



CENTRAL SPORTS

FLAG FOOTBALL MANUAL

Name: _____

Team: _____

Practice Day/Time: _____

Last Updated August 2019

Central Sports Flag Football

Central Sports focuses on three things: fun, growth, and respect.

- **Fun** - We want the kids, parents and you, the coach, to have fun. We want learning about Jesus to be fun. He is the creator of fun, so we should have fun learning about Him.
- **Growth** - We want kids to be better players at the end of the season than they were at the beginning of the year. We want the relationship of the players, coaches, and parents with Jesus to be deeper at the end of the year. If they don't know Jesus, we want them to get to know Him.
- **Respect** - We want players and coaches to play to win, but at the same time not to win at all costs. We want players and coaches to respect the opponent. We want you to have the same reaction in winning and in losing. Jesus taught us to love others, so we need to love our opponents.

COACHES EXPECTATIONS

Coaching can have a larger purpose than simply teaching a kid how to throw a spiral or run a route. As a coach, you can teach your players about the sport that you are coaching along with the truth of God: that He loves us and wants to know us. We want to come alongside and equip you to share Jesus with your players.

We want you to:

- Grow in knowledge, skills and Godliness.
- Instill character in the kids who you are coaching. This only comes from a relationship with Jesus and constantly renewing your mind with the things of Him (Rom. 12:2).
- Encourage and respect your players and the game: be a positive role model, communicate clearly and consistently, know the sport, and listen to your players.

Coaching Keys:

1. **Teach the game through drills** - The ability to execute proper drills enhances skill level and improves athletic foundations. Your practices should utilize drills that enhance skill development.
2. **Teach the rules of the sport** - For the players to grow in the sport, they must understand and apply the rules of the game. Take time to explain rules and their importance.
3. **Instill sportsmanship with a competitive spirit** - In sports, winning and losing are a part of the game, just as they are in life. Knowing how to handle both in a positive way builds character in young athletes. Teach your players to play hard and play to win, but also teach them to put others before themselves with a positive attitude and sportsmanship.
4. **Communicate effectively** - In order to teach the rules, explain drills and teach sportsmanship, you have to be an effective communicator. Likewise, good communication and organization are crucial in keeping parents informed throughout the season. This includes keeping them up to date on practice and game times and having a plan in place each practice.

COACHES EXPECTATIONS (CONT'D)

What to Say at Meet the Team

- When: August 27th – Fields
 - Kinder and below division 6:00-6:20 pm
 - 1st – 3rd grade division 6:30-6:50 pm
 - 4th – 6th grade division 7:00-7:20 pm
- All game and picture schedules will be posted on the website.
- Introduce yourself
- Tell them when the first practice is
- Tell them where the first practice is (all practices will be the same)
- Let them know what to bring to practice
 - Shoes, shorts, t-shirt, flags
 - Cleats are recommended, but not required.
- If possible, assign someone to be a team parent to handle snack sign-up
- Ask for help coaching if wanted / needed
- Let them know when you will be out
- Hand out team rosters

Contact us if you and your assistant coach will not be at Meet the Team, and let your team know that they do not need to come.

Ministry Safe

As a coach, you MUST complete the Ministry Safe Sexual Assault Awareness Training. This is to protect the players, you as the coach, and Central Sports. There are videos and a test at the conclusion of the training. The entire training should take no longer than 45 minutes. This training certification lasts 3 years. If you have taken the Ministry Safe Training at another church, please send your certification to bwise@centralbcs.org. If your training expires during the middle of the season, you will be asked to complete a new training prior to the start of the season. We thank you for taking every step possible to protect the kids we love.

Central Sports Coaches Dress Code

- Central Sports Coach shirt or sleeved t-shirt
 - No tank tops, muscle shirts, crop tops or spaghetti straps
- Athletic or walking shorts
 - If wearing yoga pants, compression pants or compression shorts, you must wear shorts over them.
- Tennis shoes or cleats
 - Come dressed for practice the way you want the kids dressed for practice. Set the standard and example.

SUGGESTED PRACTICE BREAKDOWN

- 1. Pre-Practice Huddle (3-5 minutes)** – Cover specific flag football rules and the basics of flag football. Teach and review proper techniques for each skill needed for practice drills.
- 2. Warm-up Activity (3-5 minutes)** – Provide players the opportunity to practice individually and slowly warm up their muscles.
- 3. Practice skills through drills (20 minutes)** – Use drills that reinforce skill development. Focus on only one to two skills per practice.
- 4. Mid-practice huddle (5-7 minutes)** – Share the practice-specific devotion for each week.
- 5. Scrimmage or games that teach (20 minutes)** – Guide players in using the skills they are learning through scrimmaging.
- 6. Post-practice huddle (5 minutes)** – Communicate game times, picture times, etc. After practice is a great time to engage in conversations with parents.

PRACTICE/GAME CANCELATION POLICY

Cancellations for practice will be made as soon as possible. If the fields are flooded, practice will be cancelled. Practice will not be canceled due to the forecast for weather. Emails will be sent out to the league and cancellations will be posted to the Central Flag Football Facebook page by 3:30 pm that day. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cbcupwardFF/>

RULES UNIQUE TO CENTRAL SPORTS

- The offensive team begins the game and second half by taking possession of the ball at its 5-yard line.
- The lines 5 yards from each end zone and on both sides of the midfield line are no-run zones. No-run zones do not apply to the Kindergarten division.



