

HEADSETS

WRITTEN FOR COACHES BY COACHES

VOLUME 1: ISSUE 9

DEVELOPING
ATHLETIC LEADERSHIP

defensive
DRILLS

HOW TO GET
MORE
INTERCEPTIONS
ON DEFENSE

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Kenny Simpson
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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 or the one who truly makes all this work at Jameysimpson@gmail.com.

Thank you,

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FOOTBALL 101

HOW TO GET MORE INTERCEPTIONS ON DEFENSE



Chris Haddad
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Defensive Coordinator
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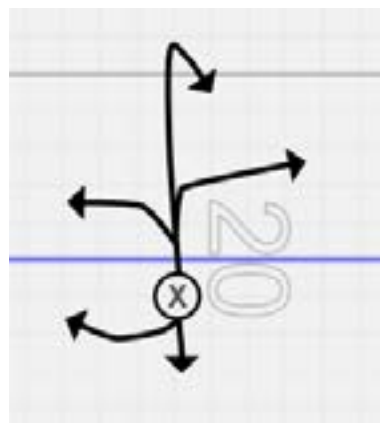
Interceptions on defense can drastically change the momentum and score of the

game. While most interceptions are made off of poorly thrown or tipped throws, there is a way that we can teach our players to read route breaks and quarterback progressions. This will ultimately lead to more interceptions on defense.

[Watch a 60-second breakdown here on TikTok.](#)

The first mental progression I always coach with my defensive backs is receiver route breaks. I make them learn the most common breakpoints from a wide receiver.

We start with the 0-5 yard range. These routes include bubble screens, now screens, slants, speed-outs, and hitches.



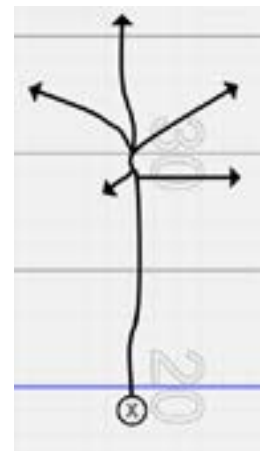
These routes typically happen within the quarterback's 3 step progression (or catch and throw out of shotgun). If the

defensive back is patient through this 3-step progression, he can anticipate the route break and jump it. This will lead to more pass breakups and ultimately more interceptions.

3 step progressions from the quarterback are typically "on-time" throws. They are often practiced against air and have a certain timing of when they should be caught. As defensive players, it's our job to disrupt this timing. Understanding this 0-5 yard range of route breaks can help our corners and safeties jump these routes.

Next are the downfield progression routes. These breaks typically happen at 7-10 yards. Included in these breaks are posts, corners, comebacks, and dig routes.

Once the defensive back has cleared the 0-5 yard routes, he then can move into his next progression of 7-10 yards.



From here, the corner can determine, based on split and formation, where the wide receiver may break. After the 10 yard mark, if the receiver hasn't broken off his route, we can conclude that it's a vertical route. This allows the DB to open his hips and run with the wide receiver.

Reverse engineering what the wide receiver, quarterback, and coach is trying to do helps us understand where to break and disrupt the timing.

Use these diagrams and route breaks as a foundation when teaching your defensive back's about quarterback progressions and on-time delivery.

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LIFE LESSONS:

FUNDRAISING: THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX



Kenny Simpson
Author
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"Conventional wisdom often produces conventional results."
- Bill Walsh

When I decided to be a football coach, I had no idea that a big portion of the job would be dedicated to handling money.

Working with a booster club, budget and committees to figure out ways to give our players great equipment and facilities did not cross my mind. There is no formal training provided for coaches in this world. We have very few people to go and ask for ideas. And ultimately, we will have to rely on fundraising at 90% of the schools we may coach at during our career.

My college path was slightly different than the traditional coach, as I was in business marketing for a large portion of my education. I also spent time in the private school world early and watched as those schools had to survive on fundraising. The lessons learned during those years have served me well at my stops in my coaching career and I am hopeful some of them will be worth your time as you read.

While there is not one guaranteed system that will help, I hope to go through some principles to help you along your journey as a coach. My goal is to provide practical advice, but what I want to encourage is to think outside the box in the fundraising world for your program. When I arrived at each job, I was quickly told by many why we would not have the facilities or equipment I felt we needed. It took a lot of hustling and thinking outside the box, but I never wanted my players to not have the best.

I have served as a head football coach now at three very different schools and been at four schools in two states over my career. Most of what I will share with you was learned as a young coach that watched many private school fundraisers and I have carried over into the public

school world. Each school was different and at my most recent I am not asked to do much fundraising since we are in a place that is not needed.

