

# Tonka Football Association

**TFA**



## **Coach's Manual**

Rev: Fall 2021



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## Letter from the Area Director(S)

Dear Coaches of TFA for the 2021 season:

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to help make our program one of the finest in the state.

The attached coach's book is designed as a reference and how-to guide for all coaches in all grades. It has been assembled by coaches involved in our program for years and reflects what we as a program value and promote.

Our program is a developmental and instructional and one that focuses on the fundamentals of the game through participation. Our program is designed for kids to play football rather than to watch football. The primary goal of the program is straightforward; we want as many as kids possible to be playing football and to have fun doing so while adequately preparing them for the 'next level' whatever that may be.

We measure the success of our program in how many kids come back the next year. With the assumption being, they would return only if they had a positive experience in the prior years. While winning is certainly a factor in a positive experience it is not the primary factor for kids, parents, or our program.

While player safety has always been a priority for our organization, the concern and national attention surrounding concussions will have a continued impact on youth football programs across the country. The LMAA has developed a concussion protocol which complies with the Minnesota State Law. Many of the LMAA Rules were created with player safety in mind including equal playing time, weight limits for ball carriers, and the limiting of defensive stunts for the younger levels.

Additionally, through USA Football and our varsity coaching staff, we will help train coaches and players to focus on and teach the proper techniques for blocking and tackling. Proper fitting equipment continues to be a priority; parents and coaches are encouraged to monitor the players' equipment for proper fit, including "full" form fitting mouth guards.

Our youth football program provides a wonderful opportunity to teach the kids more than just offensive and defensive football skills. Our players learn how to work together in a team setting and they learn how to resolve conflicts by observing how adults (referees, coaches and parents) resolve conflicts. As a TFA coach, your leadership will provide great examples for these kids to learn from and emulate for years to come.

We believe this Coach's Manual will provide you with ideas and some of the mechanics of how to facilitate your roles. Thank you again for your contributions of time and your willingness to develop these kids. We wish you a successful season or seasons for you and your players.

Best regards, Tony Wixo & Chad Dill



Spirit of the Rules: Coaches, Players and Parents must remember the rules are defined to create the most beneficial experience for the players. Coaches must remember that the games are to be played for the players and not for the coaches or parents.

Visit the LMAA website at: [www.lmaa.org](http://www.lmaa.org)

## **Sportsmanship**

Webster Dictionary defines Sportsmanship: *“Conduct (as fairness, respect for one's opponent, and graciousness in winning or losing) that is becoming to one participating in a sport”.*

TFA reminds all parents, players & coaches to practice good sportsmanship. You are representing our community. We teach our children by example, be a good example and a good sport. It's a simple as remembering the motto below.

**PLAYERS PLAY!**

**COACHES COACH!**

**REFEREES REF!**

**PARENTS/FANS CHEER!**





## About Tonka Football Association (TFA)

The Minnetonka Youth Football Association (TFA) is volunteer run organization dedicated to offering young people in grades 2nd through 8th an opportunity to learn the fundamentals of football, the value of teamwork and to have fun doing it.

The program has been designed to contribute to the development of the players:

- Sense of Achievement
- Leadership Skills
- Sense of Teamwork
- Positive self-image
- Moral Principles
- Appreciation of what the body can do
- Social Skills
- Understanding the character, a person needs to have on and off the football field.

### Our Advice for Future Skippers

**Participate in as many sports as you possibly can.** Fight the pressure to specialize in any one sport and trust that the lessons learned in different sports crossover and help you far more than hurt you. Respect the season you are in and dedicate yourself to your team and your coaches. Learn to compete with class and improve from your successes and failures.

You are the **Future of Minnetonka Football!**

We are committed to providing an opportunity for as many children as possible to participate in football under the rules of the league.

TFA is a member of the Lake Minnetonka Athletic Association (LMAA), a youth football league founded in 1961. The league consists of Minnetonka, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Edina, Wayzata and Maple Grove.

### LMAA Philosophy

The LMAA is the governing board for all participants in the league. It is run by a Board of Directors that is made up of representatives from each area.

The LMAA sponsors a football program each fall to offer young people in grades 3 through 8 the opportunity to learn more about the fundamentals of football and to have fun doing it. The program has been designed for all players to enjoy the benefits of participation in youth football.



