IDENTITY FOR YOUR POSITION GROUP - PART TWO



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Young people today do not want to be told what to do, they want to be coached. Elite position groups have crystal clear expectations that emphasize fundamentals. One way to streamline your position group's identity and culture is through the use of soundbite coaching. Soundbite coaching encapsulates your instruction into short phrases, usually just 1-6 words long. Soundbites are memorable cues that help athletes achieve peak performance. I use the following soundbites and drills to reinforce the Stonecutter identity and to coach the running back position.

#### Stonecutter Soundbites and Drills:

Soundbite: "The fastest three yards in football."

The success of the veer hinges on the effort of the play-side RB, whose run to the QB mesh-point must be "the fastest three yards in football." The Stonecutter Standard is to get to the outside leg of the guard as fast as possible. If the QB does not get to the mesh-point before the RB, it is NEVER the RB's fault, and the QB must move on to his second and third options. This soundbite emphasizes the importance of tempo and selling the inside run by hitting the hole at full speed.

#### The Fastest Three Yards in Football Drill: Veer Tough

Done with a skeleton line strip and the QBs, the Veer Tough drill allows two RBs to rep the triple option at once. Holding a push-back bag, a coach or player simulates the DE. On the cadence, the play-side RB uses the skeleton line strip to identify his veer landmark, the outside leg of the guard. The QB eyes the bag-holder, makes his read before the mesh-point, then executes the decision. If the bag-holder's first move is to stay where he is or widen, the correct read is a give the ball to the play-side RB, low and firm in the RB's belly. The QB and back-side RB continue the rep by carrying out their midline option and relationship. If, on the other hand, the DE crashes inside, the correct read is a pull. In this case, the QB opens, showing the ball to the play-

side RB, but keeps it high, grazing the ball against the RB's top arm. The play-side RB sells the fake by plowing ahead, lowering their body as if they have the ball and sprinting through the hole. Meanwhile, the back-side RB replaces the play-side RB's pre-snap alignment and positions himself four yards outside and one yard behind the QB. Together, the QB and back-side RB work outside the DE and beyond the line of scrimmage.

Soundbite: "Relationship." The second and third options in the veer offense are the QB/RB option. The back-side RB in the split-back formation, or the deepest back in the I-formation, can be used to stretch a defense and gain yards on the perimeter. As the QB runs midline, the backside RB needs to replace the play-side RB, then mirror his path to the quarterback's. The Stonecutter Standard is a 4 x 1 relationship. We want the back-side RB to be four yards outside and one yard behind the quarterback, anticipating a legal lateral pitch. The QB is reading the DE and has the freedom to cut up-field, so RBs must anticipate his movement and be ready to change his path. This soundbite helps the RB focus in traffic and serves as a reminder to have the correct 4 x 1 relationship to the QB.

#### Relationship Drill: Midline Pitch

Using an Offensive Line skeleton strip to represent the line of scrimmage, the QB and RB execute the midline option. Once outside the Tackle or Tight End, the QB, or coach playing QB, can choose to pitch the ball or cut up-field. The RB must maintain the proper 4 x 1 relationship with the QB until he has accelerated beyond the designated finish cone or nears the sideline. Keep your RB honest by pitching the ball sometimes outside of the hash, but not every time.

Soundbite: "Alligator arms." Running backs should NEVER take a handoff directly in their hands. Instead, backs should create "alligator arms" by bending their arms at the elbows to receive the quarterback's handoff in their belly. The elbow closest to the QB should form the top alligator arm, running across the athlete's chest, perpendicular to their sternum. The RB's thumb should be pressed against their chest, pointing down. The Stonecutter Standard is to elbow the QB in his ear. The RB's bottom hand should be flat across their belly, at or below the belly button. This soundbite ensures that every Stonecutter secures the handoff the proper way.

