

Endorsements for *On Coaching Football*

“In his book, *On Coaching Football*, Tom Dean focuses on what it takes to field a competitive squad in a competitive league. His emphasis on player development, game plan structure, and how to establish and maintain a successful football program, including the hiring and development of a coaching staff, makes this book unique. I would recommend it as a resource for every coaching staff.”

Coach George Chaump, Head Coach Central Dauphin East High School

George Chaump is the Head Coach of Central Dauphin East High School (Harrisburg, PA). During his coaching career Chaump has been the Head Coach of the United States Naval Academy, the Head Coach of Marshall University, the Head Coach of Indiana State University of Pennsylvania, quarterback coach at Ohio State University under Woody Hayes, on the coaching staff of John McKay at the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, was the Head Coach of Harrisburg High School, Head Coach of Central Dauphin High School (Harrisburg, PA), Head Coach of the former John Harris High School (Harrisburg, PA), Head Coach of Shamokin High School (PA) and linebackers coach at the former William Penn High School (Harrisburg, Pa). He twice coached the Pennsylvania squad in the Big 33 Classic high school all-star game played in Hershey, PA. He was a captain of the West Pittston High School (PA) football team of 1952 where he played for Coach Dean. After graduating from West Pittston High School, George Chaump attended Wyoming Seminary and Upper School in Kingston, PA and graduated from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania where he played football for four years before starting his coaching career under Tom Dean at William Penn in Harrisburg.

“Tom Dean has written a must-read book (and one to be re-read) about coaching football, A to Z, for all football coaches from the novice to the veteran; it covers all phases of coaching, leaving nothing to chance. Coach Dean emphasizes what he terms as the only law in football, “the law of time and distance” which all coaches need to fully understand. Time is the great limitation in coaching and Dean explains in detail that you play the way you practice; i.e., coach by the clock and simulate game conditions during practice. Tom Dean teaches football as more than just a game and that concept has impacted, and will continue to impact, coaches and players for the rest of their lives.”

Mickey Minnich, Vickie’s Angel Walk Foundation

Mickey Minnich is the former Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Big 33 which sponsors The Big 33 Classic, an annual high school all star football game played in Hershey, PA. Established in 1958, the Big 33 Classic has pitted the Pennsylvania all state squad against high school all-star teams representing the USA, Texas, Maryland and Ohio – its current long-standing rival. “The Big 33 is more than a game”, a phrase coined by Minnich who also coached the Pennsylvania Squad in three Big 33 games, serving two years as Head Coach. The Big 33 supports educational foundations and grants for college students along with the Big 33 Buddy program to help children with special needs. Mickey Minnich also was the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Scholastic Football Coaches Association from 1977 to 2006. He played for Tom Dean in 1955 at the former William Penn High School in Harrisburg, PA. He coached under George Chaump at the former John Harris High School (Harrisburg, PA) and later became the Head Coach at John Harris, a position he retained when John Harris and William Penn merged to become Harrisburg High School in 1972. Mickey Minnich also was the Head Football Coach at Steel–High, in Steelton, PA, an adjoining community to Harrisburg. Minnich is a graduate of Gettysburg College. He currently directs the operations of Vickie’s Angel Walk Foundation, a non-profit charitable organization that provides financial and emotional support to cancer patients who cannot pay their bills due to their cancer.

“This book will give the reader an excellent picture of how a highly successful high school football program should function. Coach Tom Dean and line coach Frank Acocella gave me a solid foundation in technique, strategy, and philosophy that enabled me to go on to a successful career at the University of Nebraska. Our high school practices, procedures, and daily routines were exactly what we did at Nebraska. I would enthusiastically recommend this book to coaches as well as to players as a blueprint for success.”

Coach Daryl White, James Caldwell High School
All-American 1971, 1972, 1973; Team Captain, 1973
University of Nebraska

Daryl White was a New Jersey All-State offensive lineman in 1968 at East Orange High School and a key member of their back-to-back Group IV state championship teams of 1967 and 1968. He received a football scholarship to the University of Nebraska where he was a three-time All-American as an offensive tackle, and team captain of the Cornhuskers in 1973, playing for Coaches Bob Devaney and Tom Osborne. Daryl White is a Teacher Developer in the Newark Public Schools and coaches football at James Caldwell High School in Caldwell, NJ.