## TFA and LMAA's Approach to Safety

With registration for football upon us each summer and fall, some parents may be concerned with the prospect of their child playing the great sport of football. Check out some of the things we have done and continue to do to help make an informed decision:

1. TFA plays within the rules of our league - the Lake Minnetonka Athletic Association (LMAA). The rules are designed to help facilitate a safe game while promoting education, equitable playing time and a fair & balanced playing field. All referees are scheduled and coordinated through the LMAA, with the goal of: "no 'homer' referees".
2. TFA requires concussion training and certification from the CDC (Center for Disease Control) for ALL coaches. This training is similar to the training and certification that other sports (lacrosse, baseball, basketball, fast pitch softball, soccer, hockey, etc.) require.
3. TFA provides properly sized and fitted helmets to all players in the organization. All of these helmets were purchased new and go through a rigorous certification process. When helmets are issued each year, they are properly fitted with the assistance of TFA representatives. Each year the helmets are inspected and repaired if possible otherwise, they are discarded. All helmets are retired after seven years.
4. TFA requires that each coach is USA Football certified through Trusted Coaches. This training covers many aspects of the game including proper tackling techniques, blocking, practice planning, etc. This is the same certification used and endorsed by the NCAA and the NFL.
5. All coaches must complete and pass a criminal background check prior to the season starting.
6. All coaches attend mandatory coaches' meetings with the TFA leadership and high school coaching staff where age appropriate drills and practice plans are discussed among other coaching goals for each grade level.
7. Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) are at ALL games as a precautionary measure.





## General Information

This section includes the Web address, Key Dates, and checklist of things needed for your first game.

Tonka Football Association Web Information:

We encourage you to visit the area web site for a variety of information: including weather cancellations and updates. In addition, you will find important dates, rules, schedules, and field locations.

The web site is: <https://youth.tonkafootball.net/>

Key Dates and Event Descriptions\*

All key dates are posted in the calendar on the web site:

<https://youth.tonkafootball.net/page/show/202229-calendar>

Please check our web site for changes or updates to key dates and schedules.

### **Checklist:**

Must have at every game:

- ✓ First Aid Kit
- ✓ Check Players Equipment: mouth guards (intact), helmet fits snug to tight (pump in air if applicable), hard cover chin strap and shoulder pads are snug.
- ✓ LMAA Rule Book
- ✓ Player phone list (cell phones preferred) and Medical Info.
- ✓ Team Playbook
- ✓ Depth Chart/Game plan
- ✓ Referee should be present 30 minutes before game time.
- ✓ If you are the HOME TEAM – it is your responsibility to have a play counter. Laminate a play counter and place in your equipment bag / bin.
- ✓ First down chains and field markers should be present. If not and you are the HOME team it is your responsibility as coach to pull these out of their storage area and set up. This will take a good 20-30 minutes to do. If you are the last HOME game it is your responsibility to put these away and return them in the same way they were before they were used. Use common courtesy to guide you.





## Coaching:

Reference the TFA website and USAFootball.com for Heads Up Football includes Coaching Techniques, Drills and Practice Plans. <https://www.usafootball.com/>  
<https://youth.tonkafootball.net/page/show/4174058-tfa-football-safety>

## Do(s):

- ✓ Make the experience **FUN** for every player!
- ✓ Have a season plan before the first practice. It will take over two weeks to install your offense and defense.
- ✓ We highly encourage you to name a "Team Parent" to assist in scheduling and other issues.
- ✓ Have a Parent Meeting during the first week of Practice.
- ✓ Teach all players the "fundamentals". Every player should learn to block for example.
- ✓ Always praise good effort even if the result is not what you wanted.
- ✓ Minimize the distance between players for blocking and tackling drills. Train for technique rather than the amount or size of collision.
- ✓ Identify two likely centers and a third candidate by the end of the second practice. You may want to consider taller players so QBs don't have to reach as far. Centers should be at least an average player.
- ✓ Identify two likely QBs and a third candidate by the end of the third practice. Rotating QBs is a good idea in regards to development not to mention a backstop against injury or scheduling conflicts.
- ✓ League Rules require you to have at least two groups of players. These groups should be balanced with stronger and weaker players. Consider a talent / leadership balanced blue team and black team, also consider having these teams work together the entire season as your rotations progress. They will work better together as time goes on.
- ✓ Have a plan for your Defense.
- ✓ Coach your team to be disciplined. The Players will get "lazy" and fail to execute the techniques properly. Don't let them get away with poor technique and more importantly lack of trying.
- ✓ Teach the players their assignments. (Why and Who does what on Offense, Defense and Special Teams).
- ✓ Have a plan for what you will do if any player is hurt or missing. Even the toughest player in the league will miss a few plays during the season. Have a substitution list in the event of an injury with you at game time, think and prep prior to the game so it is automatic during the game. There is nothing more stressful than having to make 'surprise' decisions that you are not prepared for on the fly in a game, only to think back after the game...why did I do that? A great coach limits the amount of surprise decisions.... i.e. they have already been thought through.
- ✓ Start and End Practice on time as per your schedule.





