

The Pass Rush Bible

The definitive guide to
pressuring the quarterback

By **Craig Roh**

Developing the fundamentals

Your hands are your weapons

The #1 tool a blocker has to stop you in your tracks is his hands. Just look at how this blockers's punch affects this rush.

Because of this, it is critical to use your hand to defend your body from the attacks of your opponent.

There are various pass rush moves to properly deal with different types of punches that I will cover in later chapters, but first you must develop the fundamentals of effective hand usage: **position**, **reaction**, **violence** and **placement**.

Position

Coach Arpedge Rolle likes to say, "When you're tight to the fight get your hands up to strike." Just look at how combat specialists protect their bodies when they are in close quarters.

click [here](#) to see example



Their hands aren't by their sides. They're up and ready to defend against any blow their opponent throws at them.

So, rather than keeping your hands at your side, get your hands up when you break the bubble of the blocker.

click [here](#) to see example



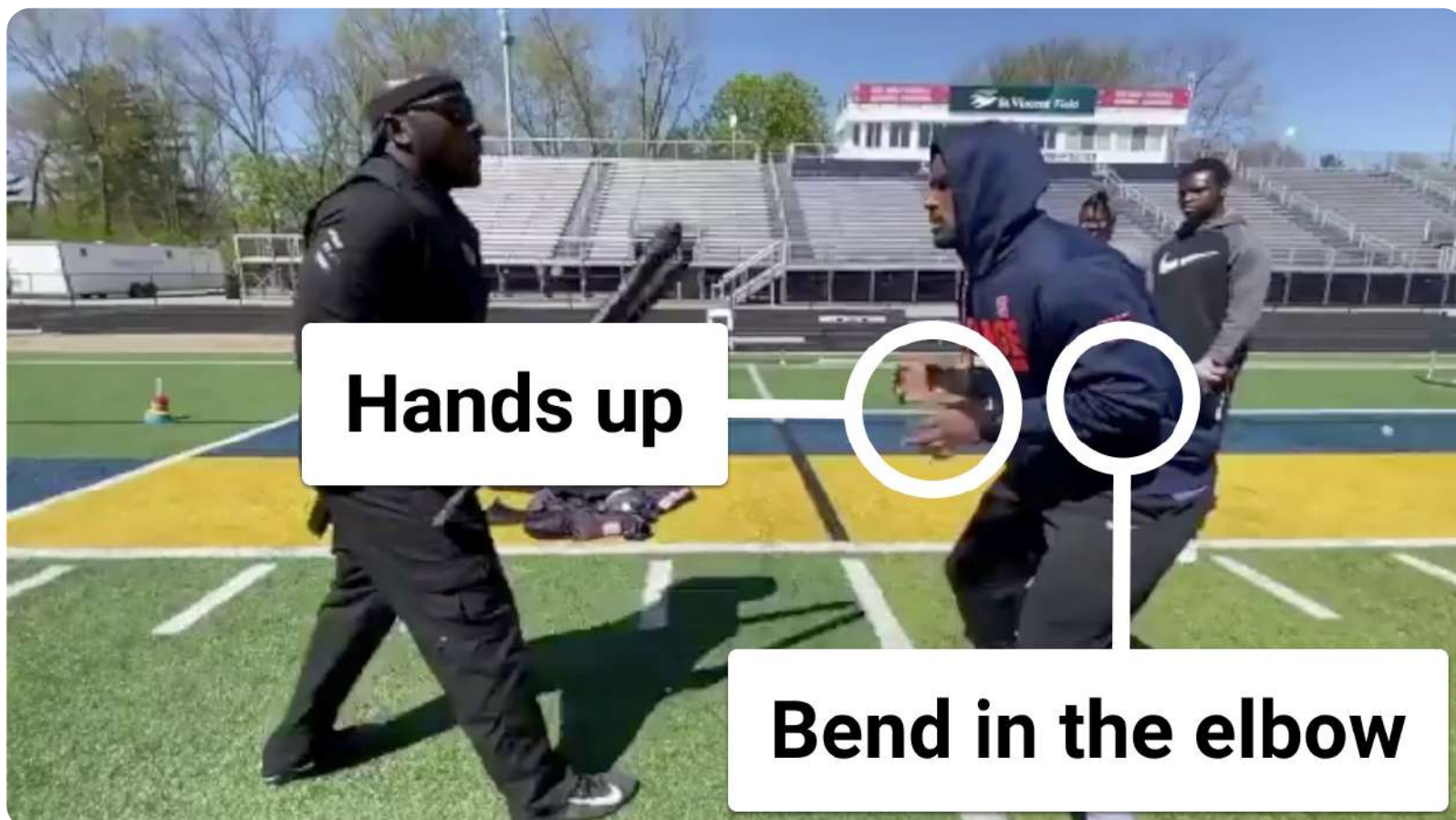
You should bring this principle into any hand fighting drill work as well.

The key here is to practice your hand position so much that your hands automatically go to the right position without having to think about it.

With this being said, in drill work you should have your hands up, a bend at the elbow and a continuous pumping with your arms to mimic the motion of rushing.

via [@RobertMathis98](#)

click [here](#) to see example



Reaction

The difference between defensive line and every other position on defense is that s\$%& is happening right now. Let me give you a example.

Say you're pass rushing and a blocker jump sets you and throws his punch. Do you have time to think "oh he's jump setting I should chop his punch down and work the edge". No way! You only have time to react.

