

afternoon and put it in the game plan Sunday night.

He has spoken at so many clinics that most of what he says seems as if he were reading it off the walls of a locker room.

On a coach who wouldn't leave his team for a week: "If you can't leave for four days, you've got a poor group of assistant coaches. And if you leave for four days, the kids will listen to you more when you come back."

On the variety of offenses available: "It doesn't make a dang what you line up in; it's what you do after you get there."

On his coaching philosophy: "It's not the big things that beat you; it's a million little things."

The little things might surprise you. He watched a coach in practice one day and noticed that, on every offensive play, he put the ball down on a yard line. Wood couldn't believe it. How often does that happen in a game? Move the ball around, he told them. Make the players look to see where the ball is, and maybe they won't draw foolish penalties for lining up offsidcs.

His assistants knew what he wanted. Southall, the only assistant over elected president of the Texas High School Coaches Association, worked for him 31 of his last 38 years in coaching.

Southall left him only a couple of times, once to be head coach at Winters after Wood left from Stamford, where he won state championships in 1955 and '56.

"If I'd had him at Stamford . . ." Wood says of Southall and stops in mid-sentence when a ball bounces off a Brownwood receiver and into the hands of a Joshua defensive back.

"That's two balls they've dropped," he says.

He shakes his head.

"If I'd had him at Stamford," he says again, "I'd have won three state championships there. No doubt. He was the best quarterback coach in the state."

He thinks about the interception again and winces.

"That kills me when they do things like that," he says.

He sees mistakes everywhere. He watches the Cowboys every Sunday. He is a friend and "great fan" of Tom Landry, a reluctant admirer of the impersonal Jimmy Johnson and a defender of Barry Switzer.

But he is amazed at what happens on a professional football field. He cites a play in a recent game where Emmitt Smith fumbled on a pitch.

"You know why they fumbled and lost it?" he asks. "Damn poor coaching, that's what."

He says he thought about writing Cowboys coach Chan Gailey and telling him so. Wood is big on writing letters. They appear occasionally in *The News* and the *Abilene Reporter-News*, mostly defending teachers of U.S. Rep. Charles Stenholm, a former all-state end for Wood at Stamford. Sometimes he just writes to correct mistakes of any nature.

He'd write Gailey, he says, but he's not sure it would do any good. He pulls out a sheet of paper and diagrams his trademark play, the power pitch. Any team that wanted to beat his, he says, first had to stop the power pitch. They'd run it 20 times a game and never fumble.

Here's why the Cowboys fumble, he says, whether it's Tony Dorsett or Emmitt Smith: Coaches teach the running back to run at an angle toward the line of scrimmage before taking the pitch. Wood says they should have backs run parallel with the line, which would better allow them to catch the pitch,

then square their shoulders before they hit the hole.

But wouldn't the Cowboys argue that a back gets to the hole faster if he runs at an angle?

"Might be quicker to the hole," Wood says tersely, his eyes returning to the field, "but you aren't gonna get to the hole with the ball."

He stares straight ahead.

"Just a fundamental mistake," he mutters. "S'all there is to it."

Asked his favorite college coaches, he immediately cites Texas Tech's Spike Dykes and Texas' Mack Brown. He is intrigued by Oklahoma's comeback under Bob Stoops, he's impressed by Kansas State Bill Snyder, and he's a great friend of Florida State's Bobby Bowden.

In his 1992 book, "Gordon Wood's Game Plan to Winning Football", he lists 36 coaches who have contributed to his beliefs, ranging from former assistants to Bo Schembechler, W.T. Staple, Gene Stallings and a high school coach from Ohio named Bron Bacevich.

Wood's education in football seems funny, considering how he started. His father was a farmer outside Abilene who didn't believe a man needed much in the way of schooling.

"If you get to third grade and can read and write," A.V. Wood told his eight children, "you're wasting your time going to college. You'll just be a teacher or preacher, and you'll starve."

Gordon Wood was the only one of A.V.'s four sons to earn a high school diploma. He went on to Hardin-Simmons and never starved. But he didn't get rich, either. The most he ever made coaching and teaching, he says, was \$42,000. He had an offer in the '50s to be an assistant coach at Texas Tech, but he didn't like the travel required in recruiting.

He and Katharine, who reared a son and daughter, live in a little three-bedroom house just two blocks from the high school, the same place they've lived since the early '60s, two doors down from Southhall. The day that Wood retired, he fulfilled a promise to himself when he bought a luxury car and the best golf cart he could find.

He drove the car into the garage, and Katharine told him it was nice. She also told him she'd never ride in it.

"There are too many hungry people in this town," she told her husband.

So he took the car back. He listens to Katharine, as long as she's not trying to send in a couple of new plays. He says he probably would have coached one more year, but she insisted that he retire, and he reluctantly agreed.

"It was time for me to quit," he says.

He sounds sincere. But he still has a radio program on Thursday evenings to talk about high school football, still has coffee with friends to talk about it. He watches it on television, reads about it in newspapers, visits coaches and players.

And, nearly every week, he goes to a game. "I enjoy watching," he says. "I really do."

Most of the time, anyway. With five minutes left in the Joshua game, he gets up to leave the press box and beat the rush. Brownwood is up, 35-6, and sitting on Joshua's goal line.

At one of the exits, he says to hold up a second. "Let's see if they score," he says.

As if on cue, a Brownwood player is flagged for illegal motion.

"Aw, crap," Wood says, and turns for the parking lot.

Mistakes kill him, and always did. "I'd die if we had two or three penalties a game," he says.

Mistakes kill him, but he says he didn't make one by staying at Brownwood all those years. Katharine had put it in perspective earlier. "You take Tom Landry and Spike Dykes and Grant Teaff and Hayden Fry," she said. "They're all great coaches, but they were all just kids who played high school football in Texas."

And Gordon Wood was a Texas high school football coach, the best ever, his peers say.

Even an old perfectionist couldn't beat that.

"I wouldn't change anything," he says softly, sitting in his driveway in his sensible sedan. "No."

HONORING RONALD R. ROGERS AS HE IS INSTALLED AS GRAND MASTER OF THE GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS IN OHIO

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 17, 1999

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ronald R. Rogers, a constituent, who recently became Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons for 1999-2000.

Mr. Rogers has an extensive Masonic record. He began his Masonic career as Master Councilor of Ivanhoe Chapter of the Order of DeMolay. He received his Chavalier Degree in 1952 and was awarded the Active Legion of Honor in 1976. He became a Master Mason in Norwood Lodge No. 576 in 1972. Before becoming Grand Master, Mr. Rogers was elected Junior Grand Warden in 1996, Senior Grand Warden in 1997, and Deputy Grand Master in 1998.

A Cincinnati native, Mr. Rogers is a graduate of Norwood High School and received his B.A. from the University of Cincinnati. He worked for Clayton L. Scroggins, a management consulting firm in Cincinnati, for 35 years. Mr. Rogers is the proud father of a daughter, Robin, and the proud grandfather of a granddaughter, Leslie.

Active in his community, Mr. Rogers is a member of the Forest Chapel United Methodist Church. He has served Forest Chapel as Chairman of Finance, Chairman of Music and a member of the Administrative Board. He sang in the Forest Chapel Chancel Choir and also served as its president. Mr. Rogers is a past Area Financial Officer of United Way and past President of the Forest Park Band Boosters.

We congratulate Ronald Rogers on his position as Grand Master, and wish him every success during his tenure.

COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE COMPETITION AND PRIVATIZATION ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM BLILEY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 10, 1999

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3261. I am pleased that today we will