

Defensive Line Drills





Defensive Line Drill Library

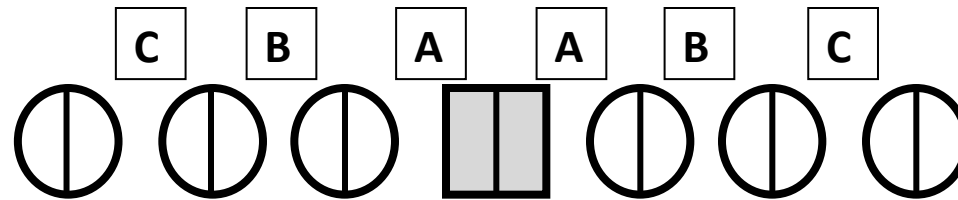
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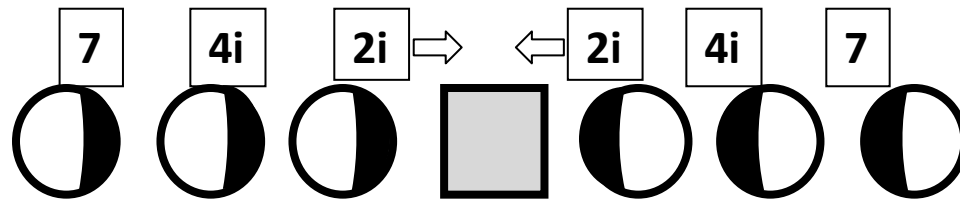


Alignment Assessment Drill

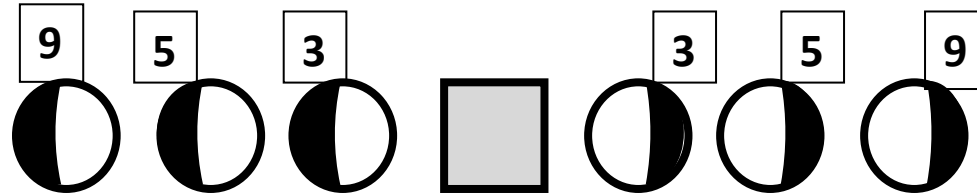
Gap Identification



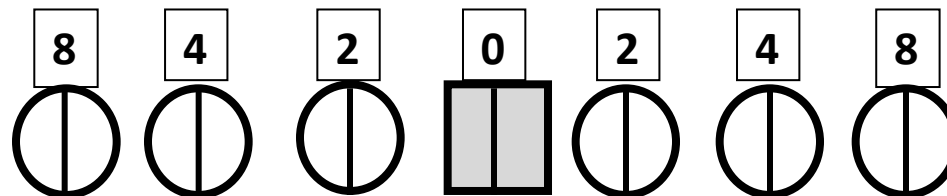
Inside Defensive Alignments



Outside Defensive Alignments



Head Up Defensive Alignments





Common Errors

1. **Lack of total effort - trying to save yourself for the fourth quarter. By that time, it doesn't matter.**
2. **Guessing - not playing what you see because you "think" they are going to do something else.**
3. **Trying to make a tackle or big play without first defeating primary blocker.**
4. **Giving up if picked by a second blocker.**
5. **Not being prepared for quick count.**
6. **Giving up when you think the play is over and not going until the whistle blows.**
7. **Wearing unnecessary pads, bandages, tape, etc., that hinder rather than help a performance.**
8. **Anticipating the snap count.**
9. **Appearing tired, out of shape or dragging your body on or off the field.**
10. **Not Playing White Hawks Football.**



DL Tips

- 1. Always line up with your feet well underneath you so that you are ready to fight pressure from any direction. The only thing that overrides the first sentence is; pass only responsibility, this can elongate a defensive lineman's stance.**
- 2. Always concentrate on the man nearest you, for he is the man who can block you first.**
- 3. Never raise up to look for the ball carrier, for the blocker will tell you where the ball is going.**
- 4. Always keep your back parallel with the ground and you then become very difficult to block.**
- 5. Do not go to the ground, but if you do so, get back up quickly. A football player's ability can be equated by the amount of time he spends on the ground.**
- 6. In defeating the trap, first, know who is going to trap you. Secondly, use your head to get to an "anti-trap" position. As you turn to play the trap, keep your head on your side of the L.O.S. and you will never be trapped. If you get too much penetration, then spin back inside.**
- 7. Never allow a blocker to get into your legs, for if he does you will go down, and on pass this is a cardinal sin.**



9 Ways to Force Fumbles

1. Put your face across the ball as you make the tackle; even if you do not accomplish your objective, you are still in a good position to bring the runner down.
2. If you are the second or third man in on a tackle, go for the football. This applies when the first tackler has stopped the ball carriers momentum.
3. If you are being contained by a blocker and cannot get a good shot at the runner, reach out for the football with both hands. Actually tackle the ball with both hands.
4. If you are approaching the runner from behind and tackling him high, you can sometimes club the ball loose by bringing the arm closest to the football over the top.
5. If you are approaching the runner from behind and you are the second or third man, go for the elbow. A lifting action on the elbow will sometimes force the runner to fumble. The ball carrier cannot maintain control of the football with a lifting motion on the elbow.
6. When rushing the quarterback, force fumbles by stripping and hard tackling, this is effective when he is back pedaling. Linebackers who get in quickly are in good position to force fumbles in this manner.
7. Keep in mind the ball carriers and receivers who are apt to fumble. Try to know the characteristics of each. By way of illustration, a runner who is the type that spins, pivots, and twists a lot is the type who leaves himself open to allow you to force a fumble.
8. The best method of all to force fumbles is to gang tackle. Hitting a runner from different angles will often dislodge the football. In addition, it will take something out of the runner.
9. There are times when defensive backs can force fumbles due to the type of pass thrown. A technique that is very effective is to club the catch hand of the receiver after the catch has been made. The catch hand is the farthest hand away from the quarterback.



Pass Rush Moves 1

Bull Rush

Used as a strong surge over the outside shoulder of an offensive blocker. The bull rush is used versus linemen who lack strength or pass set inside to much. This is an all out attempt to whip your man physically, and must be your first technique because it sets the offensive man up for all other escape moves.

1. Designing Your Bull Rush Drills:
2. No head fakes, pulls or throws, but simple power thrust and get the offensive blocker on his heels.
3. Once getting the blocker on his heels, force the blocker back into the quarterback.
4. Drive your forehead through the throat or chin of the offensive blocker, then with both hands punch through his numbers in an upward movement.
5. Defensive lineman must keep his pads underneath the blocker.

Butt and Rip

Technique used whereby the defensive lineman drives his face mask to a point just above the blocker's numbers with the hands grabbing both shoulder points. The rusher will drive forward working blocker up and back in an attempt to over power him. Once the rusher has the blocker off balance he will rip and explode to quarterback.

Punch, Shoulder Club & Rip

Same as the punch and shoulder club except the rusher will now rip with the offside shoulder and arm. Used to stop the feet of blocker, then work a side to the quarterback.

Club and Rip

Rusher must get off quick and force blocker to move his feet and turn his shoulders. The rusher's aiming point must be an imaginary shoulder wider than the pressure point. Once rusher gets close enough he will execute a club and rip technique in an attempt to break down the angles of the blocker's shoulders then explode to the quarterback.

Club and Turn

Use Jet technique from a three point stance, driving the heel of the hand on the side of your first step into the shoulder of the blocker, simultaneously grabbing the blocker's opposite arm above the elbow with the other hand, turning the blocker away from you, while continuing your charge around the blocker to the quarterback.

Rip Through

Release the inside hand, pulling with the outside hand and arm, turning the shoulders of the blocker. Dip and rip with the inside arm and leg. Must get shoulder in the armpit of the blocker, rip the inside arm to the sky. Defender must get his hip past the blockers hip, roll the hips through while ripping the inside arm to the sky.

Punch Shoulder, Club & Swim

It is the same as the punch and shoulder club except the rusher will now swim over with offside arm after the shoulder club. Use this technique when you want to force offensive blocker to stop his feet. You should be able to beat him to the side.



Pass Rush Moves 2

Inside Crossover

You use this technique when an offensive lineman has taken away your outside Go or Jet. The object of this rush is to take advantage of the offensive blockers over compensation to stop the outside jet move.

1. Drill Technique
2. Explode off the football.
3. Take Jet angle outside.
4. Turn sharp inside and drive helmet for outside shoulder of offensive blocker.
5. Crash inside shoulder so blocker will compensate with body weight.
6. Drive inside shoulder through outside number of offensive blocker's chest. Inside arm should be in a drag arm position as outside hand grabs jersey.
7. Drive up field in a pinching manner destroying blocker.
8. Pull outside shoulder out and back as inside arm clubs inside shoulder of blocker. Bring outside arm over as you cross over. Club backside of blocker with outside hand as you release to sack quarterback.

Punch and Shoulder Club

Technique whereby the defensive lineman will punch the offside shoulder of the blocker then club the onside shoulder of the blocker in an attempt to get blocker off balance. Coaching point - The punch must occur on the 1st step. Use this technique when you want to stop an offensive blocker and then work a side.

Jab Step and Throw

Jab step forward under control, making contact with your hands on the blocker's shoulders. Push off with your inside foot, sliding laterally and forward to the outside of the blocker while throwing him off to the inside with your hands. Continue your pass rush past the blocker to the quarterback.

Note: Any combination of the above techniques can be used. The defensive lineman must adopt a combination that most suits his abilities.

Swim Over

Same as rip through, but your inside arm will come over the top of the blocker's shoulder, as if punching the quarterback. Must bring arm over quickly, with elbow landing on kidney area of the back, this keeps the blocker from wheeling on the pass rusher. Emphasize tight hip to the blocker and must get the inside hip past the blocker when making the swim move. Never stop your feet from moving up field when making any type of counter move.

