

THE 2007 DC WING T

A unique way of running Wing T Football

By

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Sixth Edition

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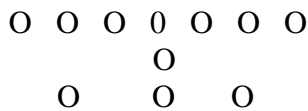
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OFFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY

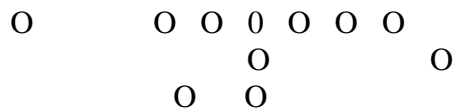
Every offense has a philosophy. The “run and shoot”, for example, seeks to spread the defense and then attack the open areas. The “T” formation seeks to give the ball to a single, dominating running back. The wishbone, double wing, and single wing all seek to control the ball through their power running game. It is important to understand what an offense is trying to do if you’re to use it correctly. It would be unwise, for example, to line up in the wishbone and then throw for four straight downs or to try and run for four straight downs from the run and shoot. Thus, if you want to benefit from my offense, one needs to know what it does best. The offense described here is the Wing T. However, it is not the “Delaware” wing T. I have changed it to accommodate the bigger, slower and also smaller players found at the youth level. Yet the underlying principals and philosophy of my offense still remains the same as the Delaware wing T. Whatever you see the “big boys” run, you can run too (and on far less teaching and talent. Everything in here can be mastered by 10 year olds and about 70% of it by 7’s.). This makes the offense fun for the players, fun to coach, and especially fun for the parents to watch. Of course, if you’re going to run a high school offense ultimately you must know the same things that the high school coaches know to win. This manual will educate you in the knowledge of a high school coach while avoiding the need for high school players. You select enough of the system to fit your age and talent needs against *whatever opponent you face*. That covers a lot. We will begin with the formation itself.

It's hard to say just how old the wing T formation is. It first appeared in a book in 1940 as a derivative of another highly successful formation, the “T”. The wing T was soon adopted by Coach Robinson of Grambling, one of football history’s winningest coaches, who used it to win 408 games. In order for you to equal that record, you would have to have a 10-0 winning record every year for 40 years - And at the end of that time you would still be 8 wins short. That should give you an idea of the strength of this offense.

The wing T and the original “T” formation, the “grandfather of modern football” from which it was derived, are both shown below.



T formation



Wing T Formation

Only two players were moved from the original “T” to create the winged T; one halfback (HB) to a wing back (WB) and one tight end (TE) to a split end (SE). You can probably see for yourself some of the advantages these changes offered over the T. The addition of the SE spreads the defense to improve the passing game. And, by adding a WB you can now quickly put three receivers downfield versus only two for the "T". Yet the wing T formation was not introduced to improve the passing game. *It was introduced to improve the running game.* Many youth coaches believe two TE’s will improve the running game. It doesn’t. The formation is at its best, running wise, with an SE.

The wing T was designed primarily to attack a specific defensive player; the defensive end (DE). For purposes of this playbook, the DE is defined as the furthest outside defender on the line of scrimmage to either side who does not have a pass coverage assignment. In my illustrations I will use the symbol “E” to mark the location of the defensive end. Traditionally, DE's have the duty of stopping the sweep. They do this by lining up outside the TE or inside the SE and then taking an upfield rush. The wing T attacks a DE doing this by blocking down on him with the WB outside the TE and then sweeping the runner around him. This forces the DE to move even further out and align on the outside shoulder of the WB in order to get around him and avoid the “crack”. Yet, if he does so, he not only has to go farther to reach the QB on pass but we can also run “off tackle” inside him through the now extra large gap he left between himself and the next defensive player inside him. On the SE side of the formation, the DE is forced to align inside the SE to “plug the hole” between the SE and tackle inside him. He must move far enough inside the SE to not be cracked by the SE which tends to bring him within range of being “load” blocked by a back and we can run outside him. Thus, no matter how the DE aligns against a wing T, he’s always wrong. He’s either too far out and we run inside him, or he’s too close in and we run around him. In most cases he’ll align wide on the TE side but close in on the SE side. To take advantage of this, the SE is always placed on the wide of the field and the TE on the short side. By running off tackle (inside the “loose” DE) to the TE side, the offense avoids sweeping into the near sideline (the so called “12th defender”) and, by sweeping to the SE side (around the “tight”), the offense automatically sweeps the wide side of the field for maximum running room.

The DC Wing T alters the traditional Delaware wing T formation. The SE is lined up a maximum of 10 steps away from the ball for receiving room inside or a maximum of 7 steps from the ball for receiving room outside. This not only shortens our throws, but, if the DE to his side tries to move out away from our back to avoid being load blocked by our HB on the sweep, he comes within range of the SE’s “crack” block when aligned 7 steps out. On the TE side, the TE also uses what’s called a “nasty” split and is four feet outside the offensive tackle while the WB is usually about two yards outside him (or also about 10 steps from the ball). This feature of “progressive splits” is the primary feature of the successful “Split T”. Finally, the HB is set closer to the line than in the traditional Delaware wing T.

Most youth DE’s elect to defend the DC Wing T as I described. As an example, here are the DE alignment instructions from the book, “Coaching Youth Football Defense”, 2nd edition, published in 1996 by John Reed, a noted youth football author. He instructs (page 10) his DE to align, “On line of scrimmage one yard outside the end; *two yards outside a wingback* (emphasis in original)”. Thus, fifty-seven years after the introduction of the wing T, coaches are still recommending that the defense play its DE’s outside the wingback of the wing T. If we use Reed’s instructions, we can actually measure how much bigger the “off tackle” hole inside the DE becomes with this adjustment. If our WB aligns two yards outside the TE, Reed’s rules would place the DE another two yards outside the WB. The DE is now four yards outside the TE, or **three yards farther than normal**. But since the DC Wing T lines the TE up with an extra one yard “nasty split”), the DE in Reed’s defense moves *yet another yard further out*. The off tackle hole is now **four yards wider** than it would otherwise be. To avoid this, most of my opponents put

their DE “head up” on my WB, but this still leaves the DE lined up three yards wider than normal. Unless we sweep at him, he’s out of every play and we wouldn’t normally sweep at him since that would be into the near sideline. Except on one play, we don’t even bother to block him. He’s left to defend “air”.

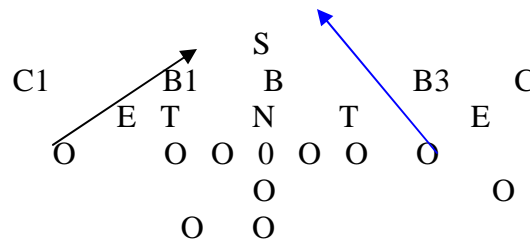
To the SE side, most of my opponents play their DE one yard outside my offensive tackle (Reed’s book also says to do this). This gives the HB an effective, 45 degree load blocking angle on the DE for sweep. So we either sweep weak or run power off tackle strong through the the three yard wide hole the defense gave us.

In our base formation, the SE is always to the left. This is because an opposing youth coach will usually place his best players to our QB’s right (as most youth teams run predominantly right) and putting our TE on the right encourages them to believe we will “run right” too – a false assumption. Of course, if we’re on the left hashmark we can change the formation to where the TE is on the left and the SE on the right. In this way, our formation always “fits the field” with running room wide to the SE side and inside power room to the TE side.

In the sixty plus years since the creation of the wing T this strategy has been lost. Youth coaches that play an SE today usually line him up way wide and only use him to absorb a defender. As such, he is often referred to as a “wasted” player. These coaches seldom run weak to the SE side because he cannot hold his block long enough and, instead, predominantly run strong to the TE side and, by doing so, have become predictable. As a result, most youth coaches just run two TE’s.

The offense in this playbook uses the original 1940 concepts. We will use an SE and run primarily to his side versus the TE side, borrowing from the old “wishbone” attack which was designed primarily to run to the SE side and not to the TE side.