- **Down Format**
 - The offensive team has four plays to gain a first down by crossing midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, it has four plays to score a touchdown.
 - Kindergarten & 1st-3rd Grade
 - If the team fails to cross midfield in four downs or score a touchdown, the other team takes possession on its own 5-yard line.
 - 4th-6th Grade
 - On fourth down, a team has two options.
 1. A team may attempt to gain a first down or a touchdown. If a team fails to convert on fourth down, either by scoring or picking up a first down, the ball changes possession at that spot.
 2. A team may "punt" as its fourth-down play by notifying the referee. In this case, the ball will be placed on the opposing team's 5-yard line and there will be a change of possession.
- **Game Clock**
 - (4) 10 minute quarters with a running clock and a brief halftime
 - Substitutions will be briefly made at the conclusion of each quarter
 - There are no timeouts during the game
 - There is a 30-second play clock that starts after the referee spots the ball for play and blows the whistle.
 - The game clock only stops at the conclusion of quarters, halftime and for injuries.

RULES UNIQUE TO CENTRAL SPORTS CONT'D

- **Game Format**

- Devotion will be led over the PA system. The teams need to meet at midfield. Warm up time will be completed before then.
- Visiting team calls the coin toss. The winning team chooses to play either offense or which end zone to defend. The team that plays defense at the start of the first half will play offense at the start of the second half.
- The team with possession at the end of the 1st and 3rd quarter will maintain possession at the start of the next quarter.
- Teams will switch end zones at the conclusion of the first half.
- Kindergarten division is 6 v. 6 while 1st-3rd and 4th-6th grade divisions are 7 v. 7.
- 4th-6th grade can have ONE coach in the huddle for the first TWO games. Kindergarten and 1st -3rd grade can have ONE coach in the huddle throughout the season.

- **Scoring**

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: 1 point (passing play from 5 yd. line) OR 2 points (running or passing play from 10 yd. line)
- Safety: 2 points. The Scoring team will receive possession on its own 5 yd. line.

- **Offense**

- A minimum of three players must be on the line of scrimmage at every snap.
- A beanbag will be used to mark the line of scrimmage.
- Only one player can be in motion when the ball is snapped.
- In the 4th – 6th grade division, the ball must be snapped between the legs to begin play.
 - Kindergarten and 1st-3rd grade players may use the side snap.
- Before handing off or passing, the quarterback must have complete possession of the ball.
- **Running the Football**
 - The person who receives the snap from the center (under-center or shotgun) is considered the quarterback and cannot run the ball across the line of scrimmage.
 - A pitch from the quarterback can be executed immediately after the snap or on a delay (similar to the option play without the quarterback being able to advance the football).
 - The quarterback is the only player who can make the pitch. The pitch can occur at any time while behind the line of scrimmage.
 - Once the pitch is received, the ball carrier can run the ball, hand-off the ball (behind the line of scrimmage) or pass the ball (halfback pass).

RULES UNIQUE TO CENTRAL SPORTS CONT'D

- **Running the Football (cont'd)**
 - Direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are legal. Multiple handoffs may be used. After the ball crosses the line of scrimmage, handoffs and laterals are not permitted.
 - The 5 yards leading toward the goal line and the 5 yards leading to the midfield first-down line are NO-RUN ZONES. The no-run zones do not apply to the Kindergarten division. Plays beginning in the no-run zones must have a pass beyond the line of scrimmage.
 - A player receiving a handoff or pitch can pass the ball (halfback pass) from behind the line of scrimmage.
 - A ball carrier may not dive. A dive will result in a penalty.
 - The ball carrier's feet determine the spot of the football when a flag is pulled, not the location of the football.
- **Receiving the Football**
 - All 6 or 7 players are eligible to receive passes. The quarterback becomes eligible after a handoff or pitch.
 - A completion consists of a receiver gaining control of the football while having at least one foot in bounds.
 - If a player catches a pass with his knee(s) on the ground, the play is dead and the ball is spotted at the point of the completion.
 - All forward passes can be completed behind or beyond the line of scrimmage. Only one forward pass can be completed per play. However, while in the no-run zones, all forward passes must be completed beyond the line of scrimmage. Once the ball leaves the quarterback's hand, the defender can make a play on the ball. The defender must avoid contact with the receiver.
 - The quarterback has 7 seconds to throw a pass. If a pass is not thrown within 7 seconds, it is treated as an incomplete pass (loss of down). A handoff or pitch will end the 7-second pass count.
- **Dead Balls**
 - Play is ruled dead when one of the following occurs:
 - The ball carrier's flag is pulled or falls out.
 - The ball carrier steps out of bounds.
 - The ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
 - A touchdown or safety is scored.
 - A pass falls incomplete.
 - At the point of an interception. When the defense intercepts a pass, the play is whistled dead, and possession changes at that spot.