Break and Rip

This move is used to counter a late lock out by the blocker, strike down through the outside arm of the blocker with the inside hand and arm. Possible rip or swim move. It is important to keep a good grip on the outside shoulder of the blocker while driving up field, the key is to keep the tip of the shoulder pad pulled down the outside hand, because the blocker can't square up on the defender



Pass Rush Moves 3

Tricep Break

This move is a change up to the break and rip and is used to counter an early lock out by the blocker, break the tricep in a sweeping sideways motion with the forearm of your outside arm, must get the blockers shoulders turned. Continue with rip action

Jet Speed

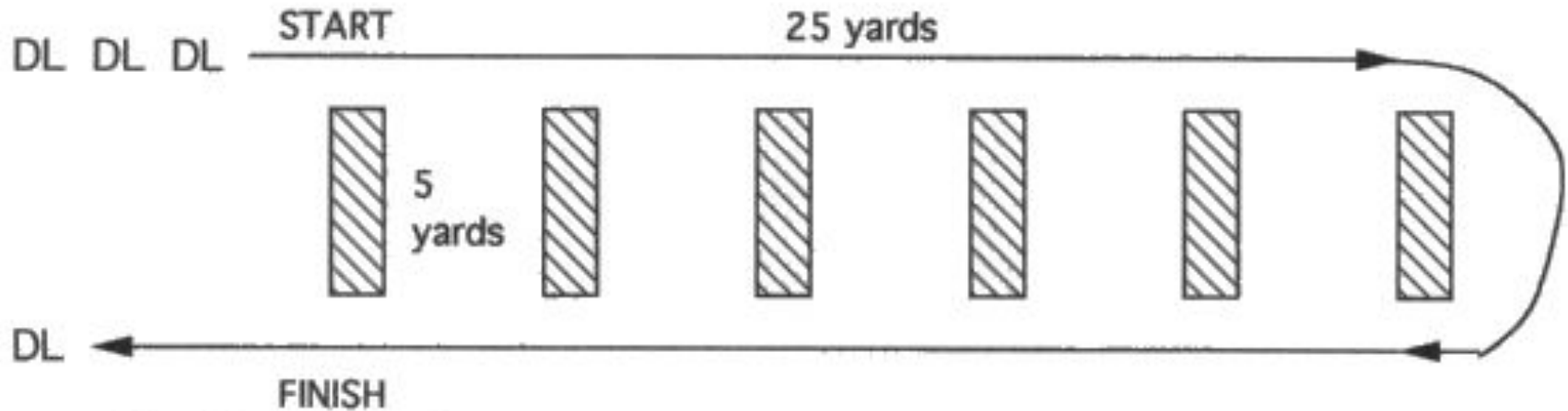
Jet or speed moves usually occur with pass situations, when no run responsibility exists and designed to out run the blocker who sets inside to much, has slow footwork or crosses over to engage the rusher.

1. It is to your advantage to widen the alignment of the defender slightly and drive directly up field to avoid immediate contact with the blocker. Have the defender sprint to a predetermined point and attempt to defeat your opponent's poor footwork and quickness.
2. The key is to get the blocker running up field so he attempts to push you past the quarterback, get his weight shifted out past his base, this makes him very susceptible to an inside move. Align in a 3 point stance with the majority of the weight on the down hand.
3. Feet should be staggered but not to the extent that you can't gain ground on your first step. A quick head fake inside on the initial move is often effective.
4. Base should be narrow. Hips should be higher than your shoulders with your eyes fixed on the pressure point. Crash outside shoulder so blocker must compensate with body weight.
5. Drive the inside shoulder through blockers outside shoulder. Take all the ball you can and still be able to read your keys. Eliminate all false steps or wasted movement
6. Deliver hard inside hand shiver to chest and outside hand to blockers outside shoulder, then slip outside hand to back of jersey and grab cloth.
7. Drive up field forcing your weight back towards the quarterback in a pinching manner.
8. Pull outside shoulder forward. Bring inside arm over in a swim motion.
9. Rip through with inside arm and continue inward pressure to quarterback, through inside arm to the sky.



Combination Bag Drill

Bag drill - six flat bags - one football



First time - forward sprint

Second time - backward run

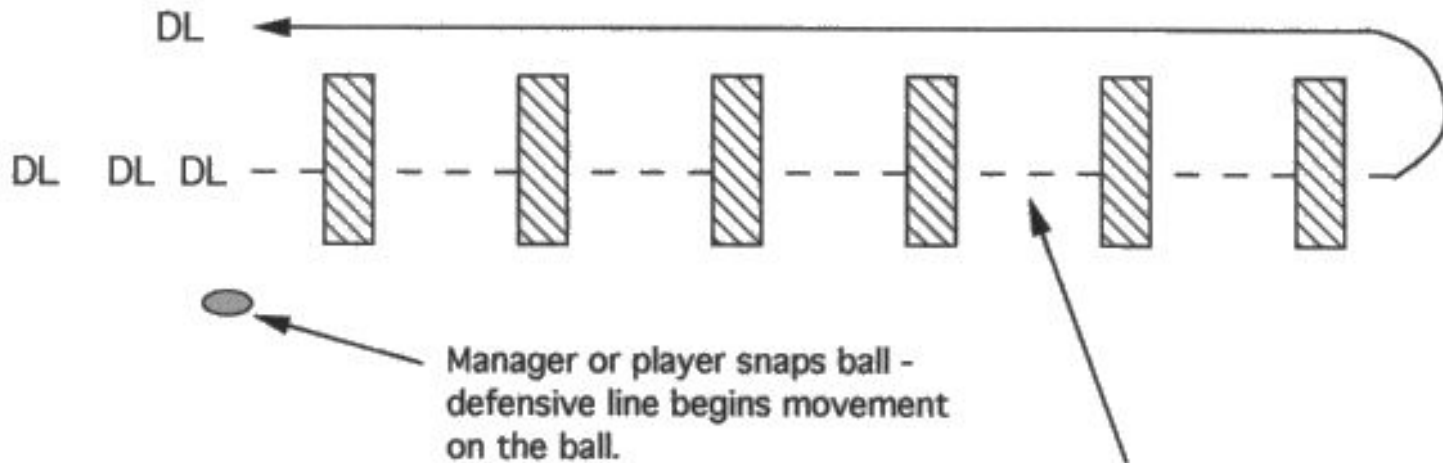
Third time - combination forward / backward - Switch after 3rd dummy

Fourth time - carioca facing into bags - all the way around

Fifth time - carioca facing away from dummies - all the way around the bags



Combination Snap/Bag Drill



Coaching Points:

1. Check stance
 2. Alignment on ball.
 3. Move on ball.
 4. Agility
-
1. Regular Stride
 2. Both feet
 3. Turn players - coming parallel with dummies.
 4. Do a "Z" between bags.
 5. Crab over bags.
 6. Stress stance - alignment - movement - agility.
 7. Switch snapper to other side the next day.

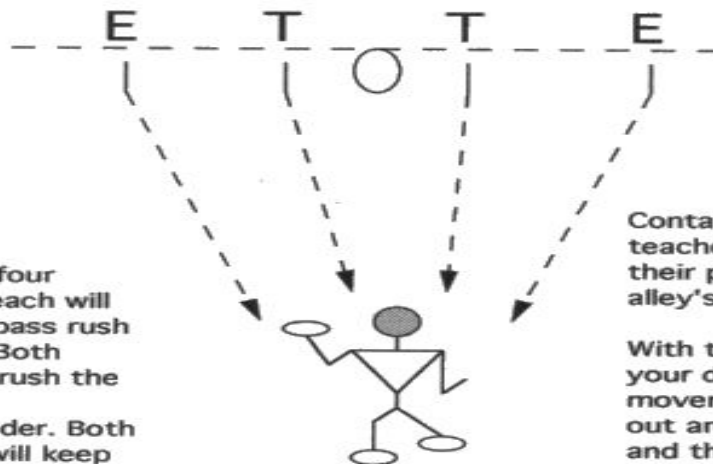


Contain and Alley Drill

Four Man Rush

COACH

When rushing with four defensive linemen each will have a designated pass rush landmark or alley. Both defensive ends will rush the outside tip of the quarterback's shoulder. Both defensive tackle's will keep their landmark or alley on the near ear.

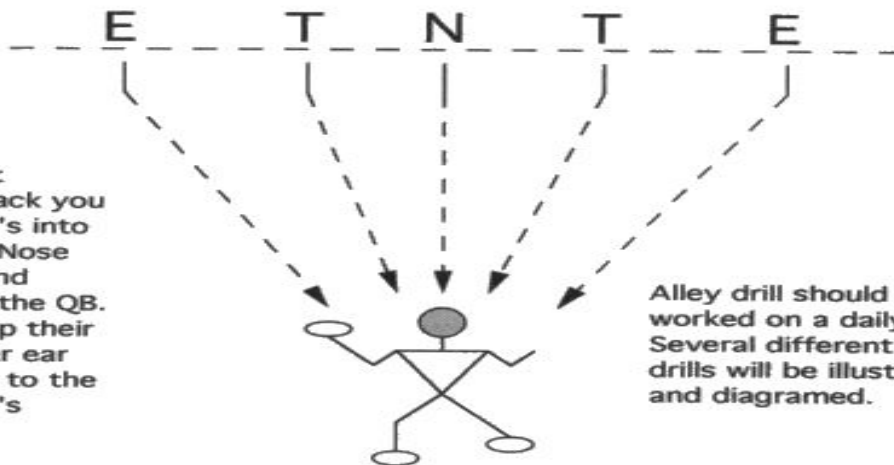


Contain and alley drill teaches the defensive line their proper pass rush alley's.

With this drill you can start your defensive line on movement of the ball to fire out and hit their stomachs and then come up and react to the movement of the quarterback.

