

Pass Receiving Quotas

by Ray Dunlap

It is my firm belief that the more stringent the quota restrictions, the better the APBA Football game will be. For that reason I will use this forum to discuss quotas for the next few issues. I will start with a discussion of pass receiving quotas.

When the game company introduced locator columns for pass receptions, it was in response to a problem that had been around since the game's inception ... no one ever threw to "B" or "C" receivers if they had "A's" on the team. I remember playing a game in the mid-1960's, when Mike Ditka and Johnnie Morris were the only "A" receivers on the Chicago Bears, where each of them caught 13 passes. What's more, they were the only two Bears to catch a pass during the entire game!

Later, I participated in a face-to-face league that employed a per-game quota system for receivers based upon catches. An "A" receiver, for instance, was allowed to catch six passes a game. Although this concept was a marked improvement over no quota system, I did not like it for three reasons: (1) it grouped all "A" receivers together regardless of how many actual receptions they may have had in the NFL, (2) it did not take into consideration the player's actual yards per catch in the NFL, and (3) it did not allow an individual "A" receiver to have an outstanding effort where he might catch 10-15 passes in one particular game.

I set out to create a system that would accommodate all three of these points. First, each player would be given a per-game quota but not to regulate the number of pass receptions he can make in a game but the number of time you can throw to him ... the number of Pass ATTEMPTS. And this attempt quota would be determined (for "A" and "B" receivers) by their actual number of NFL receptions as follows:

Grade	NFL Rec. / by
A	8
B	5
C	Unlimited

For example, the quotas for the current Phoenix Cardinals are included below (please note that under this system, if a player has a split grade, i.e. A/B, B/C, etc., use his BEST grade to determine his quota - this will be explained later in the article).

Player	Grade	Rec.	Quota (Atts per game)
Smith	A	83	10
Green	A	68	9
Awalt	B	39	8
Novacek	A/B	38	5
Ferrell	B/C	38	8
Mitchell	C	25	unlimited
Jones	C/B	23	5
Jordan	C	4	unlimited

The next step is to segregate these receivers further by their yards-per-catch. This way you can separate the deep threats from the guys who will only catch the ball out of the backfield. The idea is simple. If the player averages 7.5 yards per catch, I consider that *none* of his attempts can be what I call "extended length passes" (ELP's), which are Medium and Long passes. If he averages 15.0 yards per catch, then 50% of his attempts can be ELP's. If he averages 22.5 yards per

catch, then all of his attempts can be ELP's. Remember, these are merely quotas, or maximum ELP's allowed per game and not a requirement. A player that qualifies for all ELP's is still entitled to be thrown Short or Screen passes; that is the coach's option. Also, any player falling within 7.5-22.5 yards per catch will have his extended pass quota determined by the following formulas:

- "A" Receiver — $ELP = \frac{[Receiving\ Yards - (Receptions \times 7.5)]}{120}$
 - "B" Receiver — $ELP = \frac{[Receiving\ Yards - (Receptions \times 7.5)]}{75}$
 - "C" Receiver —
- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|------------------|
| Wide Receivers & Tight Ends | | 2 ELP's per game |
| Runningbacks | | 0 ELP's per game |

Let's see how the Cardinals' ELP Quotas look:

Player	Grade	Rec	Yards	Avg	Quota	ELP
Smith	A	83	986	11.9	10	3
Green	A	68	1097	16.1	9	5
Awalt	B	39	454	11.6	8	2
Novacek	A/B	38	569	15.0	5	2
Ferrell	B/C	38	315	8.3	8	0
Mitchell	C	25	214	8.6	unlim	0
Jones	C/B	23	496	21.6	5	4
Jordan	C	4	24	6.0	unlim	0