Of course, for our wing T offense to work, the SE cannot be a “wasted” player. He must be threatening to the defense. This does not mean, however, that he has to be a big player. We can get by on a small player here by employing a simple trick. *He almost never blocks the defender covering him.* He is instead assigned to block the “nearest, deepest defender” and, if that path takes him into a linebacker along the way, to hit him enroute to the “nearest, deepest defender”. We call this “track blocking”. This not only often creates a blocking angle on the defender but the linebacker also often doesn’t even see him coming. This allows a small player to become a threatening blocker. Also, by not blocking the defender straight in front of him, he avoids having to hold his block while the sweep to his side develops. The SE’s “track block” for a play run to his side (left) is shown below:

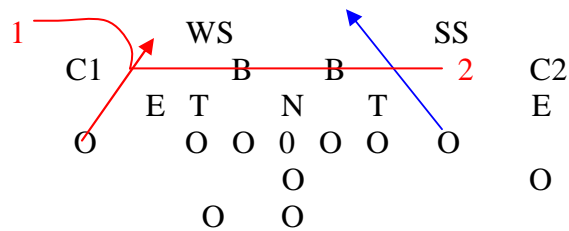


The defense shown is called a “Cover 1” (one deep defender). The SE (black arrow) is track blocking to the “nearest deepest defender” (S) and will “crack” the linebacker (B1) along the way. The cornerback (C1) in front of our SE is now placed in conflict. If he

covers the SE for pass, then not only will the SE block B1 and then S next, but the corner will also be taken out of the play by chasing him. One weak offensive player has just taken out three defensive players! But if the corner sits and plays run, the SE's initial track block release is identical to his pass route release, and he'll be uncovered for a pass. The corner is placed in conflict just as the DE's are placed in conflict. Whatever he does is wrong. Further, if we do sweep, since our SE plays as close to the ball as possible, the defending corner is also brought within easy range of our other blockers. A lead blocker can easily hit him long enough for the runner to get by.

Notice that while the SE is track blocking, the TE on the right is running a post pattern (blue line) behind the safety to also place him in conflict. Does the safety come up and play the run and leave the TE uncovered behind him? If he does, we can throw to the TE. B3 is also in conflict. Should he cover the TE on the post or chase the sweep to the other side of the field? If they don't cover the TE we throw to him. If they do, we run.

Shown below is a "Cover 2" defense (two deep defenders):



Again, our SE is "track blocking" (see red arrow) to "nearest, deepest defender" (WS) for a run to the left while the TE posts. This time though, we have included the SE's passing "tree" (see other red lines) off this route. If C1 refuses to cover the SE, the SE can either 1) circle behind C1 or 2) cut towards C2 (Who should be covering our WB.) simply or catch a quick slant at the cut point. And, because our SE isn't very far out, all three throws are fairly short making them high percentage passes for completion for youth QB's. Thus, if C1 comes up to play the run, the SE circles left for the pass. If WS comes over to cover the SE behind C1, the TE (blue) is open. If SS covers TE, then the SE cuts right and into "open" area as C2 vacates to cover WB. Again, the defense is in conflict. If they cover the run, we pass. If they cover the pass, we run. Whichever one they do is wrong. But how do we know which mistake the defense is making? Do we have observers sitting in a booth with headsets?

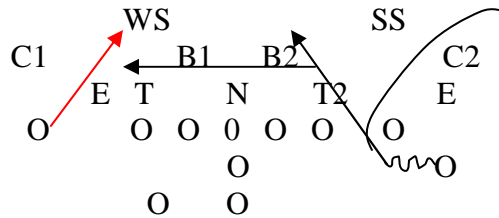
We have an observer on the field. The DC Wing T plays three SE's, one at a time. They take turns running the plays onto the field given to them by the offensive coach. At the end of each play they report back to the offensive coach and tell him if they were covered or not that play or not. If a returning SE reports he was uncovered by the corner, the offensive coach can call a pass to the next SE going onto the field or observe on the next play to see if the SE was reporting correctly or not (*). As the SE's are very motivated to report when they are open, we receive the information.

* Notice, that an SE cannot lie, claim he's uncovered, and have the offensive coordinator (OC) call a pass to him. The OC will call the pass to the next SE who goes in after him.

To know if the TE is open, we have our receiver coach (or the TE's parent stand on the sideline), watch him for us to see if he comes open. Thus, the first time either the SE or TE comes open, we know about it.

We play three SE's because our SE's run three times on every play; once to take the play out, once to run the play, and once to get off the field. The defending cornerback only has to run once – during the play. To keep things even with the corner, exhaustion wise, we have three SE's. This works well because we have now found a position for three small players from which they can positively contribute to the success of the team.

Again, the same conflict occurs for the defense if we run the ball to the right.



Now the WB in motion “track blocks” (see black arrow) through the heels of T2 to B2 while the SE runs the post. If the left corner (C1) pass covers our SE, the WB, by cutting left off his “track block”, can run into the open area C1 vacated for a “throwback” pass (see black passing “tree” for the WB). If C1 doesn't cover the SE, we throw to the SE on the post behind the safety (WS). We'll know if the SE is open because he'll report back if he was covered or not. If open, we throw the post to the SE. If covered, our receiver coach watching the backside should tell us to throw the “throwback” to the WB, who is automatically open if C1 is covering the SE. So, whatever C1 does, he's wrong. Likewise, C2 has a similar problem. If C2 plays the WB's track block as a run to the right and comes up to stop it, the WB can get behind him for the pass by circling right off his “track block”. Whatever C2 does, we do the opposite to put him in conflict also. Even if the defense finally finds a way to cover the WB and SE both – we simply call the “throwback” to the TE instead of the WB and, for the defense, the problem starts all over.

Again, all the throws are short (about 10 yards) for a high percentage chance of completion. Finally, the DC Wing, in order to place the defense in ultimate conflict, has its QB, if the designated receiver is covered, tuck the ball and run *towards* the designated receiver (average gain, 7-10 yards), putting the defender in the conflict of whether he should continue to cover the receiver and let the QB run, or come up to stop the QB and risk the QB throwing over his head to the now uncovered receiver behind him.

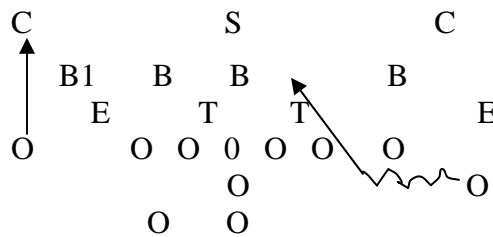
Most of this is all taking place, automatically, without the coach watching any of it. As long as the receiver coach knows the call and watches the backside of each play and the offensive coach listens to the SE's coming back, he knows who is open.

If you're afraid the receiver might drop the ball, after being told the receiver is open, you can wait for a short yardage situation (third and two, second and three) and then throw it to him. If he drops it now, you can still run for the first. If you have good receivers, statistics show coaches using this system should pass at least once every five plays since we are always throwing to an open, uncovered man. Also, to fail to throw removes the defensive conflict. The defender can just play the run and be right every time. The

failure to throw can, and will, cut your scoring in half, so you must throw (Even if the pass is incomplete, you force the defense to cover the receiver next time, which helps the running game go.). Since you are always throwing to an uncovered man, you should throw ZERO interceptions in a season and complete 67% of your passes (the other 33% being either dropped by the receiver or badly thrown by the QB.). This unique feature makes the “DC wing T” a *passing wing T*.

However, once you throw and the defense covers the track blocking receivers, it becomes a *running wing T*. This is because, if they cover our receivers, the SE alone can take out up to three pass defenders (and the WB two) leaving huge amounts of open space for our backs to run. Whichever the defense tries to stop; pass or run, it’s always wrong.

Of course, our SE and WB must be threatening as receivers for the corners to have to cover them. But, actually, only one of the three SE’s has to have the ability to catch. The coach can send out the one he wants with the pass play called. So you can always throw to your best SE. I find there are five types of SE’s; those that can catch, those that can throw, those that can block, those that can run fast, and those that can’t do anything. Put in the best blocker for runs to the SE side, put in the best catcher for passes to the SE, and put in your fastest SE for reverses (In my 2005 season, my fastest SE scored five (he said seven) touchdowns running reverses.) and let your best throwing SE pass to the QB off the reverse. Put in your SE that can’t do anything in on run plays to the TE side.