Five Man Rush

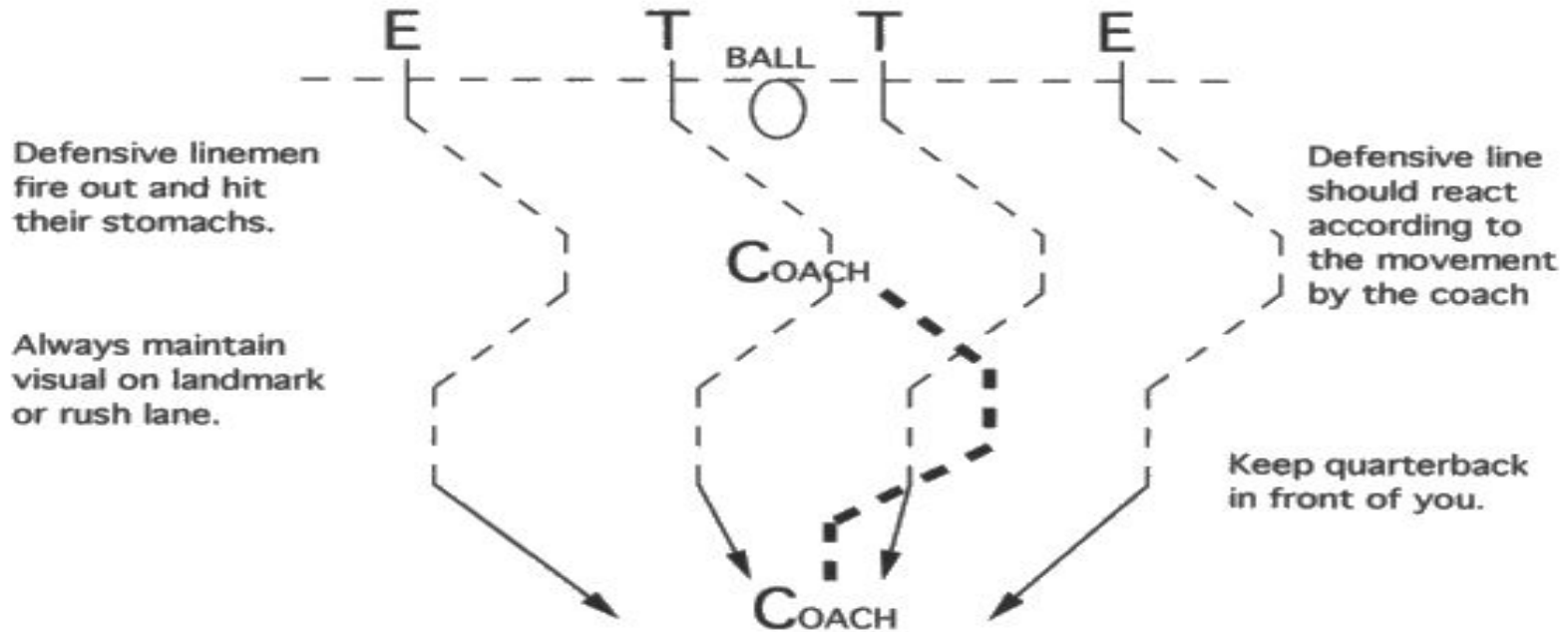
With a five man front rushing the quarterback you now divide your alley's into five landmarks. The Nose guard will keep his landmark on the nose of the QB. Both tackle's will keep their landmarks to the near ear and defensives end's to the outside tip of the QB's shoulder pads.



Alley drill should be worked on a daily bases. Several different alley drills will be illustrated and diagramed.



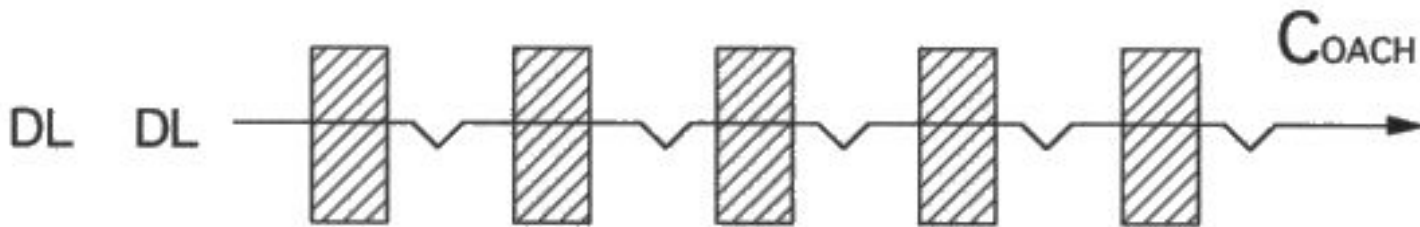
Drop back Contain, Alley, and Pursuit Drill



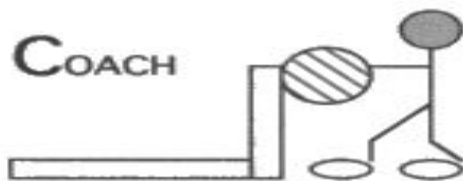
Contain, alley and pursuit simulates the quarterback scrambling with the defensive line working to maintain their proper rush alley's. Whenever the quarterback scrambles parallel to the L.O.S. The defensive line should breakdown and scramble parallel to the L.O.S. until they can find their landmark on the quarterback. See drill number 10 and 11. The rush alley's with a four man rush for the defensive ends is the outside shoulder and the near ear for the defensive tackle. This drill requires a coach and or player to pretend to be a quarterback. Have defensive line fire out and hit their stomachs and then come up and pursue.



DL Pursuit/Cross Face Reaction Drill



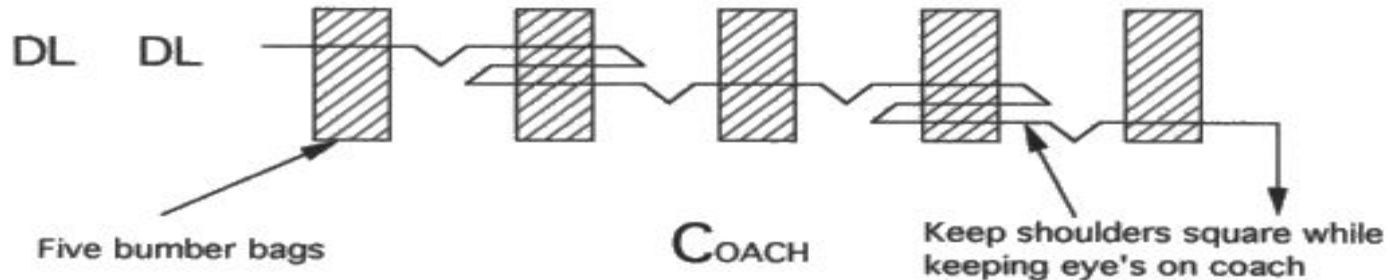
Look for quick feet as the defensive line sprints through the bags in a straight line. Eyes should be focused straight ahead, don't look down at the bags. Right leg over first. Bend at the knees. Break and drive flat after crossing last bag, always finish drill by sprinting a hard five yards. Equipment needed for this drill is flat bags that I call bumper bags.



This is a reaction drill with the defender either reacting to his right, left or middle depending upon the read he gets. While reacting to the sled or hand held bags always keep feet shoulder width apart and shoulders parallel to the L.O.S. Once the defender has finished reacting to his reads he will finish the drill by cross facing the sled or bag and finish by sprinting up field 5 yards.



Mirror Bags/Machine Gun Drill



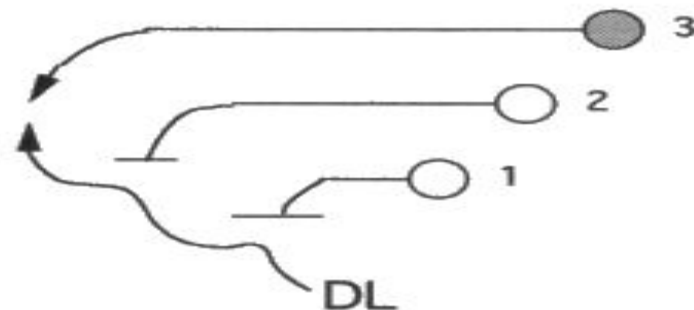
Mirror drill is done with defensive lineman facing the coach with shoulders parallel to the L.O.S.. Player moves on the coaches direction with ball. Coach will direct player back and forth through the bags. Player should move through the bags with knees bent and hips underneath his shoulders. Don't allow the chin to drift out over the knees. Also, don't look down at the bags, keep eyes focused on the coach, learn to run with your eyes. This drill requires five bumper bags. Finish drill by sprinting a hard five yards forward.

The three offensive player's start their movement on command by the coach.

1st level blocker gives low crab block.

2nd level blocker blocks high trying to get inside shoulder to outside shoulder of defender.

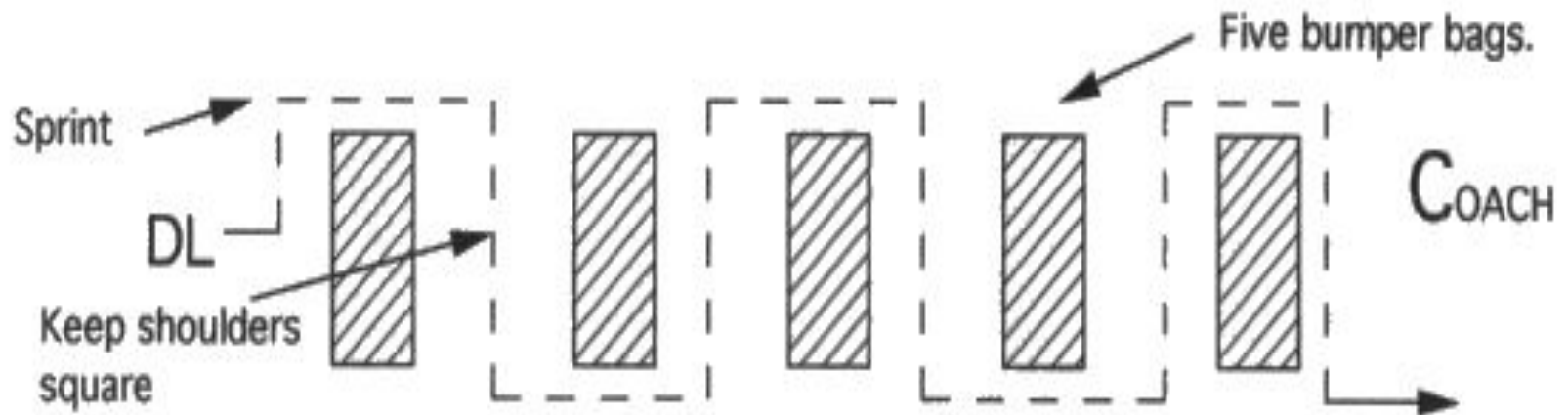
3 level is the ball carrier, attack outside arm.