RULES UNIQUE TO CENTRAL SPORTS CONT'D

- **Dead Balls (cont'd)**
 - The ball hits the ground as a fumble. The ball will be spotted at the point of the fumble with 2 exceptions.
 1. Center/quarterback exchange.
 - a. If a snap is mishandled, the quarterback (and ONLY the quarterback) may pick up the ball and continue play. If a defender gets to the ball before the quarterback, the play is ruled dead and the ball is spotted at the point of the fumble (treated like a sack). This defender begins the play 7 yards off the line of scrimmage.
 2. In your own end zone.
 - a. If the ball is fumbled in your own end zone the person who fumbled the ball, and only that person, can pick up the ball and continue the play. However, if the ball is fumbled by anyone except the quarterback, the 7-yard defense rush rule will no longer be in effect. If the defense touches the ball first, a safety will be called (treated as a sack).
- **Defense Basics**
 - Teams may play man-to-man, zone defenses or combination of both.
 - Interceptions may not be returned. Change of possession will be awarded at the point of the interception.
 - Interceptions made in the end zone will result in a touchback and the ball will be spotted at the 5-yard line.
- **Rushing the Passer**
 - All players who are rushing the quarterback must begin 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage. Before each snap, the referee will designate the 7-yard rush line.
 - With the 4th – 6th grade division, any number of players may rush the quarterback. The 1st - 3rd grade division may only rush one defender.
 - Defenders not rushing the quarterback may line up on or off the line of scrimmage. In the Kindergarten, three defenders must line up 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage.
 - Once the ball is handed off or pitched, the 7-yard rule is no longer in effect, and all defenders may cross the line of scrimmage to pursue the ball carrier.

PENALTIES

- **Defense**
 - Encroachment: The penalty is 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and REPLAY OF DOWN.
 - Illegal Rush
 - Enforced when players start rushing from inside the 7-yard rush line.
 - The penalty is 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and REPLAY OF DOWN.

PENALTIES (CONT'D)

- Interference
 - The penalty is 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and an AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN.
- Illegal contact
 - Pulling the jersey, holding, blocking, pushing.
 - The penalty is 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and an AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN.
- Illegal flag pull
 - Before the receiver catches the football.
 - The penalty is 10 yards from the line of scrimmage and an AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN.
- Diving
 - Diving toward the ball carrier to pull a flag
 - The penalty is 10 yards from the spot of the foul and an AUTOMATIC FIRST DOWN.
- **Offense**
 - Illegal motion
 - More than one person moving.
 - The penalty is 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and REPLAY OF DOWN.
 - Illegal formation
 - Not enough men on the line of scrimmage.
 - The penalty is 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and REPLAY OF DOWN.
 - Illegal pass
 - A pass is thrown after the ball carrier has crossed the line of scrimmage
 - The penalty is 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and a LOSS OF DOWN.
 - Delay of game
 - The penalty is 5 yards from the line of scrimmage and REPLAY OF DOWN.
 - Flag guarding
 - Intentional or unintentional use of the arm to prevent the flag from being pulled.
 - The penalty is 5 yards from the spot of the foul and a LOSS OF DOWN.
 - Illegal use of the hands
 - stiff-arming, blocking
 - The penalty is 10 yards from the spot of the foul and a LOSS OF DOWN.
 - Diving
 - Diving toward the end zone or first down.
 - The penalty is 10 yards from the spot of the foul and a LOSS OF DOWN.

