

FOOTBALL



HELP DESK

'Helping Coaches Helping Kids'

HIT SCORE

In the speed camp article I used the analogy that velocity equals impact. This is true no doubt. However one of the things that goes with velocity is weight, if you have ever seen a semi truck hit a Volkswagen, you know the bug loses, no matter how fast it was traveling. Determining a Hit Score for your players will go a long way in answering one of the questions I get asked the most about defensive football; and that is player placement. Where should I place this type of player or what type of player should we use at this position? The Hit Score answers this question most of the time.

First though, the Hit Score is nothing more than Mass x Velocity. Without getting into all the complications of that equation, what it means is simple. The bigger, faster kid is going to create a bigger collision at the point of impact. Basically the bug is going to lose. During the course of speed camp we try hard to identify the kid that runs fast, but is carrying more weight than the others. When I see an 11-12 yr old kid that weighs between 120 and 130 lbs. and he is one of the top 5 speed-wise on the team, I know I have a high Hit Score player. Defensively, I want to protect that player, I want to put him in a position where he cannot be blocked, I want him arriving to the football untouched and angry. That kid is going to be my enforcer. That is my defensive philosophy, but how you place those kids will determine your team's success, you need to look at what you want to accomplish when placing players.

Most of the time we can look at our players 30-yard dash times and their weights and we can tell who will have high Hit Scores without doing any math. However, the simple formula can also be used so long as you remember to compare other attributes (experience & attitude) when the scores are really close. And all we mean by this is don't be silly and just place a huge, overweight kid that has never played football in the most important spot on the field based on the fact that he runs really fast in a straight line without any real football situation.

$$\text{(Distance / Time) x Weight = HIT SCORE}$$

After deciding who our top 5 players are in terms of Hit Score, we can place them into our defense. I want my #1 kid at the Will backer. Then my #2 kid would be my Mike backer. And #3 would be my Sam backer while #4 and #5 would be my DEs. This is because my defense is set up for the top 3 to be unblocked and running free to the football on most plays.

What I see more often are coaches picking positions for players based on some individual attribute like size or speed or on some sort of attribute like arm length. I do this too. However, I honor the Hit Score first. If you run the 46 like I do, then your hit squad is your LB core. However, if you are running the 33-Stack, you want your top 3 players to be the 2 Dogs and the Reaper. If the 4-3 is your defense those kids end up being the two Safeties and the Mike backer.

This seems simple but, I cant believe how many times I see a coach put a player like this at a non-impact spot because 'he is big and can take on blockers'. It is pretty rare to have very many players like this on your team. Putting a high Hit Score kid at DE while playing a 4-3 defense just because he can take on kickout blocks does your team a disservice.

In closing I submit to you that these types of players will make your defense a lot better if you place them correctly. On the defensive side of the football, a wo-lick can bring a huge emotional lift to your team while devastating the emotions of your opponents. So putting a player with the right Hit Score in a position to make that wo-lick benefits the whole team.

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