During my tenure at Southside Schools, I took over a very new football program (Five Years Old), so there were many things that needed to be addressed as we grew our program. We were able to raise over \$1.5 million for facilities and equipment needs during my tenure at the school. Obviously, that shows tremendous community support that you may not have, but these tips will help as you begin transforming your program.

I am a firm believer that every school is in the recruiting business. I do not believe in the illegal recruiting that sometimes occurs, but I believe that a school must show that it will provide the students with the best possible facilities to help each program. Do wins come from wearing Nike T-shirts...probably not. However, the mindset of putting the best on our athletes does help.

Thinking outside the box has become important to me as I have taken a unique path to where I am now. While I value those who have come before me and want to learn from them, I understand that to get the best for your program it may require doing something different. My first book I published carried the name of the motto I have always used in all aspects of coaching (and life for that matter), "Find A Way". This needs to apply in improving your program's facilities as well.

Fundraisers should maximize profit for time and effort spent. We want to work hard to make sure we are allocating our time effectively. This requires "thinking outside of the box". One of the quotes I use in coaching and in leadership roles is the following:



GOALS:
"We want to design all of our fundraising efforts in things that will produce 100% profit, will require as little time as possible, and will not risk losing any money or wear on our athletes or parents. While providing different opportunities to raise money is important, it is imperative to adjust to your community."

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"Companies and individuals are starting to focus on productivity, rather than hours worked because the appearance of working hard doesn't always mean you're working in the most efficient way." - Hannah Power

We want to design all of our fundraising efforts in things that will produce 100% profit, will require as little time as possible and will not risk losing any money or wearing on our athletes or parents. While providing different opportunities to raise money is important, it is imperative to adjust to your community.

Casting a vision is great. Having a plan of action is awesome. However, make sure what you are attempting to achieve is possible. Do not limit yourself, but be realistic in your goals. All things are possible in fundraising with time and creativity, but you must be sure the administration and community shares your vision.

I have heard of many coaches running all kinds of crazy fundraisers, but my hope is to make you think outside the normal box of fundraisers. No more cookie dough sales or candles you force on your community. No more overpriced \$45 hoodies that your program gets \$10 off of each sale. Think differently in fundraising.

"I had no idea that a big portion of the job would be dedicated to handling money. Working with a booster club, budget and committees to figure out ways to give our players great equipment and facilities did not cross my mind. There is no formal training provided for coaches in this world. We have very few people to go and ask for ideas. And ultimately, we will have to rely on fundraising at 90% of the schools we may coach at during our career."



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Ted Neal - Fort Smith Northside HS

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ATHLETIC LEADERSHIP

ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT CLASS: ZERO PERIOD



Kevin Swift
Gold Beach HS - OR
Athletic Director
[@kdawgswift](#)
[Free Materials Here](#)

Class Mission Statement
"I am a Panther Student-Athlete doing AM Work to become better every day in the Game of Life. If I do NOT Work someone somewhere is beating us in the Game of Life."

Athletic Development or Zero Period as the kids refer to it is a graded class that meets year round from 6:50 to 7:45 AM (55 minute class), Monday through Friday. Each player will receive an elective PE credit each year they are enrolled. 8th graders are allowed to start participating after the start of their second semester of their 8th grade year. Seniors during their last semester of the high school transition into roles of peer tutors and instructors aka; assistant coaches for our new 8th grade Panthers. Players arrive at school between 6:30 and 6:45 (some come from 35 miles upriver) to dress in athletic attire; they must be lined up in squads on gym floor by 6:55 on days we are training their bodies. We will engage them is 40 minutes of activity before sending them to showers on training days to get ready for school provided breakfast and academic classes that start at 8:15 Days we are meeting in a classroom or training their minds and hearts they must be in class by 6:50 and we will instruct on lessons till 7:35 before sending to showers. It is open to all the school's athletes NOT just football players. We average 35 to 42 football players enrolled. In Oregon, a licensed teacher is required, for grades to be issued in any subject class for it to be a valid accredited class. Therefore, I serve as the instructor, but my assistant coaches who are walk-ons are allowed to participate but only I can award a grade.

