

Find Your Graduating Class



classmates.com

FIND

I GRADUATED IN: 1997 1997 1977 1967 1957

Weatherford Telegram

Growing with the Community

Site Search

Saturday, Aug 29, 2009

Home

News

Business

Sports

Living

Editorial/Opinion

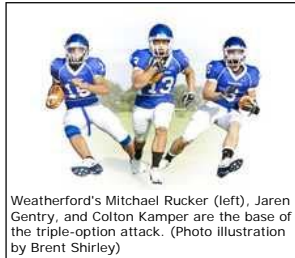
Contact Us

Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2009

Triple threat

Weatherford's triple-option attack forces defenses to pick their poison
Brent Shirley

Weatherford coach Kenny Wheaton has a buzz cut, keeps his office meticulously organized with multiple three-ring binders containing in-depth statistical breakdowns, and stresses discipline. He grew up on military bases – his father was a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force. Now, at age 53, his coaching still oozes military method, including running the triple option.



Weatherford's Mitchael Rucker (left), Jaren Gentry, and Colton Kamper are the base of the triple-option attack. (Photo illustration by Brent Shirley)

"The option offense is a precision, unselfish offense, like the military," said Wheaton, who has been coaching the triple option for 30 years since he was hired as an offensive coordinator at Mount Pleasant High School. "If you can execute it, it's unstoppable.

The option is designed to give the offense a numerical advantage by forcing the defensive end to choose between tackling the fullback – who is running up the middle – and chasing the quarterback around the outside, where he has the third option of pitching the ball back to a slotback. The offense works when the quarterback makes the right reads.

"It's simple, but it's fast," said Weatherford quarterback Mitchael Rucker. "I take three steps, and I've already made two reads. I also have to trust that the slot player will be running right behind me down field."

Rucker, fullback Jaren Gentry, and slot back Colton Kamper, all seniors, are the Roos' three main options. All three have run the option in practice so many times it has become second nature.

"Things happen so fast, you almost don't have time to think," Gentry said. "That's why we practice it so much. A lot of the play's success depends on the mental side of the game."

Weatherford won only one game in 2008, but it ran the ball well. Last season, 17 lost fumbles hurt the Roos, and they have worked on protecting the ball at the start of each practice during the spring and summer.

Wheaton requires his team to be accountable off the field as well. The Kangaroo players keep their helmets on top of their lockers exactly four inches from the edge. They store their cleats perfectly lined up on their locker seats, toes pointing out.

It wasn't easy for the Weatherford football team to adapt to Wheaton's regimented style, but at the start of his third year at Weatherford, his players have learned to embrace his order.

"You can tell how much this team wants to win by our practices," Rucker said. "When we go from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., it's so hot, but no one stops for anything."

Wheaton also emphasizes team unity. After Weatherford's intrasquad scrimmage on August 14, the senior players spoke in a closed "circle of truth," each one explaining what the season means to him and airing any grievances.

"I think this senior group is much closer than past years, and we care about winning more," Kamper said. "I believe that trust will lead to a successful season."

[reprint or license](#) [Print](#) [E-Mail](#)
[BOOKMARK](#) [AIM](#)

Advertisements

CITIBANK® 12-MONTH CD

2.00% APY

\$500 minimum balance required

To learn more, stop by a Citibank branch, or call 1-866-422-1485.

Citi never sleeps®

citibank®

Charter's **Back2School**
Laptop-a-Day Sweepstakes

You could WIN A **FREE LAPTOP!**

LEARN MORE

Plus a FREE Gift Card with our special online deals

Printable Grocery Coupons

Get Coupons Now!

Powered by: **COUPONS**

[News](#) | [Business](#) | [Sports](#) | [Living](#) | [Editorial/Opinion](#) | [Contact Us](#)
About the McClatchy Company
[Terms of Use & Privacy Statement](#) | [Copyright](#)

**"How Does She
Look So Thin?"**



**Learn How A Mom Cut
Down 42 lbs in Just 2
Months by Following
This 1 Secret Diet
Being Used by
Celebrities**