On Coaching Football

On Coaching Football: A Resource and Guide for Coaches

*Thomas A. Dean
with Paul J. Emrick*



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In Loving Memory of Beth, who enabled me to pursue my aspirations

We wish to remember, thank and recognize:

The supportive mothers of the Fifth Quarter Club in East Orange, NJ, who, over the years, were dieticians, fundraisers, player advocates, and providers of love and inspiration;

The Selinsgrove, PA Fifth Quarter Club fathers who car-pooled our players home from practice, before the days of activities buses, and made it possible for “farm kids” to participate in football;

The “Firehouse Gang” in Harrisburg, PA who passed the hat to purchase portable flood lights that allowed us to complete our practice sessions late in the year, after daylight saving time ended, and become a better team;

Coach George Chaump, former head coach of Harrisburg High School (currently the head coach of Central Dauphin East) and Coach Dave Hess, head coach of Selinsgrove Area High School for providing the players who are the subjects of the photographs used in this book;

Jim Berrier, who developed our pass offense at East Orange High School and made it possible for us to have a “two-dimensional” offense, contributed to the pass offense chapter in this book, played for me at William Penn High School in Harrisburg, PA as a captain of the squad, was an outstanding player at Juniata College, and became a head coach, devoted husband, father and friend;

The scouts who, each week, gathered the information on our opponents that was crucial to the development of the game plan;

Ashley Hudson of Ashley Designer Art for her expertise in producing the football diagrams used in the book;

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About the Author

Thomas A. Dean is a native of Washington, DC. He is a graduate of Sidwell Friends High School in Washington and Bucknell University in Lewisburg, PA where he received a bachelor's degree in biology in 1952. He earned a master's degree in guidance in 1961. He played on the freshman football team of 1948 that posted an undefeated, untied season and quarterbacked the 1951 varsity to a 9–0–0 record finishing the season ranked number two in eastern collegiate football, behind only Princeton. Bucknell was ranked number 20 in the nation in 1951.

After graduating from Bucknell in 1952, Coach Dean accepted a job as a teacher and head football coach at West Pittston, (PA) High School. The next year he moved to Selinsgrove, PA where he revitalized its high school football program. Two years later, in 1955, he accepted the head coaching position in Harrisburg, PA, at William Penn High School, where he encountered another football program in need of rebuilding. He taught biology, American History and coached football and baseball at William Penn for five years. His 1958 football team was co-champion of the then Central Penn League, one of the most competitive leagues in the state.

In 1960, East Orange High School, with a storied tradition of football dating back to 1898, hired Coach Dean from a field of 60 applicants to head up its football program. In his 12 years at East Orange, Dean's teams won three (3) Group IV (the largest school population group in the state) New Jersey State Championships and four (4) Group IV Sectional Titles.

In 1972, Dean left East Orange and returned to Pennsylvania to accept a teaching and head coaching position at Erie McDowell. After one year at McDowell, Coach Dean moved to Belair, MD where he was the head coach at Belair High School for three years. He then became a guidance counselor and coached developmental football at C. Milton Wright High School, which is also located in Belair. Coach Dean retired as a public school teacher and football coach in 1994.

He began a second career, accepting a position in the personnel department of the then Baltimore Colts Football Team. Dean became head coach consultant to a professional development football team in Düsseldorf, Germany in 1995. He has consulted with high schools and youth recreational leagues in Greater Baltimore that wish to establish or rebuild their football programs. Tom Dean also is a volunteer social worker serving the needs of young people and the elderly in the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area.

Among his lifetime achievements, Coach Dean has received the NCAA Centennial Award, for his contributions to college football. He has placed a countless number of players in colleges and universities throughout the country. Many have gone on to successful careers in business, the professions and in

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education. Many have earned advanced graduate degrees and a number of them have had successful careers as high school, college, and professional football coaches. Coach Dean has been inducted into the Pennsylvania Coaches Hall of Fame, the New Jersey Coaches Hall of Fame, the Bucknell University Players Hall of Fame, and the Washington DC Jocks Hall of Fame. He was married to the late Dr. Elizabeth (Beth) Rubey Dean who also was an educator. He is the father of four children: Robert, William (deceased), Anne, and Susan, and has been blessed with twelve grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Thomas Dean resides in Silver Spring, Maryland.