## Don't(s):

- ☒ Never use profane language and don't allow it coming from the kids either.
- ☒ Never grab a player by the facemask. If you need to have the player's complete attention say, "Look me in the eye".
- ☒ Never put a player's safety second.
- ☒ Don't forget to teach the players the rules. Some may know very little about the rules.
- ☒ Don't forget to tell players WHY they are doing a drill, skill, tactic, etc.
- ☒ Don't forget to plan each practice.
- ☒ Don't act like a Drill Sergeant!
- ☒ Don't make it complicated.
- ☒ Don't forget to coach the entire team. Players of all abilities need your attention.
- ☒ Don't waste time on conditioning, it's not FUN! The best coaches know how to work the players at a fast pace on football drills to condition your players.
- ☒ Don't forget to insist that the players drink water. Bring extra water for the players that forget.
- ☒ Don't scrimmage too much. 1. Risk of Injury is greater. 2. Reduces the number of Reps you can get in due to "un pile time". 3. Difficult to see blown assignments or poor technique.
- ☒ Don't practice after dark (for safety reasons).
- ☒ Don't do hitting drills with too much space. The players should not have room to get up a full head of steam. All hitting drills need to have restricted space.
- ☒ Don't mismatch players in drills. Be sure to match them up by size and ability.
- ☒ For 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, don't forget to work on special teams.



## Season Preparation

Parent/Player Meeting: a successful coach puts priority on this meeting before anything as the season begins. This meeting serves as an introduction, sets expectations, and is just a good practice overall. You can't go wrong over communicating.

Example:

The following is an example as to what you may want to include in your parents' meeting. The content is up to you but we strongly recommend that you have a meeting following the first or second practice once your teams are in place.

- ✓ Introduce Coaches
- ✓ Players Introduce themselves
- ✓ Set Expectations:
  1. When Coaches Talk.... Players Listen
  2. Players should pay attention during drills and watch & learn from others when not involved in a drill.
  3. EFFORT & ATTITUDE do not take skill...critical to getting better as a team
  4. SPORTSMANSHIP is expected from all: Coaches, Players and Parents
  5. Player to call ahead if late or missing practice or game
- ✓ Discuss proper sideline demeanor for both Parents and Players
- ✓ The playing time requirement is 50%, not equal –
- ✓ It is critical that parents be on time or schedule alternative pick-up of child
- ✓ No equipment or trash left on the field following practices or games
- ✓ Go over planned schedule (practice times)
- ✓ All equipment must be present and in good repair or the child cannot practice or play. Ask for a parent Equipment Manager to monitor.
- ✓ Ask for volunteer parent coordinator to assist with communication/scheduling changes
- ✓ Encourage players and parents to read the rules at: [www.lmaa.org](http://www.lmaa.org)
- ✓ Introduce Heads Up Football:
  - The LMAA has adopted USA Football's Heads Up Football program to enhance player safety.
  - Our coaching staff has completed a USA Football Coach Certification as well as, the State mandated Concussion Training.
  - The Pillars of Heads Up Football include: Proper Equipment Fitting, Heads Up Blocking & Tackling, Training for Recognition and Response to a variety of safety concerns including Concussion, Heat & Hydration and Sudden Cardiac Arrest.



## Practice Planning - also see USAFootball.com

At a minimum a coach should always hit the field with a plan. It allows for the practice to move much smoother when the activities are thought through in advance. The basics of any plan include: time for warming up, basic technique work (stance, blocking, tackling) time for working on position specific drills, offense/defense/special teams as a team. Remember to keep the “black striper” involved in more than blocking drills...today’s black striper may be tomorrow’s tight end, receiver or quarterback. Make every practice FUN!

Example: Practice Schedule Aug 10, 2018

6-610 Warm-up: High Knee running, Toe Kick Running, Sprints, Back Peddle, etc.

610-620 Stance Work: Emphasize Balance, flat backs, Ability to go any direction

620-630 Skills Drill: Center Snap/QB; All others Pass Routes

630-635 Skills Drill: Huddle to Hut (multiple huddles) Practice huddle formation, positions, splits, cadence and fire off the ball.