Can switch low and high blocks on one and two



Weave Through Bags Drill

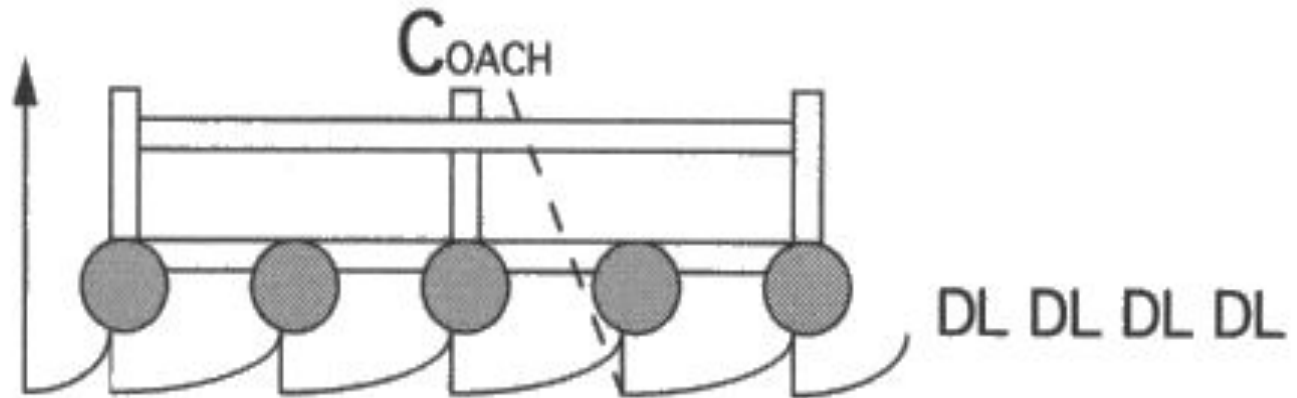


Player weaves through the bags working change of direction. Must keep knees bent and shoulders parallel to the bags, with eyes focused straight ahead at the coach. Never allow chin to float out over the top of the knees. Finish drill by sprinting a hard five yards forward.



Five Man Sled Rip & Shiver Drill

Keep eyes
focused on
coach.

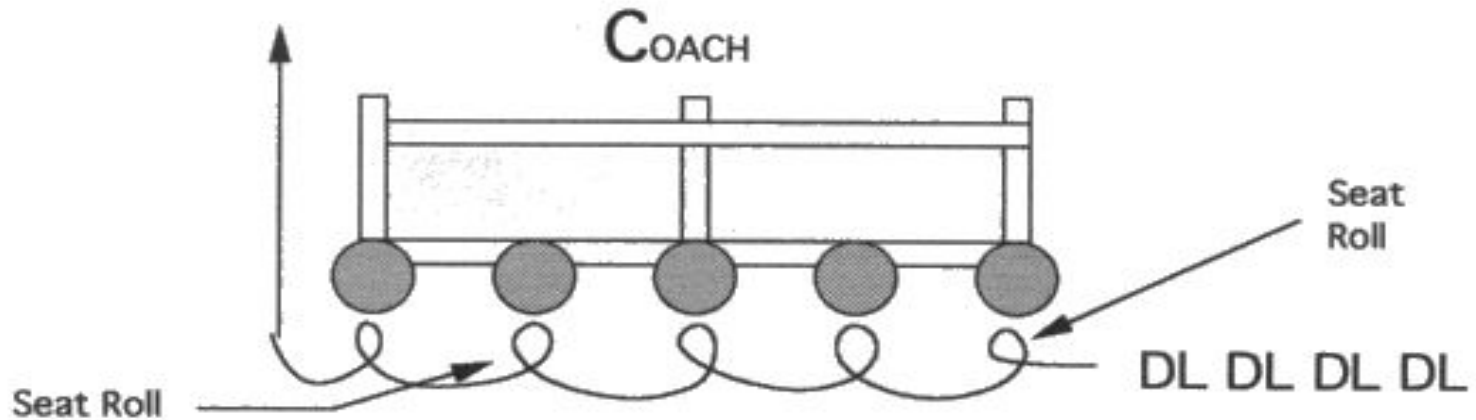


Shiver or Punch and Shuffle

From a three or four point stance defensive lineman will fire out and rip or shiver sled and then shuffle and repeat while moving down the bags. When coming off the last bag finish with a hard five yard sprint. While moving down the sled keep a good base with feet shoulder width apart, don't bring the feet together. Also keep shoulders parallel to the sled. Always be able to see over the top the the bags. Must keep an eye on the coach. Maintain a good hitting position with your hips underneath the defender. Keep vision on the coach.

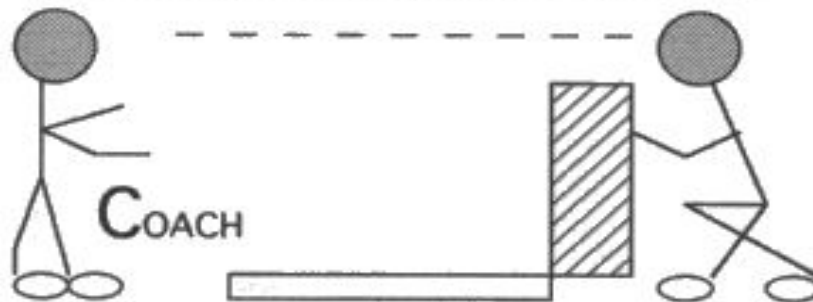


Five Man Sled Rip & Shiver and Roll Drill



With shiver and seat roll follow the same rules as above. After firing out and hitting the bag then drop the play side knee and hip, then roll back into a stance and then repeat vs the next bag. Make sure when doing the seat roll that the shoulders stay on a line parallel to the L.O.S.

With hand shiver see the coach over the top of the bag. With rip technique keep vision on the coach from the side of the bag.



Helmet placement should be at a point to where you can maintain vision on the coach after coming out of the seat roll and while making contact with the bag.



Two Man Lev. Sled Drill

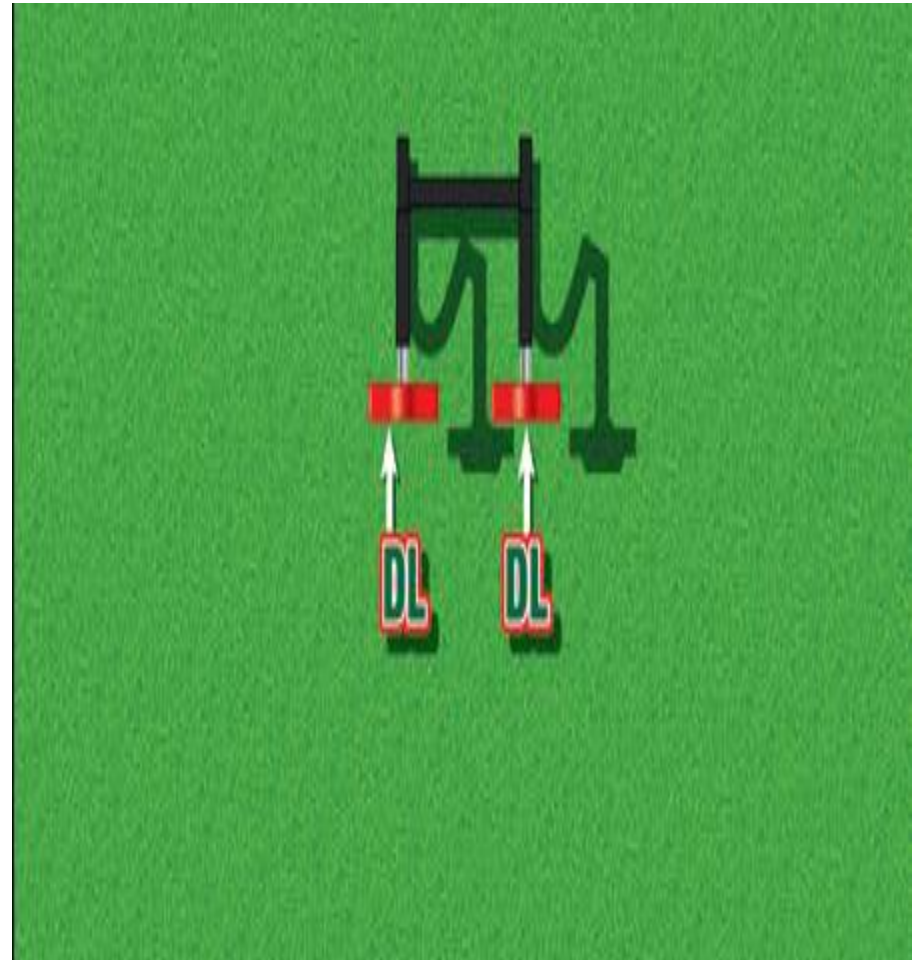
Purpose: To teach proper attack and escapes

Procedure

1. Align two single file lines facing sled.
2. On visual key, DL (from 3 pt. stance) attacks and punches sled.
3. DL makes contact below numbers and works up through sled.
4. Escape to edge of sled.

