

# Louisiana LFCA KICKOFF

A Publication of the Louisiana Football Coaches Association  
August 2011



## LFCA News



I WANT YOU  
TO JOIN LFCA

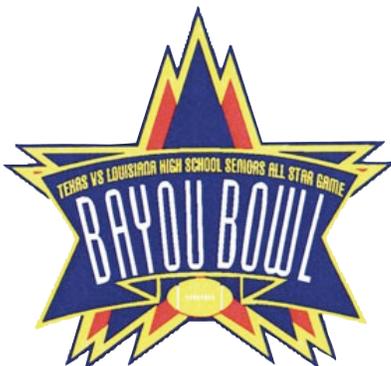
### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

REMINDER! If you haven't re-upped your membership, you need to do so now before the football season begins. Membership for this year is from December 1, 2010 to December 1, 2011 - to be included for the clinic and seats at LSU games ***you need to have the neon yellow with blue print 2011 membership card.*** Please check our website for MEMBERSHIP information and forms.

### SUPERDOME CLINIC

We will again return to the Sheraton Hotel at 500 Canal Street in New Orleans for our annual Superdome Clinic scheduled for Friday December 9th, 2011. We will have more information about the clinic and speakers in our November newsletter; keep up with the latest at on our website.

Also, the LHSAA is currently working on restructuring the game times for the Superdome Classic and we will provide you with that information as soon as possible. Again stay tuned at [www.lfcassoc.org](http://www.lfcassoc.org) for all you need to know about high school football in Louisiana.



### BAYOU BOWL COACHES SOUGHT

Football coaches interested in coaching in the 2012 Nike Bayou Bowl All-Star Game to be held on Saturday, June 9th in Baytown, Texas must fill out the Coaching the Nike Bowl Form and submit it to the LFCA or LHSAA by 11:00 PM Thursday, December 1, 2011. Information can be found on our website.

## Developing a Championship Quarterback

By Jeff Curtis, Quarterbacks Coach

John Curtis Christian



First off, I would like to thank the LFCA for the opportunity to present this article to you. I hope you can get a few things out of this to help develop your quarterback and their play. Developing a quarterback into a championship caliber player is a very long process. I had the opportunity to go through this process having played at John Curtis (1990-1994) and at Tulane University (1995-1998). At Tulane I was able to learn under some great coaches like Buddy Teevens, Frank Monica, Tommy Bowden and Rich Rodriguez, all have great minds when dealing with QB play. These experiences help me relate to my QB's on an individual level. It is important to know that your QB's don't know the things that you think they know. Never assume that they know something just because you think they should know it. That is probably the #1 mistake we all make as coaches, including myself. Repetition is a huge key in educating any athlete and is even more important with the quarterback position.

Establishing a consistency at practice through repetitions is also a key concept you should employ during a practice session. You want the athlete, in this case the quarterback, to anticipate what is going to happen next based upon that consistency or routine of practice.

### Practice

What we do at practice doesn't change much from Day 1 to the day before the state game. We are going to warm up throwing the football using all of the fundamentals of proper technique that most of you already know. I let the "older" QB's decide when their arm is loose and ready to move into our pre-practice route running phase. Each QB must know their own body and how important being loose is toward the arm care for the day, week and season. I think it's important to teach the athletes about arm care and how important it is and talk to them all the time about icing and injury prevention. After he has determined that he is loose, we move into the route running where we run the basic fundamental "short game" routes. We start with three step drop routes and try to have two lines of receivers and tight ends with two sets of QB's. It is also important to note that having multiple balls available will help the process of achieving as much as possible in as little time as necessary. We usually have between 8-10 minutes of "pre-practice" time to get our arms and legs warmed up before stretching. Stress the importance of this to your QB's. Have them take ownership in how much gets accomplished in pre-practice, not only for themselves, but for their teammates as well. This is something you want them to establish independence on and be able to do on their own without you around to tell them what to do. Again, establish consistency.