#### Alligator Arms Drill: Two-Line Exchange

Divide your squad into two equal lines that face each other, five yards apart. Give one line footballs and have the players take turns handing the ball off to each other as they jog by. Every runner should make the correct alligator arms, opening their elbow to the earhole of the other player. The ball should be exchanged between the two players by firmly placing the ball low and inside the runner's belly. After the exchange, the ball carrier should lower their pads and sprint to the designated

stopping point before joining the opposite line. As he sprints, the next handoff occurs. Repeat this drill until every RB has had the chance to give and receive at least one handoff.

Soundbite: "Fist to chin." There's an adage in football: ball security is job security. For years I coached RBs to carry the ball "high and tight," explicitly teaching them to point their elbow down and along their side and cover the point of the football with the palm by wrapping their fingers around its nose. While my expectations were specific, "high and tight" was subjective, and every player looked slightly different when they carried the ball. So, in an attempt to standardize our team's RB play, I modified my instruction with the soundbite "fist to chin." Now the Stonecutter Standard is for the ball to be covered by the palm of the hand, as described above, with the hand nestled under the player's chin or facemask. This position secures both points of the football and presses the ball firmly against the athlete's chest. No matter which Stonecutter is carrying the ball, this soundbite emphasizes the importance of ball security and uniformity in just three words.

#### Fist to Chin Drill: Bag Runs

Lay out several agility bags in a row with approximately one yard of space between the bags. Begin the drill with each running back holding a football "fist to chin" in a single-file line at one end of the bags. On the whistle, have your RBs maneuver over the bags, sprinting to a designated finish cone beyond the final bag. Start by having RBs place one foot between the bags, then repeat the drill placing two feet between the bags and shuffling around the bags. Be creative, but stress carrying the ball fist to chin!

Soundbite: "Two hands in traffic." While it is acceptable for RBs to carry the ball with one hand in the open field, the Stonecutter Standard is to use two hands when they are in "traffic" – surrounded by defenders looking to capitalize on a fumble. The soundbite "two hands in traffic" reminds our players to cover the ball before contact because ball security is job security.



#### Two Hands in Traffic Drill: Partner Security

One RB jogs five to ten yards, holding a football fist to chin. As they run, another player grabs the back of their jersey or shirt, and tries to punch and rip the ball out of the ball carrier's hands. This drill can be done with one person punching and ripping both sides OR with two people punching and ripping, one assigned to each side. Note: Partner Security is a great pregame warm-up drill.

Soundbite: "Run behind your pads." The ideal leverage for ball carriers is low to the ground with a forward lean. At the mesh-point, the play-side RB's eyes should be on their aim-point and the hole opening ahead of them. The soundbite "run behind your pads" reminds our RBs that their upper body, which is protected by their helmet and shoulder pads, needs to extend beyond their knees and toes. The photo below, courtesy of Rhonda Rauch Photography, demonstrates this Stonecutter Standard. This soundbite promotes athlete safety as they run through contact.

#### Run Behind Your Pads Drill: Resistance Runs

Resistance bands provide an easy, inexpensive way to teach RBs how to run with a forward lean using short, choppy steps. In

pairs, have players take turns wearing resistance bands as they run five hard yards holding a football fist to chin. After five yards, the ball carrier should gradually return to their upright position as their partner decreases the stress on the resistance band. Have the players switch places and repeat the drill as desired.

Soundbite: "Make the first defender miss." Running backs must be elusive. Elite RBs extend plays by breaking tackles and running through contact. The first defender cannot take the RB down. The photo on the next page, courtesy of Todd Danner and the Denison Bulletin Review, illustrates this Stonecutter Standard.

#### Make the First Defender Miss Drill: Gauntlet

Set up an obstacle course using tubs, bags, balls, other players, or whatever you have lying around, and let the fun begin! From the start of the gauntlet, the RB should be hit and distracted as they weave their way through the obstacle course. If the sideline is available or your field is striped, position the obstacles down one side of the line and instruct the RBs to stay "in bounds." Be creative! This drill is a player-favorite and can be used to create energy at practice.

Soundbite: "Run to daylight." Is there anything more beautiful in football than a wide-open hole to run through? Stonecutters follow a one-cut policy: they have autonomy to make one-cut before accelerating vertically up-field. By running to daylight, Stonecutters reach the edge or find a cut-back lane without wasting precious time or energy dancing. This soundbite reminds ball carriers to cut judiciously and look for open areas that force defenders to tackle in space.

