

FOOTBALL



AVIATION TRAINING
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES NAVY





FOOTBALL

Revised Edition

PREPARED BY THE
V-FIVE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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PREPARED BY OFFICERS OF THE
AVIATION TRAINING DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES NAVY



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A Brief History of Football

For most Americans the term "football" means American Intercollegiate Football, a development of the old game of Rugby introduced from England about 1870. However the game itself dates back to long before the Christian era, specific mention being made of a game of ball in Homer's Odyssey. Harpastum was a favorite game of the Spartans and the Athenians and it was played upon a rectangular field marked with side lines, goal lines and center line. As early as 177 A.D. a book was written about the game by Julius Pollux, an Egyptian who dedicated it to Emperor Commodus. The game was extremely popular among the Lacedaemonians, Romans and Florentines also; although its popularity rose and fell through the ages, the game never entirely disappeared at any time.

The Romans passed the game on to the Britons early in the Twelfth Century but edicts by English Kings went out against it in the 14th and 15th centuries. It is interesting to note that despite edicts forbidding the game its popularity was not stamped out and it was continually played in the streets and on the commons as noted in Samuel Pepys' diary. By 1800 the game was adopted by English schools and Universities as "Quite the leading sport." About 1850 an Association was formed in England in order to harmonize the various types of games being played in different sections of the country, but not until the Rugby Union was formed in 1871 were definite rules enacted.

Football was not played in America to any extent until about 1870. The game in this country was unlike anything prevailing in other countries but had some of the characteristics of the Association game. Rugby was introduced to Harvard by the Canadians in 1875 and in the same year Harvard played Yale in a game under rules set up by representatives of the two Universities who tried to harmonize the Association and Rugby games. This was not satisfactory and in 1876 Rugby Union rules were accepted. The popularity of the game increased greatly.

The English Rugby game is essentially a kicking and passing game somewhat like a combination of basketball and American football. However in America there was no tradition and few established rules so the rules were changed with popular demand until the game became largely a matter of advancing the ball by aid of "interference" furnished by teammates of the man carrying the ball. The development of the game into a science with full opportunity for strategy appealed to football coaches and they are constantly devising new stratagems and evolving unusual and surprising plays.

One of the greatest changes in the game was brought about by the Flying Wedge, an extremely popular play but one which resulted in many serious injuries and the reaction of the public against this mass play was strong. The Rules Committee then set up rules to free the game of unnecessary roughness and to improve its good points. From 1906 when the forward pass was introduced into American Football (though the forward pass was a feature of the Roman game Harpastum played 2500

years ago and from which play the game took its name) came a quick succession of rule changes. The seven man line, halves changed to quarters, ball carrier running unassisted, and other changes opened the game up and not only added safety measures but increased spectator interest.

The American game is a distinct development of Americans and no longer closely resembles the English game which still adheres closely to the type played early in the 19th century. Frequent rule changes are made to help balance the offense and defense so that now it is not so much the variety of defenses used but the definite moves made to conceal until the very last moment the specific defense that creates the situations requiring brilliant strategy. Teams are more daring and gamble more frequently and moreover they very often find the gamble resulting in their favor. Skillful coaching is making teamwork play a greater part in the game without limiting individual brilliance and so the American game grows more colorful from year to year.

Football is, and has been, a definite factor in the development of such qualities as self-discipline, intelligence, resourcefulness, self-reliance and the will to win—both in the individual and in cooperative effort. The players daily learn to search for strength and weakness of the opponents, analyze situations quickly and devise plans to offset them. This experience is bound to be a great factor in the building of morale in our armed forces.

CHAPTER II

Football in the Navy

Football! Navy! War!

At no time in history were these words more entwined and intermeshed than in World War II.

For many years, the Naval Academy has realized the value of football in its athletic program. When he was Director of Athletics at Annapolis, Admiral Jonas H. Ingram in his first message to the Midshipmen stated: "The closest thing to war in time of peace is football!"

