

Games and Practices

Plan your practices. The more time you spend planning, the more that can be accomplished. Write down what you will do. Remember your goal is to keep all players active.

Make them fun. Try to do different drills to involve everyone. Try not to have players standing around – keep everyone involved and as active as possible. Talk to other coaches about their practices. Discuss problems or concerns you are experiencing. Other coaches may have helpful ideas and solutions.

Start and end on time. This is very important to parents. Even if you think “Just five more minutes and I’ll be done,” don’t. Your good graces with your parents are more important than those five minutes.

Do not have too many practices. Remember the age you are coaching. We expect parents will have other activities planned. Recreation activities are to complement other activities, not compete with them.

Keep an attendance record. If a player misses without notification, try to contact the parent to find out the reason. This serves a two-fold purpose. First, maybe the parents thought the child was, in fact, at practice. Second, you should expect a reason for missing. Remember, do not punish the child if it is the parent’s fault he/she missed practice. Try to work out a way to get the player to practice. Practice attendance should be noted and applied to playing time. A pre-season meeting should help this problem.

Ensure all players have a way home. Never leave anyone at practice waiting for a ride. Know how your players will get home. Don’t make yourself a taxi. Once you start, you’ll be the taxi for the entire season.

Ensure water is available. Encourage players to bring their own water bottles.

Don’t Take Chances with the Brain: Know the Signs and Symptoms of Concussions

- Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion. This information is important for coaches, parents and athletes.
- An athlete with a suspected concussion must be removed from play until evaluated and cleared by a medical professional.

● A good rule of thumb: when in doubt, sit them out.

RECOGNIZING A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION

To help recognize a concussion, watch for or ask others to report the following two things among your athletes:

- A forceful bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head.

- Any change in the athlete's behavior, thinking, or physical functioning, or any other signs or symptoms of concussion.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF

- Appears dazed or stunned (such as glassy eyes)
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction or play
- Is unsure of score or opponent
- Moves clumsily or poor balance
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Feeling more emotional, nervous, or anxious
- Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"

A good rule of thumb: when in doubt, sit them out.

Treatment of Officials

The officials for our TSO Sports program are carded scholastic officials. It is a very difficult job. Please understand that they will do the best they can. We ask coaches to conduct themselves in a manner that will not bring discredit to the officials or to themselves.

Expectations of Parents

1. Stress timeliness for games and practices. You are donating your time and should expect parents and players to be on time. Do not set unrealistic pre-game times. For most leagues, 15 minutes before a game should allow enough warm-ups. Stress to parents the need to pick up players on time after practices. Do not get into the habit of running players home. Parents have responsibility for their children.

2. Talk about times and locations of practice with the parents.

3. Discuss the role or need for a team manager. Roles a Team Manager (Parent, Team Mom) could fulfill:

- Form of carpools for practices (if required).
- Create a calling tree or similar method to notify players and parents of practice changes or game reschedules. Coaches should not be expected to have to call everyone.

- Utilize League Management Software to distribute a list of all phone numbers and have a number where you can be reached. Advise availability during the day and at night.
- Assist players on and off the field.
- Handle first aid and player injuries

Expectations of the Players

1. Emphasize what it means to be Student-Athlete.
2. Promote Teamwork and Self-confidence
3. Stress importance of timeliness for games and practices.
4. Instill in players their responsibility to notify you if they will miss a practice or game.
5. Players' names should be on water bottles and equipment.

Parent and Player Expectations of the Coach

1. Safety. Coach will always carry a first aid kit.
2. Coaches will promote and anti-bullying environment.
3. Timeliness. Start and end practices on time. Do not try to take another 10 minutes. Parents expect practices to be finished at a certain time. Respect that. Try not to get into the habit of waiting for more players. Respect and reward those who arrive on time by starting on time.
4. Fairness. TSO Sports has requirements for participation. All coaches must adhere to these requirements.
5. Fun. Try to make practices a learning experience as well as fun for the players. Try to keep all involved and allow them to try different positions. Ask parents to help at practices. Give them a definite assignment and let them help.
6. Do not forget your family. Your coaching assignment will take a lot of your time. Save time for your family. Balance is the key

Medical Information

1. Talk to parents about any medical problems their children may have. Know what to do in an emergency.
2. Explain what you will do in the event of an accident.

This is just a small list of possible discussion items. The key is information. The more information and understanding of the rules and expectations you share with players and parents, the more enjoyable your season will be. Remember that you are not alone in this coaching effort, you are not a professional coach, and you should not be expected to have all the answers.

Coaching Tips and Drills

Overview

- The purpose of this manual is to provide ideas, drills and activities for the coach to use at practice to help the players enhance their skills for game day. Strategy
- Decide what style of game you want to play and plan your plays accordingly. There is only so much you can teach the players in the time you have, so keeping to a recurring

theme can make it easier to understand what you are asking your players to do.

Example: Play for first downs, not touchdowns. This might be accomplished by using short passes and running plays.

