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MAKING THE GAME SAFER

If you watch television or go to the movies, you've seen Bobby Hosea. You just might not realize it.

In an acting career that has spanned more than 25 years, Hosea has appeared in dozens of television shows and movies including 24, CSI, Heroes, Cold Case, Xena: Warrior Princess, Independence Day – the list goes on and on. He's portrayed military officers, police detectives, doctors – even OJ Simpson.

But, in football circles, Hosea would rather be known for giving something back to the game. The former star defensive back for UCLA who went on to play in the CFL and USFL has developed a method of tackling that takes the head out of the hit, thereby reducing, if not eliminating the likelihood of helmet-to-helmet contact that causes traumatic head injuries.

To teach young players his safer way to tackle, Hosea has been operating a youth academy in Southern California for 15 years. To help spread the word around the country, he conducts seminars for coaches who want to implement his tackling technique. Now, for the first time, Hosea is sharing his method with a national audience of coaches.

Although his focus has been on youth programs, he believes, and evidence shows that the safer tackling technique can be taught to and used by players at any level.

As we've said many times, it is in the best interest of everyone involved in football to make the game safer. We believe that Bobby Hosea's approach to helmet-free tackling can be an important part of that effort.

Also in this issue, we present a checklist to help your staff and your athletes achieve a proper fit for their most important piece of protective equipment – their helmet. An ill-fitting helmet can almost be as dangerous as no helmet at all, so take the time to review these guidelines and work with helmet manufacturers to make sure that proper fitting procedures are being followed.

Safer football is better football, and we hope that these features will contribute to a safer season this fall.

NEW YORK'S FINEST

Everyone on my high school football team in upstate New York in 1970 knew that there was one opponent that we simply were not going to beat. It wasn't just our team – nobody could beat them. They were the biggest and best coached team in the region by far.

That team was Shenendehowa High School in Clifton Park and they were coached back then by Brent Steuerwald. Today, over 40 years later, they still are.

I had the privilege of meeting Coach Steuerwald at this year's AFCA convention, where he was honored as the recipient of the prestigious Power of Influence award. With over 300 games won, dozens of championships earned and thousands of athletes mentored, Steuerwald is the epitome of influence. In this issue, he shares some of the principles of communication and motivation that have guided him in his 43 years as head coach at Shenendehowa.

In upcoming issues, we'll be working with Coach Steuerwald to present a series of articles that cover various aspects of program management – dealing with everything from working with your equipment manager to building a successful strength and conditioning program. We can't think of a better coach to share his perspective on these topics that impact every program in America.

As for Steuerwald's Shenendehowa Plainmen, some things never change. Last season, they beat my alma mater, 48-6. Ouch.

John Gallup
Editor & Publisher

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