

# GAMEPLAN

## American Football

*All the Action - No Bruises - your chance to be an NFL coach*



*In Gameplan you are an NFL coach. Every week you have to prepare to face an opponent within your league. You decide what plays and formations to use, when to call them and then watch the game unfold. The best teams during the regular season qualify for the playoffs. As in real-life you've also got the college draft at the end of the season, giving you the chance to sign new players and replace your fading stars. You choose who to sign, based upon your roster's strengths and weaknesses and the way you want to build your team.*

*Gameplan is a coaching game. Whilst there is a roster-building element to the game your success and failure will depend upon your ability to choose the right plays to beat your opponent, exploiting his team's weaknesses and making use of your team's strengths. You'll be using a playbook of around twenty offensive formations, forty offensive playcalls (runs and passes) and twenty defensive playcalls.*

### **HOW IT WORKS**

You are the coach of an NFL team within a league. You play through a full sixteen game regular season, followed by the playoffs and draft. For each game you have to send in a gameplan to face your opponent for that week. The plays you use will depend upon your team's strengths and your opponent's weaknesses. You need to use a mixture of plays to keep him off balance, and prevent him from adjusting too much to one or two calls - if you call a play too much his team will start to see it coming!

### **TEAM STRENGTHS**

Each team has around thirty "star" players on its roster. These are your team's starters, representing the cream of your talent.

Your team's strengths and weaknesses are rated according to your players' skills, with offensive and defensive players rated in inside running, outside running, short-passing, long-passing and quarterback protection (pass rushing for defenders). There are also special teams ratings for kicking, punting, kick and punt returning.

Your balance of strengths will probably determine the style of play you use. If you've lots of inside running strengths you'll probably run a power offence, trying to set up play-action passes to take advantage of the defence looking for the run. If you've lots of short-passing strengths you may run a more balanced offence, using screens, draws and traps to stop the defence keying on the pass.

### **PLAYCALLS**

The core of the game is the play calls -the plays you use during each game. There are around thirty passing plays and twenty running plays, as well as about twenty-five defensive play calls. Combined with twenty offensive formations (which determine who is on the field; one or two running backs, one, two, three or four wide receivers and so forth) there is a huge variety of options for every play during the game.

You decide which play calls to use and when to use them. Your choices will be determined by your team strengths, your perception of your opponent's weaknesses and your own personal preference. As in real life you'll build up your own playbook during the season.

Teams will often have very different philosophies: some teams are predominantly running teams, passing only as a surprise weapon, while others will pass more often, and use the run to "keep the defence honest". Similar situations apply with defences: some may be aggressive and blitz a lot, others may be conservative and play "bend but don't break".

### **CALLING PLAYS**

For each game your plays are called according to your gameplan, which has a number of situations: first and second down, short yardage (specialist calls when you only need a yard or two for another set of downs), long yardage (when you've really got to pass to have a chance of making it), third down and so on.

In addition you've got other situations such as change up (after halftime, when you're losing and need to do something different), change down (after halftime, when you're winning and want to eat up the clock) and hurry-up (when you're losing and it's desperate, and you need to score as quickly as possible). Different situations will call for different mixtures of playcalls and formations.

## **ROSTER MANAGEMENT**

During the season you've also got decisions to make concerning roster management. There is always a list of free agents available to be signed, if you can afford them. You can always release players to free up funds to sign others. You can also coach your existing players to improve their abilities.

You also have to make decisions about team training prior to each game, both in terms of preparation for that week's opponent and also training on your play-calls throughout the season. The most successful teams are not just those who do well during the season, but who improve and evolve as the season progresses, and peak during the playoffs.

## **GAME REPORTS**

When you receive your game results you get a full laser-printed play-by-play report of the game you've just played, showing the playcalls chosen by both offence and defence and the result of the play. In addition you'll receive full stats from your game, full details of all games played in your league that turn and a scouting report for your next opponent, giving more detail of his last game, and the plays he used during that game as well as details of his roster. There are also regular stats listings for all of the teams in the league. Results via email is now an option for those wanting "instant" rules, and emailing in orders will soon be available as well.

## **PLAYOFFS AND DRAFT**

At the end of the season the divisional winners and wild-cards go into the playoffs, playing to reach and win the Superbowl. Teams that fail to make the playoffs or are eliminated take part in Consolation competitions or play pre-season games to prepare for the following season.

During the playoffs all teams participate in the college draft, signing new players and replacing their fading/retiring veterans, whose skills begin to erode and eventually they will retire altogether. Your roster is continually evolving and changing from one season to another, under your guidance.

## **GAMEPLAN BASIC AND ADVANCED**

Gameplan has two versions. The "standard" game is Gameplan Basic, played by the majority of players. In Gameplan Advanced instead of using the set situations detailed on the previous page you get to define the situations yourself, according to the score, down, yardage-to-go and position on the field. It's more complicated, but does give you more flexibility if that's what you want. We recommend that new players start with Gameplan Basic, and then move to Gameplan Advanced once they've seen the rulebook if they feel it'll suit them best.

## **GAMES AND TURNFEES**

There are over fifty games of Gameplan already running in the UK, the oldest having played more than ten seasons. All run with two week deadlines (so you've fourteen days between turns). The majority are "basic" leagues, though we have a number of "advanced" leagues. We have positions available in most of these games that will allow you to start play immediately (as in real life, you take over a team and try to turn their fortunes around).

Turnfees in Gameplan Basic are £3.00 for one, £12.00 for four, £27.00 for ten or £48.00 for twenty. Turnfees in Gameplan Advanced are £3.50 for one, £14.00 for four, £32.00 for ten or £56.00 for twenty. There are extra discounts available if you play in more than one game.

## **HOW TO JOIN**

To join Gameplan you'll need to send £5.00 (payable to Ab Initio Games) along with your name and address, which covers the cost of your rulebooks (you may receive one of the three rulebooks, the "playbook" with this leaflet), team setup and first two turns. When you send in your application please give a number of team preferences (real life NFL teams, the more choices you give the sooner we can start you playing). We'll start you in a Basic game, but you can quickly move up to Advanced if you'd prefer to.

## **OTHER GAMES**

We've also got a range of Sci-Fi, Historical and Business games as well as many sports strategy and stats games (Baseball, Ice Hockey, Soccer, Cricket, American Football, F1 Motor Racing, Rugby and Basketball). Please ask for more details on any of these.

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YES, I'd like to join a game of Gameplan Basic. I enclose a cheque/postal order for £5.00 (payable to Ab Initio Games).

Team Preferences: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you first hear about Gameplan?: \_\_\_\_\_

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