

Traditional Football Training Groups Assessed by Sprint Performance

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ABSTRACT

Linear speed has historically and continues to be used to predict success in both collegiate and professional football. During a training session to improve on linear speed, players are split into traditional position groups of bigs, big skills, and skills. **PURPOSE:** Determine if traditional position groups are effective groupings based on 40-yard dash times. **METHODS:** Subjects (n=495) were members of an institution's American football team. The subjects completed two trials of a 40-yard sprint assessment starting from a three-point stance with a recovery period of five minutes in between. **RESULTS:** There were statistical differences between the traditional position groups. Furthermore, in the skills group, there was a significant difference between positions ($F(3,161)=2.855, p = 0.034, \eta^2 = 0.052$, observed power = 0.680). Additionally, the mid-position group had a difference between positions ($F(5,211) = 4.085, p = 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.090$, observed power = 0.951). Similar to the skills group, the big position group had a significant difference between the positions ($F(1,121) = 32.340, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.212$, observed power = 0.951). **CONCLUSION:** The findings suggest that running backs should be grouped with the skill positions and the bigs group should be split into defensive tackle and offensive line groups. If possible, the corner position should be separated from the skill group. However, this increase in groups causes an increased strain on logistics and increases the demand for strength and conditioning professionals and practitioners. Furthermore, this might change given the team as certain offensive or defensive schema would cause some physiological differences with positional needs.