He commanded one of the large task forces at sea.

The analogy of football and war has become more and more apparent every day. The benefits of training in football helped many American soldiers, sailors, and marines in their wartime duties.

The strategy of war is duplicated in every game of the season, viz:

We must:

seek out the opponent's weakness and pound on it;

shift the point of attack when the defense is strengthened at that point;

use the element of surprise as a devastating scoring play!

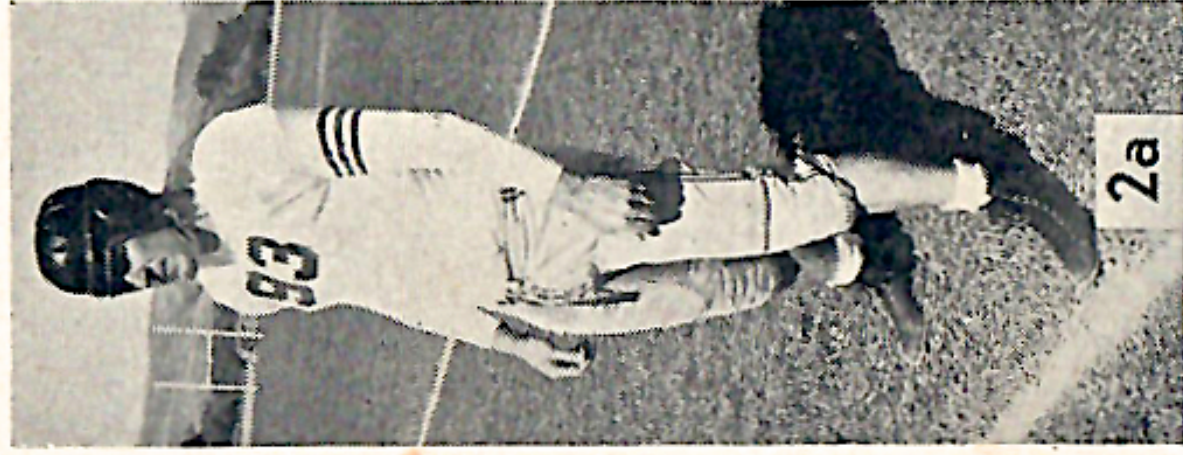
realize that few games are won by defensive measures alone and that well trained reserves continually represent the margin of victory;

know that the continuously successful team must possess a varied and coordinated attack, in the air and on land, and must be able to hold its ground;

have the foresight to punt and bide time for a scoring opportunity, and when it is offered to attack with speed, power, deception, with complete confidence and with a will that does not permit failure.

The capacity of our football players to absorb the shock and pain of violent physical contact without wincing, and to rally strongly and courageously in the face of misfortune and adversity is familiar to all who know the game. The football player accepts blows from Fate and his adversary as part and parcel of the game and stays in there swinging. He combines fortitude and strength with bodily skill and agility, and these factors with split-second thinking and reactions. These are the same qualities that have made our fighting men the toughest and best in the world.

Competition is as old as the Navy itself and it is just as traditionally Navy as John Paul Jones. In peace time and in war time, the method the Navy has used to train its crews is competition. One turret crew has competed against another, ship has contested against ship in engineering and communications as well as in gunnery. Aircraft squadrons have trained by competing against one another in machine gun practice, camera gun and bombing. The high state of efficiency and the remarkable records that the Navy made in World War II in gunnery and aerial warfare are ample proof that these competitive methods are very worthwhile.



2a

(a) Assuming three-point stance—feet about twenty-four inches apart; toe of right foot on line with heel of left foot.