#### Run to Daylight Drill: Dip 'N Slip

Two backs run ISO, either out of the split-back or I-formation, while another RB serves as a puller. This group goes against two more RBs, who simulate a DE and OLB combination across from them. On the whistle, the puller must block out the DE, while the play-side RB or FB leads up on the OLB. At full speed, the ball carrier must decide to follow the FB to the edge, or find a cut-back lane. This drill should be fast and physical. For extra intensity, start in the red zone and mandate runners to finish in the end zone.



Soundbite: "Pound The Stone." You cannot be a Stonecutter if you do not pound the stone. Whether things are going well, or the game is a total disaster, a Stonecutter's effort cannot be conditional. Stonecutters relentlessly swing the hammer and trust that the stone will eventually split in two!

Think about the words or phrases that you use within your position group regularly, then condense them into short, memorable soundbites. Don't miss the final installment of the Stonecutter identity in the next issue of Headsets as we will explore how this micro-culture transforms our team on Friday nights in the fall.

# COACHING RESOURCES

## PARENT RULES: PART I



Chris Parker

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As the Head Coach, you need a few "parent rules". These are the go-to things you say when parents want to talk to you. Talking to parents is a part of being the head coach. These are their most precious possessions and sometimes you are the first person to tell them something they do not want to hear or you may be the first coach to put someone in the game over their child. This can make them upset. It should not change your course of action, but you should understand why they would be upset.

The best way to handle frustrated parents is to be "pre-emptive". This means you need a built-in, positive relationship with them before they ever became frustrated. Here are some ways you can be "pre-emptive" in dealing with parents:

- Build relationships all the time.
- Be honest with them.
- Be consistent.
- Communicate the expectations.
- Promote the good things their child is doing.

Part of being pre-emptive is giving off the impression that you have a plan and are organized. Parents are much more likely to trust a coach that is organized. They are much more likely to not complain about something they disagree with if they think you have a plan. Think about most parent questions ahead of time and come up with a "Frequently Asked Questions" page you can post and send home with parents. You should always know the answers to the basic parent questions:

- What can parents do to help?
- What is the commitment in the summer?

- How do you handle players that play multiple sports?
- Can parents attend practice?
- How do coaches determine who plays what position?
- How do you determine who is on JV or Varsity?
- What should parents do if their child gets injured?
- What do parents need to do to help their child get recruited?

Even when you do all these things, there will still be parents who are mad at you and want to talk to you. Since part of making these situations the best they can be is to communicate expectations, it is important to have your basic "parent rules" when these situations arise. As you attempt to make your "parent rules", think about the following:

When is it appropriate for the parents to talk to the coach? Some people prefer 24 hours after a game, some say make an appointment, and some may be fine talking to them right after a game. Regardless of your preference, you need to make it known to everyone in the program when you will talk to them.

What will you discuss? Some people refuse to talk about playing time, some refuse to talk about schemes, and all should refuse to talk about players other than their child. Some coaches like to have the athlete in the room when the conversation takes place. None of these are right or wrong, but make sure the parameters are clear before the meetings ever start.

Parents can be an important part of a successful program or they can be one of the key ingredients in making one deteriorate. It is imperative that the coach understands how to work with parents and get the most out of them. The best way to work with parents is to explain to them what they can do to help. Parents need to SUPPORT and COMMUNICATE. They need to publicly support the team and the coach and address issues in private. They need to communicate any concerns, injuries, or issues to the coaches. If you can get parents to do this, you will have a thriving program.

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# OFFENSIVE DRILLS

## 21st CENTURY FOOTBALL DRILLS: 1/2 LINE BLITZ PICK-UP DRILL



**Lee Weber, CSCS**  
Rose Hill HS - KS  
Head Football Coach  
[Coaching Resources](#)  
[Children's Book: Coach Dad](#)  
[@coachlaw71](#)



**Tom Blazer**  
Offensive Line Movement/  
Skill Acquisition Specialist  
at SASI  
[@TBlazerSASI](#)  
[@SASIOL](#)

"No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man." - Heraclitus

In our last article we discussed how to modernize the way you use drills to incorporate a constraints-led approach to drills and open your mind to helping your players think and find solutions to the chaos of a football game.