Zero Period is a course made up of six core areas of study

or development, Lifting, Speed/Quickness, Nutrition, Leadership, Culture Development, and Academic Support. Course is made up of Six Week Cycles each cycle contains a lifting routine/target, speed/quickness, classroom topics, and academic support. . At the end of each cycle or Week 7 is testing. We do one rep max for kids to enter Lifting Clubs - Core Lifts (Cleans, Squat, Push Press & Bench), coaches are more interested in 4 rep max (4 downs to move chains or stop chains), speed or quickness testing times, classroom topic test, essay, or presentation and academic grade checks. All of these components will make up athletes grade in the course and make them eligible for a host of motivational awards we give out over the course of the off season. The grade is primarily a reflection of the students, attendance, class participation or buy in, and degrees of improvement in our six core areas of study in the class. Some other areas of uniqueness, before we get into resources and specific lessons are as follows:

This class is part of the overall GPA and therefore is a huge contributor to keep our athlete's eligible for co-curricular activities year round.

Accountability of athletes' with each other, the fact that we can operate as one team each morning rather than being split up all day for lifting is huge. Players see each other improving, "seeing is believing" is one of our morning slogans.

This working together early each morning builds great team chemistry and ensures all of our athletes are getting a solid nutritional breakfast provided by our school, to start their academic day.

Class Resources for the 3 Core Areas of Nutrition, Leadership, and Culture:

Core Area of Nutrition:

School provided breakfast, that has been granted waiver on calories by Feds & State, in order to ensure our athletes get the right amount of calories and the right kinds of calories. Several YouTube videos used to teach athletes the right nutrition for a student-athlete and to provoke thought and discussion on the right habits student-athletes should have regarding nutrition and alcohol, drugs and tobacco.

Weekly Nutrition Trackers for each student-athlete that are handed in each Friday AM and a new one is started at Lunch on Friday.

Guest Nutritionist and Local Doctors speaking on specific topics related to overall health and wellbeing of student-athletes.

Core Areas of Leadership & Culture:

Books either read completely or excerpt taken from:

Bleachers by John Grisham

Gridiron Dynasties by Gavin Kralik

One Great Game by Don Wallace

When the Game Stands Tall by Neil Hayes

Culture Beats Strategy by Randy Jackson

Worth Dying For by Rorke Denver

Damn Few: Making the Modern SEAL Warrior by Rorke Denver

Other Materials used:

YouTube – Examples - Ducks If, 60 Minutes Sports Built By Bama, Saban Speaks on Leadership, TED Difference Between Winning & Succeeding by Wooden

Motivational Posts or Stories found via Twitter, Facebook or other Social Media

Lesson Example in Culture:

January – February -Week 2 of 6 week Cycle:

Mondays – Lifting- Building a Base or Grades Mandated Study Hall

Tuesdays – Lifting – Building a Base (High Sets & Reps in Core Lifts)

Wednesdays – Lifting - Building a Base (High Sets & Reps in Core Lifts)

Thursdays – Lifting - Building a Base (High Sets & Reps in Core Lifts)

Fridays – Classroom – Topics – Nutrition, Culture & Accountability

During Week 1 of Cycle - Friday the Team read together. Excerpt from One Great Game.

Bob Ladouceur's "What is a Spartan?"

<http://www.spartanhood.com/whatisaspartan.htm>

I will lead a discussion on it with the whole team after we read it and help it make the point we want it to in terms of Culture & Accountability. Student-athletes will be required to create a "What is a Panther?"

An Example Attached with this document

Week 2 of Cycle I will select a few players randomly to share / public speaking skills. All players hand typed versions at end of period to be graded by our English teacher & me. The student-athletes will get a grade in Zero Period – Core Area – Culture and their respective English class will receive a formal essay grade and a work sample. Win win!!

Week 3 of Cycle we will create an edition of "What is a Panther?"

EXAMPLE OF "WHAT IS A PANTHER?"

A Panther football player at Gold Beach High is not a person who picks up a football the opening day of season, and puts it down the day season ends. A Panther football player is not a person who simply goes through the motions of everyday. A Panther football player is not a person who wakes up every day without a goal in their mind they are striving to achieve. The young men on the Gold Beach High football team are anything but. A Panther is a player who is committed to excellence, belongs to a family, and is part of program. The values you learn as a Panther not only help obtain high goals in football, but allow you to obtain high goals in all parts of your life.

In order to be successful at anything in life you must be committed. It takes a burning desire to outwork and outlast your opponents. There are no short cuts or easy ways to get to the top of any competitive field. You must put the time and effort of preparing yourself to meet the opportunities that will soon face you. The Gold Beach High football team is aware of these elements of commitment and takes pride in efforts to follow them. Being committed to a goal does not mean you do it when it is convenient for you, but it is a way you live your life. It carries out to all aspects of your life.

