

HEAD COACH

by SIMON DAVIES

The objective of the Head Coach is to WIN THE SUPERBOWL. To do this, he must first win enough games in the 12 week regular season to earn a place in the PLAYOFFS and then fight his way through the "FIRST ROUND" and the "CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP" games for the right to play for the 'SUPERBOWL'.

Naturally, to achieve these aims the player in his role as Head Coach must put together a good team by shrewd trading of players and College Draft choices, he must pick his most effective team for each game allowing for injuries and his opponents strongpoints. During each game he must call each "play" from the sideline, attempting to outwit the opposition and give his side the advantage. At the end of each season, he must look at his squad and work out where the weak areas are, then use his options to bring in new players in those positions.

By making the right decisions, the glory of a SUPERBOWL win can be yours.

We suggest that you start playing the game and refer to the following detailed instructions as necessary. When you have grasped the basics of playing, careful study of these instructions will help you to improve your skill and success.

HEAD COACH - INSTRUCTIONS

1. LOADING:

Type LOAD "" Press ENTER and start the tape.

2. STARTING OFF:

Choose your team by entering division number

So, when inspecting a squad, the information is presented under the following headings:-

Pos Name RLP AG FT FM

Explanation

- Player number - type this into trade.

Pos - Player position.

R) - Player skill on rush, line plunge and

L) -

P) pass plays respectively.

The sum of these 3 numbers is the overall skill total, which along with the player age, gives an indication of the player's market value in trading.

Ag - Player Age. This is important in that those aged 22-25 may IMPROVE in skill, either in the weekly news or in the close season, but those aged 27 or more may retire (likelihood increases with age).

Ft - Player Fitness (Can decrease due to participating in a game. Injury results when this reaches 0.

Fm - Player Form. This increases by 2 for a player participating in a victory, but decreases by 1 after a loss or when a player is left out. A player's skill ratings may improve when form reaches 10.

TRADING. You are allowed a number of trades between matches. When deciding whether to accept, compare the total of your player's skills and his age, with that of the player offered, and take account of the draft choice offered or demanded.

4. BEFORE TEAM SELECTION:

When all trades have been completed you continue to the next match.

You are first presented with a report by your scouts on the other team, of variable accuracy. (Scout Accuracy may be changed in the weekly

(1-6) and team number (1-4).

There follows a pause while squads, schedule etc. are set up.

Then you must then select your skill level.

3. MAIN MENU:

Choices 4 (check schedule), 5 (Check tables), 7 (Save on Tape), 8 (Facts and Figures) and 9 (Change Skill Level) are self-explanatory.

Choice 6 refers to the College Draft, where initially each team would have 1 choice (i.e. 1 chance to pick up a college player) per round. This situation may be greatly altered by continual trading of draft picks, so this option therefore allows the developments to be monitored.

Choices 1, 2 and 3 are the most complicated and hence require detailed explanation . . .

An American football team is made up of 3 squads, OFFENSIVE (who take the field when you have the ball), DEFENSIVE (who play when the other team has the ball) and a SPECIAL TEAM (which includes the Kicker who attempts Field Goals and Conversions).

The offense (offensive squad) consists of the following types of players:-

QB - Quarterback - Receives ball initially and will either pass ball to a receiver or give it to a Runningback.

RB - Runningback - Runs or plunges with the ball.

OL - Offensive Lineman - Protects Quarterback and Runningbacks from would-be tacklers.

TE - Tight End - May protect Runningback or catch passes.

WR - Wide Receiver - Catches passes downfield.

The 3 types of DEFENSIVE PLAYER are:-

DB - Defensive Back - Defends against passes and may stop Runningbacks who have broken through.

news). The other team's actual ratings are out of 40, except for the kicker's skill (10). This is significant, because it will be seen that the most your team's ratings could add up to is 40.

IMPORTANT - Since they take to the field at the same time, your OFFENSE is compared to their DEFENSE, and vice-versa.