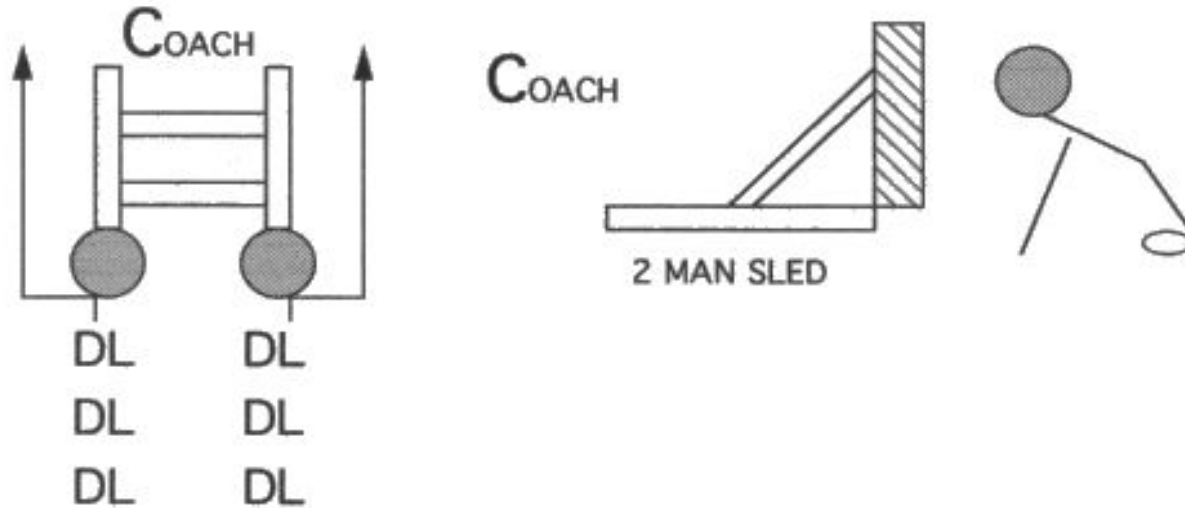
Coaching Points

1. Aggressive attack and punch, eyes on numbers.
2. Quick lock-out.
3. Escape quickly.





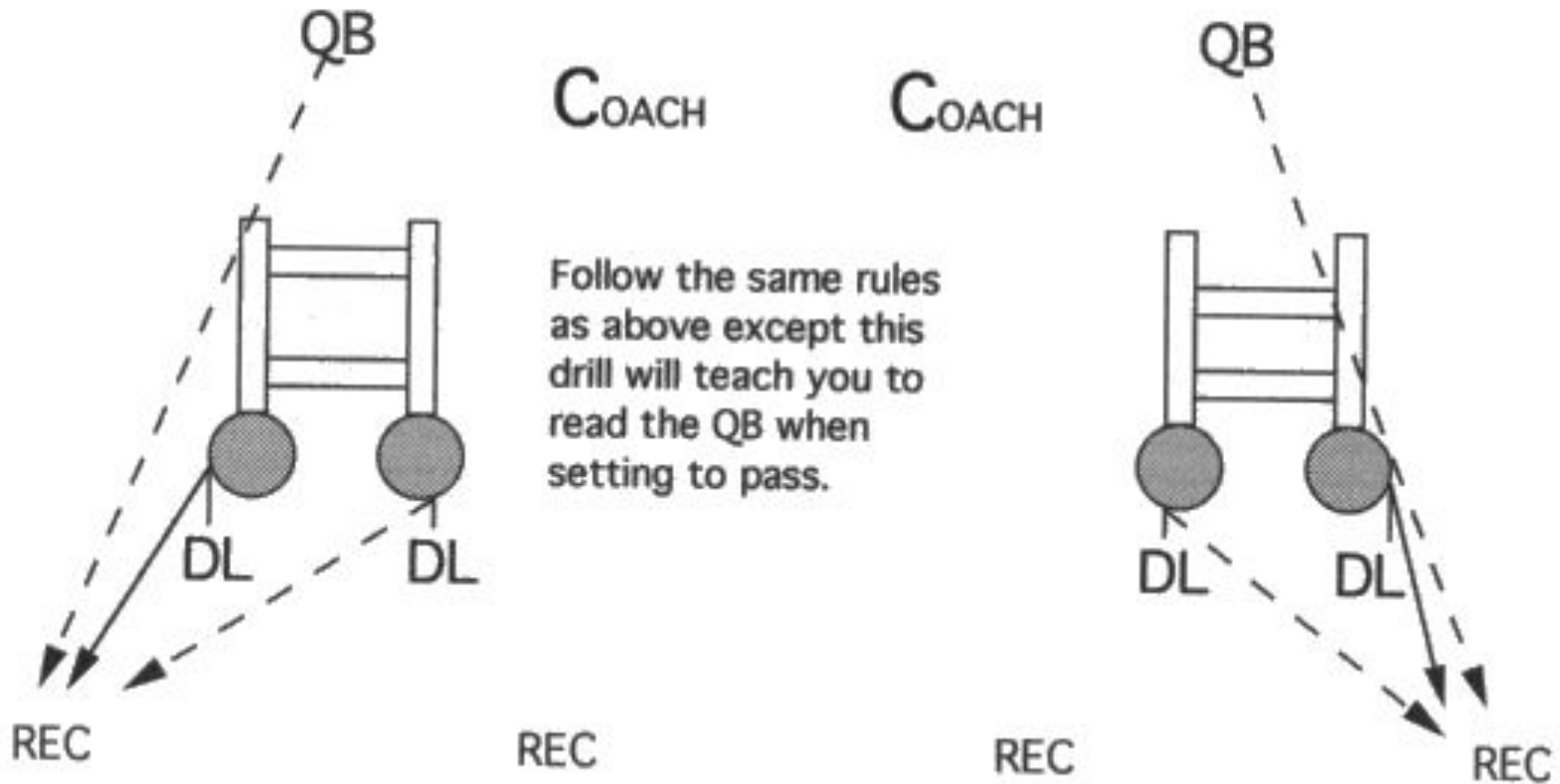
Two Man Sled Rip or Shiver Drill



Form two lines with each line reacting to movement or some sort of command from the coach. Since most defensive linemen use their hands, it is recommended to teach shiver instead of a rip. If a defender is aligned in the right side row he will first react by stepping with his inside foot or left foot. The first step is called the reaction step, then bring trail leg and then release after a good shiver has been delivered to the bag. Sprint a hard 5 yards. If in the left side row the first step will be the inside foot or the right foot. Punch should be delivered to the middle of the bag with head up in order to see the ball or coach. All defensive linemen will start from a three or four point stance. The release is done by teaching arm over or by bringing the backside arm through with a cross face or rip through. Once defenders have released downfield then the next two defenders will be down and ready to go. After finishing on one side then rotate to the other side and repeat.



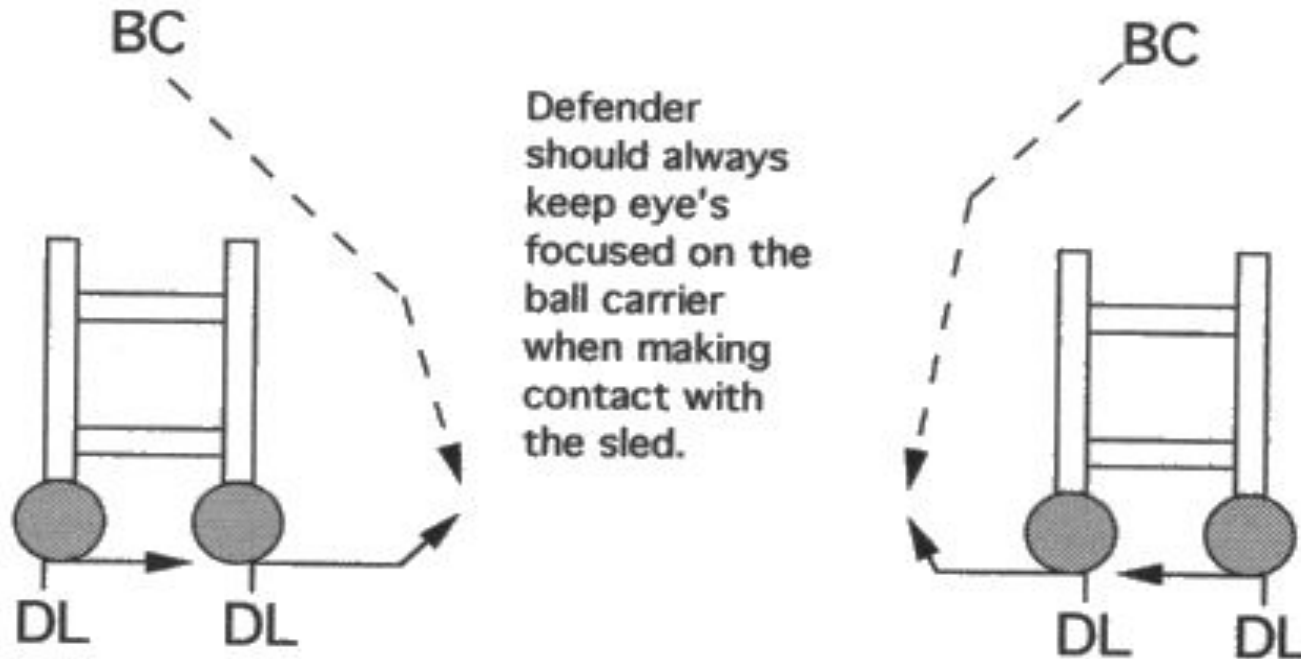
Two Man Sled Drill With Pass React



Shiver and pass reaction is a good drill to help teach your defensive lineman get their hands up when seeing long arm action by the quarterback. Once the ball has been thrown turn and run to the receiver as if game like condition.