It is interesting to look at the split grade receivers. Earl Ferrell, who is rated a "B/C", is now strictly a "B", which works out fine, because he is not entitled to any ELP's anyway. Ernie Jones is also a "B", not a "C/B". The game company gave him that rating to try and encourage you to throw more long and medium passes to him based upon his average of 21.6 yards per catch, but with an ELP quota of 4 out of his 5 per game attempts, this has already been accounted for, and it is pretty ludicrous to assume that he is somehow a WORSE short range than long range receiver. Jay Novacek received an "A/B" rating because, even though he had one fewer reception than Robert Awalt, he picked up over 100 more receiving yards. Novacek now becomes an "A" receiver, and even though he has a smaller per game quota than Awalt (5 vs. 8 attempts), the probability is that he will catch around the same number of passes over the course of the season because a coach is more likely to throw to an "A" than a "B". And since his ELP represents a higher percentage of his attempts than Awalt's, he should also end up with more overall yardage.

Now you can also see a real difference between J. T. Smith and Roy Green. Smith, with a quota of 10 (3) - ten overall attempts, three of which can be ELP's - is clearly the possession receiver, while Green with a quota of 9 (5) is the burner. These distinctions will allow you to more closely recreate their actual actual yards per catch in your replay.

What about the ability to have one of those "dream" games where a receiver may set a team or league record for catches? This is an easy concept to adopt. Any "A" receiver who catches his entire allotment of passes without an incompletion, then becomes an unlimited "A" for the remainder of the game. This does not, however, entitle him to additional ELP's, but it does mean that he has the potential to approach Tom Fears' NFL record of 18 receptions in a game.

Awarding "Bonus A's"

There is one other twist to receiver's quotas that has been a wonderful incentive to throw to "B" and "C" rated receivers, and that is the "BONUS -A". This idea was originally conceived by Mike Haley and introduced in the AJ years ago. The concept is simple, but powerful. Any "B" receiver who catches 3 passes before he misses 3 passes is entitled to one pass attempt in the "A" column. Likewise, any "C" receiver who catches 2 passes before he misses 2 passes

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is entitled to one pass attempt in the "A" column. Also, if you have a "B" receiver who has a per game quota of only 5 pass attempts, if he qualifies for a Bonus-"A" on his last attempt, he is then entitled to a sixth pass attempt so he can take advantage of his Bonus-"A".

With the Bonus-"A" you, as a coach, will want to bring in that 2-C rated wide receiver and throw him a pass early in the game. If you can complete two to him (before he misses two, which eliminates any possibility of his qualifying for a Bonus-"A"), he then becomes a threat later in the game when you might need a clutch play. We have a separate play card which has the words "BONUS-"A" written on it and is placed along with the

Focus on APBA Football

by Ray Dunlap

In my last article (written sometime during the Truman administration), I discussed quotas for receivers. This time I would like to cover the Rushing quotas.

Unlike my receiving quota schedule, which is calculated on a per-game basis, rushing quotas work better on a *seasonal* basis. To give a runningback a per-game quota is too restrictive. A seasonal quota allows a significant increase in coaching flexibility, something that I am a firm believer in.

I break my rushers into five categories. The first are those with 1-16 actual NFL seasonal rushing attempts. Those are "specialty" runners - the wide receivers who have end-rounds, the punters who fake a kick and then run, etc. I limit these players to their *actual* NFL rushes. Also, they are *not* allowed to run inside their opponent's ten yard line. In the 1989 season, Jerry Rice of the 49ers, ran 5 times from scrimmage. In our league next year he will be limited to 5 carries for the season.

The second category I use are runners with 320 or more NFL carries. They, too, are limited to their actual NFL totals. For instance, Christian Okoye of the Chiefs, rushed 370 times in 1989. He will be allowed that many carries in our league as well.

For those players with between 17-319 rushing attempts, we use a formula to determine rushing quotas. The formula allows the player with fewer attempts a greater percentage increase over his actual NFL carries. For

regular play cards when the coach wants to use up one of the Bonus-"A" attempts he has earned. This adds a strategic element to the game along with the incentive to utilize ALL available receivers.