Shown above is a “Cover 3” defense (three deep defenders). Defenses can use this to try and force our SE to block his man over him. The SE is now releasing straight downfield at “nearest, deepest defender”. But the corner is now so deep that, if the play is a run to that side, with the SE stalk blocking him we should still make yardage even if the corner does make the tackle. This is because the corner is still in conflict because, if he comes up when the SE runs at him, the SE may be going out for a pass. The corner can’t escape this conflict and can’t come up and must wait to be blocked.

Our TE “nasty split” also places the defense in conflict. The defense has two choices of how to handle this extra one yard gap. They are:

- 1) Do nothing
- 2) Put a defender in it

If the defense does nothing we can run the ball through the three yard wide hole between our offensive tackle and their DE head up on our WB. If the defense puts a defender in it, they have three ways they can do so. First, they can bring a defender over from the other (SE) side and put him in the gap. Second, they can bring a second or third row defender (linebacker or safety) up from the TE side of the formation to fill the gap. Third, they can

move a down lineman over to fill the gap. Either way wherever they moved this extra defender *from* to fill the gap, that's where we run or throw to.

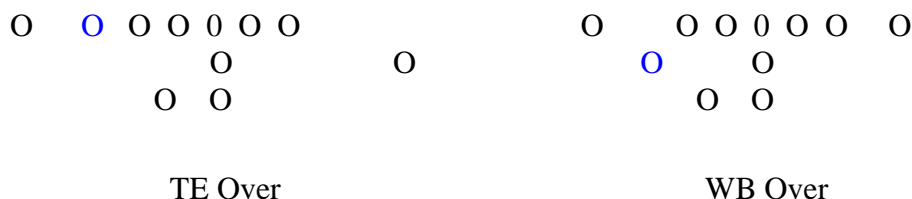
Example: If the defense brings a defender over from the SE side and puts him in that gap, we simply run the ball to the SE side where the defense is now "one man short". If the defense brings up a linebacker or safety and puts him in that gap, they, again, lose him for any plays run to the SE side because he can't get over and they lose him as a pass defender. So we run away from him or throw at the spot he vacated. Finally, the third choice is if the defense moves a down lineman over into the gap. But this opens a run hole between our tackle and center where he vacated. Again, whatever the defense does about this "gap", they're wrong.

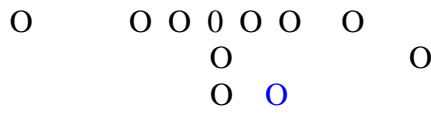
The "DC Wing T" aligns the HB ahead of the fullback (FB) in order to run a play called the "Quick hit". In 1947-48, this play led the nation in yardage. The DC Wing T is the only wing T that can run the "Quick hit". By moving the HB up he can also pass release or lead block for the FB. Normally, one thinks that the bigger FB should lead block for the smaller HB but, in the old "T" the HB always lead blocked. This is because the old "T" fullbacks were trained to "bull their way" for 5 yards using a specific run technique (John Riggins, Larry Czonka, and Earl Campbell all used this technique which is included in this manual.). Today's backs run to keep the defense honest so the QB can pass. But, in the old days they ran to threaten first downs. If your FB runs for 5 yards on 1st and 10, it now becomes 2nd and 5. This opens up your entire offense for the next play because the defense must key the FB or give up the first down. To threaten this 5 yard gain, we give the big FB all the blockers we can, including the HB.

The DC Wing T also incorporates motion into the formation. The formation is designed for the WB (or the HB) to go in motion every play. This allows us to read the coverage (If he's followed, the coverage is man. If he's not, the coverage is zone.). It's also hard to pass cover a receiver in motion. The WB in motion is also a "portable run blocker". We can have the motion WB block down on any defender on the line, all the way from the near DE to their nose guard (NG) or kick out any defender on the line past the QB.

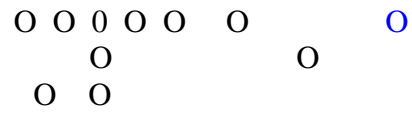
Finally, the DC Wing T allows us to change the formation in order to create additional problems for the defense. For example, we can overload one side of our formation by moving a player from one side of the formation to the other. These "unbalanced" attacks are the most powerful attacks in football because, if the defense does not move with you, it gives you an extra blocker playside. And, if the defense does move with you, it creates "open area" back the other way. One or the other *must occur*.

One way the DC Wing T overloads one side of the formation *is to name the player to be moved to the other side and call "Over"*. That player (shown in blue below) will now line up on the opposite side of the formation he normally would.

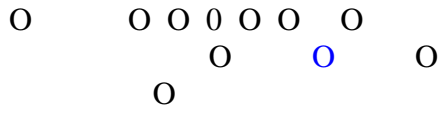




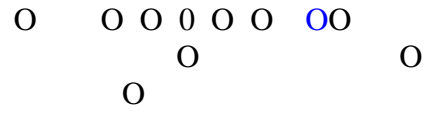
HB Over



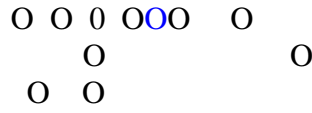
SE Over



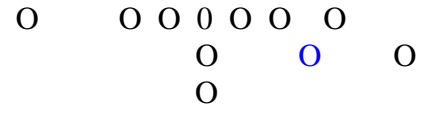
FB Over



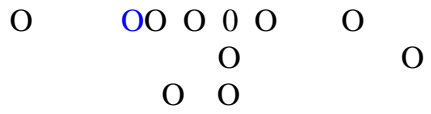
FB On



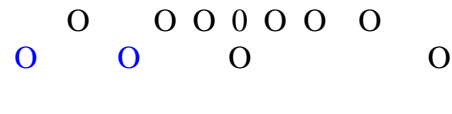
SE Tight Right



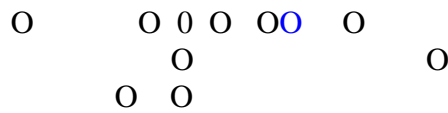
Slot Over



Right Tackle Over



Trips



Left Tackle Over

The DC Wing T likes to give the defense different versions of the same problem to each side of the center. So, in “SE Over”, the SE counts his 9 steps from the TE and not from the ball. In “WB Over”, the WB doesn’t count his steps but lines up one yard outside the OT. In “FB Over” and “Slot Over”, the FB and HB align over our “nasty split”. But, if we call “FB On”, the FB will “nasty split” himself and then go foot to foot with the TE (So that there’s always a gap for the WB to track block through.). In “Tight Right” the SE aligns *between the right guard and tackle*, foot to foot with them. Calling “Right Tackle Over” (or, similarly, “Left tackle Over”) also puts the extra tackle “foot to foot” with the existing tackle. “Trips” has the HB align as a flanker 3 steps outside the SE and the FB align one yard outside the left tackle. These formation changes can be taught in ten minutes, far less time than it would take most defenses to learn to respond to them

correctly. Further, each of these ten formation changes creates a unique advantage from the other. Here are how the “Over” formations are used:

TE Over: We can either run behind the TE on the weakside, gaining a double team on the nearest linebacker while widening the DE, or pull him back to the strong side if the defense shifts with the unbalanced line.

WB Over: Again, this widens the DE to the SE side allowing us to run inside him. It also allows the WB to crack a DT on a call to the “5” hole on his way to “tracking” the inside linebacker or block the corner over the SE for a screen pass to the SE.

HB Over: Allows a double team on the inside linebacker on plays to the right or we can run a “Quick Hit” to that side.

SE Over: Moves the corner away from the “6” hole and sometimes brings the other corner over with him.

FB Over: Allows us to pick up a “crashing” DE or have the TE and FB change blocking assignments.