Again we want to touch on the concept of "repetition without repetition" with this issue's drill. We found this information in the Altis Foundations Course from the late and great motor behavior scientist, Nikolai A. Bernstein:

"This concept was labeled 'repetition without repetition' by Bernstein, who suggested that 'repetitive solutions ... are necessary because in natural conditions, external conditions never repeat themselves ... consequently, it is necessary to gain experience relevant to all various modifications of the task and external conditions'".

Unpacking this, quite simply it states the situations that our athletes face in a football game never truly repeat themselves exactly so we must continually modify the task and external conditions which we will do in this 1/2 Line Blitz Pick-Up Drill.

A second key point comes from the Altis Foundations Course to outline why this is important for our athletes in building a sense of ownership in finding the solution to the puzzle that is varying never repeating situations in a football game and specifically in this text in regards to offensive line play picking up blitzes in pass pro:

### USE QUESTIONS TO FOSTER A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP

Watching a repetition, pointing out a mistake, and providing the solution is too often the typical coaching sequence. This does not encourage discovery, and there is little, if any learning in this process. Our job is not always to provide the answers to the puzzle, but instead to ask better questions to create athlete ownership in their learning journey. As Benjamin Franklin said: "Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn."

To best illustrate a narrative to fit the dynamics of blitz pick-up we want to zero in on one key term in this Altis Foundations explanation: puzzle. Correctly blocking a play or pass protection is akin to putting together a jigsaw puzzle like a family at Christmas time. We first must develop a strategy on how to put together this jigsaw puzzle.

Have you ever dumped out a puzzle and tried to fit one piece to all the other pieces one at a time? It is an impossible and time consuming task. You must have a scheme or strategy to effectively solve that puzzle. Relate this to offensive line play, you can not as an offensive lineman act alone in a silo. The entire offensive line must work together and communicate as well as employ the agreed upon strategy to effectively block the front and any stunts or schemes employed by the defense. While each puzzle solver or each offensive lineman may solve individual assigned portions of the overall puzzle, it can not happen in a silo. To do so is like the aunt who hoards all the blue pieces to the puzzle at her corner and has like the 3 pieces you need to solve your portion!

Also key to remember that some of the puzzle pieces we see on the field may not even belong to our puzzle as offensive linemen. A player dropping into coverage from an outside linebacker spot suddenly becomes a piece of another puzzle for the quarterback and receivers to fit into their pass route

scheme puzzle. So we also have to be able to determine as the play develops which puzzle pieces don't belong to our puzzle.

First, we must sort out the mess and start identifying the pieces of the puzzle of the defense and their strategy (akin to turning over the pieces of the puzzle, sorting colors, and shapes.) Secondly, as most puzzle solvers do we find our border or edges and create a structure. In pass protection, the creation of that border or finding all the edges and where they fit is our scheme whether it be full slide or big on big protection.

Once we have our established and agreed upon structure or "found the border" in pass protection, then we start to solve our puzzle by identifying our specific jobs. Let's use this comparative to jigsaw puzzle solving: We are solving a farm puzzle. Each person has a shape or figure to complete. You may be working on the barn, another family member works on the tractor, and so forth. The same holds true in pass protection dependent on the scheme employed. We each "find our shape or object" and then start fitting the puzzle pieces together for that shape. The fitting of those puzzle pieces together in our shape (barn, tractor, etc.) correlates with finding the technique to employ in our own individual pass protection battle.

So as the play develops and we all attack our individual battles within the puzzle solving scheme we are employing then the groups of shapes in the puzzle start to come together. Once we have established trust, communication, and effectiveness in our strategy, then any other puzzle that gets dumped in front of us becomes easier to sort, assemble, and solve.