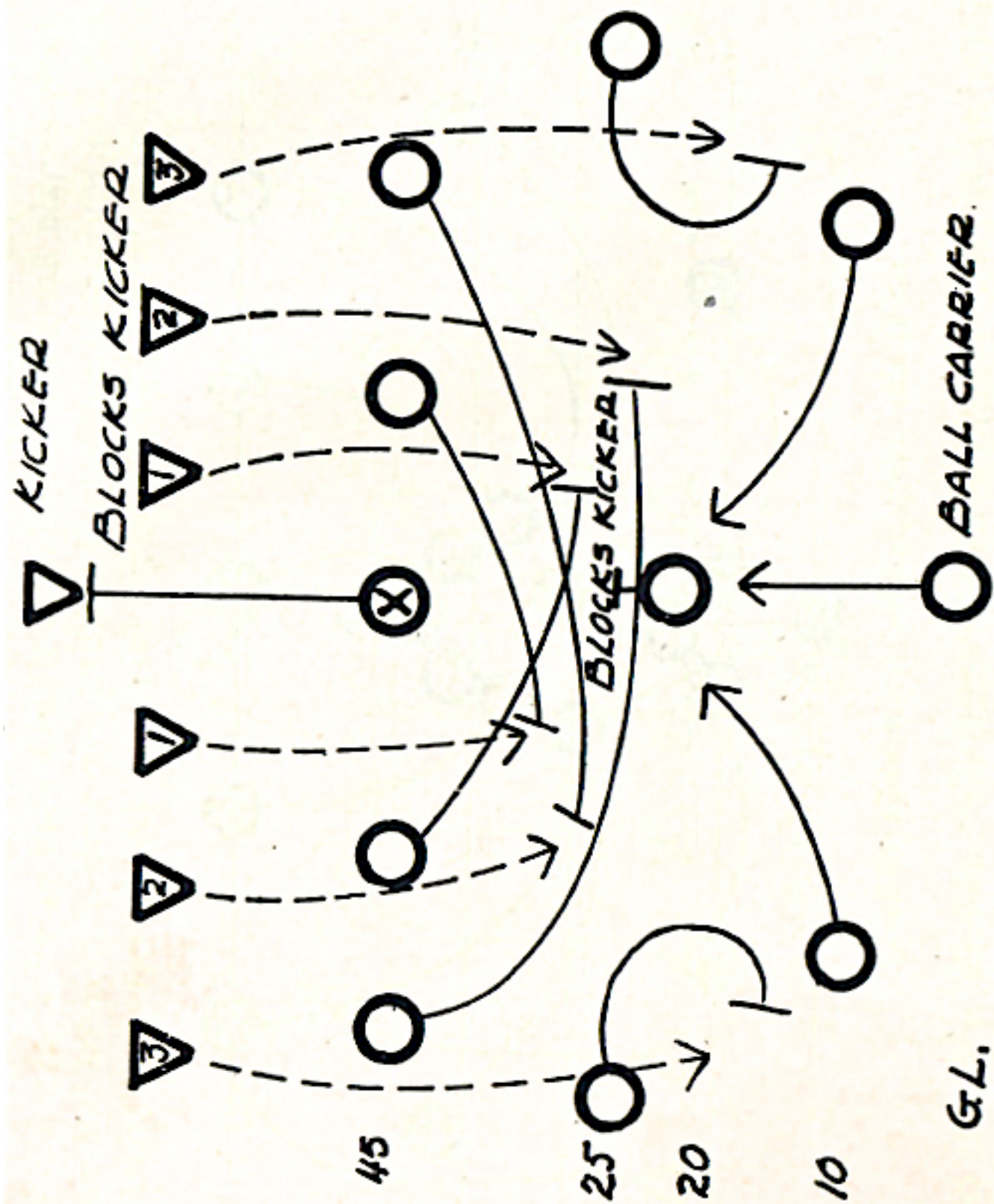
2b

(b) Full knee bend. Dropping right hand to ground, resting left forearm on left knee. Balance on balls of feet.



2c

(c) Relaxed and balanced position; right arm straight from shoulder to ground; hips lower than shoulders. Heels clear of ground and weight on balls of feet; head up, bull neck, and eyes ahead with split vision.