5. TEAM SELECTION:

You should select the following number of each type of player.

Offense - 11

One Quarterback (QB)
Two Runningbacks (RB)
Five Offensive Linemen (OL)
One Tight End (TE)
Two Wide Receivers (WR)

Defense - 11

Four each of two types of Defensive player and three of the third type.

Special Team - 1

One Kicker.

Having pressed the right button to check a particular squad, players are selected by using the flashing cursor, which is moved up and down using the 7 and 6 keys, and alters the status of the player on the pressing of '0'.

On pressing '0' the R sign, for 'Roster' or 'Reserve' is replaced by S - Selected.

Most important of all, the overall skill ratings of the squad are augmented. (These ratings, which are compared against the relevant squad of the opponents are made up of the sums of the skill on each play of those selected.)

When you have finished selecting players in a squad, press ENTER (You cannot leave the page if you have selected too many players in the squad.) When all selection is completed, again press M to go on, as indicated.

6. GAME DAY:

At this point the true skill ratings of the opposition

LB - Linebacker - The defensive 'Handyman' often tackles the Runningback.

DL - Defensive Lineman - Tries to break down offensive line, hurry the Quarterback, stop the Line Plunge and tackle the Runningback early.

The team with the ball in American Football (the team "on offense") has 3 basic options, apart from bringing on the kicker. They may PASS it, RUSH downfield with it, or PLUNGE over the LINE.

These 'plays' are referred to in Head Coach as RUSH, LINE PLUNGE and PASS. As can be seen, the role of each type of player in the game is different, so the players are given skill ratings on their contribution to each type of play, with the maximum total over the 3 categories being 10 (or 20 for the Quarterback). A wide Receiver for example, who effectively contributes only on pass plays, has up to 10 skill points on the Pass, but 0 on the rush and Line Plunge. A Runningback is very important on a rush play and moderately important on the Line Plunge, so his maximum ratings are 7 on Rush, 3 on Line Plunge and 0 on the Pass, giving a total of 10.

The complete table of maximum skill distribution:-

	Rush	Line Plunge	Pass	Max. Skill Total
Offense				
Quarter Back	4	4	12	= 20
Runningback	7	3	0	= 10
Offensive Line	4	6	0	= 10
Tight End	2	0	8	= 10
Wide Receiver	0	0	10	= 10

Defense

Defensive Back	2	0	8	= 10
Linebacker	4	4	2	= 10
Defensive Line	4	6	0	= 10

NB The skill of the KICKER is also marked out of 10.

are revealed and are compared with yours. It is important here to work out which of your plays is most effective - for the further your offense rating is ahead of their defensive rating is the first indication of the change of success of the play. You should also decide in which plays the opposing team has the advantage over your defense, for they will play to their strengths. Take account of PITCH CONDITION - the softer the pitch, the less effective the rush, and the WIND - the faster the wind, the less effective is the pass. When you have decided which plays you will be using most when you are on offense, and which you expect the opposing team to use when you are on defense, press any key to go into the match.

7. THE MATCH:

In the game of American Football, a team on offense is given 4 DOWNS, i.e. 4 plays to move the ball 10 yards. Failure to gain the 10 yards means that the ball must be turned over to the opposition, but if 10 yards are gained on any down, another series of downs is earned. In HEAD COACH, to increase the pace of the gameplay, you only get 2 DOWNS to move the ball 10 yards. The ball is 'moved' by catching a pass downfield (PASS PLAY), or running with the ball either around the end (RUSH PLAY) or through the middle by going through the lines (LINE PLUNGE PLAY).

The object of moving the ball upfield is to score a TOUCHDOWN, worth 6 points plus the chance of a 1 point conversion, by moving the ball to the far end of the field, or to at least get near enough for the kicker to attempt a FIELD GOAL, a kick over the post is worth 3 points if successful. On a point of notation, "1st down and 10"

means that the offense is on the first of the 2 downs allowed, and must get 10 more yards to achieve another First Down. The team on offense therefore is trying to get downfield, and in the short term needs 10 YARDS OFF 2 DOWNS. When on offense, you are required to choose your play, (after you have pressed and key to start things off), by pressing the relevant key.

