



# HEADS UP TACKLING<sup>SM</sup>

## TACKLE PROGRESSION

## DEFINITION

STEP 1

### BREAKDOWN



The foundational starting point for all movements and drills.

STEP 2

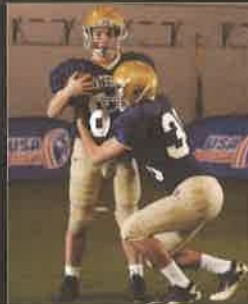
### BUZZ



Technique for coming to balance and regaining breakdown position prior to contact.

STEP 3

### HIT



Correct body posture at moment of impact for safer tackling. Head and eyes are up using the front of shoulder as point of contact.

STEP 4

### SHOOT



The opening of the hips to generate power and create an ascending tackle.

STEP 5

### RIP



With head to the side and out of contact, throw double uppercuts and 'grab cloth' on the back of jersey to secure the tackle.



# HEADS UP TACKLING DRILLS



## BREAKDOWN POSITION

- a) Knees bent, feet shoulder-width apart, upper body in a 45-degree forward lean, chin up and over the toes and weight on the balls of your feet (not your toes).
- b) Players must be able to re-gather themselves in a Breakdown Position when buzzing feet
- c) Teach progression:  
Feet → Squeeze → Sink → Hands

### NOTES

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# HEADS UP TACKLING DRILLS



## BUZZ

- a) Come to balance.
- b) Take quick, choppy, heel-to-toe steps to bring the body under control while continuing to gain ground toward the ball-carrier.
- c) One the defender is within “striking distance” of the ball-carrier, the defender buzzes his feet while widening his base and sinking his hips.

## NOTES

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# HEADS UP TACKLING DRILLS



## HIT POSITION

- a) After closing to the ball-carrier, the final step is a short downhill power step.
- b) Have a bend in both knees. With your back foot directly under your hips.
- c) Head and eyes up, shoulders square to contact.

## NOTES

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# HEADS UP TACKLING DRILLS



## SHOOT POSITION

- a) Forcefully explode your hips open and upward.
- b) Using the larger muscle groups of the lower body produces a powerful tackle.
- c) To finish the tackle, continue to drive your legs while working up and through opponents.

### NOTES

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# HEADS UP TACKLING DRILLS



## RIP

- a) Upper body movement to secure tackle.
- b) Forcefully club both arms in an upper-cut motion: "Thumbs up and elbows down."
- c) After the Rip, secure the tackle by "grabbing cloth" (the back of the ball-carrier's jersey); you should have your elbows tight to ball-carrier's sides.

## NOTES

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# HEADS UP TACKLING DRILLS



## STEP-OVER TACKLE

- a) Putting the 5 fundamentals together.
- b) Using Bags for soft contact introduction.
- c) Close the space, Buzz the feet, Hit Position, Shoot and Rip the tackle.
- d) Horizontal bag forces Rip.

### NOTES

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# HEADS UP TACKLING DRILLS



## POP-UP TACKLE

- a) Putting the 5 fundamentals together.
- b) Using Bags for soft contact introduction.
- c) Close the space, Buzz the feet, Hit Position, Shoot and Rip the tackle.
- d) Vertical bag introduces “body-like target” – technical check: Rip vs Wrap.

### NOTES

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# DRILLS

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. Step-Over Tackle
2. Pop-Up Tackle

## BASICS

1. Straight-On Tackle
2. Angle Tackle
3. Lane Tackle
4. Open Field Tackle

## INTRODUCTION TO CONTACT

1. One Foot Tackle
2. Freeze Tackle

## FIX/FOCUS

1. Leverage Tackle
2. Three Rips
3. Grapple Tackle
4. Finish Tackle
5. Bag Series



# TACKLE CIRCUIT

## Integrate this period into your Practice Plan

- ⌚ Tackling and Blocking are the most important all-player skills
- ⌚ Separate periods convey importance
- ⌚ Teams that tackle and block well are competitive