I (Lee) am an avid fan of the MTV Challenge and I can't help but draw a reference here. The Challenge if you are not familiar with it is a reality TV show in which reality TV stars face a series of challenges to win a large sum of money. The Challenge much like a football game takes a great degree of physical prowess, but the winners of The Challenge are typically the ones who can also handle the puzzle solving portions along with having enough physical prowess to reach the puzzle solving stations with enough mental stamina to still function and maintain their wide range of puzzle solving abilities. While many of the puzzles have similar traits, they typically are never the same. Those who hone their physical abilities and puzzle solving abilities typically fair exceedingly well in The Challenge while those who veer to one end of the spectrum struggle mightily.

I draw the comparison to the Challenge because while I may have a player who has a great physical prowess and pass

protection technique, that does not ensure success if that player doesn't have the mental bandwidth to solve the puzzles placed in front of him and especially if they can't understand and apply our pass protection or puzzle solving strategy.

In this article, we are going to utilize a 1/2 line blitz pick up drill that Coach Blazer uses with his offensive line to help you conceptualize how to create repetitions of the same task without repetition and create a myriad of puzzles for your offensive line to face and apply your pass protection scheme (puzzle solving strategy.) One of the hallmarks of a constraint-led approach to coaching is utilizing small-sided games. As a reminder, 1/2 line or 7 on 7 are football based examples of a small-sided game. The elements of game play of football are there, but you have reduced the number of players or other constraints to focus on a smaller grouping of players completing a task.

In this 1/2 Line Drill, we are going to work a slide protection involving the three offensive linemen to the playside, and the quarterback. We may also utilize a receiver for hot route applications and a running back if they are involved in the scheme. We start with the basics of the pass protection as you would teach it your own scheme.

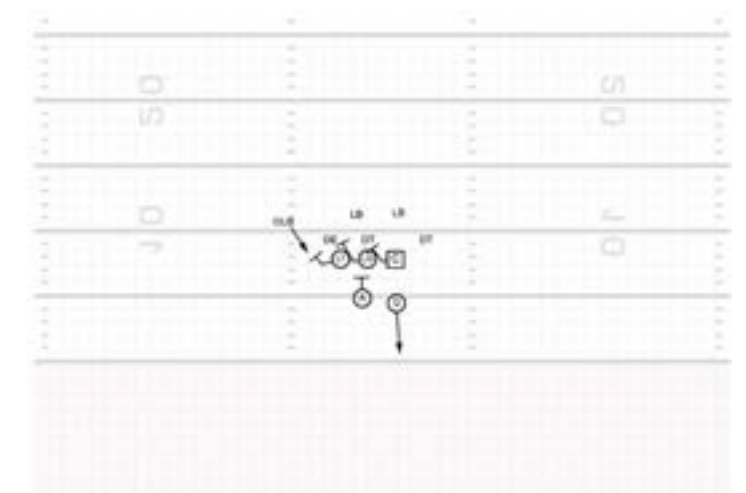


DIAGRAM 1: 1/2 LINE BLITZ PICK-UP DRILL

In this iteration of the drill, things are static in which your players are executing the pass protection and defenders are running a pass rush scheme that is straight forward. The players being blocked are where they are supposed to be and play it as you have shown your athletes.

Here is where the variation has to come to help your players start solving the problems that arise within this task. Forewarning, your players have to truly understand the original task (pass

protection) and the concept of the protection fully before you start any variation. This isn't for beginning freshmen offensive linemen until they understand the basics. With your more advanced players, you start to change the variables to the play without telling them this is what is going to happen because you want them to self-organize and learn to solve the problem without feeding them the situation. Diagram 2 illustrates just one variation you could throw at them in the drill.

The variables of the drill just changed like the variables of the play change in the game. You want your players to be able to adjust and complete the task on their own. Now, they will inevitably make a mistake at some point in the changing of the variables and look to you for the solution.

