

THE ATAVUS TACKLE SYSTEM

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY



CUSTOMER STORY

OVERVIEW

Rutgers University head football coach Chris Ash selected Atavus to deliver guidance on tackling techniques, game film analysis, and practice drills. Implementation of the Atavus Tackling System spurred individual player development, gave the team confidence, and kept key players on the field. More effective tackling translated into significant statistical improvements, and eventually to more wins.

CHALLENGE

The Rutgers University Scarlet Knights started playing in the Big 10 Conference in 2014, an upgrade in schedule and opponents that created some big challenges for the program. In 2016, Rutgers hired Ohio State defensive coordinator Chris Ash as head coach.

Despite an 0-9 conference record in his first year, Ash knew Rutgers had the potential to quickly improve performance on the field. The Rutgers defense was ranked 13th out of 14 conference schools, yet Ash believed his defense could rapidly make up ground with focus in a few key areas.

SOLUTION

Having experience with Atavus from his time at Ohio State, Ash hired Atavus to consult with the Rutgers coaching staff on drills, film review, and advanced statistical analysis to teach a more effective tackling technique.

Atavus went to work reviewing practice and game film. Using a proprietary algorithm to grade tackles that incorporates over 80 attributes measuring for performance and safety, Atavus gave each individual tackle a score. This deep analysis of the 2016 season allowed the Rutgers coaching staff to identify specific opportunities for improvement.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Reduced yards lost to explosive plays by 70%.
- Improved team tackle effectiveness by 59%.
- Allowed 110 fewer points



“The Atavus approach is safer, more effective, and leads to better performance on the field.”

– Chris Ash, Head Football Coach, Rutgers University

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Atavus delivered solid advice on technique, and a plan to coach it that excited Ash, his staff, and his players. **“Atavus gave us new ideas, helping us adjust and adapt to make things better,”** said Ash.

“Our players actually enjoy the drills, and because we keep it fresh the players are more engaged.”

RESULTS

The focus Ash placed on the defense paid dividends in 2017.

Implementation of the Atavus Tackling System spurred individual player development, gave the team confidence, and kept key players on the field. More effective tackling translated into significant statistical improvements, and eventually to more wins (3 conference wins – 2 more than the previous two seasons combined).

One large area of improvement was in decreasing yards lost to explosive plays by the opposing offense. In 2017, Rutgers allowed just 259 yards in this category vs 864 in 2016, a 70% improvement.

“It’s really helped build the confidence level of our players,” said Ash. **“The Atavus approach is safer, more effective, and leads to better performance on the field.”**

The Scarlet Knights made similar improvements across all areas of the defense: reducing yards allowed from non-contact misses by 57%, improved 31% in rushing yards allowed, allowed 110 fewer points, improved 59% in team tackle effectiveness, and had their best defensive efficiency ranking since 2012.

Ash plans to continue using Atavus, and sees value in the approach. **“It would be a huge benefit to any program to have Atavus come in,”** said Ash.

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*Chris Ash, Head Football Coach
Rutgers University*



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.