Two Man Sled Shiver With Run React Drill

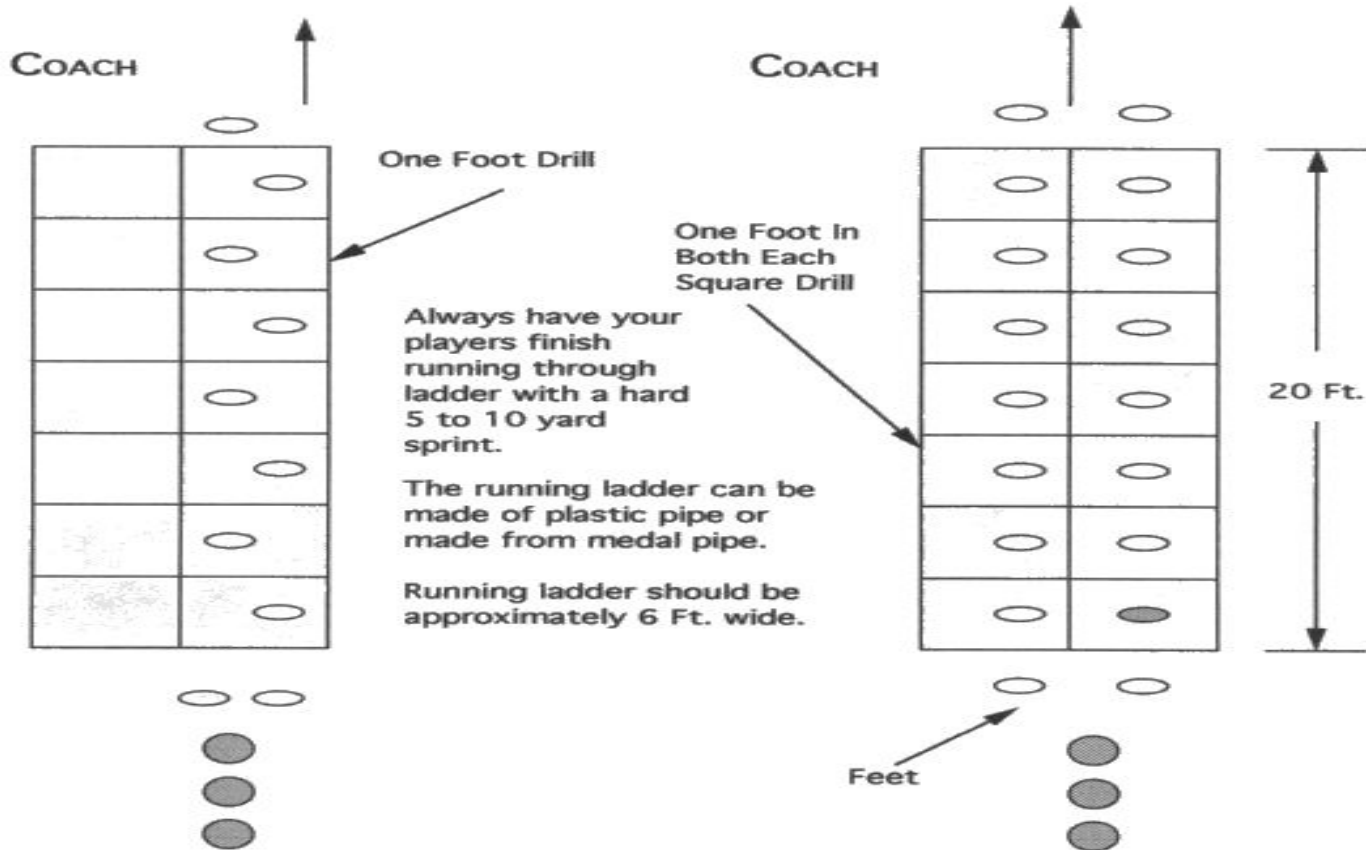


Defender should always keep eye's focused on the ball carrier when making contact with the sled.

Follow same coaching points as the diagram mentioned above. The difference with this drill is that once the defenders have fitted up on their prospective bag they then will react to the cut of the running back. The back stands at approximately five yards behind sled. Once the defenders have fitted up the back will take off and run to one side or the other. Defenders will react accordingly.



DL Ladder 1 Foot Drill



The one foot drill has the defensive lineman running through the ladder with one foot in each square to one side of the ladder.

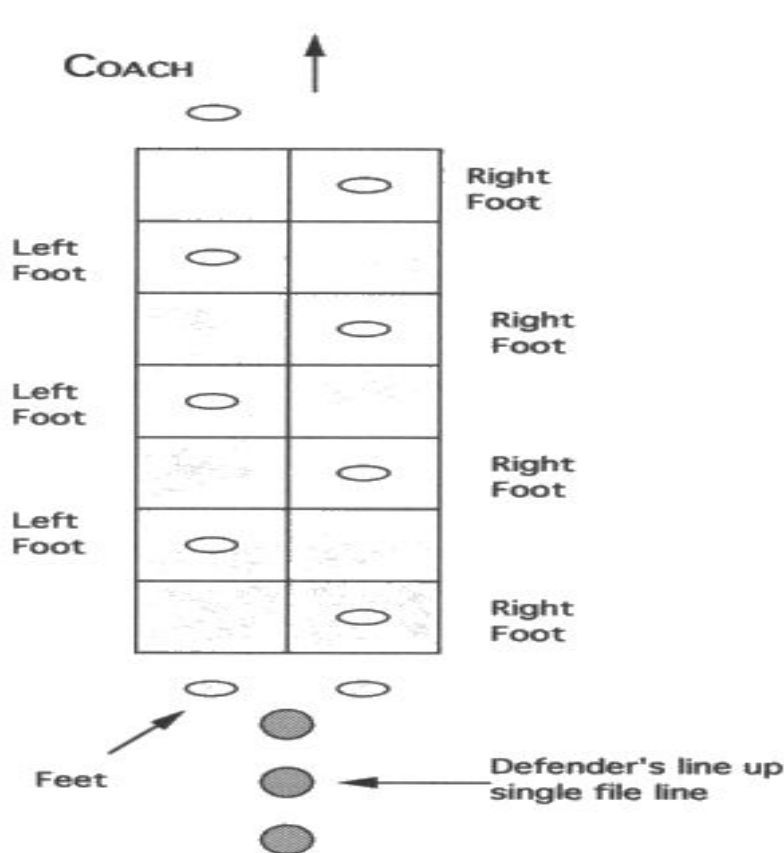
Eyes should be focused on the coach. Run with high knees with hands and arms pumping.

Both feet drill has the defensive linemen hitting each square with one foot.

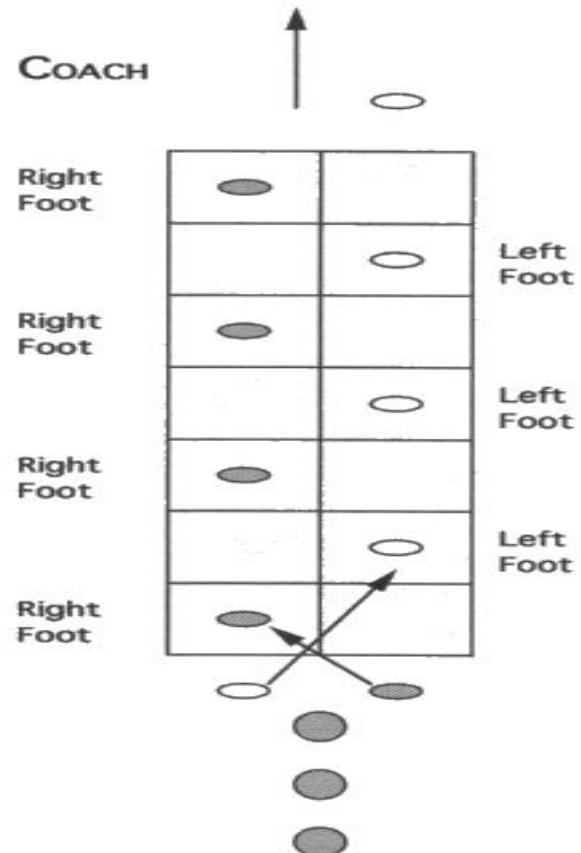
Keep eye's focused on the coach, don't look down at the ladder. High knees with arms pumping.



DL Ladder HK Drill



With this ladder drill the defender will hit every other square. The object is to work on high knees, keeping eyes focused straight ahead. Don't look down.



This drill is a crossover technique. Defender will start the drill by crossing over with his right foot, into the left side square first. The second step is with the left foot crossing over to the right side.



DL Ladder HK Shuffle Drill

Finish the drill by sprinting a hard five to ten yards. After running through the ladder you can have several different options. One, a tackling drill or pursuit drill.

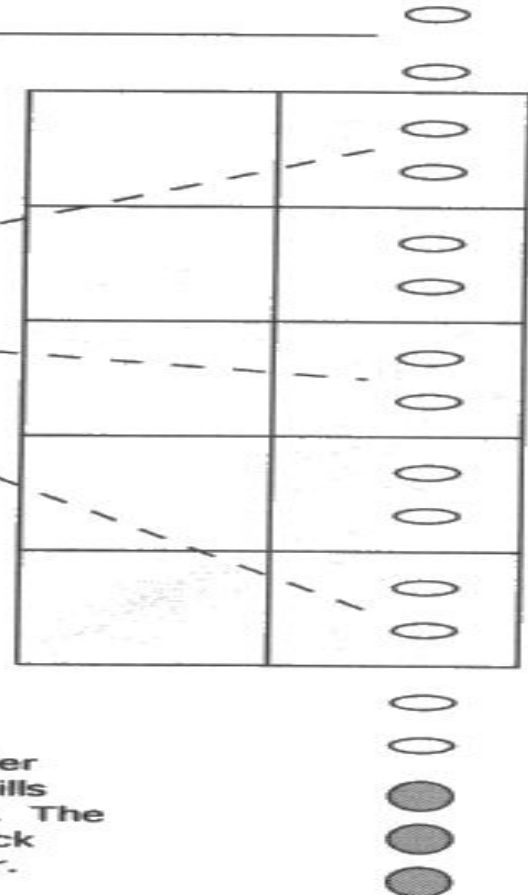
Defender will keep his shoulders parallel to the ladder with knees bent. Keep a low profile will going through the ladder.

C
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A
C
H

Keep eye's focused on the coach.