About Paul Emrick

Paul (a.k.a. Pete) Emrick, played for Coach Dean in 1955 and 1956 at the former William Penn High School in Harrisburg, PA. Emrick is a 1961 graduate of Juniata College where he was a three-year varsity letter winner and a member of their undefeated football teams in 1957 and 1958. He served in the United States Navy and, following his discharge from active duty, was employed in the field of state and federal government relations by a packaging company and two trade associations during his 35 year business career. He is the owner of Emrick Consulting, LLC and lives in Orange Park, FL with his wife, Nancy. They have been blessed with three children and four grandchildren.

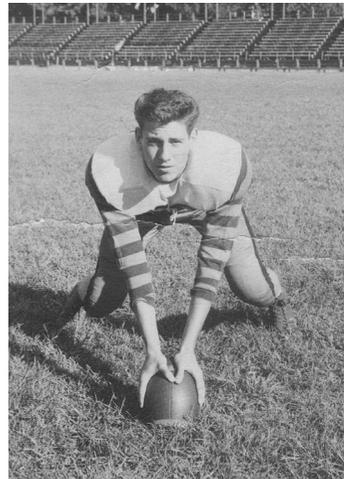
Now and Then

The publication of this book marks a relationship between Coach Tom Dean and “Pete” Emrick that spans over half a century. Based on their experiences as coach and player that started in 1955 at the former William Penn High School in Harrisburg, PA, Dean and Emrick teamed up to write a book that truly is a resource for coaches. It is a comprehensive checklist that discusses the concepts of a complete football program – from the job interview process, pre-season activities, the coaching staff, the building of a game plan, to the involvement of the community. This book should be in the library of every coach, or aspiring coach.

TOM DEAN 1956

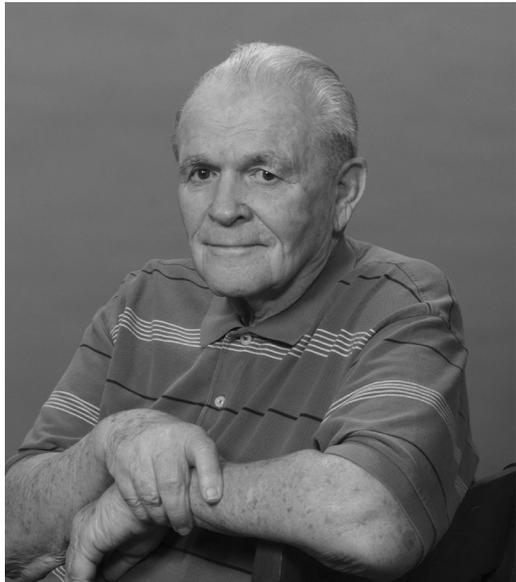


PAUL EMRICK 1956



Emrick recalls the last practice of his senior year, on the eve of William Penn’s annual Thanksgiving Day game against then, cross-town rival John Harris. “Coach called us together, as he always did at the end of practices, for a final word. It was the last high school football game for those of us who were seniors. After summarizing the coaching points he emphasized in practice, Coach finished by telling us that although the season was over after tomorrow’s game, we would always be a team. When I consider our teaming up to write this book, 56 years later, it strikes me that Coach Dean’s words were prophetic. I think football creates life-long bonds among players and coaches that are special because we are forever teammates”.

TOM DEAN 2011



PAUL EMRICK 2011



Prologue

The objective of preparation is to be better tomorrow than we are today. The intent of the book is to help coaches achieve this objective for themselves, their coaching staff and for the players. The book is written for individuals who want to coach in a competitive situation. We define competition as a contest between equal sides; i.e., the talent on each squad in the conference or league is, for the most part, equally matched. Over the years, we have found that those who are involved in success-oriented organizations, including successful football programs, possess three chief characteristics: Commitment, Consistency and Competitiveness. These characteristics serve as the motivation that demands the best from the head coach and those around him: coaches, players, the administration and all others associated with the program.