Throughout the course of a practice we put a great deal of emphasis of making sure our quarterbacks understand or recognize the concept of each play. Even if we're working in a "small box" like QB/RB handoff exchange, we think it's important for them to see some type of DL/LB technique and give them a mental visual of what the defense may look like in the secondary on the backside. We don't like to have our QB's play the game in a small box. We like them to think about the big or whole picture. This leads me to our philosophy on audibles, or checks, at the line of scrimmage. We like to give our QB's the keys to the car, if you will. At any time, at any point in the game, in any situation, our QB's have free range to audible into any play that they want to audible, whether it is a run or a pass. We feel like we have coached them well enough to be able to make that adjustment based on what they're seeing at the present time. We work on that constantly throughout practice when we are in inside drill, pass skeleton or in our team period. We are constantly asking those questions in film review as well. The QB is always looking



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**QB**

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for the weakest part of the defense to attack. It is also important to note that you keep your younger players involved with practice as much as possible. You need to always have them doing something. They need to be listening to your corrections, ask them what they are looking for on a particular play, throwing balls to receivers returning to the huddle, throwing for the service team, etc. Help them understand that the more they can participate as younger QB's the more it will help them when it is their "turn" to be the starting QB.

**Off the Field**

Quarterback is probably the most important position to your team off of the field. We try to encourage the QB to be "visible" and "attentive" to all of their teammates constantly. They need to sit in the front of the meeting/film room or as close to their position coach as possible that is near the front of the room. On Mondays when we are preparing our game plan we print out very few sheets to give out. We would rather have them copy off of the board what they need into their notebook. Have them take pride in their notebook. It is like their classroom textbook for the playing field. It should give them all of the information and tools necessary to compete on the field cerebrally. When in the film/meeting room, they need to be able to self-critique themselves. They need to be able to deal with criticism constructively.



Let them understand that there is never going to be a perfect quarterback. Concentrate on the little things and pay attention to all of the details in a successful and unsuccessful play. Show them why a play worked and/or didn't work. Help them understand that this game is a game of inches. It is important for the QB's to focus on themselves and not get involved in watching the ball. All of this will help in their game preparation. I like to incorporate a QB quiz or test that is given out the day before the game and is turned in the afternoon of the game. The answers come from things that we have gone over that week, particular to that game. Most of the answers can be found in their QB notebook with the notes that they copied from the board. I try to grade it and have corrections on it and given back to them before we leave the school to go to the field for the game. There may be some last minute changes or instructions that are important to that game that you thought they knew. Try to cover the details and important things for that night's game plan.

**During the Game**

Understand your QB's personality. They come in all sizes, shapes and forms. There isn't one thing that every QB needs in order to be successful. It is a conglomeration of things that come together. Each QB is different in my opinion. I don't think you need to train everyone to be the same. You may get similar ones over the course of time, but it is very rare to have the same kind/type of QB's in a short time period. For example: I have coached QB's who have been the vocal leader who thought he could win every fight, a guy who wasn't very vocal but knew how to communicate well with others, a quiet kid who was extremely tough, a guy who had very little self confidence and everywhere else in between. Some of those guys have turned out to be a professional QB, a pharmaceutical salesman, a lawyer, a construction worker, and a guy in med school. It is important to learn how to communicate with each one effectively. Their communication to you during the game could be VERY essential to the success of your team. They have to be able to trust you and you have to be able to trust them with what they say. It's important for them to know the difference between a 2 and a 3 technique during the game. How deep the safety is playing? Are the corners playing tight or soft?

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**QB***Continued from Page 3*

Things like that can go a long way and it only helps them be a more effective QB if they know those types of things during a game.

There must be NO DOUBT who is in control of the offensive huddle. Although it may sound simple to us, make sure that your QB's know the rules of the game. Also each of them should know the nuances of the game like: down and distance, knowing when to throw the ball away, when and when not to take a sack, when to try to make something out of nothing and when not to, how to avoid big hits, positive encouragement, enthusiasm, when to use timeouts, how and when to get the ball in the correct player's hands, etc. Being a student of the game is imperative in order to be a championship-caliber quarterback!



In closing, we feel that being a championship-caliber quarterback is a full-year job. Starting with the off-season weight program, to the practice field, to the classroom, to extracurricular school events and finally to the game field. All eyes are on them at all times. The leadership that they provide in all of those instances is applicable to the success of the season. Thank you and good luck with the season!



## **FIVE QUOTES BY MIKE DITKA**

*“Before you can win, you have to believe you are worthy.”*

*“You’re never a loser until you quit trying.”*

*“If you are determined enough and willing to pay the price, you can get it done.”*

*“The ones who want to achieve and win championships motivate themselves.”*

*“If God had wanted man to play soccer, he wouldn’t have given us arms.”*

## Football Rules Revision

### *Reprinted with permission of NFHS*



A change in the definition of a chop block in high school football, along with a strong emphasis on proper use of the helmet to minimize risk of injury, highlighted the January 21-23 meeting of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Football Rules Committee in Indianapolis.

