



Chico Area Recreation and Park District Youth Football Practice and Skill Breakdown



Basic Offensive Fundamentals

Warm ups

Coaches should emphasize the importance of warming up muscles to prevent injuries for their players. There are several exercises coaches can use to help implement this type of philosophy, exercises include:

- Light Jogging
- High Knees
- Heels to Butt
- Carioca
- Shuffles
- Sprints

Positions

Going over what type of positions flag football offers could spike the interest of the players who are indecisive of which position is best for them. As the coach, you should give every player the opportunity to try a new position. Positions include:

- Quarterback
- Wide Receiver
- Tight end
- Center
- Linemen
- Defensive Backs
- Linebackers

Offensive Philosophy

Every coach should have a philosophy and strategy they coach their offense by. There are different types of strategies; more run oriented, pass heavy oriented, short passes only, deep ball only, and or trick plays. A great philosophy to go by in flag football is going for first down not touchdowns.

- If you are going for first downs first it will give you the opportunity to still move the ball up the field incorporating your team and when there is a chance to stretch the field it will catch the defense off guard

Passing

Developing proper passing as a quarterback will help build their fundamentals. Coaches can have players pair up and warm up together and practice the proper throwing technique.

Throwing a Spiral - Hold the ball near the back with your fingers over the laces - Keep your elbow in tight to your body and 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 don't want to throw the ball to where the receiver is but rather where he/she is going to be - Practicing your routes with your receivers will help you figure out how far you can lead them with your throws

Drills for Throwing-

- 2 knee drills- players sit on their knees about 10 feet and throw to each other while just warming up their arms. As they progress players can stand, now using their hips to generate more power; then progress to players being able to step and throw. As players go through these progressions make sure they are moving back each time
- Passing to receivers- Coach has two different lines, one for receivers and quarterbacks. Quarterbacks will throw to receivers, while receivers will run different routes to improve team communication and building team chemistry.

Receiving Routes and Running

Receiving the ball:

- Receiver should put hands together in shape of a diamond as their target
- Both hands up ready to receive a pass (i.e. "showing a target").
- Catch the pass (i.e. "come to the ball", "meeting the pass").
 - Player should be trying to catch with their hands with limited body to improve hand eye coordination and not rely on your body to catch

Different Routes:

- Streak or Go Route - Receiver runs straight up the field
- Curl - Receiver goes about 5 yards then turns around to the ball
- Slant - Receiver goes about 3 to 5 yards then cuts across the field
- Out - Receiver goes about 5 to 7 yards then makes a right angle towards the sideline
- In - Receiver goes about 5 to 7 yards then makes a right angle towards the middle of the field
- Corner - Receiver goes about 10 yards then cuts towards the sideline
- Post - Receiver goes about 10 yards then cuts towards the field

Running:

- Teach players the proper way of receiving a hand off and where it should be placed by the quarterback. Running backs need to have a target



Offensive Drills

NFL Ultimate

Purpose: To develop awareness and feel for the flag football concept.

Organization: Set out a 20 x 40-yard area. Pair up 10 participants. Rotate players, or duplicate the drill if space permits.

Drill Outline:

- 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 2 steps after catching the ball.
- The offensive players without the ball can move anywhere on the field.
- The ball always has to be passed toward the end zone - 6 points are awarded for a touchdown.
- After a touchdown, the team that was on defense switches to offense and takes possession of the ball on their own 5 yard line.
- 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 arms length from the player with the ball. The defensive play is similar to that of basketball.

Key Coaching Points:

- WRs must work to to get open and not bunch up

Passing & Receiving

Purpose: To develop proper receiving and passing skills. Teach participants how to spread out and use the entire field.

Organization: Set out a 40 x 40-yard area. Divide teams into even groups and place players opposite each other across the field. The entire class can participate.

Drill Outline:

- Eight to ten participants start on the field, the remaining players stand on the sidelines.
- This game concept and playing area is similar to basketball, but without the baskets or dribbling.
- The ball starts with one player at the center of the field.
- The object is to throw the football to a teammate in the circle or goal.
- The player with the ball has to pass to his/her teammates inside the game or can get assistance from teammates on the sidelines.
- The player with the ball can only take two steps, similar to basketball. The players in the playing area without the ball are free to move around. The ball must be passed within 10 seconds or the other team gets possession of the ball. The idea is to try to knock down or intercept a pass. If the ball is dropped or intercepted, the team on defense is awarded possession of the football.