From the moment you join the Panther football team as a freshmen you join a family. The family consists of every coach, player, and trainer that is involved in the sport. You become part of one sole unit, which lives off team camaraderie and teamwork. You live to trust and rely on your fellow teammates. With the help of your brothers, you are able to push yourself farther than you ever could have gone before. This is because you know your actions no longer affect only yourself, but your entire family. It teaches you to make sacrifices for the good of the whole team over the personal needs of yourself.

As being part of the Gold Beach High football team, you are also a part of the Gold Beach High football program. A program that is built on the blood, sweat, and tears of its predecessors. It does not rely on the accomplishments of yesterday to do today's work, but focuses on the goals of tomorrow. Consisting of dedication and a strong work ethic, the Gold Beach football team has now become a recognized and respected football program across the state. This recognition does not come easy. It was acquired by the hard work of the past Panthers and is up to the current Panthers to up hold the name.

Throughout my four years on the Gold Beach football team, I have learned what it takes to be successful. I have learned to sacrifice and become a team player. To not only love myself but also love my fellow teammate. The bonds I have created while on this team will last me a lifetime. I can proudly say I am a Panther.

Senior 2010 #28 Strong Safety – All League & All State

ZERO PERIOD MISSION STATEMENT:

“I am a Panther Student-Athlete doing AM Work to become better every day in the Game of Life. If I do NOT Work, someone somewhere is beating us in the Game of Life.”



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DEFENSIVE LINE: 101

ESCAPE MOVES AND GAP CONTROL DRILL



Quint Ashburn
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In the past two articles I have broken down my approach to stance and start drills for my defensive linemen. The next drills are how I teach escape moves as well as a gap control drill to teach my defensive linemen how to understand gap responsibilities. I will finish with a 2-step punch with an escape move and pursuit drill that will bring together all of the skill development I have discussed so far.

The three main escape moves I teach are the rip, swim, and shed. Each of these escape moves will have the defensive lineman paired up with another defensive lineman from a prefit position. After repping the moves from a prefit position, you can perform this as well from a three point stance with your defensive linemen.

Drill 1: Rip Move:

In my opinion, the rip move is an easy and safe move to perform. Once the defensive lineman extends their arms, it's almost as if they throw an uppercut from low to high through the offensive lineman's armpit.

Pair up defensive lineman in a prefit position.

On the coach's verbal command/whistle, the defensive lineman will buzz their feet.

On the second command, the defensive lineman will extend his arms and will rip off of the block.

Once you have them escape in one direction, you will drill the escape move to the other direction.



Drill 2: Swim Move:

The swim move, when done correctly, is a great move. As coaches, we have to make sure that it is performed with great technique or else it will not be effective. The keys to performing a good swim move are to extend arms on the blocker, pull the shoulder you are swimming over down and across your body, and "swim" your arm over the blocker.

Pair up defensive linemen in a prefit position.

On the coach's verbal command/whistle, the defensive lineman will buzz his feet.

On the second command, the defensive lineman will extend his arms and will swim off the block.

Once you have them escape in one direction, you will drill the escape move to the other direction.



Drill 3: Shed Move:

The shed move is probably the easiest move to teach to your defensive linemen. They will need to have a great initial punch against their opposing blocker and will need to be strong enough to shed/throw them off when you fit on the runner. Pair up defensive linemen in a prefit position.

On the coach's verbal command/whistle, the defensive lineman will buzz his feet.

On the second command, the defensive lineman will extend his arms and will shed them to the opposite side of where they are fitting.

Once you have them escape in one direction, you will drill the escape move to the other direction.



Gap Control Drill:

I have recently begun using this drill after watching Pete Jenkins present in a clinic tape on defensive line play. This drill is great for teaching defensive linemen how to extend their arms with the punch, make sure that they have their gap secured, and to finish on the ball carrier when he makes a decision.

Pair up defensive linemen in a prefit position with another defensive lineman/scout guy about five yards deep to use as a runner. The player acting as an offensive lineman will need to lean on the defensive lineman to give him some resistance to work against.

On the coach's command the defensive lineman will extend his arms on the offensive lineman, get his feet hot and secure his gap.

Once the player acting as the back commits to a side to run to, the defensive lineman will shed his blocker and fit to the gap he is running toward.



3-Point Stance Escape Move Pursuit Drill:

In this drill I want my players to be able to get out of their stance, shoot hands, escape, and get down the line to the football in quick succession. I want to make sure they are running down the line and not too far upfield. This will put together everything I have covered so far about stance, start, escape moves and getting down the line. Below are the steps with diagrams to show what the drill looks like.

Set Up:

Players will get into two lines with the coach in between to simulate the snap of the ball. There will be one defensive lineman in each group facing the group to simulate being the offensive lineman on the ball.

