

SMALL-SCHOOL ATHLETIC MANAGEMENT

16-Area Master Problem Outline

16 CORE PROBLEM AREAS	
1. Coach Assignments	9. Game-Day Preparation
2. Practice Schedules	10. Individual Coaching
3. Player Evaluation	11. Time Management
4. Skill Development	12. Minimize Player "Dead Time"
5. Conditioning	13. Captain/Senior Utilization
6. Positioning Players	14. Trainer/Equipment Mgr/Laundry
7. Team Discipline	15. Farm Boys/Working Players
8. Locker Room Management	16. Preparing for the Next Week's Opponent: Film Breakdown & Game Planning

FIVE UMBRELLA CATEGORIES	
A. STAFF MANAGEMENT	1 Coach Assignments 10 Individual Coaching 13 Captain/Senior Utilization
B. PRACTICE MANAGEMENT	2 Practice Schedules 4 Skill Development 5 Conditioning 11 Time Management 12 Minimize Player "Dead Time"
C. PLAYER MANAGEMENT	3 Player Evaluation 6 Positioning Players 7 Team Discipline 8 Locker Room Management
D. GAME MANAGEMENT	9 Game-Day Preparation 16 Preparing for the Next Week's Opponent: Film Breakdown & Game Planning
E. SMALL-SCHOOL REALITY	14 Trainer/Equipment Mgr/Laundry 15 Farm Boys/Working Players

NOTES / PRIORITIES

Area 1 - Coach Assignments

Staff Management | Build clarity, efficiency, and accountability from a limited coaching staff.

1.1 Know exactly what manpower you have

Inventory staff size, role type (full-time, part-time, volunteer, shared), certifications, experience, availability limits, and who can coach multiple positions.

1.2 Assign coaches according to strengths

Match people to the work where they add the most value - for example, line technique, quarterback development, coverage work, or strength and conditioning.

1.3 Give every coach a primary responsibility

Every coach should be able to say, *"This is what I am responsible for."* Small staffs cannot afford unclear ownership.

1.4 Give coaches secondary responsibilities

Clarify every additional hat: run-game coordination, equipment, junior varsity, or another needed role. Make these assignments intentional rather than random.

1.5 Establish the chain of command

Define who leads the program; who coordinates offense, defense, and special teams; and who owns discipline, equipment, player communication, and parent communication.

1.6 Don't overload your best coaches

Avoid placing multiple position groups, special teams, strength training, equipment, discipline, game planning, and administrative duties on one capable person. Use every coach effectively.

1.7 Build assignments around practice efficiency

At any point in practice, it should be clear who is coaching whom, where, and doing what. This keeps players from standing around waiting for instruction.

1.8 Assign coaches to the entire program

Plan coverage for varsity, JV, freshman, and junior high. Do not let the varsity consume all available coaching resources while younger players receive little instruction.

1.9 Establish accountability

Every assignment needs an owner. Replace "Somebody needs to get the equipment ready" with a named coach who is responsible for it.

THE CENTRAL PRINCIPLE

Put the right coach in the right place, give him clear responsibility, and hold him accountable for the development of the players assigned to him.

Small-school question: How do we get the maximum amount of coaching, teaching, supervision, and player development from a limited number of coaches?

COACH'S NOTES

Area 2 - Practice Schedules

Practice Management | Turn limited time, space, and staff into purposeful player development.

2.1 Build practice around your actual constraints

Account for coaches, field space, player numbers, school schedules, transportation, weather, and working-player obligations. The plan has to work in real life, not just on paper.

2.2 Start with a consistent daily structure

Use a reliable rhythm: warm-up and movement; individual instruction; group work; team offense and defense; special teams; conditioning or finish; review and dismissal. Consistency reduces explanation time.

2.3 Plan every minute

Each period should state what is being taught, which players are involved, which coach owns it, where it happens, and the expected result. Redesign any period without a clear purpose.

2.4 Limit player dead time

Avoid long lines and large groups standing around. Use stations, split groups, and multiple drills when possible. Players should be moving, learning, or recovering with a purpose.

2.5 Balance individual, group, and team work

Team periods cannot replace technique work. Schedule individual skill development, position-group instruction, unit work, team execution, and situational preparation.

2.6 Make practice match game demands

Practice the situations that decide games: third down, red zone, two-minute offense, goal line, backed-up offense, sudden change, punts, kickoffs, and return situations.

2.7 Adjust by day of the week

Monday: correct and introduce. Tuesday: install and work full speed. Wednesday: refine the game plan and situations. Thursday: sharpen execution, special teams, and confidence. Friday: game day.

2.8 Build in flexibility

Weather, injuries, school events, and limited staffing will disrupt plans. Keep a short-practice version and an indoor or limited-space version ready for each practice.

2.9 End with clarity

Before players leave, they should know what improved, what needs correction, what is expected tomorrow, and any equipment, film, or schedule responsibility.

THE CENTRAL PRINCIPLE

A good practice schedule turns limited time, space, and staff into purposeful player development.

COACH'S NOTES