Football is a highly complex sport. It is demanding physically as well as intellectually. A major reason for the complexity associated with football is the number of players that are on the field at any given time; 11 on each side. Keeping track of all of these moving parts is a demanding task. Consider, if you will, that each player is blessed with four appendages (two arms and two legs). Multiply the number of appendages by the number of players on the field at any given time (4 x 22) and it is apparent that there are 88 moving parts for the coaching staff to take into account. Ideally, each squad will have an offense, defense, and special teams for a total of 33 to 35 players who normally play in varsity games as members of the offensive platoon, defensive platoon, as role players, or on one or more of 20 special teams. It takes an immense amount of preparation by the coaching staff and squad members to be ready for game day.

It has been estimated that four hours of off-field preparation are necessary for each hour spent on the practice field. As the reader will readily observe, to conduct a two-hour practice session, eight hours of off-field preparation are required. Clearly, there is no way for coaches to spend 50 hours or more per week on football and still function as classroom teachers, administrators or in outside occupations where state athletic association rules permit.

The answer to getting the required preparation time is to operate on what we term the “Circular Calendar”. A coaching staff can prepare to play a competitive scholastic football schedule if the preparation time is stretched-out over the full year as detailed in the pages that follow. To do this, we recommend that the staff limit its coaching activities to football. Time will not allow football coaches to be involved in other sports if they desire to contribute to a success-oriented program in a competitive league.

Good preparation is the basis for good communication and we would suggest that communication is the key to success in a competitive football program. The reader will be exposed to extensive discussion throughout this book that emphasizes the need for effective communication – both on and off the field.

The concept of change is also examined in the following pages. In fact, we would suggest that change – particularly at the high school level – impacts the depth chart so greatly, that we believe it can be unequivocally stated the chief constant scholastic coaches, and to a lesser degree college and professional coaches, will encounter is change. And change also can regularly occur in the coaching staff, particularly if it is comprised of motivated associate coaches who one day want to become head coaches. These staff members can be expected, and encouraged, to move up as they develop. The reason they were hired is that they have the characteristics of Commitment, Consistency and Competitiveness that are valued by a success-oriented organization. We submit it is the professional obligation of a head coach to develop his coaching staff as well as his players.

Last but certainly not least, this book is intended to help coaches evaluate their football programs. It is not intended to tell the reader what to do - rather it is meant to be a checklist by which coaches can systematically utilize their depth chart with flexibility. They can adjust their system to match the talent of their players. If the book accomplishes the purpose for which it was written, the reader will strive to build enough flexibility into the program so that it can be adjusted to meet the inevitability of change which, as previously mentioned, is the chief constant in scholastic football.

HOW TO READ THE BOOK

For the reader who wants to coach in a competitive environment, our advice is to read the book analytically.

In my college comparative vertebrate anatomy class the course textbook, along with the laboratory manual, included diagrams of anatomical subjects such as frogs and cats. The student would read the verbal material carefully and correlate it to the diagram of the organ being studied. Often there were instructions about where and how to make an incision in the lab animal to expose the specific organ discussed in the chapter. The student would use the textbook and lab manual as resources to complete the lab assignment. If necessary, the course instructor would help the student to interpret what was presented in the written material and diagrams so that he or she could complete the lab work successfully. *On Coaching Football: A Resource And Guide For Coaches* should be read in the same way as a college biology textbook, with the material presented being put to use in classroom sessions and on the practice field; in football laboratory if you will. The subject matter presented needs careful thought to be understood, evaluated and implemented.

Members of the coaching staff also will benefit from studying the specific steps by which individuals learn. These steps are discussed in a process, based on the scientific method of inquiry (or thinking), known as the “Learning Hierarchy”, also called the “Cognitive Domain”, the details of which are found in the Appendix. When the points of emphasis in the book are understood and evaluated, they can serve as a comprehensive and, it is our hope, a valuable checklist for a broad range of topics that we believe are important to coaches, ranging from the job interview to the game plan, to the year-round operations of the football program.

PART I

Organization

By dictionary definition the word “organization” is derived from the Greek word, *opyavov* (*organon*), meaning tool. An organization may be defined as a social arrangement that pursues collective goals, controls its own performance and has a boundary separating it from its environment. In this book we apply the word “organization” to the school. Other related organizations would be entities such as the league or conference in which the school’s athletic teams compete, the state high school athletic association, the state department of education, the federal department of education, and the courts that may hear legal matters involving the football program and the school. The school is the organization in which the football program (and other co-curricular programs) are housed. The school is the entity to which the football program owes its reason for being. The school administration and the school board have ultimate responsibility for, and authority over, the school’s football program; a principle that the head football coach must understand and respect.

