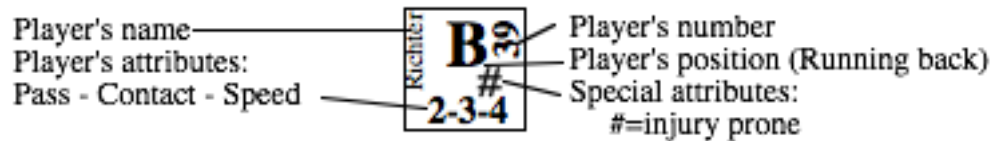


## CHAPTER 2

### The Game Components

#### 2.1 The Player Pieces

Each football player is represented by a marker as shown below, which bears the player's characteristics: name, position, jersey number, receiving ability, contact ability, and speed. (Some players may have more than one special attribute; most have none.) The first three characteristics are similar to common football usage. The player's name and number, together with his team (indicated by the color of the marker), serve to identify him, and have little or no other role in the game mechanics. The position identifies how the player may be used, and does have a bearing on the rules. The basic positions are C, G, T, Q, E, and B on offense and DE, DT, LB, and DH on defense. (Further specialization is possible in the advanced rules that are generally used.) The three numbers for pass, contact, and speed are the primary characteristics used in determining the outcome of a particular play. In all three cases, a larger number is better.



Receiving ability, the first of these in the case of most players, is important in catching passes, pitchouts, kickoffs, and punts, as well as for pass defense. Quarterbacks have a pass throwing value (sometimes put in parentheses) rather than a receiving value. Quarterbacks are all assumed to have a receiving value of one, should they for some reason find themselves receiving rather than throwing a pass, or making punt or kickoff returns. All non-quarterback running backs are assumed to have a passing value of zero, should it be needed. Other players may not play quarterback at all. Most linemen have a pass value of zero. In those cases where the pass value is not zero, it applies to pass rushing and blocking, rather than receiving. If, for some player, the pass value is blank (true for most linemen and some linebackers), the value is taken to be zero, and is omitted to simplify the marker.

Contact ability is important in tackling, blocking, pass rushing, carrying the ball, and in attempts to recover a fumble. It also may play a role in determining kick return yardage and such. Speed is important in reaching remote parts of the field, pursuit, and the pass rush. A fast player as ballcarrier or receiver has a better chance of eluding coverage or pursuit, and making a long gain. Speed is perhaps the most important attribute at most positions.

Further description of the position attributes and of the special characteristics and more specialized position definitions players may have can be found in Chapter 7. The special attributes apply only if the optional rules are in use, as they generally are in FOOL play.

## 2.2 The Gameboard

The figure below shows the gameboard, which represents the playing field relative to the line of scrimmage. The field is subdivided into the offensive and defensive sides of the line of scrimmage. These regions are further subdivided into "zones" and, on the defensive side, "areas". A zone corresponds to the space that can be covered with one unconstrained movement point under normal conditions. As offensive players move, they count out movement points in zones up to the limit given by their speed. A player with a speed of 4 would normally be able to move 4 zones. Certain groups of zones, the deeper ones, on the defensive side of the field, are separated by dashed rather than solid lines. These larger groups of zones are called areas, and correspond to the area which can be covered by a defender in a zone type defense, given the time it will take a play to reach that part of the field. As an example, the Short Center "SC" zone and Medium Center "MC" zones together constitute an Area, which is known by the name of its shortest zone in most cases, here as the "Short Center Area." Defensive players are initially positioned in areas, and only put in particular zones of the area when the play develops.

			<b>TB</b>						
	-6 yd						-6 yd		
	P3 5	P2 6	H2	F H1	H2	P2 6	P3 5		
	-3 yd		H1	Q H1	H1		-3 yd		
		<b>TE</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>G C G</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>TE</b>			
<b>W</b> <b>W</b> <b>R</b> <sub>3</sub>	-2 yd	-1 yd	Line of Scrimmage				-1 yd	-2 yd	<b>W</b> <b>W</b> <b>L</b> <sub>3</sub>
	<b>WR</b> Wide Right 4	<b>RE</b> Right End 4	<b>RT</b> Right Tackle 4	<b>RC</b> Right Center 4	<b>LC</b> Left Center 4	<b>LT</b> Left Tackle 4	<b>LE</b> Left End 4	<b>WL</b> Wide Left 4	
Wide Wide Right	<b>RS</b> Right Sideline 3	<b>SR</b> Short Right 4		<b>SL</b> Short Left 4		<b>LS</b> Left Sideline 3		Wide Wide Left	
<b>IR</b> Intermediate Right 2			<b>SC</b> Short Center 3			<b>IL</b> Intermediate Left 2			
<b>MR</b> Medium Right 1			<b>MC</b> Medium Center 2			<b>ML</b> Medium Left 0			
<b>DR</b> Deep Right 0			<b>DC</b> Deep Center 1			<b>DL</b> Deep Left 0			
<b>VD</b> Very Deep 50 yds						30 yds		0	