You will need another coach or player behind the person snapping the ball to point to the direction the defensive linemen will run.

Drill Progression:

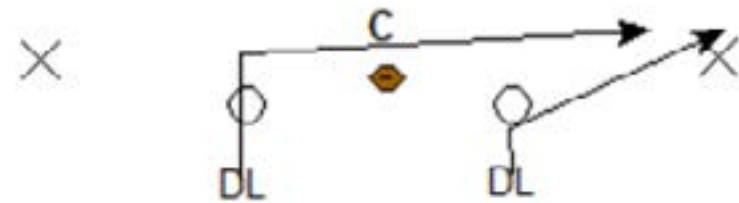
Two defensive linemen will line up in front of the offensive lineman across from them.

On the snap of the ball the defensive lineman will fire off out of his 3-point stance into the offensive lineman.

Once the defensive lineman gets extended, he will perform an escape move on the offensive lineman (rip, swim, shed).

Once the defensive lineman gets past the offensive lineman the coach in the backfield will point either to the right or left. The defensive lineman will sprint in the direction pointed to down the line of scrimmage.

Coach or player will point the direction to run.



Players will run down the line to the cone the coach has pointed to.

In conclusion, these drills should be a great transition from stance and start drills. Every defensive lineman must be able to get separation and escape from their blocker in order to get to the tackle or get to their assigned gap. I will work escape moves constantly during the football season to make sure that my players are able to finish when getting off blocks.

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OFFENSIVE RESOURCES

UNDER SCREEN



Brent Morrison
Westerville Central HS-Ohio
Head Football Coach
[@BrentMo03800724](#)

In the midst of the pandemic our staff had to determine which plays we were going to install with limited practice time. One of the things we eliminated were screens that required linemen to travel down field. Tunnel screen and

middle screen had always been a huge part of the game for us but if you honestly look at them, they are called very few times a game and when you normally want to call them the opposing coaches are yelling watch screen. Another issue is the practice time required for the plays. There are so many pre and post snap coaching points that we decided the play was too expensive for our situation.

Anyone that has been watching college football over the past two seasons has seen the under screen but I rarely see it at the high school level. We began to play around with it and on the first try in practice it went huge and throughout the season it became one of our most consistent plays and one of the easiest ways to get the ball to a specific player. Every coach has that player that needs more touches, well here is an easy way to do it.

OFFENSIVE LINE

We use our drop back protection for this play. The OL is very important in this play because they must sell that this is a pass and get the defense into their drops.

QB

The QB will take his normal drop back steps, 3 step from gun. We tell him to sell his eyes down the field. We run Air Raid Shallow and Mesh concepts so we want our QB to use the same timing to pass to the under route

SCREEN SIDE BLOCKERS

Attack vertical and outside of the defender. If the defender

indicates man coverage, then continue your vertical path. We run a lot of 4 verticals so it sets the play up nicely. If there is a back then they also take a playside release and cap the box. The RB must stop any defenders from the box that are chasing the screener. Make sure you know the rules from your state. We blocked a chaser a few times and got called for a blindside block.

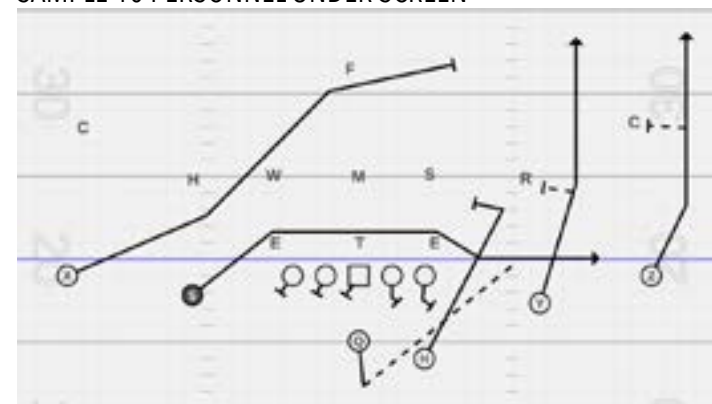
BACKSIDE RECEIVERS

We tell our backside receivers this is the same as a rollout play and they are working across the field. This isn't necessarily to have a ball thrown to them but instead it puts them in a better position to block downfield for the ball carrier.