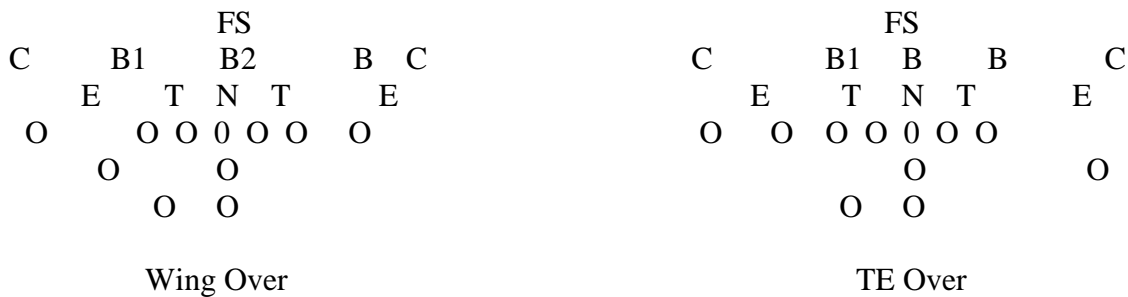
FB On: Same as “FB Over” only it also increases the spacing between the inside linebacker and the outside linebacker from 3 yards to 4.

Tight Right: The SE lines up tight to the right tackle (RT) which moves the outside linebacker out farther. The SE will either double team the RT’s man or, if the defense shifts with our unbalanced formation, he can be pulled back to the weakside without being keyed by the defense. “Left Tackle Over” does the same thing.

Slot Over: Provides the HB and WB with identical blocking angles for double teaming the inside linebacker (Useful with another call called “Swap Out”). It also creates a “bunch” passing formation.

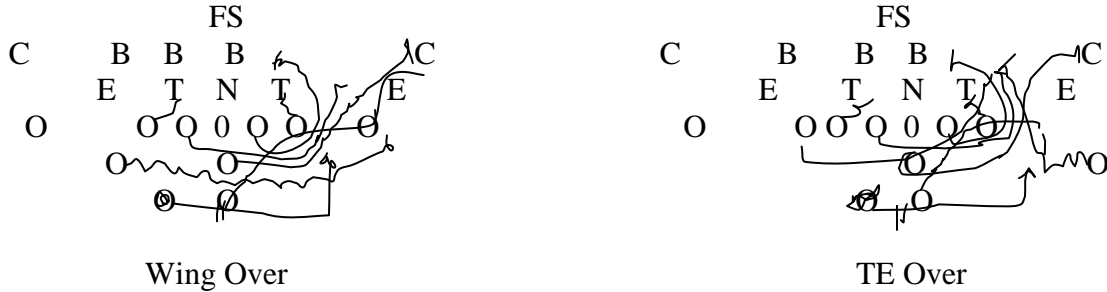
Trips: Moves two players to the left instead of just one. Useful with a QB who can both run and throw.

Below are shown our “Over“ calls versus a balanced defense that failed to adjust.



Both calls move the left DE out for a play to be run inside him. In “Wing Over”, if the DT was directly over our LT, the WB would crack him on the way to doubling B2 (“track block”). In “TE Over”, we lose the “crack” but gain a double team on B1. Thus, not only do we get two different looks but two different blocking attacks. Obviously, if the defense does not move with us, it’s to our advantage to use “Over” calls and run to the overloaded side. Because we can line up unbalanced so many different ways this increases the complexity to respond beyond most youth defenses (or for “scouters” to

record) and the defense will simply choose not to react to our unbalanced formation. But, in the unlikely event the defense did react, the DC Wing T is far enough advanced as to have an IMMEDIATE RESPONSE because, if the defense did shift, it leaves “open area” back to the weak side. Here are the same two formation calls but with the defense reacting by shifting down:

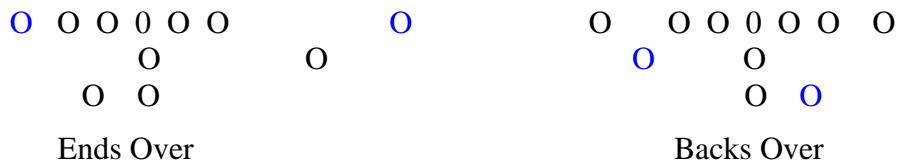


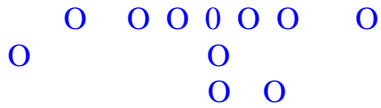
Above, the linebackers have moved over to match both our unbalanced fronts, leaving only three defenders to cover the entire right side of the field. As soon as they do this, the DC Wing T allows you to run back to the reduced side by pulling backside players playside. This is shown above using the call “36 Power Toss”. Both plays brought two extra blockers playside (The “WB Over” formation has brought the WB and left guard (LG) playside and the “TE Over” formation pulled the LG and TE playside (If we called “Super”, the SE would be pulling too.). Once again, we outnumber the defense playside – even though they shifted with us. Only now we outnumber them by two blockers instead of one (And they have more area to defend!). To put this to your fullest advantage, *if a defense moves with you, move them towards the short side of the field with an “Over” call and then run to the wide side of the field against the reduced number of defenders there.* No other youth offense lets you do this.

What the DC Wing T is doing is allowing you to do is unbalance your formation three different ways unavailable to most youth offenses. They are:

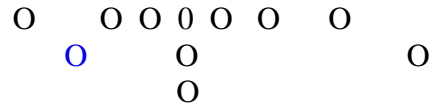
- 1) By alignment (Over calls)
- 2) By pulling guards and ends
- 3) By putting the WB in motion across the formation

We can also call formation changes that allow us to still stay balanced. These formations are often used when we are on the left hashmark or for power runs off tackle. They are shown on the next page with adjusted players in blue. In these formations we often change *two players* by flipping both to the opposite side of the formation.

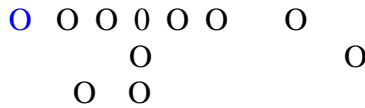




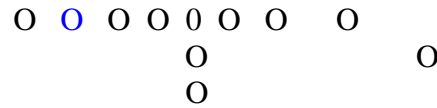
Flip



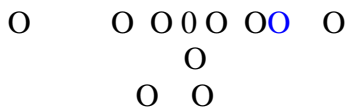
Slot



Super



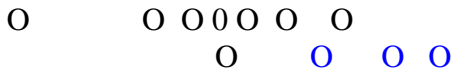
Slot On



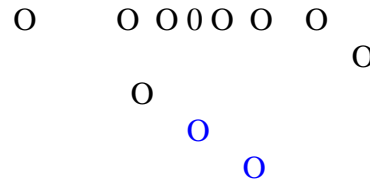
Wing On

Combined with our base, ten “Over” calls, and the six calls above, you can give the defense eighteen different formations (*). There is, of course, no need to teach them all, but they are easy to teach and most coaches will have about six different formations.

Miscellaneous Formations



Trips Right



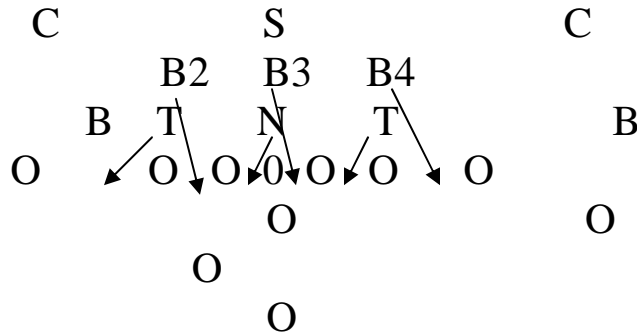
Gun

In “Trips Right”, the HB has lined up furthest outside the formation to the right, with FB inside him in the “WB” position and the WB in the “slot” position. This formation is used to run the QB right or throw quick slant passes.

The “Gun” places the QB 4 yards back, the HB one step ahead of him, and the FB one step behind him. The “Gun” is used for better running to the outside and for QB’s with poor footwork. It’s a popular choice.