In discussing the organization, structure is important – from the school board to each school in the district. The importance of organizational structure is evidenced by the flow charts that system analysts use to describe an organization whether it is a school, a corporation, or the federal government.

The chief factor in determining the effectiveness of an organization, however, is not its structure. The chief factor that determines the success of an organization is the people who work in it. Throughout this book we will focus on how personnel impact the organization and particularly how player personnel impact the depth chart of the football squad (also a type of organization) and thus impact the game plan that is feasible for the coaching staff to employ in a given year. Particularly at the high school level, there can be drastic player personnel changes to the depth chart of the squad in a year. Because such a great number of changes can occur in a short time, we use the cliché that the only constant in high school football is change.

Section 1A – Football Governance

The school administration has direct responsibility and authority for the football program, from the hiring of the head coach to a myriad of related financial and legal matters. Generally the administration also will hire an individual to be the athletic director. The athletic director will have executive responsibility for the school’s total spectrum of sport programs. In our experience, it is better if the athletic director is purely an executive and not also an active varsity team coach. Such a separation creates a perceived and, more likely, a truly objective management of each individual sport program.

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Most high schools play in a division that is housed within a conference. With the adoption of state playoff formats, schools generally are organized by size (student population), and geographical proximity to one another. Conferences are in turn governed by a state high school athletic association. While the format of athletic conferences vary from state to state, as a general rule conference championship winners grouped by class (school size) play in state championship playoff games with a state champion being crowned in each class of competition.

Such an organizational hierarchy governs the athletic programs for each sport in each school in the state. With the organizational hierarchy come rules and regulations by which the schools must abide. The head coach must take into consideration such rules and regulations, and comply with them. Basically state rules and regulations concern the eligibility and safety of players, therefore compliance with the rules and regulations starts with player personnel or, if you will, the depth chart.

The Administration

The Administration represents the philosophy and values of the organization. It is of utmost importance to establish during the interview that the Administration and the head coach candidate share mutual philosophies in educational and co-curricular matters such as football. Issues that inevitably will surface after the coach is hired can be more easily reconciled if the philosophies of the employer and employee are compatible. In our experience the singular reason that football programs, and coaches, fail is due to philosophical differences between the Administration and the head football coach. Therefore, it is in the best interests of all concerned that a philosophical understanding between the employer and the prospective head coach be established during the interview. The process for hiring a head football coach, or a head coach for any sport, should be documented and followed with discipline by the Administration. Normally the superintendent, the principal, the athletic director and the school board or some combination of the above will be involved in the hiring process. When the position of head football coach comes open, a job description is prepared and the position is advertised in appropriate media (newspapers, professional publications such as Scholastic Coach, on the school web site) in order to get as wide a circulation of the open position as desired by the Administration.

The advertisement of the job opening should clearly state the requirements that the successful candidate will possess including teaching and coaching experience, a description of the community where the school is located, the Administration's football program goals, a description of the duties that are required of the head football coach, the salary of the position, and the name and title of the administrative contact to whom a professional resume should be submitted.

Candidate resumes and any related documents should be pooled and reviewed by the Administration. A decision can then be made regarding how many candidates from the applicant pool will be interviewed. In our experience, 30 head football coach candidates is an optimal number from which to select five (5) to interview.

It has also been the author's experience that it is advantageous to both the Administration and the candidate for the school to announce, immediately after the last game of the season, that it has a head football coaching vacancy. An early announcement of the position vacancy gives ample opportunity for both parties to examine the compatibility of philosophies on the part of the Administration and the candidate. Waiting until late in the school year to advertise the job opening puts the Administration and the candidate at a disadvantage. Many good coaches will have already accepted positions by late in the school year thereby limiting the choices available to the Administration. Moreover, a new head coach simply does not have enough time to do all that is necessary to prepare for the upcoming season if he is interviewing for the job in June.

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As will be discussed at various points in this book, the football program runs in a chronological sequence. Optimally, preparation for the next season begins on the first day after the last game of the current season. This principle can also apply to the process of hiring a head football coach by advertising the vacancy as soon as possible after the end of the football season.