635-640 Water Break

640-700 Position Work:

### Blocking with Linemen

1. Stance
2. Fire/ Stay Low
3. Lead Step
4. Drive Block
5. Intro to First Series of Plays

### Drills for Backs

1. Stance
2. Handoff/Carry Position
3. Number System
4. Blocking LBs.
5. Intro to First Series of Plays

700-720 Skills Drill: Instructional Drill for all to participate

720-750 Run offense

750-800 Rip, Engage and Score Drill (fun conditioning drill)





## Safety Overview

As previously stated, TFA is committed to advancing player safety to protect the health and well-being of every child. In addition to coaching education, a key element of player health and safety is the responsibility of all coaches to conduct organized practices and teach proper fundamentals in a safe environment.

A good game is a safe game and TFA is working to prevent injury whenever possible in practice and game situations.

Keys to injury prevention are:

- ✓ Proper coach training
- ✓ Proper equipment fitting
- ✓ Proper tackling technique
- ✓ Concussion awareness and medical preparedness
- ✓ Fostering an environment of safety appreciation

Explaining Levels of Contact:

Levels of Contact focuses on varying intensity levels throughout practices to build player confidence, ensure their safety, and prevent both physical and mental exhaustion. Five intensity levels are used to introduce players to practice drills which position them to master the fundamentals and increase skill development.

<u>CONTACT</u>	<u>INTENSITY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
AIR	0	PLAYERS RUN A DRILL UNOPPOSED WITHOUT CONTACT.
BAGS	1	DRILL IS RUN AGAINST A BAG OR ANOTHER SOFT SURFACE.
CONTROL	2	DRILL IS RUN AT ASSIGNED SPEED UNTIL THE MOMENT OF CONTACT; ONE PLAYER IS PRE-DETERMINED THE WINNER BY THE COACH. CONTACT REMAINS ABOVE THE WAIST, PLAYERS STAY ON THEIR FEET WITH A QUICK WHISTLE.
THUD	3	DRILL IS RUN AT ASSIGNED SPEED TO COMPETITIVE SPEED THROUGH THE MOMENT OF CONTACT; NO PRE-DETERMINED "WINNER". ABOVE THE WAIST CONTACT ONLY, PLAYERS STAY ON THEIR FEET. QUICK WHISTLE ENDS THE DRILL.
LIVE ACTION	4	GAME-LIKE CONDITIONS.



## Season Plan Example:

Don't get hung up on the season plan example below. The point is that you think about what needs to be accomplished before the first game and begin to map out the season. By doing this you and your team will be better prepared and your daily practice plan will be easier to write.

### Practice #

1. Set tone for season, talk to players about expectations Basic skill drills, Blocking. Evaluate players Start finding Centers and QBs Introduce Basic Offensive Formation, Cadence, and Huddle.
2. Try Center and QB candidates, Narrow to 3 of each. Basic skill drills, Blocking. Evaluate players Refresh Huddle, and Basic Offensive Formation Introduce First Series of 3 plays Try several players at kickoffs (if applicable)
3. Basic skill drills, blocking! Evaluate players. Reinforce first series of three plays. Introduce the next series of two or three plays. Introduce Base Defense, Cover Roles and Responsibilities Parent Meeting
4. Offensive Positions for First Game Identified Basic skill drills, Blocking. Evaluate players Punt Receiving (if applicable) Tryout long Snappers Review 6 plays
5. Basic skill drills, evaluate players Review Defense Responsibility: and Reads Introduce next three plays First Scrimmage Kickoffs and Kick Receiving or Punt and Punt Receive
6. Basic skill drills, evaluate players Review 9 plays, add next 3 Review Defense Second Scrimmage Kickoffs and Kick Receiving or Punt and Punt Receive
7. Defensive Positions for First Game Identified Review Offense add up to 3 plays Basic skill drills, Blocking. Evaluate players Review Defense Kickoffs and Kick Receiving or Punt and Punt Receive
8. Basic skill drills, evaluate players Review Offense, modify plays if needed based on skills and scrimmages Review Defense Special Teams Review Scrimmage Including some Special Teams
9. Basic skill drills, evaluate players Review Offense, add one or two new plays Review Defense Special Teams Review Scrimmage Including Special Teams not done in Practice # 8
10. Basic skill drills, evaluate players Review Offense Review Defense Special Teams Review Scrimmage Equipment Check

### First Game

#### Rest of Season

- ✓ Keep working on Blocking and Tackling.
- ✓ Add one or two plays per week
- ✓ Maximum Cover
- ✓ Scouting reports with team



- ✓ Shorter Practices and less scrimmage time every week.
- ✓ Make minor adjustments to Defense and Offense as needed.
- ✓ Give every player a second position on O and D before the 3rd game
- ✓ Get every non-black striper a chance to carry ball
- ✓ Throw every black striper a pass by seasons end.