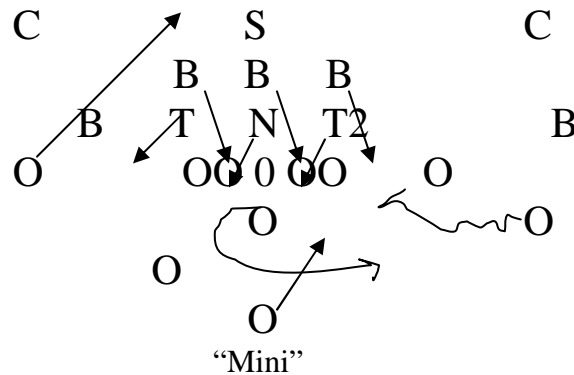
* In “Ends Over” the SE and TE switch sides. In “Backs Over” the HB and WB change sides. In “Flip”, everyone, **including the linemen, except for the QB and FB**, switch sides of the center. “Super” has the SE line up as a left side TE, but foot to foot with the tackle.

Yet we can do still more with our formations. The DC Wing T will also allow you to reduce the splits of the tackles to “foot to foot” with the guards by calling “Mini”. Or, you can add an extra foot to their splits by calling “Maxi”. Shown below is an example of where a “Mini” call would be used:



. In the “3-3 Stack” shown, the linebackers are stacked directly behind the three down linemen. Whichever way the down linemen slant, they blitz the other. From tackle to tackle we have five blockers but the defense is bringing six defenders. That’s more blitzers than we can block. A defensive coach for 7 year olds could easily teach his defense to do the above but could an offensive coach for 7 year olds teach his offense to pick this blitz up?

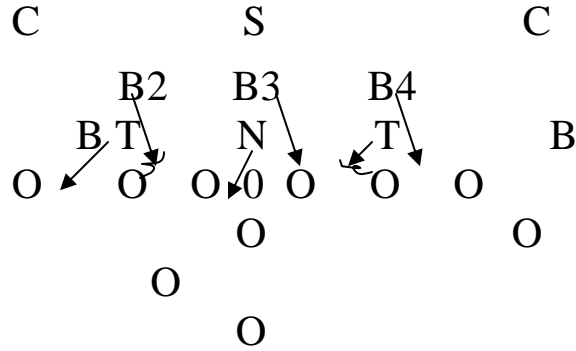
The “DC wing T” allows you to pick this blitz up with 7 year old’s using a “mini” call:



Our tackles have gone “foot to foot” with the guards leaving no hole for the inside blitzers to get through. The tight line splits keep them out and our WB “track blocking” to the heels of T will automatically pick up the sixth outside blitz (B4). We have a runner and two blockers versus two defenders outside – a good match up (*).

You can also run a “maxi” call against the same “D”:

* Note that, in the first “D” above, we don’t count defenders up close to the line and poised to blitz (B2, B3, and B4) as linebackers but simply as down extra down linemen. Thus, both our HB and TE will block S (“nearest linebacker”) on plays to their side.



A “Maxi” call increases our tackle splits and is used against DT’s that line up “head up” on our tackles. By calling “Maxi”, *moving just two blockers out has moved four defenders out* (The DT’s and the stacked linebackers behind them.). There are now only two defenders (N and B3) in front of our three interior linemen - the center and two guards. With our “maxi” tackles picking up the inside blitzers, and with two of the blitzers taking themselves outside, we now have three blockers on two defenders instead of five on six for a run up the middle.

Our regular splits are designed to attack defenders aligned in the gaps, while our “Maxi” splits are for teams that line “head up”, and our “Mini” splits is used to pick up a six man blitz versus run or pass.

THE “SWAP” FEATURE

Finally, the DC Wing T has one other feature unique to wing T teams. It can change up player skills at different positions. This is done by “swapping”.

Swapping: Often times the defense successfully matches up one of their players to one of ours in a way that’s to their advantage. For example, they’ll assign a small player to our SE and a big, strong player to our FB. We can counter this by having players switch (“swap”) positions to get a more favorable mismatch (such as fast on slow or big on small). Calling “Swap Ends” causes the SE and TE to trade positions and calling “Swap Backs” causes the FB and WB to trade places. Our big TE is now on a small corner and we have a fast FB covered by a slower middle linebacker. Simply put, the defense has now a player matched up against the “wrong guy”.

We also have the “Swap Out” call, which switches the TE and WB. WB still blocks his same man (inside LBer) but TE blocks the outside LBer over WB. The result is an angle block on both LBers. There is no motion.

These “swap” calls are run with specific plays and are not run “full time”.

THE PLAY CALLING SYSTEM

The DC Wing T obtained its play calling system from pro coach Don Shula. This system will allow you to call an enormous number of plays. However, don't get greedy. Don't pick more plays than you can practice. There is a saying I created that covers this:

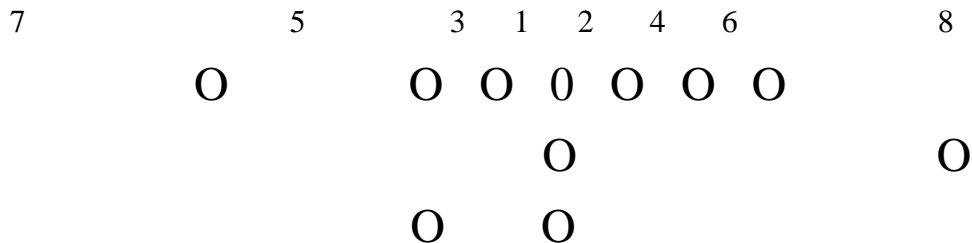
"I do not fear the coach who has 100 plays he has practised one time. Rather, I fear the coach who has one play he has practiced 100 times."

It takes about an hour to install your first play well enough to run it. But after a certain amount of teaching, new DC Wing T plays can actually be installed in minutes. I'm often asked how many plays one should have in this offense. The average youth offense has 6-8 plays. That's because the average player can only memorize that many calls. The DC Wing T does not have this memory limitation. You can call over 50 plays in the DC Wing T system on the same amount of memory skills other coaches teach 8 plays in. The actual number of plays you select depends upon your practice time. If you have ten hours of offensive practice time before your first game you can probably have 10 plays installed by your first game. But, after that, adding plays starts to go pretty fast. Most DC Wing T coaches run between 13-27 plays (some more). I prefer 18 plays myself as that allows me to have three plays to every eligible player, including the QB. It also usually allows me three different ways to hit the same "open area".

How the System works: Run plays always include two digits in the play call. The first digit gives the number of the back carrying the ball and the second number gives the hole number he will run. For example, on a "15" call, back #1 (The QB) runs hole #5.

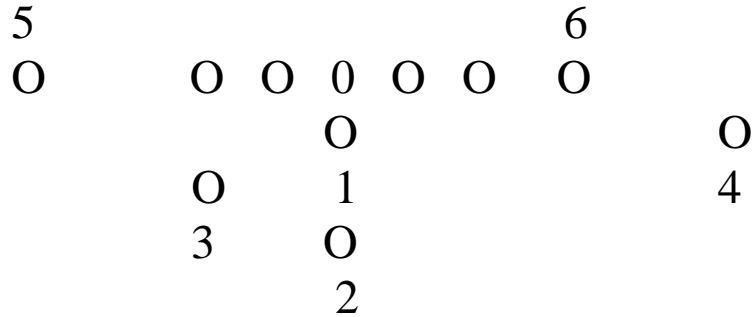
HOLE NUMBERING

Odd numbered holes are to the left. Even are to the right. Shown below is the base formation with the corresponding hole (gap) numbers. Notice there is no "10" hole. The "8" and "10" hole tend to be treated as the same hole.



To call a play we call the back and the hole number. So "X4" means back "X" will run hole # 4 and "X5" means back "X" runs hole #5. This tells both the QB and runner what to do.

The eligible receiver positions are also numbered as follows:



The QB is #1, HB #3, FB #2, SE #5, TE #6, and WB is #4. We try to number the backs the same as the hole number they line up on – Odd to the left, even to the right. If we move a back over by a formation call, say “HB Over”, he still keeps the same number.