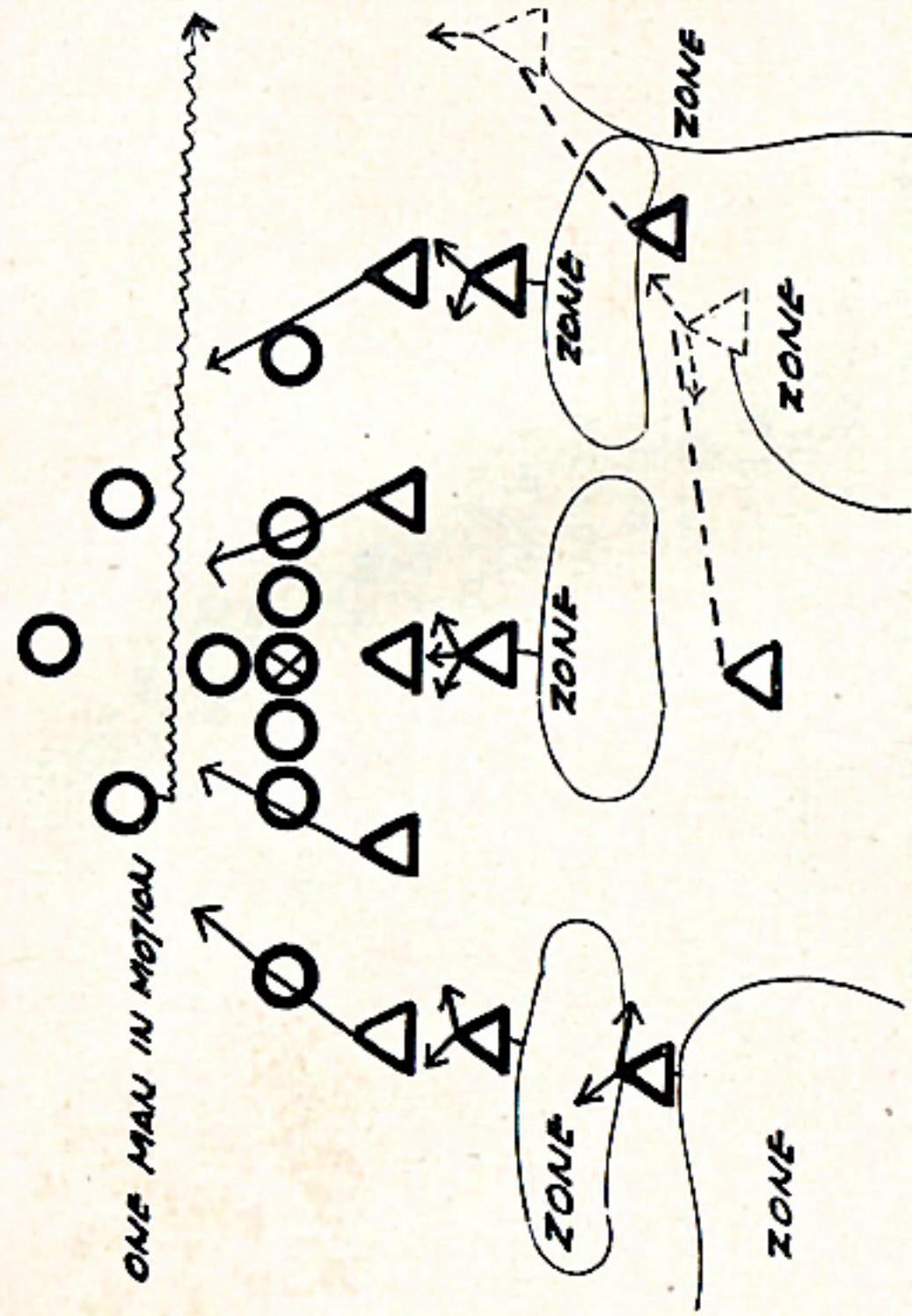


FIG. 107A. Movement of secondary with players in motion.

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