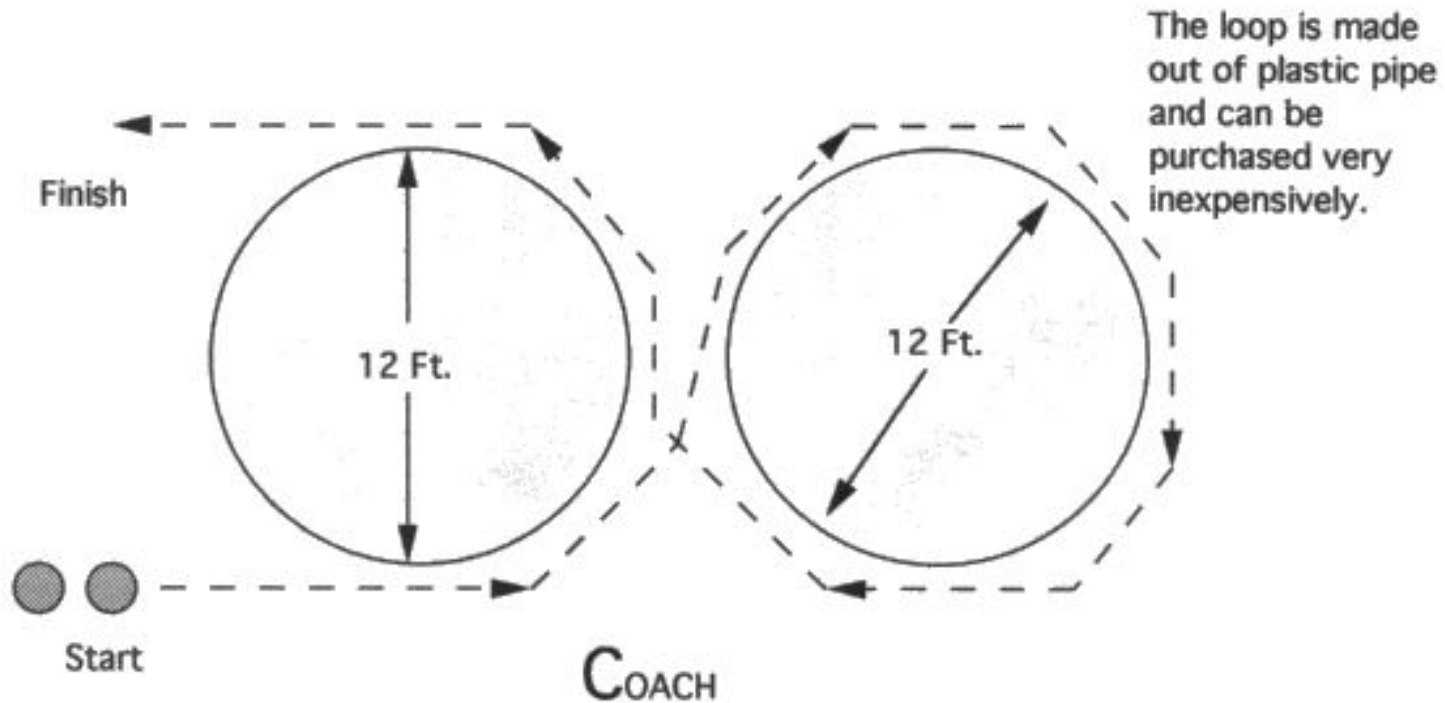
Have your defensive linemen hit each square with both feet as they travel down the ladder. An important coaching point is to make sure that the defenders only pick their feet up no more than six inches.

It's important to remember that making the ladder as a training tool is very easy. The number of drills that can be used can be left to your imagination. The ladder represents a great tool for developing quick feet, body control, vision, and practice demeanor.





Pass Rush w/Hoops



Loop drill helps your defensive line to master the shoulder dip while pass rushing. As the defender starts he will hug the loop as tight as possible, keeping his inside shoulder down and to the inside. As the defender circles the first loop and begins the second circle he will now switch to the other shoulder keeping it low to the inside hoop.

As your defensive linemen master the drill they can begin to increase their speed as they maneuver through the drill.



Hoops Progression

Hoops Progression Drill

Purpose: To teach proper use of running the feet, lean, dip and rip techniques.

Procedure

1. Utilize PVC pipe to make hoops 7 feet in diameter.
2. From starting position, execute progression with DL.

1 HOOP

- Run both directions.
- Run/Lean both directions.
- Run/Lean/Dip both directions.
- Run/Lean/Dip/Rip both directions.
- Run/Lean/Dip/Rip vs. OL without pressure.
- Run/Lean/Dip/Rip vs. OL with pressure.

2 HOOPS

- Run figure 8's.
- Run/Lean figure 8's.
- Run/Lean/Dip figure 8's.
- Run/Lean/Dip/Rip figure 8's.
- Run/Lean/Dip/Rip figure 8's vs. OL without pressure.
- Run/Lean/Dip/Rip figure 8's vs. OL with pressure,

Coaching Points

1. Full speed effort.
2. Maintain balance.
3. Execute lean, dip, and rip techniques.
4. Use leg drive to shorten edge rush.



Soukup Drill

Purpose: To teach agility and reaction.

Procedure: Player crabs on all fours, then flips his body over rolling on his seat, and then continues to crab on all fours. Repeat, following direction from coach left and right, somersault, regain your feet, forearm lift man in front, and finally the player turns to meet the opponent coming from behind, this is a quick reaction move. Drill can also be performed from bear crawl position. Also feel free to mix in “monkey roles” with a group of 3.

Coaching Points: Stress low center of gravity, quickness and operating from a good football position. Coach can use hand or oral signals for reactions



← Bear Crawl

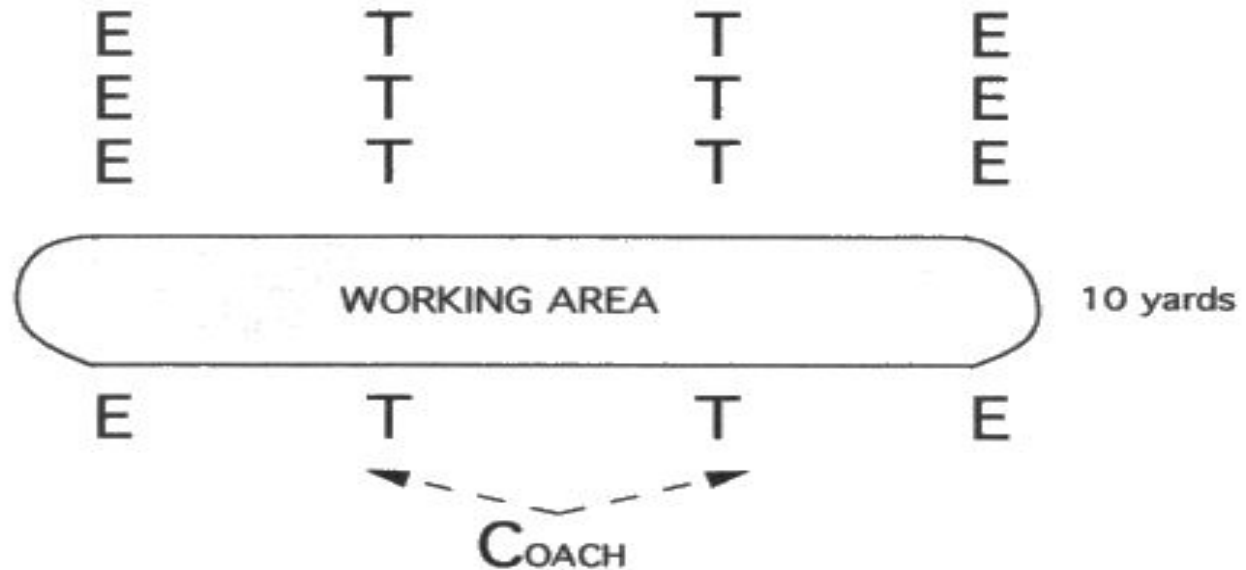
Crab Walk →





Wave and Contain Drill

Wave drill - Form four lines facing the coach - ten yards away. Reaction drill based on coach's signal. Move quickly while always maintaining a good football position.

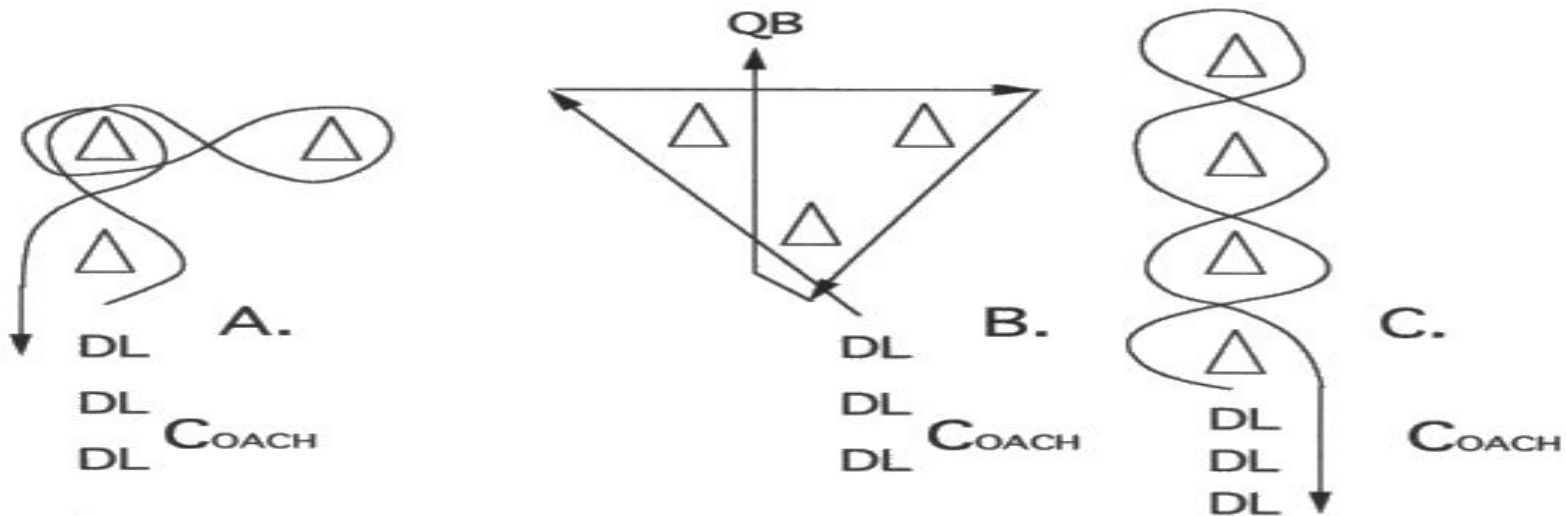


Reactions -
Right - Left
Forward - Backward
Hit ground and bounce up
Any combinations

Finish drill with quick sprint five yards beyond coach. Wait until coach turns around. Be in a good breakdown position. Once finished going one direction then turn and run drill back the other direction.



