

## CUSTOMER STORY

### OVERVIEW

Rockwall High School Yellowjackets were already a successful program, but Coach Rodney Webb knew they could get better. Replacing an inconsistent approach to tackling with Atavus technique and drill progressions, Rockwall saw a 33.8% decrease in missed tackles over three years, and zero tackle-related concussions.

### CHALLENGE

Despite a successful 10-4 season in 2015, Rockwall High School head coach Rodney Webb knew he needed to adjust the way his team played. At Rockwall, defensive position coaches were responsible for educating their group on tackling. Each coach taught his group to tackle differently, usually based on how that coach was taught as a player. With an inconsistent style, the Yellowjackets were not a great tackling team.

Coach Webb saw an opportunity to make the team better through focus and consistency. "Rockwall doesn't have a deep pool of athletes who are going to run over the other team," said Webb. "Everything we do needs to be coached well."

### SOLUTION

Webb wanted a systematic approach to tackling taught to players across the program. He knew football was changing and that shoulder-led tackling was becoming more popular. However, he knew little about the technique and needed to learn more.

After speaking with Atavus, Coach Webb introduced shoulder-led technique during offseason practices. Starting his team on fundamental drills during the non-contact period, Rockwall implemented drill progressions using both printed and video resources available through Atavus.



### HIGHLIGHTS

- Reduced missed tackles by 33.8% over three seasons
- Made tackling education a priority, appointing a "Tackling Czar"
- Improved on-field performance with zero tackling-related concussions



***"I believe shoulder-led tackling is safer, but what you'll find is that your kids are going to be better tacklers, too."***

*- Rodney Webb, Rockwall High School Head Football Coach*

THE ATAVUS TACKLE SYSTEM

# ROCKWALL HIGH SCHOOL



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### RESULTS

The first thing Coach Webb noticed after implementing Atavus drills was player commitment and improvement in practices. "Because our coaches believed in the Atavus approach, the kids bought into it," said Webb. Over time, that confidence paid off. The consistency created by using Atavus technique and drills made a difference on the field. From 2016 to 2018, Rockwall saw a 33.8% decrease in missed tackles. "A light bulb went off for a bunch of kids," said Webb. "Few teams tackle better than Rockwall now."

To insure all their players and coaches get the most from technique and reporting, the Rockwall program implemented a "Tackling Czar" who is responsible for interacting with the Atavus, implementing new drills, and analyzing game-by-game reports delivered each week. Webb tasked his linebacker coach with the role, stressing the importance of a Tackling Czar and calling it essential for maximizing results. "Our Tackling Czar is as important as the defensive coordinator or the offensive coordinator," said Webb.

Atavus provides benefits off the field as well. Head injuries have not been an issue at Rockwall, and the program had no tackle-related concussions during the 2018 season. Coach Webb makes sure everyone knows his coaches are certified in tackling and that the kids are in good hands. "We have access to something that is cutting edge, and I share what we're doing with Atavus will all the parents."

Safety is always top of mind for Webb, and he encourages other coaches to look at Atavus technique for multiple reasons. "I believe shoulder-led tackling is safer, but what you'll find is that your kids are going to be better tacklers, too."

Coming off an 8-3 season and a top 20 ranking in Texas, Coach Webb gets asked a lot of questions about his success. "Lately I keep getting asked how come we tackle so well."

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*- Rodney Webb,  
Rockwall High School Head Football Coach*



### ABOUT ATAVUS

ATAVUS combines analytics and world class coaching philosophy to measure and improve the performance of players, coaches, and teams. Located in Seattle, Atavus partners with local and national agencies to create more effective and safer contact sports.