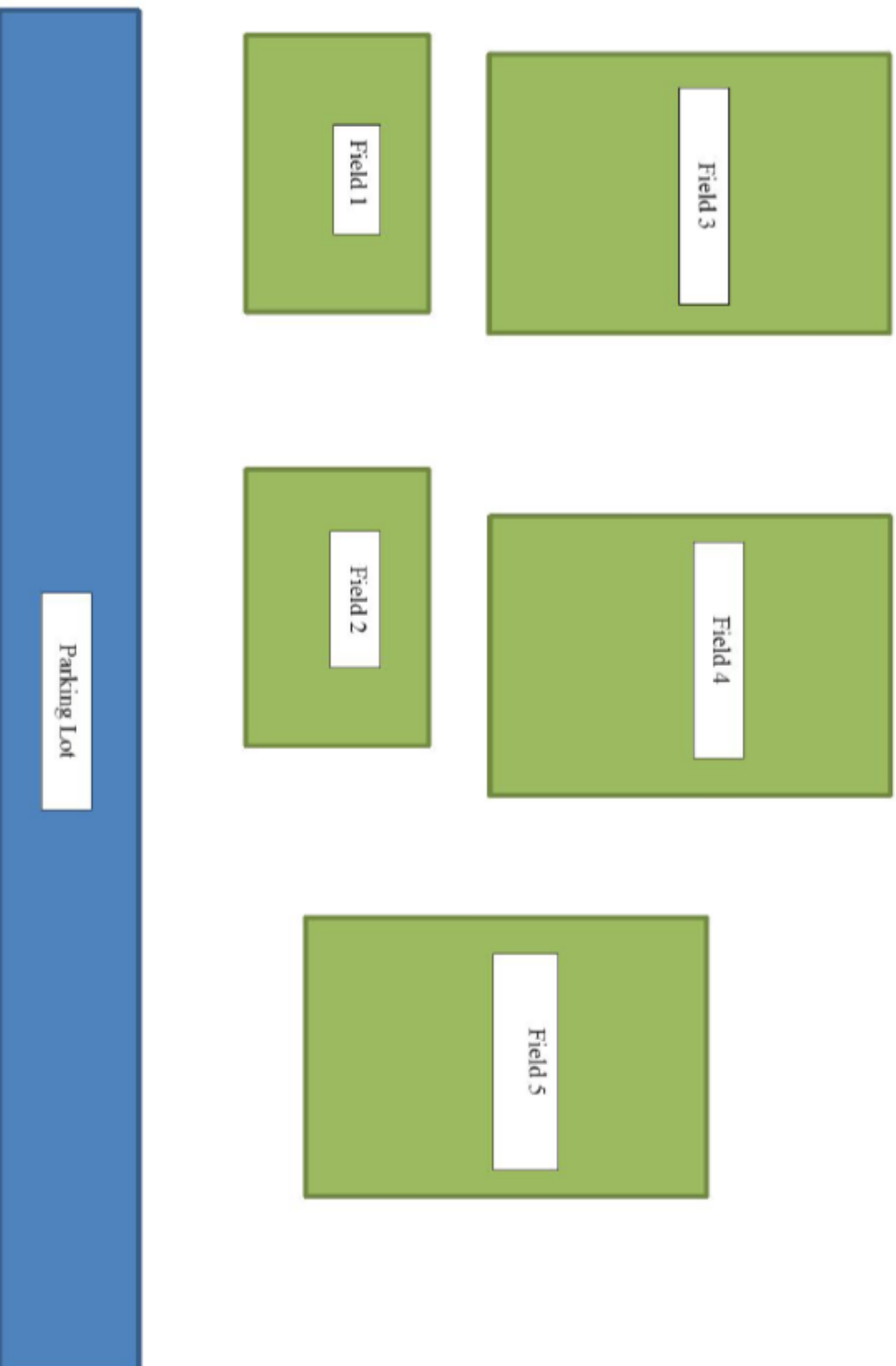
SUBSTITUTIONS

- This substitution system is designed to provide every player an equal opportunity for improvement. The substitution system ensures that:
 - No player sits out more than one quarter at a time.
 - Every player plays offense and defense in every game.
 - Coaches are not able to make unfair substitutions or be accused of doing so.
 - Coaches do not have to monitor playing time for each player.
 - Playing time for all players is virtually even over the course of the season.

END OF YEAR MEDALS

- At the end of the season, each player will receive an award for their strength to the team or improvement for the season.
 - This is not to recognize an MVP; it is to highlight each player's skill throughout the season instead of giving an award at the end of each game.
 - Each medal represents a different skill or characteristic. Please choose one of the following skills for each player. The same award can be given to multiple players.
 - Character, Offense, Defense, Passing, Receiving, Hustle, Sportsmanship, Leadership, Effort, and Encourager

Elmo Weedon Rd.



Week 1 - "GETTING ACQUAINTED"

Purpose: Get to know your players, showing them interest and concern.

At the beginning of practice, play The Name Game.

- 1) Have each player give his/her name and tell you the athlete they would most like to be and why.
- 2) You, the coach, now try to go around and name each of the players and the athlete he wants to be like – this may be challenging.
- 3) Have each player go around and try to name all the players with the athlete's name.

During a water break, find out from your players:

- Where they go to school
- Whether they have brothers and sisters
- What they like to do in their free time

Tell them a snippet of your story – you will do more of this throughout the season. This would include:

- Where you grew up
- Where you went to school
- Whether you have brothers and sisters
- What you liked to do in your free time when you were their age

Week 2 – “LOOK AHEAD!”

Purpose: *To see the importance of growth.*

Flag Football Skill

- Running to avoid defenders.

Drill you can use:

1. Open Field Tackling Drill.
 - Running between cones and attempting to avoid a defender.
2. Running/Defending Drill: Banana Drill
 - This drill helps teach the importance of taking good angles as a defender, and makes you aware of the sideline as a runner.

Development Goals

- Teach better open field techniques both offensively and defensively.

Coaching Points

- Set up 2 cones about 5 yards apart, one on the sideline, and one 5 yards in from there.
- Run a toss play to the outside and tell the runners they must run through those 2 cones. Have a defender on the other side attempting to pull the runners flag.
- Be sure to stress proper pursuit from the defender (chasing their inside hip) and stress the importance of knowing where the defender is to the runner.

Progressions

- Start slow, telling kids to run at half speed to get the drill down. After several minutes you can speed up, coach common mistakes and praise good habits. Also feel free to switch sides after having gone one way for a certain amount of reps.

Life Principle

- God wants us to make plans that honor Him, and then work hard to do them! God believes in us and even when things seem really hard, impossible even, God can help us through.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- Imagine a running back who just ran with his head down the whole game. (Feel free to demonstrate) What would happen? (look for them to answer something like: *He'd get tackled. He'd look funny. Etc.*)
- So what do we want to do? We want to look ahead while we're running. We want to see the whole field, and that's what God wants for us too. If we just go through life looking right in front of us, we'll miss all the things that are around us and all the amazing plans God has for us!
- Setting goals is a part of our lives too. How many of your schools make you set goals at the

beginning of the year? (Ask what some of those goals were)

- How does it feel when you accomplish those goals?
- What are some ways that we can set goals for this season? (Try to avoid goals like winning every game, instead go for improvement in an area, or having fun playing football).
- Yeah! Let's work hard to achieve those goals this season!

Biblical Truth

- God had a plan for Nehemiah, and he set a goal to finish building the wall in 52 days. And he did it with God's help!