## Depth Chart Example:

It is recommended that you establish a minimum of two deep depth chart or team rotations (blue and black) that will allow the kids to learn specific assignments and assist you with a substitution plan. All coaches should be 'on the same page' with this depth chart. This is a dynamic piece from game to game or as your season progresses.

Below is an example of a depth chart.

### Offense:

End	Davis Jemtrud
Tackle	Haahr Bailey
Center	Olson Blue
Tackle	Brady Brown
End	Beatle Jackson
QB	Nelson Gold Talbot
Wing	Jones Smith Johnson
RB	Talbot Spicer
RB	Anderson Larson



### Defense:

DE	Jemtrud Olson
DT	Anderson Talbot
DT	Talbot Johnson
DE	Olson Nelson
OLB	Jones Larson
OLB	Spicer Smith
MLB	Davis Brady
S	Brown Jackson
S	Blue Bailey Haahr Gold





# Scouting Report Examples:

This is a tool that can be utilized to gain a better understanding of the teams you will play in advance. In order to get any benefit out of the process it is important to fill out the information and to communicate it to the other coaches in your grade. We recommend the coaches and grade coordinators determine if this is something you want to do as a group.

Scouting Report:

Date of Game: \_\_\_\_\_ Minnetonka #4 vs. Team (Maple Grove #3)

Final Score Minnetonka \_\_\_\_\_ Opponent \_\_\_\_\_

## OFFENSE

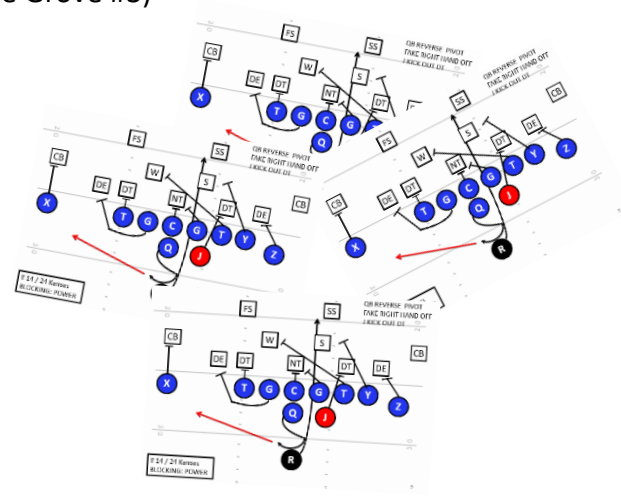
Best Offensive Players:

Best Offensive Plays:

Tendencies:

Type of Offensive system:

Comments:



## DEFENSE

Best Defensive Players:

Did they stunt:

What plays work best against them:

Comments:

SPECIAL TEAMS: anything notable?

## OTHER

Anything to be concerned about or special plays to tell the others about:

Describe what you would do to prepare for this team:



# Offense

## General Advice

- ✓ Run the ball. Youth Football is a running game. 4+ passes a game is plenty and don't forget a pass is a good way to get a "black striper" the ball.
- ✓ Offense is "strength on weakness" and weakness on strength.
  - Your best players on their weak players.
  - Size on lack of size, speed on slow.
  - More of your players at point of attack than the defense.
  - Your weaker player occupying their strong players. Use double teams, cross and trap blocks.
- ✓ Continue to run plays that are working until the Defense adjusts to stop them
- ✓ Less is more, run a few plays well. 8 to 10 plays are enough for the first game.
- ✓ Run a mix of Speed, Power and Deception plays
- ✓ Do not solely rely on drive blocking
  - Use double team blocks
  - Use down blocking (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) grade to gain leverage vs. straight up blocking and / or pull blockers
  - Use Trap and Cross Blocks (use the angles alignment provides)
- ✓ Consider using two weaker players on double team blocks on most plays.
- ✓ Play action passes work better than Drop back passes.
- ✓ Run "series" of plays A series is a set of plays where the blocking and backfield motion are similar. Example: RB Dive, Lead Off-tackle, Fake Off-tackle QB Bootleg, and Bootleg Pass

Where to play your players:

### Most Talented

- #1 Blocking at the point of attack
- #2 Running with the ball.

### Lesser Talented

- #1 Wing/Split End (Do not run Reverses with a less talented player)
- #2 Away from point of attack.

During the season give every eligible player a chance at RB using Dive or Lead plays. Give every striper a chance to catch a pass.

Most offensive teams run to their right, especially if it is the wide side. Try running left and to the short side of the field.