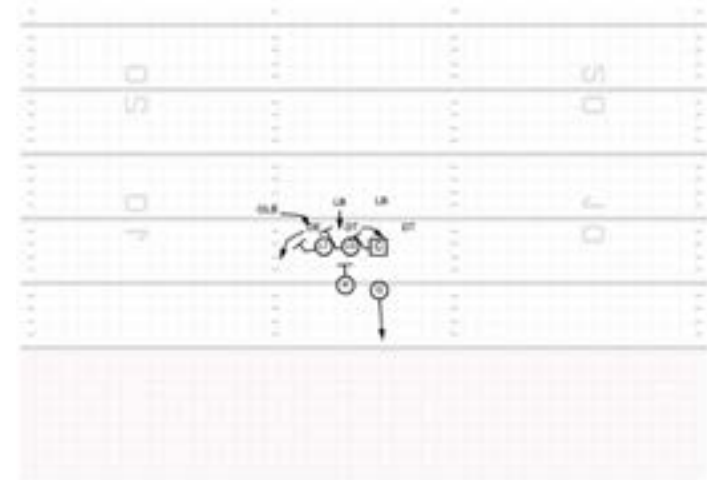


DIAGRAM 2: 1/4 BLITZ PICK-UP DRILL WITH VARIABLES

Here is the key, talk them through how to solve this puzzle with questions like "What happened?", "If the OLB and DE twisted then how could we handle that?", "How could we block the blitzing linebacker to the B Gap?" etc. instead of putting the pieces of the puzzle together for them. If you can recall from our last article this is why you do so: Even if you give them the solution to this one iteration of the problem, there are probably many multiple iterations of this problem that could happen. This relates directly back to the aforementioned quote from the Altis Foundations Course.

The variables and variations can come in a variety of manners. Defenders can line up in different locations, defenders can move post-snap, blitzes, zone drops, stemming, and other player movements can change the variables within the drill. Good practice would also be to have these defenders' movements be some of the techniques, blitzes and alignments that your scout has shown over your opponent. While it may help the problem solving equation to have some inherent

randomness, there needs to be a factoring of things that your players are also likely to see within the constraints of your opponents.

Then as your players have the mental bandwidth to handle those variations then you can start to build even more chaos into the drill such as music blaring to simulate crowd noise or doing the drill in a no huddle tempo. Another chaos element would be to create some "oh crap" situations where the exact wrong things may happen within the play and have your players make the best out of a crap situation.

This drill is only limited by your imagination and adaptability. You can create an infinite number of "puzzles" for your athletes to solve as long as you help them develop the framework to do so and coach them on how to work within that framework, but also to recognize when they may have to work outside of that framework as well to solve the problem.



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# OFFENSIVE DRILLS

## I AM A HEAD JV COACH



**Emory Wilhite**  
Leon High School-Florida  
JV Head Coach  
[@EmoryWilhite](#)

I am a JV football coach. I have only been coaching football since the summer of 2019. But as I enter my third season, I cannot believe how much I have learned.

I feel too inexperienced to write about Xs and Os. Most of my knowledge comes from study, not action. So, I will tell you about the actions within my brief time coaching that have taught me more than I've ever learned in a book, course, or online resource.

When I was in the middle of college and supposed to be thinking about majors and careers, I found myself asking for a coaching job with my old high school team because I missed the game so much. It was spring. By summer, I was on the staff attending summer workouts, standing around most of the time because I had no idea what to do. In the fall, I helped with the JV offense, and because the JV offensive coordinator was also the wide receiver coach for varsity, I had a lot of time with the players. And I knew nothing. I did not know the scheme and I did not know how to teach anything. In other words, I added almost no value to the team. Somehow, I ended up calling the plays for three games that season. We went 1-2 during that span. And that one win convinced me I could help the team in the future.

After my first year coaching, I realized that I knew nothing about the Xs and Os of football. So, I started studying the game every single day. The game opened up to me and I dove in head first. But this knowledge became my perception of football. I did not realize the reality of the game. I couldn't recognize the game on the field because it was so different from the one in my mind and in my notebooks.

But this past season confirmed I knew so little. I was the offensive coordinator for the JV team. We only played 3

games because of the coronavirus. But we went 3-0 and our quarterback had over 500 yards passing. And I learned a great lesson: being able to execute your scheme is more important than the scheme itself.

Let me explain how I learned this lesson.

