

Effective Practice Planning and Conditioning

6/2/21 Warhawks



Coach Tim Cullen

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Experience

- 25th season as high school football coach
- Entering my 3rd year as HFC Glenelg HS (12th year over all)
- Coached previously at Mt. Hebron (2009) and Hammond (1997-2008)
- Coached a combined team of 8th graders Fall 2020 in the Winfield Organization (mainly warhawks kids).

Philosophy

Overall Philosophy

- Don't burn the cake (MED)
- 100% come back next year
- Be able to explain Why you are doing something
- 100% of what you practice should show up in the game.
- Don't lose a kid for Saturday because of something avoidable on Tuesday.

Practice Philosophy

- **Get in Football Shape by doing Football things.**
- **SKAQ**
- **Small Group/Indy**
- **Large Group/Team**
- **The more people involved in the session the less intense it is (Don't go to the ground in group and team)**

Football Myths

- Athletes have changed and coaches need to change to meet the needs of today's athlete.
- These are some things I have battled over the years with coaches on staff.

1. "This is what we did when I played!"
 - a. So What? Everything has evolved and we should too.
2. "We have to toughen them up by running them hard"
 - a. Cramps and Soft tissue injuries in games are a direct result of wearing them out in practice and not allowing them to recover.
3. "Tackling to the ground at full speed is getting them ready for the game"
 - a. The kids who like contact will always like contact, the kids who don't will not all of a sudden like it by beating the crap out of them.
 - b. You will need every player on your roster to contribute at some point. The kids who don't love contact need confidence and technique.
 - c. Slow the drill down and teach them, get them confident and get them on the field.
 - d. Iron man football is not a badge of honor.
4. "Screaming and Yelling wakes the kids up"
 - a. The kids eventually will tune you out. Building their confidence will get them running through a wall for you.

91%

33/36 players on GHS Varsity Football played meaningful snaps on offense, defense or special teams. No doubt your studs have to play but how effective are they in the 4th quarter if they haven't had a break? Steal plays by being organized..

Lessons from Coaching Winfield

1. Offensive Line development is so far behind you must run a system they can handle. Hard to find road graders that are 13.
 2. Go slower than you think you should with install, once they master the basics then add smoke and mirrors.
 3. Throwing the ball is fun and a lot of times is wide open but there is a lot to execute to complete a pass the younger the kids are.
1. Teach technique and aligning to formations and do not move on until that is mastered.
 2. If you line up right and use good technique you will win most games and compete in every game.
 3. That blitz you like or coverage that you saw on twitter probably wasn't being run with 13 year olds.
 4. The kids need to have fun every day. We averaged 14 kids at practice but still did some sort of fun football scrimmage (thud) every day.
 5. Best way to practice team defense is walk through the play with scout O then run exact same play. Get the kids confident rather than try to trick them. Scout teams typically give awful looks.

Install Chart Developed before season

Offense Philosophy: RUN THE BALL!

1. Runs:
 - a. Attack A Gap
 - b. Attack Off-Tackle
 - c. Attack Outside
 - d. Counter
2. Passes:
 - a. Attack the OLB
 - b. Attack the Corner
 - c. Attack the Safety*
 - d. Boot

Defense Philosophy: Line Up and Tackle

1. Always have two over-hangs
2. Gap Sound
3. Formation Adjustments
4. Motion Adjustments
5. Coverage
 - a. Less is more
 - b. 1 zone cov. 1 man coverage
6. 4-5 man pressure= zone coverage
7. 6+ man pressure= man coverage
8. You must have an answer for Empty/Quads.

Install Chart O/D/ST

Winfield Fall 2020 13 year olds

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1yPtYSqykRzdYcQz4FmpDILHMA9zRkWQ2j55TFdWI9Qo/edit?usp=sharing>

The more time you spend teaching rules/assignments on offense and alignments/communication on defense the more successful you will be.

Special Teams

1. Week 1 Find out who your specialty guys are.
2. Week 2: Install 1 team per day 10-15 min. 1 scheme.
3. Week 3: Rep 1 team per day adding situations

Pre-Season Practice (First Week No Pads or just helmet)

Offense: Every Position should be learning how to block for their specific position (QB**)

1. Run practice like a football camp, lots of stations for SKAQ.
2. Linemen can learn blocking scheme in a generic sense (man, Double, Reach, Down, Pull) without also having to learn the play.
3. Receivers can learn the routes to run (fin, slant, curl, whip, seam) without having to know the formation, play etc...
4. RB: Ball handling, running lanes, cutting, without knowing the play it applies to.