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- Nehemiah was sad for God's people because they weren't safe. Their wall had been broken down by invaders (please demonstrate your best busting down walls kick) and they were left defenseless. Nehemiah made a plan and asked the king for permission to go and rebuild the wall and the king let him.
- Nehemiah 2:17b-19 says, "Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and end this disgrace! Then I told them about how gracious hand of God had been on me, and about my conversation with the king. They replied at once, "Yes let's rebuild the wall!" So, they began the good work."
- They were happy that they were going to rebuild the wall and that God was going to help them. The plan was glorifying to God and He was going to be with them the entire time. While they were rebuilding the wall, many people tried to stop them, but because God was with them, they got it done in record time.
- Solomon had this to say in Proverbs, "The plans of people who work hard succeed." Proverbs 21:5a
 - Is it always easy to keep going when something gets hard? No. It's easy to quit and never try again, but that's not what God tells us to do. He wants us to keep trying, and get better.
 - Even when we feel like we can't keep going, we have to remember those goals we set. We have to remember to keep our eyes up and not let them go down. When we get sad our eyes usually go down to the ground, but we have to keep them up in those hard times and keep on pressing forward through the hard times and look for God.

Week 3 – DON'T QUIT!

Purpose – To teach players the importance of never giving up.

Flag Football Skill

- Passing

Drills you can use

1. Pair up and throw back and forth. Have the team throw in a circle with someone in the middle trying to intercept it.
2. Passing Drill: Progressive Passing
 - Have your players pair off and stand about 5-10 yds apart (depending upon age).
 - Have them start on their knees to pass back and forth with one another. Be sure you're focusing on the way that they are finishing the throw. You want their thumb to be down at the end of the throw. Stress that, even having them hold it for a second at the end of the throw. Also, be sure to watch for releases above the ear; this is a bad habit, built from feeling like they have to throw it high to get it far.
 - Walk around and make corrections when necessary and praise whenever possible. If you have an odd number of kids, throw with one, and go down the row, helping those as you see them.
 - After a few minutes, have them stand up, take a 3-step drop, and then take a 5-step drop. Have the person who catches the ball tuck it like they are going to run after every catch as well.

Comments - (Make age appropriate.)

- Throwing is something that can take a lot of time and practice to get good at. How many of you watch football? Who's your favorite quarterback? (Wait for answers) Do you think the first time _____ picked up a football and could throw a spiral 50 yards without ever practicing?
- What were some things you learned today about throwing? (Thumb being down? Don't release above the ear?) What about catching? (Keep an eye on the ball, and tuck it every time I catch it? Form a diamond for the QB to pass into?)
- Do you feel like you got better the more you threw? Why/Why not? How can we focus on getting better for the rest of practice?

Life Principle

- Staying committed to things is the only way to get better. (Make age appropriate.)
- Have you ever felt excited to do something at first and then lost interest later? Why?

- Why do we get frustrated when things don't go our way? We want to be good at everything we do the first time we do it, but that's not the way things usually go. We have to be patient and willing to work at things that are hard. Kind of like what we talked about last week.
- If you pass for an hour at practice once a week, you're going to get better. You can't just practice during the season and then not touch a football for 10 months and expect to be just as good as when you were practicing.
- Commitment is the state or quality of being dedicated to a cause, activity, etc. It's when you stick to something no matter how hard it might be.
- Just like we have to stay committed to practicing for football, we have to stay committed to other things in life too. Like doing our homework, doing our chores, and being nice to our siblings even when they take our toys. We have to stay committed to doing what God says even during those times.
- What are some ways that you can commit even when it's hard this week? (Doing your homework because you know you need to instead of playing video games. Practicing your throwing/running that we've worked on, etc)

Biblical Truth

- "And may you commit your lives completely to the Lord our God. May you live by His rules. May you obey his commands." 1 Kings 8:61a

Comments - (Make age appropriate.)

- Solomon was a really smart guy in the Bible. Other than Jesus/God he was the smartest! At first, Solomon really wanted to be a good king and do what God told him to do. However, after a while, Solomon lost interest in doing things God's way. More and more, Solomon did things his own way. Do you think this made Solomon the best king he could be? Why or why not? Who knows better Solomon or God?
- Sometimes, we're like Solomon and think we know better than God. Even I do at times, and I have to remember that God is smarter/wiser than me. What does God do when we do our own thing instead of doing things his way? He keeps on loving us on anyway. God is good and fair and treats us with kindness and forgiveness. Because we don't always do things God's way, God sent His son, Jesus, to do things God's way for us. Then Jesus gave his own life for ours so we could be with our Heavenly Father. Romans 5:10 says, "So since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his son." God will always stick with you. How can you stick with him?

Week 4 - "SNATCH! THAT! FLAG!"

Purpose – Understand the importance of having confidence in themselves and in God.

Flag Football Skill

- Pulling flags
 - Mechanics of pulling flags
 - Always go for the pull with two hands. You are much more likely to be successful when going in with two hands than with one.
 - Always break down in front of the runner. It is imperative to be in control when going in to pull a flag.
 - Be sure to watch the hips of the runner. Don't be fooled by their head or their feet. Where their hips go, they will go.

Comments

- So far we have worked on running and passing. Now, it is time to talk about stopping the other team. Because if we can't stop them from scoring, we won't win.
- Today we are going to work on breaking down before we pull the flag.
 - Breaking down is what we do when you are running as fast as you can to pull somebody's flag and you need to get into a good position to get in control.
- Can you pull someone's flag if you're way out of control? No. The runner will just move and you will either run into them or they'll run past you. So we need to chop our feet and make sure we are on our toes.
- Let's practice chopping our feet and being on our toes.

Drill

- Open Field Drill
 - Set up 4 cones to make a fairly sized box. You will have a runner and a defender. Start the two about 10 yards away from each other and make the box wide enough where the runner has the ability to maneuver around the defender. Teach the defender about breaking down and staying in front of the runner instead of lunging for the flags. After they have gotten the hang of it, start the two out on their backs, and blow the whistle to have them get up and then run the drill. This provides a bit more speed depending on who gets up first and how fast.