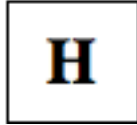
Each zone has a "short boundary" nearest the line of scrimmage (on the defensive side) or farthest away (on the offensive side). Except for the initial contact on a pass reception, the number of yards indicated at the short boundary of the zone is the reference point for any contact that takes place in that zone. Note that for the "Wide Left" WL, "Wide Right" WR, "Wide Wide Left" WWL, and "Wide Wide Right" (WWR) zones, the short boundary is at -2 yards (relative to the line of scrimmage) rather than at zero, even though these zones are considered on the defensive side of the line of scrimmage for all other purposes. This reflects the hazard of loss on long lateral runs. The "Left" L and "Right" R zones at the line of scrimmage have two short boundaries, at zero and -1 yards, depending on where they are entered by a ballcarrier. These zones each have two additional labels, for example "L" has "LT" and "LE", which are used to indicate the entry point for the ballcarrier during a play.

Each zone on the defensive side has a pass value, which reflects the ease of completing a pass to that zone. Larger numbers indicate better chances of completion. On the offensive side, some zones are marked with pitchout values, P2, P3, P4, etc. or handoff values H1, or H2. These indicate the number of movement points which must be expended by the ballcarrier prior to receiving a pitchout or handoff in that zone. (In the case of pitchouts, this is not an absolute limit. Earlier pitchouts can be taken at some cost in chance of fumbling.) The pitchout zones have a pass value as well, used for determining whether the pitchout is completed (not fumbled).

Certain zones on the offensive side are marked with the positions of players who normally start in those zones: C,G,T, and Q. All of these zones must have a player of that type in the zone at the start of the play. (There are exceptions under the advanced rules: shotgun formation, and unbalanced line.) Certain other zones are also considered starting positions for some types of players, for the TE, F, TB, or W, but having a player in that position is optional. (It is necessary in some cases to fulfill conditions for normal football rules, however. In particular, there must be seven offensive players or more at the line of scrimmage, including one or more outside the outermost interior lineman. (Set backs of a yard for multiple receivers on one side or the other are not represented – the zones are large enough that this is below the resolution of the game.) The rules include exceptions to the positioning constraints for certain formations, such as an unbalanced line. Usually, such formations are not advantageous.) On the defensive side, it is normally necessary to have at least one defensive lineman in each of the L,R, and C zones. While it is possible not to do so, such a defensive formation carries penalties, and is usually disadvantageous.

### **2.3 Coverage markers**

These markers each bear a position indicator for some offensive position. A defensive player is marked with a coverage marker if he is to cover the corresponding offensive player man-to-man. (In effect, he keys on the covered player's actions, and moves to cover him during the play.) The offensive player position labels are meant to be as specific as necessary to uniquely indicate the man covered. If there are insufficient markers of a particular kind, a blank marker can be used with a verbal coverage announcement, or additional markers can be made and added to the mix. There is no particular limit to the number of defenders who can cover a particular offensive player.