Hydration Tips

- Pre-hydrate Players should drink 16 oz of fluid first thing in the morning of a practice or game Players should consume 8- 16 oz of fluid one hour prior to the start of the practice or game Players should consume 8- 16 oz of fluid 20 minutes prior to the start of the practice or game
- Hydrate Players Should have unlimited access to fluids(sports drinks and water) throughout the practice or game Players should drink during the practice or game to minimize losses in body weight but should not over drink All players should consume fluids during water breaks. Many players will say that they are not thirsty. However, in many cases, by the time they realize that they are thirsty they are already dehydrated or on their way to be dehydrated. Make sure all your players are getting the proper fluids

Defensive Tips

- Pulling the flag
 - ★ Watch the ball carrier's hips as opposed to his or her feet, or head
 - ★ Stay in front of the ball carrier
 - ★ Stay low and lunge at the flag
 - ★ If you grab anything but the flag, let go immediately to avoid a penalty
- Playing Zone Defense
 - ★ Each defensive back is responsible for an area as opposed to a player
 - This will enable you them to keep an eye on the receiver and the quarterback at the same time
 - ★ As receivers come through your area, try to anticipate where the QB wants to throw the ball. Then try to beat the receiver to that spot
- Playing Man to Man Defense
 - ★ Leave some space between you and the receiver (Your Cushion)
 - ★ As the receiver starts his, or her route you can start to backpedal
 - ★ When the receiver makes his or her break you can turn and run with them to try to break up the pass

Offensive Tips

- Throwing the football
 - ★ Hold the ball near the back with your fingers over the laces
 - ★ Keep your elbow in tight to your body and hold the ball up by your ear
 - ★ Point your non-throwing shoulder toward your target
 - ★ Throw the ball by letting it spin off your fingers as you follow through toward your target
- Leading the Receiver
 - ★ As a quarterback, you do not want to throw the ball where the receiver is, but rather where he or she is going to be
 - ★ Practicing your routes with your receivers will help you to figure how far you can lead

them with your throws

- Receiving a pass
 - ★ Keep your eyes on the ball at all times
 - ★ Form a triangle with your hands
 - ★ Catch the ball with your hands, not your body
 - ★ Keep your hands soft so that you can cushion the ball
 - ★ Once you have made the catch, tuck it away so you will not fumble
- Play Action
 - ★ Using a fake handoff can distract the defensive backs and linebackers enough to get the receivers open for a pass
 - ★ Trying a few running plays first to set up the play-fake when you are trying to throw the ball down the field
- Short Passing Routes
 - Short passes are safe and effective ways to move the ball down the field
 - Short passes can be run towards the sideline (Out Route), towards the middle of the field (In Route), or by turning back towards the QB (Hook Route) when you have found a hole in the defense
 - Short passes can turn into a big gain with a few quick moves
- Long Passing Routes
 - ★ Long passes are great ways of moving the ball in a hurry
 - ★ Long passes can be run towards the sideline (Corner Route), towards the middle of the field (Post Route), or by running straight (Fly Route)
 - ★ Long passes are most effective when the defense is caught off guard. Using a mixture of running plays and short passes can open up the field for a long pass

Practice Drills

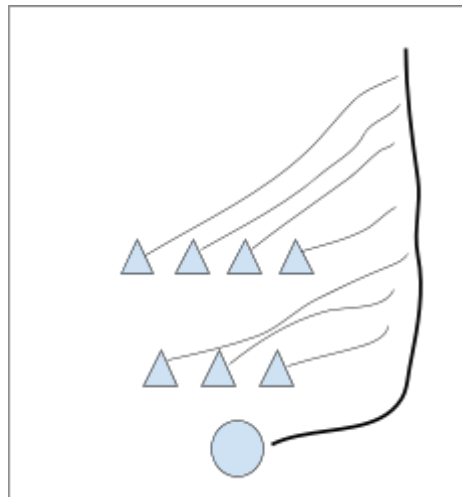
Flag Pulling Drill

- Form two lines. One will be the defenders and one will be the runners. Each player should have their flags on and a ball. Line the first defender up in an 8 x 8 rectangle. The offensive players will take off one by one against each defender.
- The offensive player must stay within the rectangle. After each turn have the players switch lines
- Make sure that the offensive player is not flag guarding. Make sure the defender gets into position. The defenders should be focused on pulling the flag and getting a good angle to get in front of the runner, so that the defender is better positioned to pull the flag
- Variation: Run the drill without flags, so that the focus of the defender is getting a good angle and moving their feet to keep in front of the offensive player

Pursuit Drill

- In Football it's very important to teach your defense to take the proper angle of pursuit. Many young defenders will simply chase a running back from behind, or the defender will run to where the running back is now and not where they will be.