Life Principle

- We need to have confidence in ourselves and in God.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- How many of you have confidence now that you can pull a flag from someone else? Why? (Look for answers such as, "I just did it!")
- What else are you confident in? That you can do well on your homework? Get along with your siblings? Obey your parents? Why? Because you've done it before.
- What kind of things do you say to yourself when you have confidence? (I can do this. I believe in myself. Etc.)
- How can we have confidence in God? What're some ways God has shown us he can be relied on? (Feel free to share a story from your life)
- Why is it important to have confidence in God? (Shows we trust Him)
- Is it always easy? Why or why not?

Biblical Truth

- God wants us to have confidence in ourselves and Him.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- When we need help, we can be confident God will give us strength and help us in times of trouble. In the Bible, young David needed God's help because Goliath, a 9 ft GIANT, wanted to fight God's people.
- He teased them and made fun of God. How do you think God's people felt about that? (Powerless. Embarrassed)
- Someone needed to do something and so David had confidence in God so he went out to fight him! David had never fought such a big man before, but he had fought bears and wolves with God's help, so he knew that God was going to be there for him against Goliath too.
- David went up to Goliath and said, "This day the Lord will give me victory over you." 1 Samuel 17:46. The king offered David a big sword, and heavy armor, but David said no. He knew all he needed was God and his trusty sling and stones. Then David struck Goliath in the forehead with a stone and killed him. Because David had confidence in God, he was able to do what none of the warriors could do, defeat Goliath. How did David show he had confidence in God?
- Sometimes in your life, you will have troubles that feel very big and hard to handle on your own. Because God's word is true, you can trust that he is always there to help in times of trouble. How does God help you be brave enough to try new things.
- How can you have confidence in God when big and hard things happen?

Week 5 – “SWARM!”

Purpose – To realize the importance of other people in our lives.

Football Skill

- To teach the importance of running to the ball as an entire team.

Drills you can do

1. 2 on 1 “tackling” drill. 2 on 1 “blocking” drill. Swarm drill.

- **Mechanics**
 - Line up in a position on the defense.
 - Have other players line up as an offense.

Today we are going to work on running to the ball as a defense. Everybody should run to the ball as fast as they can, no matter how far away they might be. (Teach angles of where to run when chasing them down at this time)

Comments

- Why should everyone on the defense run to the ball? (More numbers, better odds)
 - What if the ball runs to the other side from where we are? (Still chase them down in case your teammates miss)
 - How can we help each other when we are all trying to get the flag? (Slow the runner down so pulling the flag is easier)
2. Drill – Swarming to the ball
- Run different plays such as runs inside, outside, passes over the middle, passes to the outside, and practice running to the different spots. When the runner/receiver’s flag is pulled, have players chop their feet until the entire defense gets to that spot. Once they are all there, have them all clap, and repeat.
 - Watch to see if they are pulling flags with both hands, breaking down when they are approaching the runner, and correcting/praising them where appropriate.
 - Go quickly through several rounds. Change out defensive personnel.

Life Principle

- We need other peoples’ help in life.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- How many of you were the one to pull the flag EVERY time? (Should be no one)
You needed your teammates to help you right?

- Sometimes in life we think we can do things all on our own, but that is not how life is supposed to be lived. How much easier was it to pull the flags when you had help? Way easier right?
- Was there ever a time you needed help, but didn't want to ask because you wanted to do it by yourself? How'd that go?
- Was there ever a time you needed help, and asked for it? How'd that go? Better or worse than doing it by yourself?
- Why do we want to do things ourselves? (We're proud; we want all the credit.) God didn't design us to do things that way. God designed us to live in community, that means with other people, so that they can help us, and we can help them.

Biblical Truth

- God wants us to ask for help when we need it, and help others when they need it.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- Would you win if you took on a whole team by yourself? (They'll probably answer yes, just roll with it) No probably not, you can't cover everyone on the field at one time, and just like in the drill today, if they all ran at you it'd be hard to get away. You wouldn't be able to snap it to yourself or throw yourself the ball, so it'd be really hard to win by yourself.
- When we play together we have a way better chance of winning. That's how life is too. It's really hard to go through life all by yourself when bad things can happen.
- Ecclesiastes 4:12 says, "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." And Galatians 6:2 says, "Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ."
 - What does it mean to share each other's burdens? (Help each other out)
 - What are some ways that we can share each other's burdens?
- Be thankful for your teammates, and if they mess up, be sure to tell them that they can do it. How can we encourage our teammates?

Week 6 – “DO NOT FEAR”

Purpose – For the players to understand that God is always with them, and is bigger than all of their fears.

Football Skill

- Catching
 - **Mechanics**
 - Make a diamond with your hands. This is the window that the quarterback wants to throw into.
 - Keep your eyes on the ball all the way into your hands.
 - Catch the ball with your fingertips, not with your palms.
 - Place your hands out in front of you. You want to catch the ball with your hands, not with your chest.
 - Tuck the ball after every catch. Get in this habit, so that you are less likely to fumble.
 - Hold the ball against your chest on one side of your body, above your ab section, and below your pecs, keeping your elbow as close to the side of your body. This ensures great ball control with little chance of losing grip because of a defender.
 - Practice this often to make it perfect! Don't ever give up!