To call a running play to a specific back, we give the back’s number and then the “hole” number. So for the FB to run “hole” #4 we would call “24” and for WB to run hole #7 we would call “47”.

LINE SPACING: The offensive line sets its splits while standing up. Unless the call is “mini” or “maxi”, the line splits are as follows: The guard should be able to rest the palm of his hand on the center’s shoulder pads. The front of his toes should be slightly behind the center’s heel. The tackle should just barely be able to touch the guard’s shoulder pads with his fingertips and the TE should be **at least** one yard (four “shoe lengths”) from inside foot of TE to outside foot of the offensive tackle.

Split End (SE): Approximately 7-10 steps from the ball which is about the same distance from the ball as he is from his assigned man to block. This often gives him a 45 degree blocking angle on his man. Note: Some split ends have trouble figuring out when they are on the line of scrimmage or not. If they are too far off the line that is a penalty. You have two ways to get your split end on the line penalty free. First, you can have him ask the near referee if he is on the line. They will tell him if he is not. Second, he can move up until he is no longer able to see the near guard’s heels.

Wing back (WB): Normally 10 steps out from the ball. The number of steps he counts is determined by his speed and by the rhythm of the QB’s snap cadence. If he is blocking “power” or running “Jet” to the left of center, **he’ll play 3 steps closer to the QB.**

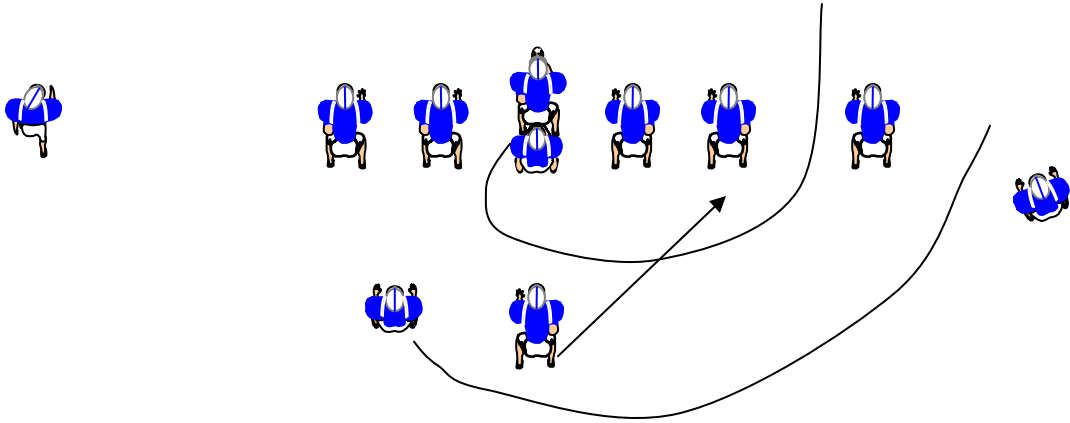
Fullback (FB): Four steps straight back behind the QB (5 off the ball) except on “wedge” plays, when he plays back 3 steps.

Half Back (HB): Three steps back from the inside foot of the left tackle, except on wedge plays when he plays 2 steps.

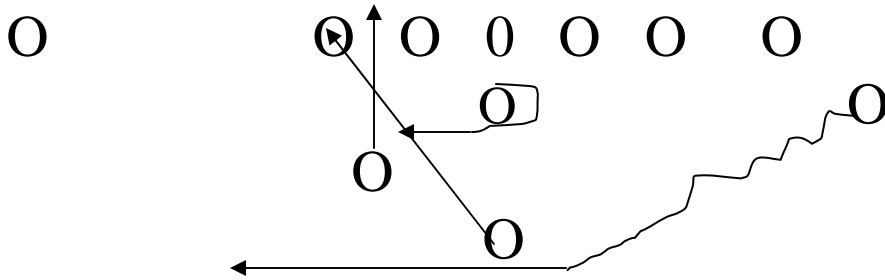
Note: We always have the HB, WB, and FB count their steps back at the beginning of each play or the FB tends to line up too deep and the plays stop working. The WB must also count his steps or he’ll lose his timing.

The backfield action depends upon your QB’s talent. A running QB uses the “option”, “boot”, or “bucksweep” series. A blocking QB uses “toss” and a passing QB “belly”.

BASE ACTION:

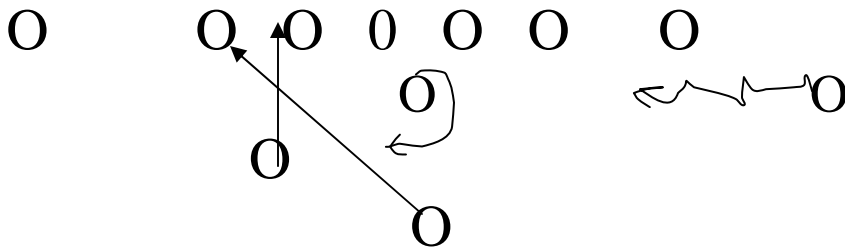


This is the base action for an option QB. In this and most other series, the fullback's (FB) first THREE steps are at the outside foot of the playside OT. The first step is with his play side foot. The FB always forms a handoff pouch as he performs this, whether he is getting the ball or not. The QB will reverse pivot and be ready to hand the ball to the FB on his (the FB's) third step or keep and run the # 6 hole. The HB will run a pitch route. Shown above is the base action run to the strong side. Shown below is the base option action to the weak side with the wingback in motion.

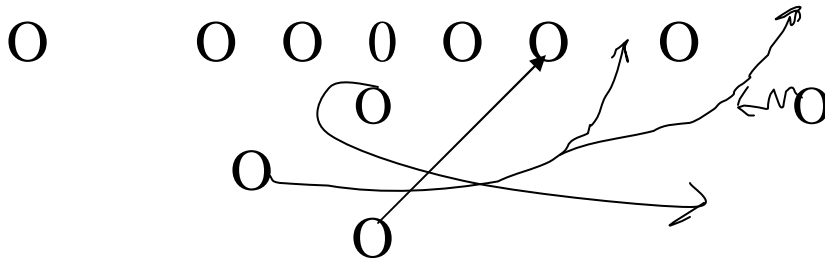


In the base action of plays to the SE side, the HB dives ahead, the FB takes the same THREE steps at the outside foot of the left OT, the QB opens playside, ready to hand off to the HB or pitch to the WB. The WB goes into motion (On first "Hut") and then runs through the FB's position on his pitch route.

If you elect not to use option in the offense, the base action by the WB is to use flat motion towards the QB as shown below. Everything else remains the same.



And, for a non-option offense, plays to the right become:



The difference between the two base actions is that in the option attack to the left, the wingback is the third player in the series to get the ball whereas in the non-option series he can be the first player to get the ball. The WB is shown in short motion because the play is coming to his side but it can be longer, depending upon the play call. The QB can hand off to either back or roll out, keep, or throw. This is “belly” action.

The QB can also boot away from backs (“bucksweep” or “boot”) or lead block (“Toss”). The action you select for him needs to fit his abilities.

SNAP COUNTS: The QB calls the cadence by calling, “Ready! Down! Set! Hut One! Hut Two! Hut Three!” with the center snapping the ball on “One”, “Two”, or “Three”.

The “Ready!” call is to give the line more time to get set with an inattentive QB. The use of “Hut” allows developmentally “slow” or very heavy players on the line to take off in unison with the rest of the line. A player who is late on getting off the ball is simply told to move on the “hut” prior to the snap number. Thus, if the snap were on “Two”, the slow lineman in question would move on the second “hut” while the rest of the line, and the ball, moved on “Two”. The mentally or physically slow player will now be getting out of his stance in time with the rest of the offense. Finally, the longer count gives the WB time to motion properly.