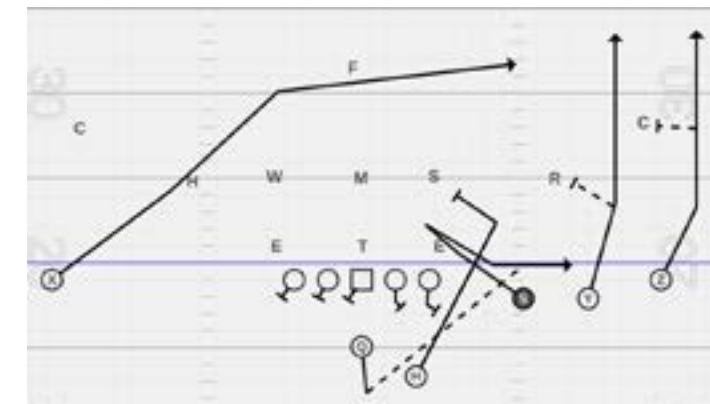
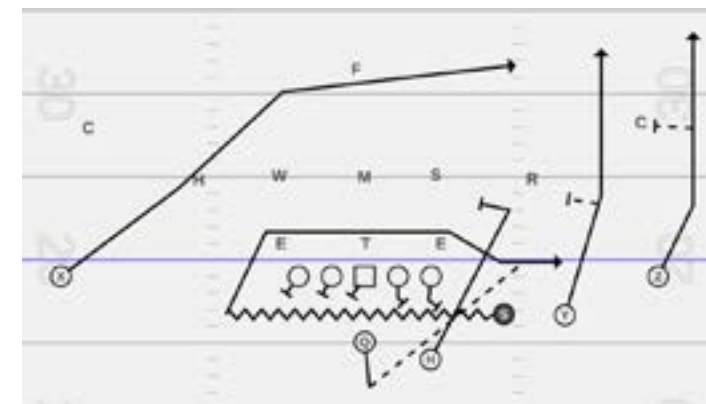
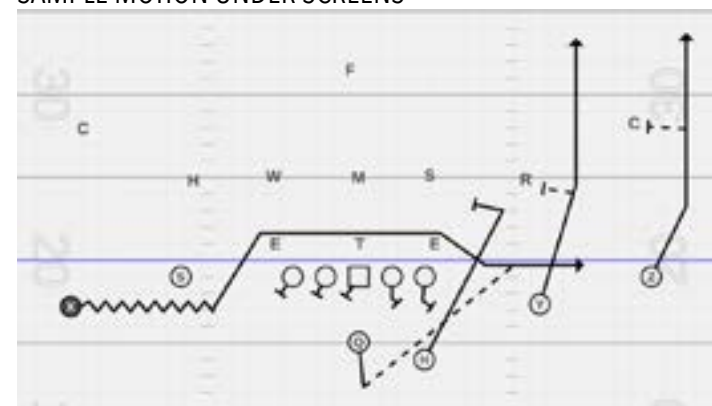
SCREENER

As previously mentioned we run lots of shallow routes in our normal pass game. The screener runs through the heels of the DL and then as the DL rushes work back to the line of scrimmage. Keep running and trust the QB will throw you the ball where it needs to be.

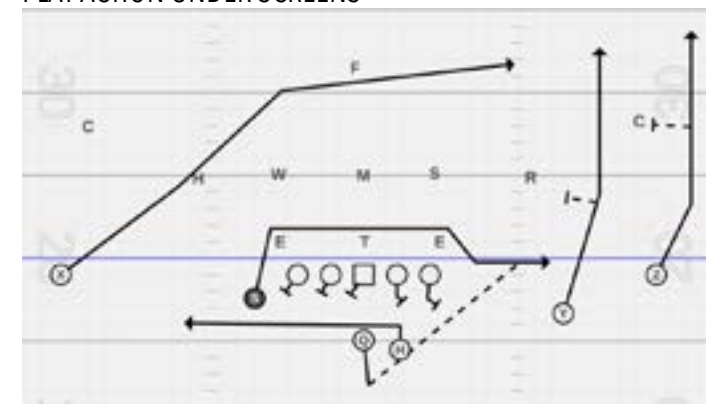
SAMPLE 10 PERSONNEL UNDER SCREEN



SAMPLE MOTION UNDER SCREENS

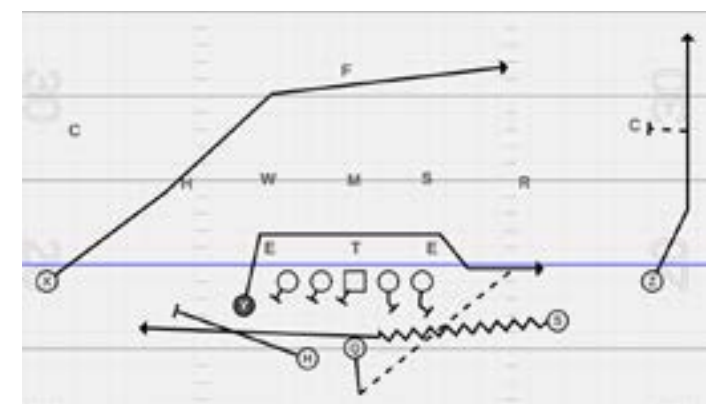


PLAY ACTION UNDER SCREENS



CLOSING THOUGHTS

This screen is very easy to install and incorporate as a compliment in any offense. I would highly recommend you tell the officials before the game that you run this play. Almost everytime we run it, I see the opposing coaches talking to the referees trying to convince them the ball was thrown past the line of scrimmage.