On Pass plays give the QB two receivers maximum to read. (any others are decoys).





Coach your team to not tip-off the plays. Use your scrimmage opponents to help you know if plays are being tipped off.

Use one of your best players (on the other rotation) as a backup Center. You must have good C-QB exchanges. During a game you will not have an opportunity to practice if your center goes down.

A talented player will not need many repetitions to be a competent backup.

## Defense

### General Advice

- ✓ Stop the run. Very few teams pass well.
- ✓ Defense is "strength on strength".
  - Your best players on their best players.
  - Size on size, speed on speed.
  - Number of players at point of attack
  - Take away their best plays.
- ✓ Most teams rely on sweeps. Be prepared to stop them.
- ✓ Stop the fake sweep/ halfback pass
- ✓ Backside players must be disciplined to stop reverse/counter plays. Stay Home!

Where to play your players:

#### Most Talented

- #1 MLB/ILB
- #2 Left side DE
- #3 Right DE (Must be coachable to play reverse)
- #4 NT at 7th and 8th grade level

#### Lesser Talented

- DTs
- One Safety (not both)
- Short side of the field

Most offensive teams run to their right, especially if it is the wide side.

Most teams will tip-off their plays. Teach your players to read the tips.

Use code words so your opponent doesn't know you are reading their plays.

Example: They only run a reverse from a certain formation, call out a color. They only run a pass play from another formation, call out a state.

LB and DBs must move forward on the snap. Move...e then read the offense. If they read first they trail every play.



## Defensive Reads and Responsibilities

Example 4-3-2 (4 Linemen, 3 Linebackers, 2 Safeties) 9 man

### DE Responsibility:

1. Contain sweeps / first step with inside foot
2. Contain Reverse and bootleg
3. Penetrate 2 yards every play
4. Sack QB on Pass plays

### Reads

1. Tight End
2. QB

### Tackles Responsibility:

1. Penetrate and go to the football, TACKLE any back that might have the ball
2. Gap between OG and TE

### Read

1. Guard

### MLB Responsibility:

1. Go to the football
2. Gaps between Guards and Center
3. Pass coverage Middle of the Field

### Read

1. Flow

### OLB Responsibility:

1. Contain Sweep / first step with outside foot
2. Contain reverse and bootleg
3. Passes
  - a. Strong side covers inside receiver
  - b. Weak side cover QB or RB

### Read

1. Strong side OLB reads Inside receiver and QB
2. Weak side OLB reads QB and nearest RB

### Safety Responsibility:

1. Pass
  - a. Strong side cover outside Receiver
  - b. Weak side covers End
  - c. Plays pass FIRST, Watch for trick plays
2. Runs, Go to Football

### Read

1. Strong side reads Outside Receiver then QB
2. Weak side reads End then QB



## **Defensive Reads and Responsibilities**

### 5-2 (5 Linemen, 2 LBs, 2 CBs 2 Ss) 11 Man

#### DE Responsibility:

1. Contain sweeps / first step with inside foot
2. Contain Reverse and bootleg
3. Penetrate 2 yards every play
4. Sack QB on Pass plays

#### Reads

1. Tight End
2. QB

#### DT Responsibility:

1. Penetrate, go to the Football, TACKLE any back you can reach
2. Gap between G and T
3. Sack QB on passes

#### Read

1. Tackle

#### NT Responsibility:

1. Go to the football
2. Gaps between C and Gs
3. Sack QB on pass plays

#### Read

1. Center

#### LB Responsibility:

1. Go to the football
2. Gaps between Guards and Center
3. Pass coverage Middle of the Field

#### Read

1. Flow

#### LB Responsibility:

1. End Tackle Gap/ first step with outside foot
2. Contain reverse and bootleg
3. Passes
  - a. RB their side
  - b. Weak side QB on "sweep pass" or RB their side

#### Read

1. RB and QB



#### CB Responsibility:

1. Covers outside Receiver
2. Plays Pass First
3. Supports DE on Sweeps
4. Stays home to prevent Reverse/Bootleg

#### Read

1. Outside Receiver

#### Safety Responsibility:

1. Pass Covers inside Receiver, covers motion once past TE
2. Plays pass FIRST, Watch for trick plays
3. Runs, Go to Football

#### Read

1. Inside Receiver

## Special Teams (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> only)

### General Advice

- ✓ Minimize chance for turnovers.
- ✓ Field position is less important in youth football.
- ✓ Most returners are right-handed and will run to their right.

### Kickoffs

- ✓ The easiest way to give up a TD is to Kickoff deep to your opponent's best and fastest player.
- ✓ Consider squib (ground ball) and onside kickoffs every time unless you have a comfortable lead.