Weave Cones Drill



- A.** **Figure 8** - This is a change of direction drill requiring the defensive lineman to dip the shoulder closest to the cone as he rounds it. Stay as close to the cone as possible without knocking the cone over. While rounding the cone keep chin in line with the knees, this will allow for tight turns. Don't allow the hips to float outside this will make the defender slip. Finish drill by sprinting 5 yards past last cone.
- B.** **Triangle to QB** - Defender will run as close to the cones as possible without touching them. Keep hips tight to cone with knees and feet remaining under the hips, don't allow feet to drift from underneath the hips. As you finish with the drill you will now act as if rushing the quarterback. Learn to get the hands up when finishing drill as to knock down an attempted pass.
- C.** **Weave Drill** - Sprint and dip near shoulder to each cone and touch ground with near hand along side of cone. Start with cones 3 to 5 yards apart and tighten them down as they progress. Finish the drill by sprinting 5 yards past the last cone



Tip Pass Drill

Tip Pass Drill

To quickly teach having separation from an OL and working into a passing lane, we will use our tip pass drill. We will align two or three groups of OL vs. DL and put a QB at different depths. This drill works well to teach rush lanes and responsibilities, finding an open rush lane, working the timing of our rushes, and gives us the opportunity to work specific moves.

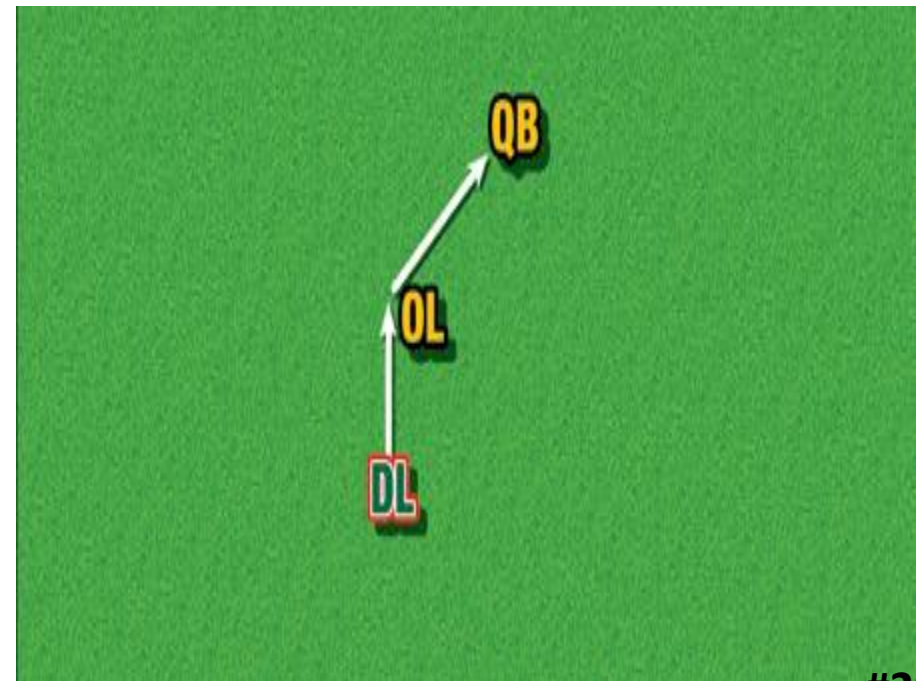
Purpose: To teach DL to work into passing lanes and tip passes

Procedure

1. Align OL vs. DL. At snap, QB drops to simulate pass.
2. DL works pass rush moves. QB pulls guide hand as if to throw.
3. DL disengages and works to passing window to tip ball as QB throws.

Coaching Points

1. Get off the ball.
2. Work a pass rush move.
3. See the QB and force a line to the QB.
4. As QB pulls guide hand, work to the passing lane.





Three Cone Drill

Three-Cone Drill

We will use a sideline of a field as the line of scrimmage. We place an OL straddling every 5 yards and place a DL across from him. A cone is placed between each 5-yard line at a relative 3-step drop depth. We will begin the drill from the left side of an OL and execute a pre-determined pass rush move with a burst to the cone. We will then slide the DL group 5 yards in the other direction and rush the other direction to work rushes from the right edge.

Purpose: To teach and practice rushes from the FIT position.



Procedure

1. Fit OL and DL in attack position.
2. On "Hit", DL executes pass rush move.
3. After beating OL, burst to QB at 3-step drop depth.

Coaching Points

1. Fast hands, fast feet.
2. Clear the hips.
3. Stay on track for 3-step; don't get washed up field.
4. Employ counter moves if needed.
5. Burst to QB



Beat w/Feet Drill

Procedure

1. Align two cones 3-4 yards apart.
2. Align an OL between the cones and a DL facing the OL.
3. On “hit”, DL works to move past the OL using feet and speed.
4. OL has restricted use of hands (not a contact drill).
5. After DL beats OL, re-circle and continue drill.

Coaching Points

1. Move the feet.
2. Full speed effort.

Beat With Feet

Purpose: To teach DL to use their feet to beat OL





Rag Drill

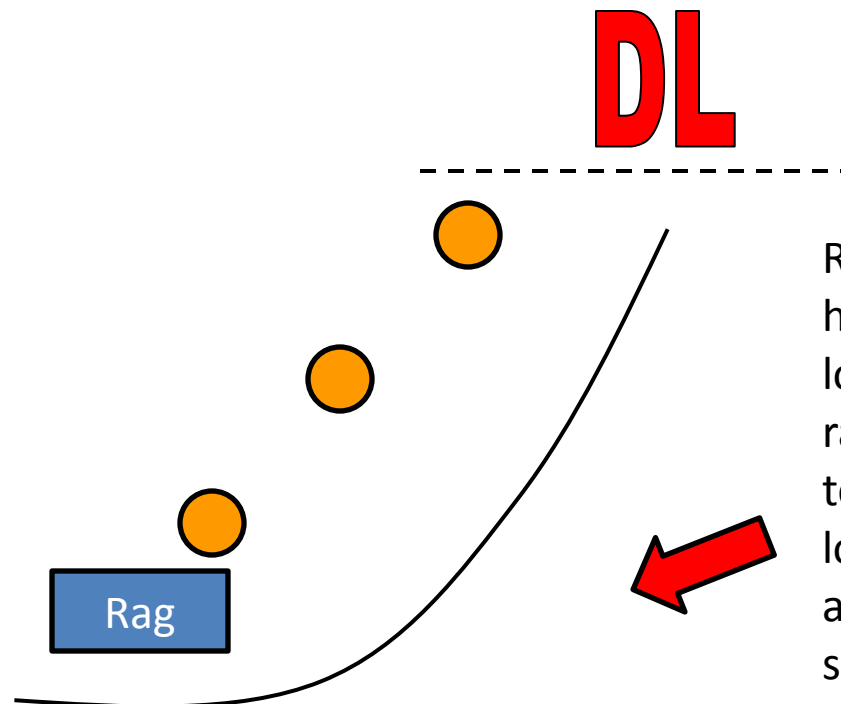
Procedure

1. Line up behind the line.
2. Break on movement from coach.

Object

1. Stay tight to cones and low.
2. Rip low and grab rag.

QB



Rip inside hand down low and grasp rag. This teaches the low dip rip and getting skinny vs. the OL on pass rush.



Double Hip Drill

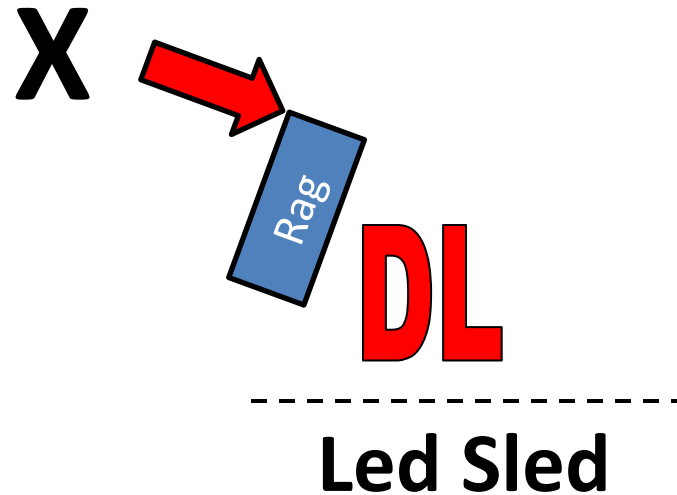
Procedure

1. Strike Sled from stance.
2. Other player holding bags provides pressure from the outside on the side.
3. Play w/good balance and wide base.
4. Play w/contact.
5. Bag does not have to come every time, this ensures the DL player will not cheat the drill.

Object

1. Work on gap control
2. Work on playing w/good base & leverage while taking pressure from DBL team.

Go from DL,
to bag holder
to out..





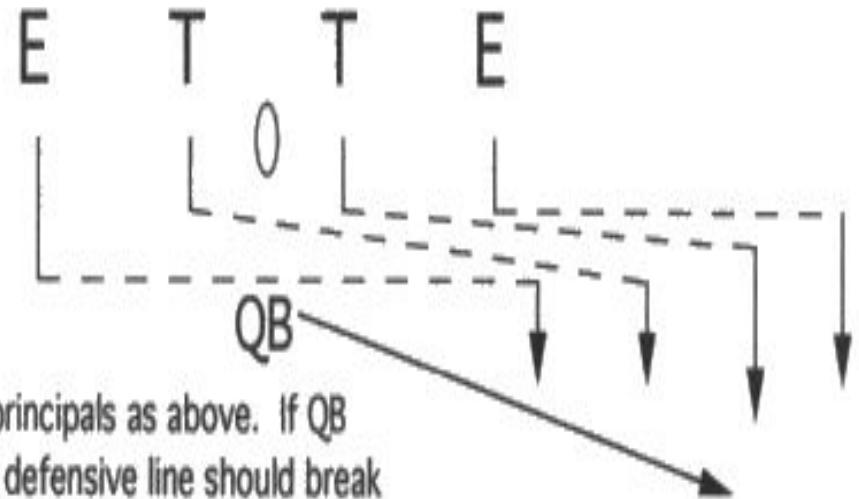
Roll Sprint-Out, Contain Drill

Procedure

1. QB/Coach gives scout look for DL.
2. Start w/summersault
3. Stress low center of gravity for defender as he executes his forward roll.
4. From a good football position execute a somersault, come to your feet in a good hitting position, with extended arms and hands lifting the defender and warding off or shedding the blocker.
5. Then reacting to the coaches hand signal, reacting to the proper angle of pursuit.

Object

1. To teach agility, shedding or warding off an opponent and reaction.



Use same principals as above. If QB sprints out defensive line should break and run parallel to the L.O.S.