I personally prefer this system of controlling the intended pass receiver over the game company's and I use it in both face-to-face

Football League; cont.

ing manner:

- to be an "A" receiver for medium passes, he must average 24.5 yds per catch or more
 - to be a "B" receiver for medium passes, he must average 18.5 to 24.49 yds per catch.
 - to be an "A" receiver for long passes, he must average 27.0 yds per catch or more.
 - to be a "B" receiver for long passes, he must average 21.0 to 26.99 yds per catch or more.
- Any player not meeting the A or B requirements for medium and/or long passes, is a "C" receiver for that distance.

The best thing about grading receivers in this manner is that it tends to individualize them according to their statistics. Most running backs who catch at least 2.5 passes per game played receive A/C/C grades ... an A receiver for short passes and screens but a C for medium and longs ... most "A" tight ends fall into the A/A/B or A/B/B category and most possession-type wideouts pull A/A/B's or A/B/B while the big stars like Rice pull A/A/A. The low catch high average barnburners like Willie Gault and Clarence Verdin are candidates to pull B/A/A or B/A/B. Occasionally someone gets a C/A/A with a long in the 80's. As a simple C receiver, he wouldn't have much value but he would with these grades.

3) limiting place kickers to their actual long field goals ... with all place kickers, each is

example, Sylvester Stamps, of the Bucs had 29 rushes in 1989. His quota will be 46 rushes (a 59.8% increase over his actual attempts). Bobby Humphrey of the Broncos, meanwhile, had 294 NFL carries which translated into a quota of 310 rushing attempts (an increase of only 5.3%). This formula will let you achieve an adequate team quota without allowing a coach to overuse the players who already have large quotas. The formula is as follows:

$$[806.4 - (\text{NFL ATTS})] \times (\text{NFL ATTS}) / 486.4$$

The fourth category of rushers are the *Unlimited Runners*. For them we use an arbitrary cutoff of 3.3 yards per rush. Any player averaging 3.3 yards or less is given an "unlimited" quota. Actually, we do limit them to either 200 rushes or their actual NFL total, whichever is higher, because there is a chance that a player with a 3.3 yard average from a 1-15 team could rush for 1500 yards because of the way the cards are made. The rationale for an "unlimited" runner is to allow

and solo APBA football. I want to be able to call the shots. But a solid quota system will keep you from overusing the better player while at the same time increasing the strategic options and putting the control in the hands of the coach. That's the way I believe the game should be played.

assigned an LOS (line of scrimmage) number which is maximum yard line that he can make a field goal. The LOS is found by subtracting 17 yards from their actual long. APBA's reduced the ability for long range kicking this year so the problem isn't quite as acute as it was a year ago when an accurate, but dink place kicker, like the Vikings' Chuck Nelson was just as good as Washington's Chip Lohmiller at long distances.

I have included (on page 10) the roster of my team's skill position players for the upcoming season which will be starting next month. Our rookie draft is Aug. 19 so a few more players will be added to the list.

You'll notice the added J's. The "FFN" is the fumble system that we use which appeared in the AJ about four years ago. The "LG" means long gain. Those are the players actual longs from last year while the CAG is the maximum number of times I can run that player in a game. The CAY is his actual number of carries from last year and the maximum number he can carry for me.

The "Rec" are the short/medium/long receiving grades with the first number (in parenthesis) his longest possible gain and the second, the number of catches he has for the year. The RAG is the most catches he can make in any one game and the PA under SPEC refers to the pass attempts. Our group enjoys these innovations very much.

you to platoon and best utilize your quality rushers by filling in with these guys.

My last category of runners concerns quarterbacks. This used to be a real problem before the Game Company incorporated scrambles into the football game. Now, most of the QB's rushing attempts are accounted for in either scrambling or end-of-the-game "falling on the ball". So we limit QB runs to *one* per game, and, just like the "specialty" runners, they can not be used inside their opponents 10 yard line. (Quarterbacks, however, can still scramble inside the 10 if it comes up.)

We also limit runningbacks on a per-game basis, as well, and we use the following formula:

$$\text{NFL ATTS} + 10 = \text{Per Game Upper Limit}$$

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We have used this quota system for ten years and it has worked exceedingly well.