KEY PLAY	
I	Info. The info, screen reminds you of the strengths and weaknesses of both teams and helps you to decide your tactics.
P	PASS The Pass will gain 10 or more yards if caught - more than enough for another 'First Down' - but gains 0 yards if dropped (Incomplete). Thus the pass is the 'Winner takes all' play. The risk is the Interception.
R	RUSH Can gain any number of yards, from 0 to going all the way for a touchdown. The risk here is the Fumble.
L	LINE Most likely result is a 5 yd gain, but 0 and 10 yard gains also possible. A conservative play, since it will not bring the big gain, but the chance of the Fumble occurring is less. Rarely used on 2nd Down if 10 yds are required (i.e. 2nd Down and 10), but often the best on 2nd and 5.

The success of plays P, R and L for the team on offense depends on:-
 i) Offensive skill rating compared with defensive

skill rating on that particular play.
 ii) Play selected by defense.
 iii) Home team advantage. (Home team is always the SECOND of the two in American Football.)
 iv) Pitch Condition, Wind.
 v) Number of times play already used in match.
 Factor (v) is included to thwart a team which relies too heavily on one play, since if it is continually used, its effectiveness is reduced. (In real life, defensive players would learn how to react to the play to their advantage over the course of the game.)
 Choice K is the FIELD GOAL ATTEMPT.
 The chance of the kick being successful depends on the kicker's skill, and the distance from the posts. Few kicks miss from the 10 yard line, but a kick from beyond the 45 yard line is very unlikely to succeed.
 If a Field Goal is missed, the other team take over either from the spot of the kick or their own 20 yard line, whichever is to their advantage. Except on the last play of the game, field goals should not be tried on First Down, as First Down could otherwise be used to gain a few more yards making the kick on second down easier.
 Second Down is decision time. If you are at the other team's 30 yard line, you can go for a field goal, worth 3 points, or keep up the effort to score a touchdown, by "Going for it on 2nd Down" - risking failure to gain the required yards, which would mean giving the ball up.
 KICKOFFS, although not shown graphically, occur at the start of each game and are taken by the scoring team after a touchdown or field goal. The receiving team starts in their own half, on First Down and 10.
 When on DEFENSE, there are 4 alignments available, keyed in as S, Y, R or P. The role of the

defense is to disrupt the offense, and this is most likely to be achieved if the Head Coach of the defensive team calls for an alignment designed to counteract the particular play the offense choose. If he calls for the wrong alignment, he may actually aid the offense. This part of the game is "think and double think".

KEY DEFENSIVE ALIGNMENT

- S STANDARD - Some effectiveness against all 3 offensive plays.
- Y SHORT YARDAGE - Greatly reduces success of LINE PLUNGE but helps offense if they PASS.
- R (PREVENT) RUSH - Greatly reduces success of RUSH but helps offense if they LINE PLUNGE.
- P (PREVENT) PASS - Greatly reduces success of PASS but helps offense if they RUSH.

If a game is tied at full time, an extra period called "overtime" is played, in which the winning team is the first to score - by field goal or touchdown. **IMPORTANT** - Between plays there are NO "Press any key to continue" notices. So when the action stops, press any key to get ready for the next play.

8. AFTER THE MATCH:

You are first shown your final score, followed by the results from the weeks' other games. You are then shown your LEAGUE TABLES. Note here that there are 3 other teams in your division all fighting it out with you for the championship, and because of this direct competition, you are scheduled to play each of these twice per year. You are also in competition for a playoff spot with the other teams in your CONFERENCE (AFC or NFC).
 After a short pause to allow checking for injuries,

form alteration etc. you are shown a NEWS ITEM. You are now returned to the MAIN MENU (3), for the next week, and you can go about trading with more knowledge of which areas you would like to improve.