Defense: Every position should be learning how to tackle for their specific position.

1. Tackling stations ([USA Football](#)). Group kids by position and travel to 3-4 stations. No helmet or shoulder pads.
2. Position Specific SKAQ
 - a. [D-Line](#)
 - b. [Linebackers](#)
 - c. [Secondary](#)

****These should continue throughout the season but link to actual scheme once install begins. Use this week to teach huddle's and cadence**

Pre-Season Practice Install (Week 2&3)

Offense

1. Two Days Same Stuff (Scheme)
 - a. Allows more reps for mastery before moving on
2. Install One Run and One Pass
 - a. Do it from multiple formations
 - b. Wait to add motion unless critical to the play (rocket toss)
 - c. Rep vs. different looks to get the kids comfortable in the rules for executing so they can apply them to any look they get.
3. Ex. Monday & Tuesday same plan, Wed/Thursday same plan, Friday review that week and can add smoke and mirrors at that point.

Defense

1. Install vs. 1 personnel group the whole day before moving on to a new concept/blitz.
 - a. Day 1 all 2 back
 - b. Day 2 all 1 back
2. Need an align and assign period every day.
3. Teach coverage ½ field at a time.
 - a. Allows you to see the 3-4 players execute easier.
4. Day 1 Align and Assign vs. basic formations
5. Day 2 same formations but now add motion.

In-Season (2 days per week)

Practice Format depends on how many coaches.

1. Ideally 4 coaches
 - a. Offense: OL, RB, QB, WR (Can get away with 3 by having QB's and WR together)
 - b. Defense DL, LB (2), Secondary (Can get away with 3 by having just 1 LB coach)
2. If you only have 2 coaches then you need 1 line coach and 1 skills coach. Have to get creative with how you practice skills.

Two Coaches: Not ideal but probably reality

Offense:

1. Run Game work backs work hand off and path while WR work stalk blocking. Alternate reps in same area. RB's are up while WR rest and vice versa.
2. Pass Game: Same idea RB work pass pro/routes while WR and QB throw/catch.

Defense:

Run Game: LB work block destruction and filling gaps and DB's are the scout team.

Pass Game: ½ field and LB's help by running routes.

In Season Practice Format (2 days per week)

Everyday

Dynamic Warm Up: 10 min (try to start early) most kids show up 10-15 min early, steal this time.

Offense (50 min)

Indy Position Drills: 15 min

Pass Skelly: 15 min (If you throw dropback) (OL still working indy)

Group Run: 10 min main runs vs. defense expected slow pace walk thru style making sure everyone understands their job.

Team: 10 min exact plays you will run in game (use WB, subs etc...) vs. expected defense.

Defense (50 min)

Indy Position Drills 15 min

Align and Assign 15 min: line up and install game plan vs. expected formations/motions and walk through the play.

10 min: Pass Skelly (if necessary)

10 min: Team D vs. Scout O walk thru then rep.
No one goes to the ground.

Special Teams Practice (2 Days per week)

Prioritize coverage teams over returns (Punt and Kick off over everything else).

When working returns have a coach throw the ball to the spot the team kicks to instead of having a kid try to simulate it with a kick.

Punt Return: Just work on lining up, pressuring, and covering eligibles. You won't get a punt good enough to return most times.

Kick Return: practice falling on bad kicks SECURE THE BALL is the only priority!

Extra Point FG once it is installed practice it on a fake play clock. Throw a ball out and yell for extra point team and start counting down from 20, make the kids scramble to line up, get block etc... simulate the stress of the game.

FG/EX point defense: Align to muddle huddle/swinging gate every week.

Conditioning

Overall

If your drills and overall practice is intense and well organized you should not need to do mindless conditioning.

Goal of conditioning should be to get 100% effort of each rep not survive the gassers at 25% effort.

If you condition each rep should be 6 seconds or less. Ideally 45 second break for recovery. If looking to work on endurance shorten the rest time but DO NOT INCREASE THE WORK TIME.

Week 1 Conditioning:

Offense break huddle, practice cadence and sprint 10 yards. Defense: Break huddle move ball and work pursuit.

Week 2 Perfect 10

Offense: Plays installed on air at full speed, defense execute stunt, blitz etc and pursue.

Week 3 and beyond: Special Teams Coverage

Why do you Coach?

This should be why!



Don't turn the ball
over on offense and
align and tackle on
defense and the rest
will take care of itself.

Thanks!

Always welcome to come out to
watch practice just reach out.

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