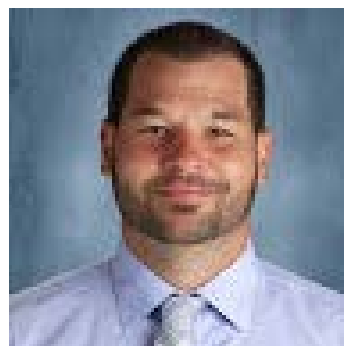


ADDING THE RETURN TAG TO THE UNDER SCREEN

This is primarily going to be done if teams are teaching their LB's to attack the route coming across. This is a common adjustment for teams that run shallow and mesh concepts.

POUND THE STONE

CREATE AN IDENTITY FOR YOUR POSITION GROUP - PART ONE



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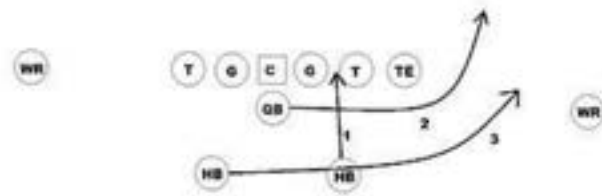
When O.J. Simpson eclipsed the 2,000 yard mark for the first time in NFL history during the 1973 season, he did it behind an offensive line that called themselves "The Electric Company," a self-named unit that turned the "Juice" on. Meanwhile in Minnesota, the Vikings' "Purple People Eater" defense made offenses crumble when linemen met "at the quarterback." Out west, the color orange spread throughout the Rockies like wildfire as people painted their cars and houses to celebrate the Broncos' "Orange Crush" defense, and John Madden's "badasses" in Oakland were led by a vicious secondary known as the "Soul Patrol." Before the end of the decade, while the Iron Curtain continued to divide the world between east and west, the "Steel Curtain" had unified Pittsburgh, guiding the franchise to four Super Bowl wins within six seasons.

What can modern football learn from its golden age in the Super '70s? There is power in a group's identity. The dictionary defines identity as "the distinguishing character or personality of an individual." A second definition simply states: "oneness." Every coach should strive to build unity through identity, and while most leaders are good at casting a vision for their teams, they rarely define how each position group or unit fits into that vision.

Offensive Philosophy

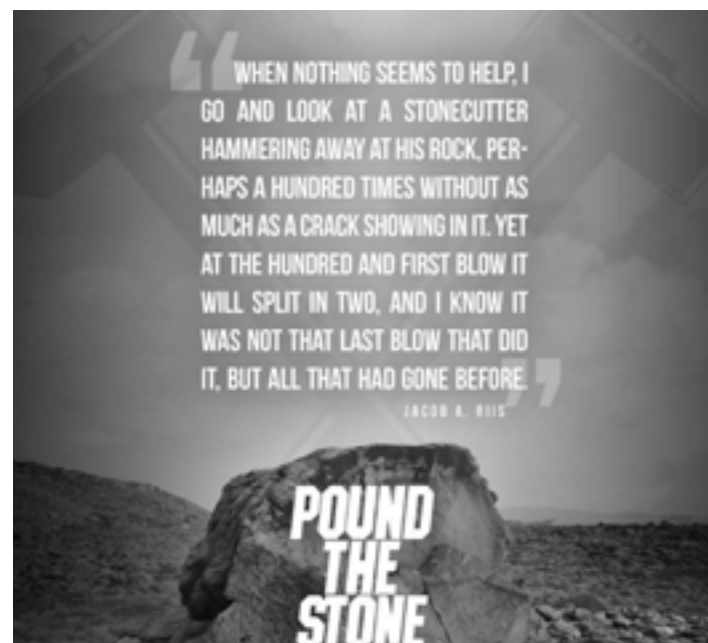
The inside veer, a variation of the triple-option made popular by Bill Yeoman at the University of Houston, is the cornerstone of our offensive scheme. In just one play, offenses can attack a defense in three different ways. The first read is a give to the call-side RB, who must penetrate the line of scrimmage between the play-side guard and tackle. At the snap, the QB locates the DE with his eyes, and must make a decision at the mesh-point. If the DE stays wide, the proper read is to give the ball to the play-side RB. If, on the other hand, the DE crashes down, the QB's read is to pull the ball and execute the midline option with

the back-side RB. The back-side RB replaces the play-side RB, then ventures four yards outside and one yard behind the QB. The following diagram illustrates the triple-option threat of the inside veer.