The Interview

The interview is where the head coach candidate will get the most complete picture of his prospective employer. It is important for the candidate to articulate his program vision to the Administration during the interview. It is also important for the candidate to ask questions to gain an accurate perception of the Administration; its football goals and the support that it will give the football program from facilities through operating costs. How does football fit with the academic program? Does the Administration view the football program as an extension of the academic curriculum (a co-curricular activity), or does it exist in a world apart from the school (extra-curricular)? In other words, how do the educational values of the Administration relate to the educational values of the football program? The interview should provide information that allows the candidate and the Administration to determine if there will be a good fit between the employee (the head coach) and the employer (the organization).

The head coach candidate should articulate his game plan in the interview. By this we mean that he should explain how he utilizes his player personnel, the characteristics of a high school depth chart, the goals of his football program, and the requirements he has in place for his coaching staff. The head coach candidate might outline his vision of the number of years that his program encompasses along with some of its high points. Following is an example of our vision: We want to compete with the best teams in the state. We want a four-year program starting with 8th grade enrollees (we call them red shirts) doing agility drills and early weight conditioning (to overcome "iron fright") during the winter and spring, and ending with the players who are participating in the college placement process during the spring of their senior year. We want 120 lockers in our football program. Our program will be year-round for players and coaches. We will play a varsity schedule, a varsity reserve schedule, a sophomore schedule and a 9th grade schedule. Each squad will play 10 games per season. Our staff will be comprised of 10 coaches, an equipment manager with four student assistants and a dedicated custodian to keep the locker rooms hygienic. We want strong parent and community support from a 5th Quarter Club. We also need to have volunteers to scout our opposition. By articulating these few words about the program, the Administration will, or will not, understand the coach. The candidate will be able to get an indication of Administration philosophy by the interest displayed and questions asked regarding his brief description of the program and can determine if there is common ground on which to proceed, or if another organization might be a better fit for him.

The issue is not whether your vision parallels the above example. The point here is that the interview is one of the two most important elements in the hiring process. During the interview you can communicate your vision to the Administration and they can communicate their vision to you. The other critical element to be addressed during the hiring process is the coach's employment agreement with the Administration that will be discussed in Chapter Three.

2

Other Governing Entities

As mentioned in Chapter One, normally there will be a conference, or league, in which the school will compete. The function of this organization is to administer the rules and regulations that govern its members; the participating schools. Matters of player safety and eligibility are important conference concerns as is school size (classification by school population), competition among equally sized schools, scheduling of conference games and a championship format in each class of competition.

The next level in the organizational hierarchy is the state athletic association. The state athletic association administers rules and regulations that impact the conferences and their members (schools) in the state and when necessary performs an adjudicative function.

Often, but not always, parochial and other private schools will have organizational hierarchies. In some states parochial schools compete in public high school football conferences.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), headquartered in Indianapolis, IN, functions as the ultimate governing entity for high school sports programs nationwide. NFHS sets safety standards and codes of conduct for state athletic associations to follow and emphasizes player safety first and foremost.

In recent years, the courts increasingly have heard football-related litigation concerning school liability and injuries to players. Player safety issues, ranging from heat related death to head injury and paralysis from blunt force trauma, are recorded each year. The American Football Coaches Association publishes yearly statistics on football injuries. Coaches must be aware of player safety issues such as sufficient hydration and assure there are trained medical personnel available for practices and games. Pre-season practices during August in full equipment should be scheduled at cooler times of the day (morning and evening). Terminology associated with contact drills should be reviewed. Language used to describe such drills, that could be interpreted by a jury in a legal proceeding as encouraging undue violence, should be avoided.

Neither this chapter, nor information in the book, is in any way intended to give legal advice. The above information is offered as a checklist for coaches, and particularly those just starting their careers, to take into consideration. The organizational entities that impact high school football are significant to every coach and his program. It therefore is prudent to be aware of such organizations and to respect their authority.

The Employment Agreement

Along with the interview, the employment agreement is the most important part of the decision to accept a head coaching position. As we discussed in Chapter one, the interview will allow the candidate to articulate his vision for the football program and talk about his game plan. The interview also allows the candidate to determine if his philosophy and that of the organization (the school) are compatible.