Drills you could use

1. Have the players stand across from each other and practice catching the ball with their fingertips, not with their chest.
2. Have the players line up and slowly jog toward you as you toss the ball to them. As they get better, have them speed up, running at you as you toss it to them. (Also, with the older kids, you can have them do 5 pushups for every dropped pass)

Comments during drills - (Make age appropriate.)

- Walk around, making sure that they are catching with proper form.
- When running at you, be sure that they don't stop to catch the ball. Continue running and come to the ball. Do not be afraid of it.

Conclusion

- To be a good football player, you can't be afraid of the ball. The good news is, God will always be with you so you never have to fear. God is bigger than any of our fears, including a ball coming at our face.

Life Principle

- Courage is facing your fears because God is with you.

Comments – (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- There are things in life that we're all afraid of. What does it mean to be brave?
- Sometimes playing football makes you feel afraid, what are some things that make you feel afraid when you play? (Ball hitting you in the face, disappointing your teammates)
- Why don't we have to feel afraid?

Biblical Truth

- God is always with us. He is the ultimate protector.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- "I am the Lord your God. I take hold of your right hand. I say to you, 'Do not be afraid. I will help you.'" Isaiah 41:13

In Bible times, God led his people to a new land that God had promised them. However, when they got to the promised land, there were giants living in the land. God's people were afraid of the people living in the land, so they didn't go in and take it like God had commanded them. Joshua and Caleb tried to convince the people that God was with them, but the people were blinded by their fear. So the people had to wander around for 40 years before they could take the land that was originally promised to them.

- Can you imagine wandering around a wasteland for 40 years?! That's (your age) (X # of times)! All because they were afraid. If they had just trusted God and had courage, then God would've given them the victory. Caleb and Joshua got to go into the promised land 40 years later because they trusted God.
- Feeling afraid can keep you from enjoying something good. What should you do when you feel afraid? Talk about it with God, your parents, and your coach. We are here to help you move past your fears. Suppose you are afraid you won't complete a catch. How can you be brave and move past this fear? Practice extending your arms. Hold your hands in a diamond shape to catch a high ball or a basket shape to catch a low ball. Watch the ball all the way into your hands and absorb the force with soft hands and bent elbows. Quickly lock the ball between your hand, forearm, and elbow and secure it against your body. What good things will happen when you are no longer afraid of completing a catch when the ball is thrown to you?

Week 7 - "LISTEN UP"

Purpose – for the players to learn the importance of a coach.

Football Skill

- To listen to the coach when he tells you what to do. *No particular mechanics or drills*

Comments – (Make age appropriate during practice.)

- What does a coach provide the players on the team? Some possible answers – draw this out:
 - Direction in how to play the game – skills and plays.
 - Direction as to what position for each player to play.
 - Motivation to play.
 - Challenge to get better.
- Why do you think it is important to listen to what the coach has to say? Some possible answers:
 - The coach knows more about the game.
 - The players work together as a team as they follow his instructions, rather than do what they want – such as the positions they play and the plays they call.
- Why wouldn't a player listen to what the coach would say? Some possible answers:
 - The player thought he knew more than the coach.
 - The player thought the coach didn't care about him and his concerns.

Life Principle –

- We need a life coach to follow just like we need a football coach.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- Think back to what a coach provides the players on the team – guidance, motivation, challenge.
- Which of those ideas do you need beyond football and for your daily life at school and at home?
- Who serves as your coach in those activities? (See how they answer this question - parents, teachers, friends)

Biblical Truth

- Jesus wants to be our Life Coach.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- While the people you mentioned for coaching you in your life – parents, teachers, friends – might all be great people who know about life and care about you, they all have one problem. What might that problem be? (*They don't know everything and don't always care perfectly for you.*)
- When you have a bad coach, what do you tend to do as a player? (*Quit listening, following their direction*)
- This is what happens to many of us as we get older and see the problems of letting others coach us – we quit listening.
- But there is one who asks us to follow him as a coach who has complete wisdom about everything and always cares for us. That person is Jesus. He says – his players hear his voice and follow him because they believe that about him – he knows and he cares.
- When he is the head coach, those people you mentioned – your parents and teachers and friends, Jesus doesn't replace them. He makes them like assistant coaches.
- So just as you have learned about football from your coaches, Jesus wants us to learn from him about life. He says, "I have come that my players may have life and life to the full."
- So when you think of Jesus, think of him as a coach. When you need guidance and motivation and challenge in life, think of his offer to come and be on his team and follow him.

Week 8 - "OVER AND OVER"

Purpose – For the players to understand the importance of consistency.

Football Skill

- Speed

Drills

1. High knees/ladders, carioca/grapevine, buttkicks, "A"-skips.
2. High to Low
 - Have 4 cones set up in a straight line. Have players sprint to the 3rd cone, stop, backpedal to the 2nd cone, and sprint through the 4th cone. Then go to the back of the line.
 - This drill works on change of pace and teaches that they can't stand straight up when backpedaling like they can when sprinting.
 - Also teaches them to be in control to come to a stop after sprinting.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- Keep your head high when you're sprinting, and keep your head low when you're backpedaling.
- Use proper running form when doing both of these. Don't let your arms cross your body, hands should be open, they should go from your hip, to your ear.
- Run under control. Don't run to where you can't stop because what if you need to change directions?
- Have you ever gotten tired of doing a drill?