The Identity of the Stonecutter

Monarch Running Backs are called "Stonecutters," an identity that began to take shape four years ago when I contributed to the book *Pound The Stone* by Joshua Medcalf. The theme of the book is predicated on "The Stonecutter's Credo."



The Stonecutter in the credo reflects the role of running backs in the veer offense. Every swing of the Stonecutter's hammer is unique, just as every run-play has a life of its own. One run-play might gain two yards, the next, yield five, and a third run may result in a tackle for loss. Moreover, we tell our players that the quarterback is never wrong. Whatever he decides is the right read. With multiple options built into the scheme, our running backs know that they may not get the ball, even though they will get hit. But just as the Stonecutter patiently pounds the stone, trusting that it will eventually split in two, our running backs execute their options, trusting that their effort will lead to explosive plays and touchdowns.

Rituals and Artifacts

Rituals and artifacts can be used to reinforce your unit's identity and create oneness. During camp, every Monarch Running Back receives a laminated copy of "The Stonecutter's Credo," along with a three-pound sledgehammer to keep in their locker throughout the season. Membership is exclusive. These artifacts remind the players that there will be good days and bad days, victories and losses, euphoria and depression, but as long as they swing the hammer, we will persevere past our challenges.



Look for two more articles in the coming issues of *Headsets* to learn about how I use the Stonecutter identity to reinforce Running Back expectations and fundamentals at practice and in games.

Pound The Stone!

“Every coach should strive to build unity through identity, and while most leaders are good at casting a vision for their teams, they rarely define how each position group or unit fits into that vision.”

GUEST WRITER

Adam DePriest is entering his 20th year of coaching. His previous stops include 10 years as receivers coach for Kevin Kelley at Pulaski Academy, was offensive coordinator at Harrison, Shiloh Christian, and Little Rock Southwest, and has recently been named defensive backs coach at Sylvan Hills. He has co-authored the book, *Saturday Morning Wake-up Call: A 21st Century Survival Guide for High School Football Coaches*.

NO JOB TOO SMALL

From an article on matrixres.com, "I placed a piece of trash on the floor near the chairs in our lobby and asked the receptionist to tell me which candidates stopped to pick up the piece of trash. I hired the only candidate that picked it up."

In my first year of coaching, I observed my head coach setting up dummies before practice and carrying the footballs to and from practice. My second head coach made the starting quarterback do that job. Both coaches had the same message, "Service is leadership." What I learned from this was that there was never a job that any coach, regardless of title, was "too good" to do.

The 2021-2022 school year will be my 20th season, and I will be at my sixth school. In all six jobs, I was the only candidate. My first was because I was a math teacher, but the rest were because of the recommendation of my previous head coaches. I don't mind doing the little things, even when "it's not my job." I have a lot of qualities that I believe make me a good coach, but I think that is what makes me the most marketable as an assistant.

Unfortunately, it seems that a trend of newer coaches is that there are jobs that are beneath them. When I was on a staff of four, none of us could hide. As I went to larger staffs, the veteran coaches seemed to be the ones to pick up the tedious chores... supervising the locker room, changing over the

laundry, straightening the office, inputting data for the next week's opponent, etc.

As the saying goes, "Every day is a job interview." This past season, I was on staff with 8 other coaches who had combined to coach at approximately 30 high schools in Arkansas and probably had connections to a minimum of 100 Arkansas coaches. I get several texts each offseason asking if I know of a coach that would fit a certain criteria. All coaches do. You may want to ask yourself if the coaches on your staff would recommend you if they get that text.

Sometimes it's not enough to just do the little things. I am a fan of Jon Gordon, and I recently finished a study with a group of teachers on *The Energy Bus*. My biggest takeaway was that I can bring positive energy and life into a room when I walk in regardless of the circumstances, or I can be an energy vampire and suck all the life out of the room by griping and complaining.

I want to conclude by challenging you to find small tasks to help out around the office and on the field and make the choice to do that with a positive attitude. When other coaches come in and complain about jobs, conditions, or players, redirect them and don't let them suck you into their hole of negativity.



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