The key then is to practice deflecting different types of punches in order to create **subconscious reactions**.

It is these subconscious reactions or "habits" as some would say that will tell your body how to respond when you don't have enough time to conciously think about what to do.

Your hands are your weapons

So, have a teammate line up across from you and have him shoot his hands at different levels so you can react to his punch.

via [@RobertMathis98](#)

click [here](#) to see example



Also, make sure to work hand reaction drills from head up and offset positions to imitate different rushing angles.

via [@RobertMathis98](#)

click [here](#) to see example



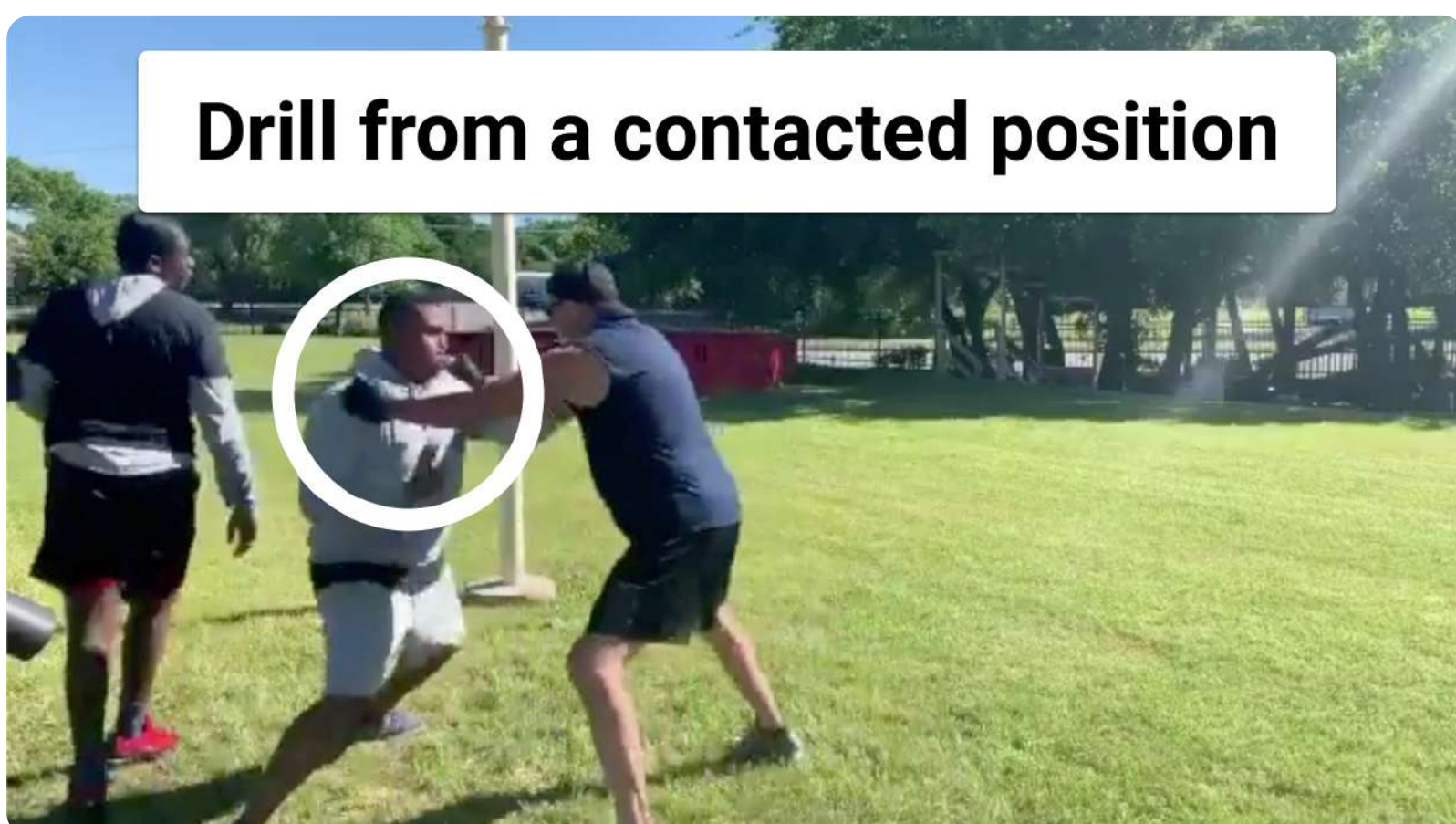
Violence

If you don't throw your hands with violence you're never going to be able to successfully defeat a blocker's punch. You just won't have enough force.

So, make sure to throw your hands **aggressively** in every hand combat drill you do. [Here](#) is a great example of what violent hands looks like. As you can see, there is a startling difference between aggressive drill work and just going through the motions.

You also will need to practice violent hands from a contacted position. Once a blocker has his hands on you it's extremely difficult to get them off. So, make sure to drill violent lifts and knock downs to get the feeling of how much power is needed to get the blockers hands off of you.

click [here](#) to see example



Placement

Lastly, good hand placement will make it much easier to defeat a blockers punch.

For example, if you hit the lower half of the blocker's forearm, you generally will not be able to affect the punch of the blocker because the lower you hit the more strength he has.

However, if you hit his upper forearm, you will be able to direct his punch away from your chest or shoulders.

click [here](#) to see example