### Kick Receiving

- ✓ Teach your players to fair catch a short one "in the air".
- ✓ Cover up onside kicks on the ground.
- ✓ No Clipping

### Punting

- ✓ Have a good punt fake.
- ✓ Punts are another way to give up an easy TD.
- ✓ Consider not ever punting unless you have a very comfortable lead.
- ✓ Put a talented athlete at long snapper.
- ✓ Cover the backward bounce.
- ✓ Punt away from the returner.



## Punt Receiving

- ✓ Assume your opponent is faking the punt.
- ✓ One good athlete Medium deep is enough.
- ✓ Teach all players to leave the punt alone unless they have a lot of room.

## Bibliography

Here is a list of books for those looking for additional reference material on coaching youth football.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
Coaching Youth Football	John T. Reed
Coaching Youth Football Defense	John T. Reed
Gap-Air-Mirror Defense for Youth Football	John T. Reed
Football Drill Book	Doug Mallory
New Coach's Guide to Youth Football Skill and Drills	Tom Bass
Coaching Football Technical and Tactical Skills Program	American Sport Ed.
Coaching Football for Dummies	National Alliance for Youth Sports
101 Special Team Drills	Paul McCord





## Final Thoughts

Coaching youth football is a tough but rewarding job. It takes dedication and patience. One of the greatest challenges for a youth Coach is how to improve the skills and build the confidence in the weaker players on your team. Every team has a few of those gifted athletes; the player who loves to learn, loves to hit and hangs on to the Coach's every word. However, the best Coach, and often with the most successful team, is the Coach who figures out how to improve and motivate the bottom half of the roster.

The greatest compliment a coach can receive is to see every one of their players return to the league the next year!

### Coaching Tips:

Teaching a technique:

1. Describe what needs to be done and why.
2. Show the player how to do it (role-play).
3. Ask the player to practice it (drill for improvement).
4. Review the technique and critique (build confidence).
5. How to critique a player "the compliment sandwich":
6. Compliment the player on something they did well,
7. Review what you want them to correct or improve,
8. Compliment their efforts, improvement or attitude.

Example: "John that's a great job of wrapping up and making a form tackle. Now, I would like you to do the same thing but keep your feet driving through the tackle. You are going to be a great football player John, keep up the great effort!"

### Common Mistakes

- ✓ Not holding a parent meeting at which you explain your policies on position assignments, playing time, practice attendance and asking for parent assistance.
- ✓ Wasting practice time on conditioning. An efficient practice with minimal standing-around time will take care of the conditioning better than pure conditioning drills.
- ✓ Placing all the more talented players in the backfield and the less talented players on the line.
- ✓ Failing to give centers, long snappers and quarterbacks enough reps so they can master their assigned skill.
- ✓ Too many offensive or defensive plays or formations. It is not about the X's and O's, it is about where you place the players to best fit their abilities and how well can they can block and tackle.
- ✓ Taking too much time to explain or run plays in practice, while players are standing around being bored.



- ✓ Neglecting to spend time on special teams each week (7th & 8th grades).
- ✓ Failing to work on form tackling and blocking at least ten minutes each and every practice.
- ✓ Letting players hit full speed and tackle to the ground in practice. Form tackling can be instructed with a two to three step lead.
- ✓ Not containing the corners on defense. Position good tacklers to stop the outside play.

What should be expected?

In addition to the TFA's goals of our coaches contributing to the development of the young person's:

- Sense of Achievement
- Leadership Skills
- Positive Self-Image
- Social Skills
- Teamwork

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Coaches Goals and Objectives:

- ✓ An introduction to football.
- ✓ To teach every player that football is fun!
- ✓ You are playing a modified game. Stress structure, doing your job, and execution.
- ✓ Keep it simple with precision... the team that is precise will be successful. This is the challenge at this age.
- ✓ Sportsmanship for our players starts at a young age. It starts with you.

4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Coaches Goals and Objectives:

- ✓ To teach the fundamentals of football; offense vs. defense, offense blocks, defense tackles, positions...
- ✓ To teach every player the proper football stance
- ✓ To teach every player how to block per the Heads-Up technique (blocking drills should be for every player)
- ✓ To teach every player the Heads-Up form tackle and do it every practice;
- ✓ Allowing every player to contribute and by the end of the season, have the teams weakest players be the most improved players on your squad.

Remember: The game of football has only one QB at a time, however; practice can provide an opportunity for every player to touch the ball!