The snap count is normally not given in the play call (Although the center can call it in the huddle.). The snap count is part of the play call. Any run play with the cue “Left” or “Right” in it has a snap count of “One”. All other runs, including screens, are on “Two”. All pass plays are on “Three”. But you can change this if you want.

MOTION: The wingback (WB) will start in motion on first “hut”. It is VERY important you put the wing in motion on first “hut” on all snaps. Otherwise, the defense will learn to recognize what plays he goes in motion on and which ones he doesn’t. Normally, he aligns 10 steps from ball but on a “Power” or “Jet” call to the SE side he’ll align 7 steps from the ball (have him tap the QB as he passes if there is a snap timing problem. The QB delays finishing the snap count until tapped.). **However, on a “Freeze” call the WB does not go in motion** (He “freezes”). Instead, the HB goes in fast motion.

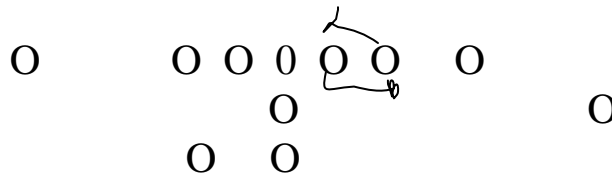
CALLING THE PLAYS: The SE takes the play into the huddle. The coach gives him the play **and the SE repeats it back to him**. Once he has it right the coach lets him take it out to the huddle where the SE gives the play. The call is organized first by formation (Such as “TE Over”) **and, second, what the QB does** (the play), followed by any special blocking instructions (called “cues”). The play call includes the back number getting the ball followed by the hole number he is running for screens and running plays while pass plays include the word “pass” and a rollout direction as well as the pass routes and the

designated receiver. Once the play is given by the SE the QB **repeats it** and the huddle breaks (Optional: Center calls snap count.).

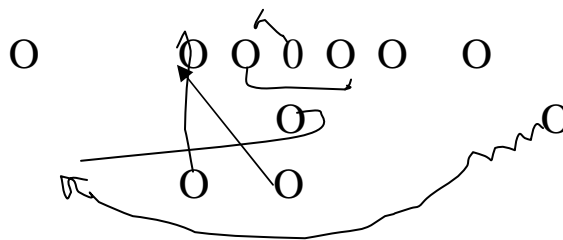
CUES: “Cues” are special blocking instructions. They allow us to combine and create new blocking systems merely by combining one or more cues together in the play call. Each player has his own cue or cues. If a player hears no cue that applies to him in the huddle, that player will base block (GOL or Reach). The kids listen in the huddle only for the cues that apply to their position and ignore all others. Most kids need only memorize four cues to learn all their plays. You do not have to teach all the cues below. Only those that go with the plays you select.

Here are the special cues:

“CROSS”: This applies only to guards and tackles. If the cue “cross” is heard in the huddle, it means the linemen on on each side of the run hole called cross block, outside man (tackle) first. Shown below is a “cross” at the # 4 hole.

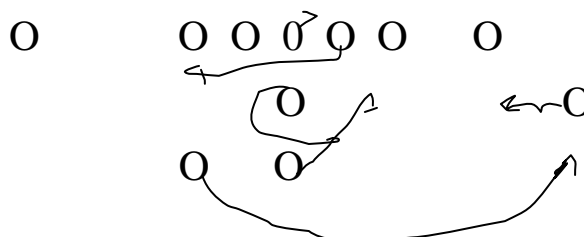


“LEFT”:



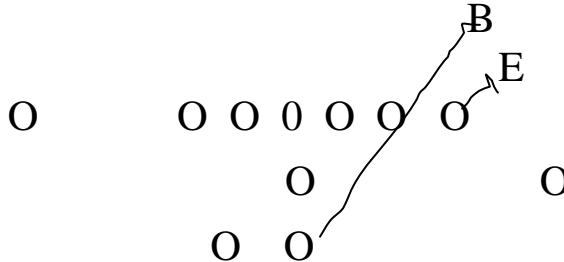
“Left” tells the *left* guard to pull to the run hole called and pull up through it, blocking back inside for a linebacker. “Left Kick” or ”Left Trap” tells the leftguard to pull to the same hole and kick out the defender on the outside edge of the hole. “Left” also tells the backfield runners who are not getting the ball they are base running *left*. The center is also being told to check his *left* gap for a defender and take him first before blocking man “on”.

“RIGHT”:



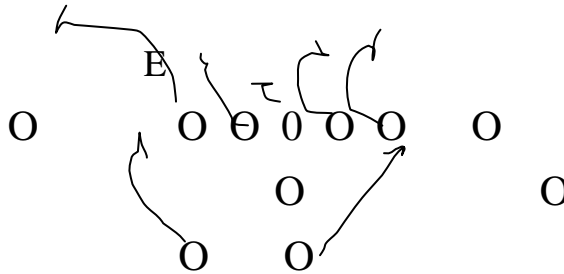
On a “right” call the *right* guard is being told to pull left to the run hole called and turn up through it or, if a “trap” or “kick” call”, to block the outside defender of the hole called. The backfield is being told to base run *right* by the same cue. The center will now block anyone in his right gap first before blocking “On”.

“SWEEP”:



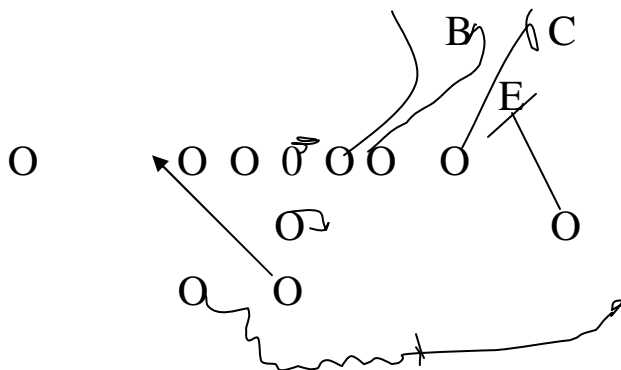
On a “sweep” call the tight end (TE) blocks the defender on his outside shoulder. The fullback (FB) blocks whoever is covering the TE for a pass.

“SPEED”:



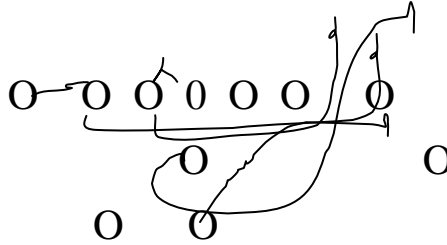
On all “Speed” calls the left tackle pulls and blocks the furthest outside pass defender on the field but goes behind the DE to do it. IF THERE IS NO OUTSIDE DEFENDER HE TAKES THE NEAREST SAFETY. The left guard pulls and follows the tackle and blocks the nearest linebacker. The halfback (HB) load blocks the DE. The backside of the line gets upfield to block anyone trying to follow our motion man on this call. FB heads at the outside foot of the RT. The center will step left and get his left hand up.

“ROCKET”: This is the same blocking as “Speed” but to the TE side. The TE passes BEHIND the DE, who is blocked by the WB, and takes the furthest outside defender (corner). The right tackle has the inside linebacker and right guard has the safety. The WB uses no motion (“Freeze”) but the HB does. The FB goes at the outside foot of left tackle, just the opposite of “speed”. The call here is “Freeze, Quick 38 Rocket Power”.



“MIDLINE”: The guards block the nearest defensive lineman “out”. The WB will motion through the #2 hole and the HB will run through the #1 hole. See “20 Midline”. The QB will use a “midline” step.