## Basics

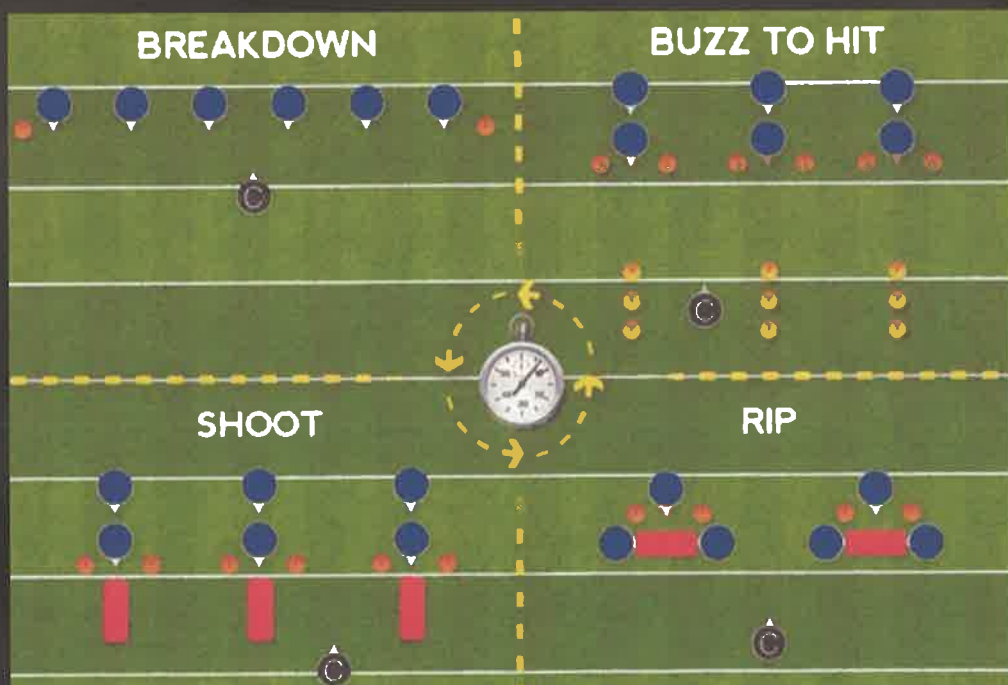
10-20 minutes every practice

Multiple stations

- Maximize # of reps
- Small groups=individual attention
- At least one coach per station

Change levels of contact

- Air, Bags, Control, Thud
- Keep youngsters on their feet





# TACKLE CIRCUIT

## Programming

### EARLY SEASON

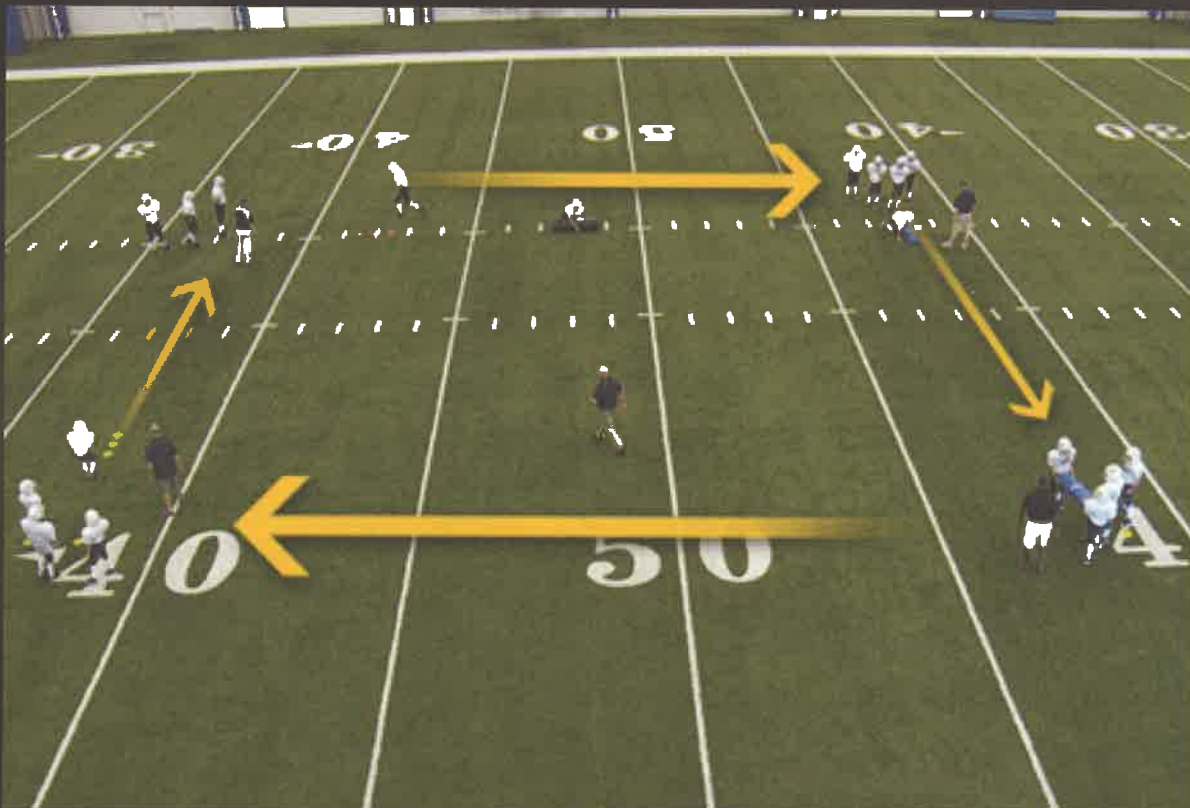
- Follow skill progression
- Same skill all stations
- Instill circuit to create habit
- Acclimate using Levels of contact

### IN-SEASON

- Different drills at each station
- Focus on multiple skills per session
- In-week contact guidelines
- Seasonal control of contact

### TROUBLESHOOTING

- Why players/teams miss tackles?
  - Use drill that teaches THAT fundamental
  - Part-To-Whole



WHAT YOUR COACHES, PLAYERS, AND PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT:

# HEADS UP TACKLING

- Using proper verbiage for a safer, more positive game
- Helping players and parents become more confident when contact occurs
- Using levels of contact in practice
- The 5 fundamentals of Heads Up Tackling
- Applying the 5 fundamentals to other tackle drill

## NOTES

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