- 6 points are awarded each time the ball is passed to a player in the goal area. The player in the goal cannot leave that area.
- Progression: Add players to the field, one per team.

Key Coaching Points:

- Stress the importance of spreading out and being in position to receive a pass from a teammate.
- It is important to get open and not bunch up because, in a game situation, the offense has an advantage when there is more room to move



Basic Defensive Fundamentals

Every player has the potential to be an outstanding defensive player. Defense is solely about heart, desire, and hustle. There are however, some important fundamentals that each player must know in order to reach their full potential on defense.

Defensive Philosophy and Strategy

A coach having a defensive philosophy and strategy is just as important as offense. Strategy can depend on what type of defense you would like to run; mostly in flag football is man or zone. Man defense is the most common and easiest to run for players can help teach them to guard their own person and watch out for the running players. There are different types of zone such as cover 1, cover 2 and or 3 zone. Each type of zone has a different look on it and would be up to the coach to help players understand each defensive set. In flag football, it works to keep things simple in your philosophy and not to overload the players with too much to think about.

General Defensive Rules to Follow

1. No tackling
2. Hands down when rushing the quarterback
3. Always go for the flags
4. Watch offensive players hips for easier flag pulling
5. Defense is a team effort not a solo act

Positions for Defense

1. Defensive Back- lines up against receivers and covers the deep pass
2. Lineman- line up against center and tight ends
3. Linebacker- line up against receivers and cover the middle of the field



Defensive Break Down

It is important to break defense down into the simplest explanation for players of all ages regardless of skill. Without a strong foundation of the basic fundamentals of defense, players will be unable to progress to running a variety of complex defensive sets. The first step to developing a strong defense is ensuring that all players are beginning on the same page. Review the first two rules of the general defensive knowledge... i.e. ask players:

- Who is the most important person on the field? (The person with the ball.)
- What two things must a defender always be able to see? (Their player **and** the ball before the snap)

The next step to developing a strong defense is to discuss proper positioning of each individual player. Once players have grasped these basic concepts about positioning, it is time to advance. In order for players to understand the logistics behind team defense, it is important to break it down beginning with flag pulling

Defensive Drills

Defense

Purpose: To develop defensive skills of backpedaling and pulling the flag.

Organization: Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. Pair up 10-12 participants or as many as space allows.

Drill Outline:

- Pair up kids - one group is WRs, the other DBs.
- Each DB will backpedal and "mirror" the WR. All players will start in slow motion on the instructor's command.
- Switch, making WRs play as DBs. Progress to half speed.
- Switch positions again. Now go to full speed. On the instructor's whistle, the WRs will try to run past the DBs, who are backpedaling.
- During the drill, the instructor calls out "GO", the DB is now allowed to pull the flag of the WR who is still running for the end zone. • The "GO" simulates the WR catching the football.

Progression: The coach will pass a football to an open offensive player when "GO" is called.

Key Coaching Points:

- DB stays in front of offensive player.
- DB watches WR's waist and hips.

Sharks and Minnows

Purpose: To develop running skills and avoid the DB. Also teaches RBs to run to an open area.

Organization: Set out a 20 x 20-yard area. 10 players start at one end zone, each with a football (if available). Two DBs are stationed in the middle of the field.

Drill Outline:

- The object is for the RBs to run past the DBs to the opposite end zone without getting their flags pulled.
- If a RB has his/her flag pulled, he/she sits out.
- Stop the drill after RBs reach the opposite end zone. Identify kids with pulled flags and allow players to catch their breath.



- The drill continues then by changing direction until there is one RB remaining.

Progression: Instead a RB sitting out after his/her flag is pulled, have him switch to a DB and assist in pulling other RB's flags.

Key Coaching Points:

- DBs should run to where the RB is going, not to where they are.
- Watch RB's waist, not his/her head or shoulders



Football Resources

"for the love of the game"

Football:

1. <http://www.livestrong.com/article/278415-youth-flag-football-skills-drills>
2. <http://beta.active.com/football/football-articles/9-drills-to-improve-a-quarterbacks-form>
3. <http://www.7on7flagfootballplays.net/tag/defense/>
4. [www.physedteacher.com/root/Pdf/Reebok skills and Drills.pdf](http://www.physedteacher.com/root/Pdf/Reebok%20skills%20and%20Drills.pdf)