The modification of the chop block rule was one of 11 rules changes recommended by the Football Rules Committee and approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The new language in Rule 2-3-8 defines a chop block as “a combination block by two or more teammates against an opponent other than the runner, with or without delay, where one of the blocks is low (at the knee or below) and one of the blocks is high (above the knee).”

Previous language defined a chop block as “a delayed block at the knees or below against an opponent who is in contact with a teammate of the blocker in the free-blocking zone.”

Bob Colgate, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Football Rules Committee, said that any combination block where one block is high (above the knee) and one block is low (at or below the knee) will constitute a chop block – with or without delay between the blocks. He also noted that a low-low combination block is no longer a chop block.

Although not an official rules change, perhaps the most significant action by the committee was the issuance of the 2011 Points of Emphasis on concussions, helmets and contact above the shoulders.

The NFHS has been the leader in establishing playing rules to deal with concussions. Last year, the NFHS implemented new guidelines for the management of a student exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion. In addition, the NFHS developed a free online course entitled Concussion in Sports – What You Need to Know, which has been viewed by more than 135,000 persons.



“The committee chose not to change many of the playing rules as it intends to ensure the continued focus on minimizing risk of injury to high school football players,” said Julian Tackett, chairman of the NFHS Football Rules Committee and commissioner of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association. “The minimal number of rules changes in high school football this year verifies that the country feels like the game is in great shape.”

In other rules changes, the committee standardized the rules regarding the replacement of apparently injured players, players who exhibit concussion signs and symptoms, and players who are bleeding or have blood on their body or uniform. Players removed in any of these situations must leave the game for at least one down, and the time-out is an officials’ time-out, not one charged to the team.

## RULES

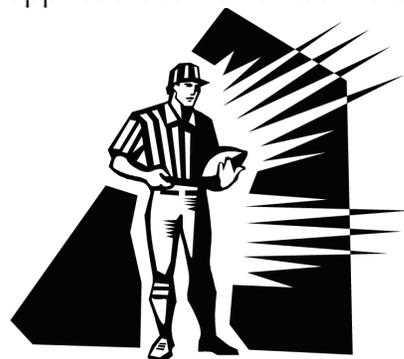
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The rules committee also defined two types of authorized team conferences – the “Outside Nine-yard Mark Conference” and the “Between Nine-yard Mark Conference.” When an injury occurs and the referee grants an authorized conference, it must be an “Outside Nine-yard Mark Conference.” Colgate said this will provide medical personnel time and space to address the injured player.

Three changes were approved in Rule 1 – The Game, Field, Players and Equipment. In Rule 1-1-8, language was added to note that “game officials maintain administrative responsibilities for the contest through the completion of any required reports or correspondence in response to any action occurring while the officials have jurisdiction.” The revised rule further notes that “state associations may intercede in the event of unusual incidents after the officials have signaled the end of the game or in the event a game is terminated prior to the conclusion of regulation play.”



In Rule 1-5-1, the detailed specifications for thigh guards were deleted because they were not necessarily applicable to newer technologies used in current production. The requirements for wearing thigh guards and that the guards be unaltered from the manufacturer’s original design/production remain part of the rule.



Restrictions on eye shade were added to Rule 1-5-3c. If used, eye shade must be applied using a single solid stroke under each eye.

“The committee’s intent was that eye shade be located below and within the width of the eye socket and not extend below the cheekbone,” Colgate said. “No words, numbers, logos or other symbols of any type may be included within the eye shade.”

Four changes were approved by the committee in Rule 9 – Conduct of Players and Others. Those revisions include the following:

- All horse-collar fouls being treated as live-ball fouls.
- Roughing-the-passer penalties being enforced from the dead-ball spot when there is no change of team possession and the dead-ball spot is beyond the line of scrimmage.
- The illegal participation rule including a player who intentionally goes out of bounds and, while out of bounds, affects the play, touches the ball or otherwise participates.
- Establishing an unsportsmanlike foul against the head coach for failure to adhere to the limits on squad members being on the field of play during the coin toss.

Football is the No. 1 participatory sport for boys at the high school level with 1,135,052 participants in the 2009-10 school year according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS through its member state associations. In addition, the survey indicated there were 1,350 girls who played football in 2009-10.