If every 4th & 5th Grade player finished the season having learned the proper football stances, became proficient at blocking and tackling and had fun learning it- this was a successful season!



### 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Coaches Goals and Objectives:

- ✓ Coaching the team so that football continues to be fun for every player
- ✓ The expectation that every player will improve on the contact skills (blocking and tackling)
- ✓ Develop the specific skill sets required to play the various positions
- ✓ By the end of the season having each player more confident in themselves and their teammates than when the season began.
- ✓ Prepare them for 9<sup>th</sup> grade football.

Remember: Not all players mature at the same level or time of their lives. Do not ask more of your players than they are capable of; it is your task to train and find those tasks that each player can succeed at. Enjoy the game and experience!

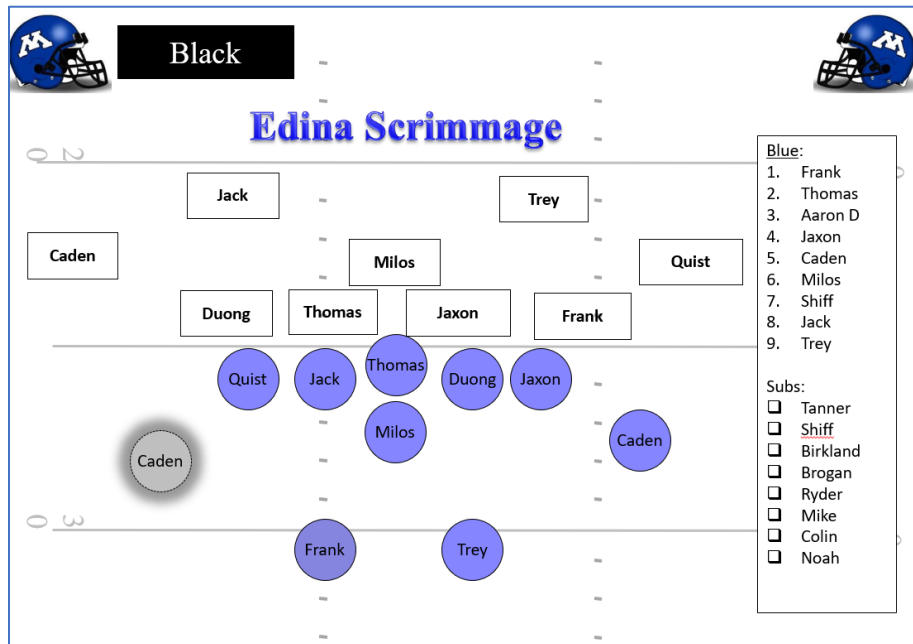
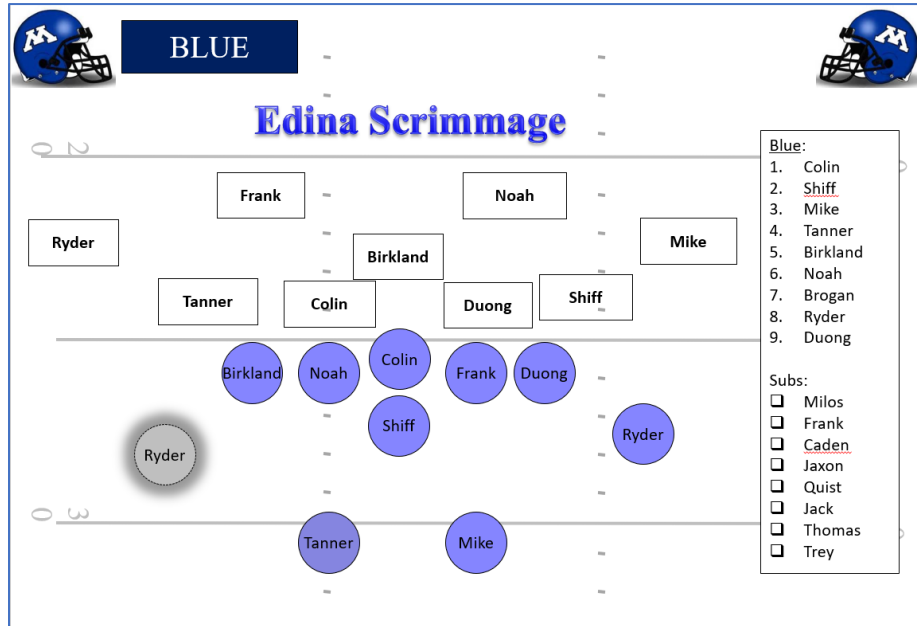






# Appendix

Visual depth chart & sub list:





# Notes