Our quarterback showed up only three days before the first game. Before he showed up, I was disheartened. I had spent all off season studying the Air Raid Offense and it looked like we wouldn't have a quarterback who could execute the offense. On one of the first days of practice, we had a 7 on 7 and my offense got obliterated by the defense. And I learned then that even without a quarterback to throw, I had another problem. I didn't know how to teach the Air Raid.

I scrapped everything and decided we would roll out for every passing play. Then, a player from last year who we hadn't seen in awhile showed up. He hopped in the wide receiver line. I was throwing our roll out routes because we had no quarterback. Sometime during our time running routes, this player threw the ball back to me with a certain zip. Immediately, I called him over and had him throw some routes. After seeing the ball zip out of his hand, I knew that we had a special quarterback.

And that day, in our team period, we ran our two roll out plays up and down the field scoring touchdowns. He did not know the plays. And at first, I tried to teach him. I would ask him what the routes were. He would not know. Then he would roll out and throw to the open receiver and complete the pass. So, my only coaching came in these words: "Throw to the open receiver."

And off we went to 3 straight wins. But, as it would be, the first throw he ever threw in a game was an interception. And in that first game, we rushed for two scores in the first half, but then our offense began to struggle in the second half. I didn't know what to do. I felt blind on the field. I had no idea what the defense was doing because I didn't study defense all off season. I had studied the Air Raid for some reason. I was so incredibly unprepared that I could hardly even understand what a JV defense was doing. Naturally, I decided it was in our best interest to chuck it deep. Twice. I gathered the team on the sideline and said, "Everyone run a go route."

So, the team went out there and ran go routes. The quarterback threw a perfect ball and it fell through our wide receiver's hands. Then we had to punt. And we fumbled the punt and

they ended up kicking a field goal. On the sideline, I was discouraged, confused, and felt the pressure. The game was now a one score game despite our defense playing well. All of our drives were stalling. Naturally, going deep felt right again.

On the first play of the next drive, we went deep.

And our quarterback connected with a sophomore who hadn't played a single meaningful down his freshman year for a 69 yard touchdown to seal the game.

Looking back, this was a moment that taught me another two lessons.

The first lesson was for me to trust my athletes' athletic ability. I often got in the way of their God given ability with my ego driven creativity. The second lesson is to know what your players are good at and double down on that. But why were they good at passing plays? And then, why were they so good at roll out passing plays?

I would like to think that it was because we practiced well, and that I called the plays at the perfect time. But the reality is that it was simple to execute. I did not ask them to do a lot. We only ran 4 routes. Our only run scheme was ISO and we hardly blocked the roll out passes correctly. We also ran in one formation the entire season. It was a 2x1 set in 20 personnel with the two receivers always to the field. And I told the quarterback to throw a hitch to the single receiver everytime the cornerback played 10 yards off. And he only did it once all season, and that was because I was yelling and pointing at the single receiver seconds before the snap. We didn't even practice well because my planning was poor.

I was trying to do too much and I did not have the ability to execute my mind's plan.

We ran one formation because I couldn't handle teaching the plays in multiple formations.

I wanted to be a tempo, no huddle team, but in reality, we were a slow no huddle team because I didn't know how to teach tempo. I was bad at coming up with play calls. So, all our plays were one word and the quarterback would yell the one word right before he snapped the ball allowing the defense to hear the play. And every play went to the field. Our operation was poorly thought out and poorly practiced, but perfectly executed by the players.

We moved the ball down the field. We scored touchdowns. We had the best players that made plays over and over again. They executed well though in the midst of chaos.

And how simple is that? What if I learn to teach players how to execute? It is so simple that it sounds too obvious to even write down. But it is important. I am a young coach entering the world of football, and I was intimidated by the lack of knowledge that I had. And I worked hard to gain a bunch of knowledge. But I ignored the most important part:

You have to focus on giving your players the tools to execute.

And sometimes, all you have to say is "Throw to the open receiver."

**"The first lesson was for me to trust my athletes' athletic ability. I often got in the way of their God given ability with my ego driven creativity. The second lesson is to know what your players are good at and double down on that."**

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