The employment agreement (contract) is the “closer” in the hiring process. The organization puts in writing what it has been discussing with the head coach candidate. The candidate either agrees or disagrees with the provisions and duration of the employment agreement. It is important to note that the coach’s employment agreement is separate from the teaching agreement. An individual may be terminated as a coach and the teaching agreement will remain in force. A teaching contract usually is embodied in a collective bargaining agreement between a teachers’ union and a school board, whereas a coaching agreement normally is between the Administration and an individual. The teachers’ union generally will not represent a coach in an employment matter that does not involve a teaching-related issue.

Often, if a head coach is fired or decides to stop coaching, he also will resign as a teacher at the school because he intends to seek a head coaching position elsewhere. Today, however, not all schools require their coaches to be teachers. It is important when accepting a job offer to understand the philosophy of the school on this point. Also, the pool of potential assistant coaches available to be on your staff is impacted by whether or not a coach has to be a certified teacher.

There are a number of key thoughts we would suggest for a candidate to keep in focus when accepting a head coaching position:

- A compatible philosophy with the Administration regarding your football program vision;
- Salary and moving expense considerations;
- Funding to attend one or more coaches’ clinics each year;
- Hiring of assistant coaches;
- Community aspirations and support for football;
- Involvement potential with youth recreational sports;
- Will the Administration put your employment agreement in writing?

Related to the philosophy of the Administration is whether or not it views the football program as an extension of its academic curriculum; i.e. a co-curricular activity as opposed to an extra curricular activity. A co-curricular football program recognizes the learning values imparted by athletics.

No athletic program is more rigorous, mentally or physically, than football. Many of the teaching and learning techniques used in football are used in the biology or English classroom. For example, players who keep football notebooks, take written examinations on each week's game plan, and apply what they learn in football meetings on the field, are using the same skills that are required in science or humanities courses. The players apply on the field or in football laboratory, as it may be called, what they learned in the classroom. A football program conducted in such a way is truly co-curricular. One could argue that such a program is mentally rigorous enough to qualify a student athlete to earn academic credit for participating in "football laboratory", although we would concede such a debate is better held at another time and place. Nonetheless, philosophy matters a great deal. If the Administration has a co-curricular philosophy, and so does the head coach, the issues that inevitably arise during the coach's tenure are likely to be more easily resolved.

Another important item for the candidate is the Administration's policy regarding moving expenses. The salary may be agreed upon, but if the candidate is responsible to pay family moving expenses out of taxable income, perhaps the compensation offer should be negotiated more thoroughly.

While discussing reimbursable expense issues, an important factor in a coach's professional development is his attendance at one or more football clinics each year. Such clinics keep him up to date on the latest innovations in the sport, give him an opportunity to network with others in the profession, and often afford an opportunity to the head coach, and his assistants, to present information to other attendees about their football program.

A key ingredient in a successful football program is the coaching staff. In hiring assistant coaches, the head coach will want to have an agreement with the Administration that he has the power to hire coaches of his choice if they meet the employment standards of the school. Our preference was to hire assistants who aspired to head coaching positions because they would be willing to put the energy and time required into a year-round football program. While this practice enhances the adage of "change is the only constant in high school football" because assistants will move on, it also attracts motivated people to the coaching staff who want to be successful.

A consideration in the building and maintenance of a successful football program is community support. A booster's organization that we called the 5th Quarter Club is primarily comprised of parents and others in the community who are loyal to the high school team. 5th Quarter Clubs can be helpful in fund raising projects for specific items that may be outside the capability of the school budget. One year our 5th Quarter Club conducted a raffle to purchase portable lights that were used late in the season when earlier nightfall shortened our practice time. The 5th Quarter Club can also boost morale by its support of the team, particularly when the inevitable down cycle of the depth chart is contributing to an "off-year". The parents in a 5th Quarter Club can also help with a variety of nutritional issues: from pre-season training meals to hot chocolate and cookies after games or after a Friday night players' meeting. The list of helps provided by a 5th Quarter Club is limited only by imagination and the willing hands of parents.

Another community consideration is the summer youth recreational program. It is good for a candidate to get a feel for how he can be involved with playground programs. Athletic talent can be identified – as early as 5th or 6th grade in playground leagues by observing baseball, basketball and track