9. THE PLAYOFFS:

At the end of the 12 week season, 8 teams advance to the playoffs, a knockout tournament, culminating in the SUPERBOWL. The six Division Champions, plus the best other teams from each Conference (NFC and AFC), called the WILDCARD teams, who always play away from home in the playoffs, make up the 8.
 If you have not made the playoffs, your competitive season is over, but if you have you carry on playing as before, either until you are knocked out or until you receive the honour of Superbowl Champion.

10. THE CLOSE SEASON:

At the end of the season you are given 20 days to trade in preparation for the college draft. A sensible tactic here is to try and trade off players who may soon retire, and so gain more draft picks.
 When the 20 days are up, close season developments are monitored. Each player is looked at and as in the weekly news section, under 27's may improve their skill ratings, but over 27's may retire. The chance of the 31 year old retiring is much greater than that for a 27 year old.
 You are then given an opportunity to look at your squad, which is no doubt depleted by retirements, and decide which areas need to be reinforced, and which type of player you need to pick up in the draft.

Finally, the College Draft takes place. In each round in which you have 1 or more choices, you will be shown the players on offer and the order of your pick(s) in the draft. When it is your turn, a flashing square appears and the cursor keys, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are used to manipulate the cursor until the name of the man you wish to draft starts flashing. Then use "ENTER" to pick the man. Note the better the standard of college, and the better the round of the draft (1 is best in each case), the higher the skill rating of the draftee is likely to be. Also, a younger player has more time to improve and will go longer before retiring. In America's NFL, the College Draft, along with the fact that money cannot be used to buy players, ensures that the league is competitive every year, because Playoff teams have to choose their players after the teams who had an unsuccessful season, so keeping the best young players of all away from the best teams of the day, and making it very difficult to have a long run of success.
 The last stage of the season will occur if you have more players than are allowed, either in the offense or defense, where 18 per squad is the limit, or overall, where 32 is the maximum. Surplus players must be CUT - given the sack from the team due to lack of skill compared with other players.
 You will now be ready to go onto the next season. Even if you win the Superbowl, HEAD COACH remains a challenge. Due to the handicap of late selection in the college draft, it is very difficult to win consecutive titles. In Superbowl History, only 3 teams (Green Bay, Miami and Pittsburgh) have won the superbowl in consecutive years. If you have won it three times on the run, consider yourself a master of HEAD COACH.

SUMMARY OF PLAYS (OFFENSIVE)				SUMMARY OF PLAYS (DEFENSIVE)			
Key	Name	Minimum Gain	Usual Gains	Max Gain	Key	Name	Minimum Gain
P	PASS	0 (Incomplete)	0, 10 + Any	TD	S	STANDARD	0
R	RUSH	0	5	TD	Y	SHORT YARDAGE	0
L	LINE PLUNGE	0	5	10	R	PREVENT RUSH	0
K	FIELD GOAL	-	-	-	P	PREVENT PASS	-

External Factors	Possible Turnover	FIELD GOAL SUCCESS DEPENDS ON DISTANCE FROM POST AND KICKER SKILL.
Wind Pitch	Interception Fumble Fumble	Success of offensive plays is affected by: i) Offensive skill compared with defensive skill on the particular play. ii) Skill selected by defensive. iii) Home team advantage. iv) External factors (see above). v) No. of times play already used in game.

SUMMARY OF PLAYS (OFFENSIVE)		SUMMARY OF PLAYS (DEFENSIVE)	
Usual Gains	Max Gain	DISRUPTS	AIDS
0, 10 + Any	TD	ALL plays slightly LINE plunge RUSH PASS	None PASS LINE RUSH

Scoring - TOUCHDOWN 6 points + EP
 EXTRA POINT attempted after TD for 1 pt.
 FIELD GOAL 3 points