- For this defensive drill, explain the importance of the angle of pursuit. First walk your players through their pursuit. Players furthest from the play/ball carrier will take the largest angle to the play. Emphasize that the players should be running to where the running back will be (not where the ball carrier is now!)
- After walking your football players through their angles, set up the drill at full speed. This drill can be done with the entire defense
- At the coach's command or snap of the ball the defenders should simulate taking on a defender, drop to the ground, quickly get up and then begin pursuit of the ball carrier. For this drill the defenders should simply touch the ball carrier or pull the flag. The Ball carrier continues down the sideline until all players have touched him. Ideally, the defense should touch the ball carrier every three to five yards



Backpedal Drill

From an athletic position:

- Knees bent at a 45-degree angle
- Head up, back straight and arms hanging loose
- Weight on the balls of the feet, push off the front foot and begin backpedaling for ten yards
- Keep chest over the feet, feet close to the ground and pump arms
- The coach may stand in front and use a football to direct the player's movement from side to side as well as angles

Jingle-Jangle Drill

Place cones at corners of 15-yard square. Line up players at one corner of square. Players then:

- Sprint to first cone
- Side-step to second cone
- Back pedal to third cone 14
- Sprint back to beginning of line
- Throw a football to each player as he or she finishes the drill
- o Repeat drill to other side after everyone has had a turn

Individual Pass Drill

5 Yard Curl:

- The Wide Receiver (WR) runs up the field five yards, stops and returns back towards the QB

5 Yard Out:

- The WR runs up the field five yards and cuts to the sideline

8 Yard Post:

- The WR runs up field eight yards and cuts towards the center of the field on a 45-degree angle

Streak:

- The WR runs straight up the field as fast as possible

Post Corner:

- The WR runs up the field. At eight Yards cut towards the center of the field and after two yards, cut towards the corner of the endzone

5 Yard Smash:

- The WR runs up the field five yards, turns toward the QB and then side shuffles to the right or left while facing the QB.

Oklahoma Drill

- Set out a 10 x 20-yard area. Place the cones five yards apart. One football is needed. The entire class can participate in this drill which, can be duplicated for more players if space permits
- The object is for the RB to run along the line of scrimmage and select an area between the cones to run through
- RB starts with the football. On the coach's signal, RB begins running.
- The DB must mirror the RB and attempt to capture the RB's flag before the RB selects a hole between the cones
- This drill simulates making a one-on-one flag capture. RB must keep head up and the football firmly tucked away DB must keep shoulders square and head and eyes looking up the field DB watches the RB's hips
- Progression: Use two defensive players

Ultimate NFL Drill

- Set out a 20 x 40-yard area.
- Pair up six participants. Rotate players, or duplicate the drill if space permits
- The concept is for the team with the football to pass the ball to teammates without dropping the ball, all the while moving the ball toward the end zone
- The player with the football has 10 seconds to pass or pitch the ball to a teammate. The ball can be passed or pitched forward, sideways or backwards
- The player with the ball can only take two steps after catching the ball. The offensive players without the ball can move anywhere on the field
- If the ball is dropped or intercepted, play continues with the other team in possession of the ball from the point of the turnover
- Each defensive player must stay at an arm's length from the player with the ball. The defensive play is like that of basketball
- WRs must work to get open and not bunch up

Passing and Receiving Drill

- This drill helps players understand simple passing routes, from the perspective of both quarterback and receiver
- Passers learn accuracy and how to lead receivers. Receivers learn how to run pass routes Defensive Backs learn how to watch receivers and cut to the ball
- Divide your team into three groups. The first player in line is the first passer; the second goes out to play defensive back; the third is the receiver.
- The outside groups run simple 10-yard square out patterns, while the middle group runs 10-yard turn-ins or buttonhooks
- Rotate each line: After passing, the quarterback becomes the next receiver; the next player in line becomes the passer; the first receiver becomes the defensive back; and the first defensive back moves on to the next group
- Make sure players get chances at all three position

Sample Practice Planner Daily Plan:

- Call practice to order
 - Address players
 - Encouragement
 - Discuss Daily Practice Plan (Briefly)
- Warm Up Lap
 - Pick a consistent route
- Calisthenics
 - Stress correct form
 - Walkthrough and help each player
- Team Agilities 3 or 4 lines- 10 yards (there & back)
 - High Knees- Form Run
 - Lateral Shuffle
 - Carioca
 - Bear Crawl
 - Backpedal
- Position Specific Skills
 - Break off into Positional Groups.
- Team Session

- o Use this time to go live and run plays.
- o Alternate Offense & Defense.
- o Time could be used for scrimmages vs. other teams.
- Team Conditioning
 - o Be consistent
 - o Make it fun, if possible. For example, shuttle runs, competitions, etc.
 - o Do not use team conditioning as a punishment.
- Final Notes
 - o Next Practice, Game Info, Handouts, etc.
- Team Cheer Notes:
 - o Most drills are at $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ speed- Emphasis on correct form.
 - o As you progress each part of practice will take less time, especially with calisthenics and team agilities.
 - o Have a weekly plan as well.
 - o Don't forget to include Game Situations in your practice.
 - o Put time periods together for each part of practice.