Life Principle

- Doing things over and over is how you get better at them.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- Farmers grow food from seeds. They water and pull out the weeds over, and over, and over, and over again. Finally, they get a good harvest after they do this process every single day.
 - It's good to care for the crops because it helps them grow lots of good food. Sometimes the sun is hot and the farmer gets tired of watering and pulling weeds. What would happen if the farmer stopped watering and pulling weeds?

Biblical Truth

- "Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don't give up." Galatians 6:9

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- God wants us to do good. What're some good things does God want us to do? (Love, comfort, help, forgive, tell people about him, etc)
- Have you ever gotten tired of doing good things? Why?
- Sometimes we get tired of helping with chores. Sometimes we get tired of using kind words like "please" and "thank you" What would happen if you stopped being helpful and kind?
 - We would miss the chance to make others feel good. We would miss the chance to make their life better. We would miss the chance for God to shine his blessings on us.
- Can you think of some things he has told us to do? (*See what they come up with*)
- It feels good to be able to run fast and help the team. It feels good to be kind and help people. How can you keep doing good even when you get tired? When the coach asks you to practice something again, what will you do? When someone needs help what will you do?

Week 9 - "EYES ON THE BALL"

Purpose – Players to learn to keep their eyes on Jesus.

Football Skill

- Discovering the importance of focusing on the ball.
- *No particular drill or mechanic involved. All receiving/defensive drills are about keeping your eyes on the ball.*

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- Focus on the ball, don't get distracted by everyone else.
- Why is it important to focus on the ball?
- What happens if we take our eyes off the ball?

Life Principle

- We have to focus on God and not get distracted by the deception of life.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- What happens if you're cleaning your room and you see your PlayStation/Xbox? Do you want to clean your room anymore? Why or why not?
- You took your eyes off what you were doing and got distracted by the PlayStation/Xbox.

Biblical Truth

- If we take our eyes off of God, our lives go downhill.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- What does it mean to set our eyes on God?
- Why doesn't God want us to get distracted?
- Why does Satan work so hard to distract us with things?
- God wants us to focus on Him because He knows best. He has the best plan for our lives, but when we get distracted by things of this world, we can't fulfill God's plan.
- Hebrews 12:1-2a says, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith."

- We cannot get distracted by sin that trips us up. We have to show God in our actions and in our words when we live. Praise God that we don't have to fear Satan or anything like what we talked about last week. We know that God is always with us and He will protect us. James 4:7 says, "Humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Week 10 - "VICTORY"

Purpose – For the players to learn what it means to win in life.

Football Skill

- Discovering that winning is more than the score on the scoreboard.
- *No particular Drill or Mechanics*

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- How do we determine the winner? (Who scored more points?)
- Who came up with this method of determining the winner? (*The inventors of the game of football*)
- Is the score the only way to figure out who wins and loses? See if there are any other ideas – ask these specific questions:
 1. What if you played a team much better than you and played really well, almost beating them. Did you lose?
 2. What if you played a team much worse than you and beat them really well. Did you win?
- Imagine: The Championship Game. Would you rather play a horrible game and win, or play the game of your life and lose?
 - Being a winner is much more than just who scores the most points.
 - From the first practice, I have asked you to give yourself to what I say. You are a winner if you do it with all of your heart, and you give your all, regardless of the score.
 - Why? Because you pleased God with your effort.
 - This is the most important part of winning, not the score on the scoreboard.

Life Principle

- Winning in life is determined by more than the score.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- How do you know if you are winning in life? Just like you look to the scoreboard in a game, so we look to scoreboards in life. What is the scoreboard at school? (*Grades, accomplishments there*).
- How about at home? That is a little tougher. What do you think is the scoreboard in your family? (*See what they say - interesting to see what they say – I would imagine it will be some things like “make good grades, cooperate with mom & dad/family” but interesting to see. Some may think there is no score. If they have a difficult time answering, this illustrates the idea.*)
- Do you notice the difference in our answers? Which one is right? How do we know the best or right answer to what is the score in life?

- Go back to football, where I said pleasing God is the biggest part of winning. Pleasing your God in life is the biggest part of winning, not the score on the scoreboard.

Biblical Truth

- God has made it clear that when we please God we are winners in life.

Comments - (Make age appropriate. During practice.)

- Let's go back to football for a moment. Who determines what it means to score? (*inventor of the game*).
- So who determines what it means to score in life? The inventor of life. Who is that? God.
- Just like the inventor of football, God has told us what it means to score in life.
- He did this in the Scriptures.
- If you were to sum all that up, it would be: to score in life, to be a winner in life, is to live in a way that pleases God. That makes him happy.
- How do we do that? By obeying what he has said to do in life.
- Can you think of some things he has told us to do? (*See what they come up with*)
- Doing these things makes him happy.
- When we make him happy, we score in life, and we are winners. That is why the apostle Paul says, "I make it my goal to please God." (2 Corinthians 5:9) In 1 Corinthians 10:31, he tells us "Whatever you do, do it all to make God happy." (My translation)
- Now obeying one thing makes him happier than all the rest – that is to believe in his Son, Jesus Christ, the one who offers to be our coach.
 - To believe that you need him as your coach.
 - To believe that he is perfect in his wisdom to coach you.
 - To believe that he is perfect in his care for his players and you.
 - To believe that he demonstrated that love and perfection when he died and rose again.
- If you have never accepted Jesus' offer to be your coach and would like to do so, then follow me as I pray. (*Pray a prayer that says you believe these things about yourself and Jesus and want him to be your coach*). If you prayed that prayer, would you tell me. I would like to celebrate with you.