Coverage marker indicating that this defender is covering the Halfback

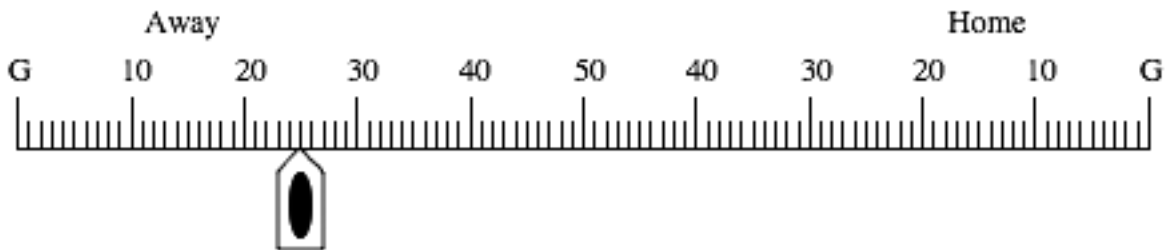
## 2.4 The game record

A means must be provided for the offensive player to write down the play he will run. A game record fills this function, while also providing space to write down the current ball position, yards gained, and time. The game record may also serve as a convenient description of the game from which statistics can be compiled after the game. For play-by-mail, the game record must be used, as well as a special "game plan" used to define plays and strategy. The game record is described more fully in Chapter 10, and the "game plan" in Chapter 11. An example game record snippet for "in-person" play is shown below. The notation for writing the plays is explained in later chapters. Note the essentials: An indication of who has possession, the yard line of the line of scrimmage for the play, the play itself (including identification of the ballcarrier), the yard gain (and any special events such as penalties, fumbles, and sacks), and the time at the end of the play just prior to the next snap. Note that space is also provided to indicate players on the field, either "starters" (st) or explicit substitutions made.

Position	Off	Def	Play	Gain	Time
Maroon			KO to Maroon, 60 yd	+21rb	14:5
M26	st	st	LH/RE (G,G) (TE) (RW) #23	+6	14:1
32	st	st	F/RC ( ) (TE) #21 inj def #27 series	+2	13:3
34	-23 +35	-27 +52	F/RT (LG,TE) (RW) #21 Fumble-3, M62 Rec.	+1 F-3	12:5
32	P	PC	Punt #9 standard +40 no rb	+40Pnt	12:4
Silver S28	st	st	WR/IR    LW/DR	0 inc	12:3

## 2.5 Scoreboard and field position display

No scoreboard display is provided in the game. For play-by-mail, it is not needed since the game record contains all of the information required. In in-person play, the game record is not conveniently accessible to both players, so a display showing the score, ball position, time, and down-and-distance situation is quite helpful. One can easily be fabricated, or such a display can be borrowed from a cheap commercial football game. Chits with numbers on them can also be used for the purpose.



Yard position is kept in one yard increments. However, there are occasions where some additional nuance is needed. Specifically, if a yardage gain is exactly 10 yards from the start of 1<sup>st</sup> down play line of scrimmage marker, or otherwise lands exactly on the “yards to gain” for a first down, a die is rolled to see if the yards to gain was achieved (d6=4,5, or 6), or the ball is just short (d6=1=3). In the latter case, the ball could be considered to be at, for example, 20 minus (-) yard line. (Or +, depending on direction.) It’s not necessary to annotate the + or – explicitly, because the next play run with 0 yards to gain for a first down is obviously “inches.” A play that is stopped inches short of the goal line would be at the 0 yard line, but actually inches short, 0+.

## **2.6 Dice:**

This game was developed to be played with only six sided dice. There are numerous occasions when more choices are needed. Some events such as the "bump" of a receiver on a pass route requires a two dice roll. Many special teams events such as kicks require 3 dice. In some cases such as on passes, we would really like 12 choices rather than just 6. So occasionally you will see two results separated by a diagonal line. In such cases, roll a second die, taking the upper result if the second die roll is low, and the lower if the second die roll is high. Use of this convention is also common in offensive play selection for by-mail play. (One could use a single 12 sided die for these rolls instead.)

In most cases it is explicit what numbers on a die roll give what result. The default used in the game, where not specified, is that a high dice roll causes something to happen. When the clock counts down toward 0:00, does it run out before the offensive team can squeeze out another play? This is a 50% roll. So, a d6=4-6 roll says that, yes, time ran out. This case is actually explicit in 2.7 below. But in some other places there may be instances where odds are given, such as 2/6 or 1/3 chance of something happening. In those cases, it happens on a high die roll, in this case 5 or 6.

**2.7 Time:** Time is normally represented in 10 second increments, with a play normally using 40 seconds if no special effort is made to hurry, 30 seconds if “hurrying” (with no penalty for doing so) and 10 seconds for a play which stops the clock, such as an incomplete pass during the last two minutes or with a time out (TO) being called as early as possible after a play.

As a new provision for Season XII, at the end of a play (and time to next snap) that would land exactly at 0:0 left in the quarter, a single die is rolled to see if time has run out. On d6=1-3, a little bit of time remains on the clock, 1 to 3 seconds (as shown on the die). That remaining time is consumed by another play that can be run before the quarter ends. The same applies to the two minute warning for either half.