“TOSS”:

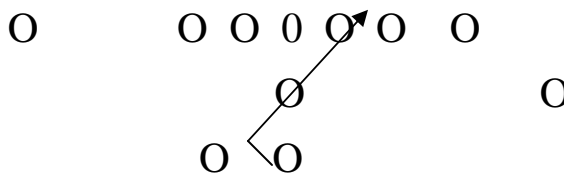


The “Toss” play is run from the “Super” or “TE Over” formation and pulls both the backside guard and tackle (and maybe the QB) all playside and through the hole. If the QB is leading, the pulling guard’s shoulder-pads should be even with those of the QB’s as they enter the hole called and with the guard’s inside hand (right hand above) on the QB’s near shoulderpad (left shoulder above). The pulling tackle has his hand on the pulling guard’s near shoulderpad. The center must remember to block back (same as “left” above) the opposite way of the play call on “Toss”. A “Toss” can be run either left or right. The above is a “toss” to the “6” hole. If the QB is leading, he finds the hole by following the FB’s block as shown and then turning upfield.

The SE “shoeshine” blocks any defender between him and the left guard. He does this by stepping right and falling down on his hands and knees in front of next defender down. If the left tackle is slow, you can pull the SE instead of the tackle.

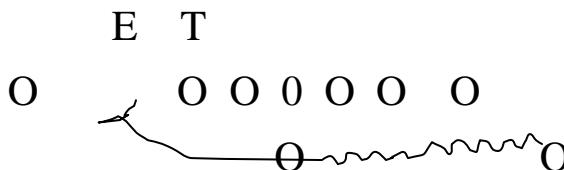
Optional: On all “toss” plays, the running back puts his hand on the back of his lead blocker (QB above) until he’s entered the hole with his shoulders square.

“COUNTER”:



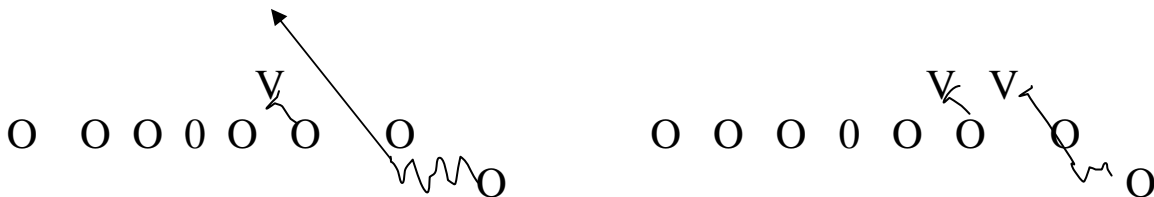
On “counter” the FB steps with a misdirection step and a head fake one way and then cuts back the other way and either takes the handoff or blocks the weakside DE.

“POWER”: On a “power” call the wingback goes in motion and blocks the farside (away) defending lineman in the hole called. A “power” to the “5” hole is shown:



On “power” blocks to the left of the QB, the WB will subtract 3 steps from his distance from the ball.

“Power” blocking is not normally used to the “6” hole as all calls to the “6” are “track blocked” by the WB. Shown below is the “track blocking” for a “36” call. The WB is tracking for the first linebacker from in front of the RG to the TE. He automatically tracks through the heels of any DT in front of our right tackle. Any wrong colored jersey along that track, he’ll block. In the example on the left, the defending DT is inside the right tackle’s outside foot, so the WB is able to track to the inside linebacker without running into the DT. In the example on the right, the DT is in the way, so the WB takes him. Please note that if the defender was head up on the right tackle, both the right tackle and WB would take him and either drive him back into linebacker (GOD blocking) or with the WB “combo’ing” off to the inside linebacker.



OPTION: The FB will lead block on the #1 outside defensive back (corner). If there is no corner, he will run off tackle to take the nearest safety.

LEAD: QB will not hand off to the designated back but keeps the ball and follows him. The FB can line up 3 steps back on a “lead” call if it helps.

FREEZE: The WB does not go in motion (Two men in motion is a 5 yard penalty.). Instead the HB does (towards the SE unless a “rocket” call.).

You are now ready to teach the offense. The teaching order presented is the same order you would use for teaching the team. The starting point for any offense is the stance.

QUICK: The WB motions through the “6” hole and the QB skips his reverse pivot, opening to the side of the play.

Do not teach all these cues to your team. Just teach the cues that apply to the plays you select.

THE STANCE

Offensive linemen with no defensive linemen in their gaps or over them may stand up in a low two point stance with outside foot back. Otherwise, we use an even toed three point stance with no foot back. This is because having one foot back is for BIG kids. If you'll notice the big boys, the ones on the left side of the line have a different foot back than the guys on the right. Even the big boys aren't so stupid as to line up with the "right foot back" all the time. But a dad coach will teach his kids to put one foot back and the right handed kids will choose their right foot back and now one half of the offensive line is screwed up. A player should *always* step off with his play side foot. But if his non playside foot is back, he will "push off" on the wrong foot. So he can only block effectively to the side of his "back foot". He's worthless for plays going the other way. And guess what? Half the plays are run the other way. So, on half of all plays, the kid is screwed. Second reason - putting a foot back can impair the ability of your guards to pull. Third, the idea of having one foot back is to gain power when pushing off with the up foot. Using an even toed stance guarantees a foot back on contact for stability. A pleyer starting with his foot back can place his feet side by side for no stability or power. The coach who teaches his line to put a foot back has screwed his kids THREE DIFFERENT WAYS!

So what is the correct solution? Line your kids up with both feet EVEN with one another, shoulder width apart (You can have them jump up in the air and land to get it right.). Now get them in a 3 point stance with one hand down, back flat, and head up. The player should be able to raise his down hand without falling on his face (for pulling). Watch what happens. The play is to the blocker's right. He steps with his right foot. The play is to his left. He steps with his left. There's no problem. Let's try pulling. To pull left, simply point your left foot left, jerk your left elbow back to pivot your body left, and GO! To go right, do the same thing. Try it yourself! As for power, take a short, 6 inch step with the play side foot, keeping the knee bent as you step down. Now step normally with the opposite foot. At this point you should collide with the defender. But your play side foot is cocked at the knee and ready to push. Now you have power! And you will push the defender AWAY from the play since your power is in your play side foot. Remember! You don't have power where the pushing leg is fully extended at the knee. You've got NOTHING! This is why when you watch two youths block each other, they often both STAND UP and neither one moves. They're standing up because their legs are fully extended and neither one is going backwards because both, with legs fully extended, have ZERO power. Think of it this way. Put your hand on your computer monitor, with elbows locked and arms fully extended. Now try and push your monitor with that arm without leaning forward. It won't move. Now put your hand on your monitor with your elbow bent and push. Now it moves! Kids are the same way. The knees must be BENT on CONTACT to move the defender!

MISTAKE #2: A youth coach will look to put his big boys on the offensive line and put the little guys outside somewhere (like SE or TE). But if you actually take your little guys and let them block the big kids, the little guys will often win. Why? There are three reasons for this. One is whoever gets lowest, wins, and we know that the little guy, by

being shorter, is “lowest man”. But there are two other factors at work here. The first is **STRENGTH!** Strength does not hit until puberty. A big, heavy kid does not have the strength to support his own weight. Want proof? Ask him to do a pushup. When a big, heavy kid has to get down in his stance, he can’t get back up. His legs can no more push his weight than than his arms. Therefore, he has no drive and will stand stand up on snap to take the weight off his knees. He’s going up high. Little guy is coming out low. The little guy wins. The second factor is **QUICKNESS.** The little guy wins again by hitting the big kid **FIRST.**

Yet a coach who doesn’t know this will put this big kid on the line, who must stand up to block, and put the little guy outside, who doesn’t have to stand up to block. They make this decision based solely on size. Then, to compound the problem, he tells that big kid to put a foot back in his 3 point stance, screwing the big blocker three different ways again. To help our big blockers, if they don’t have to block another three point defender (in the gap or over them) we let them stand up in a two point. They’ll get to a linebacker faster (You can also put a “big” player at the “split end” (SE) position. While this may seem rather odd to see a “big tank” standing up out at wide receiver, it impacts the defense. By getting his mass moving downfield, he creates enormous momentum for “crack” blocking and the defense doesn’t see him coming.)

Anyway, if you want to win with your offensive line, pick your starters by the guys who win the “**Sumo**” drill and not by who “looks” like he should be able to block. It gives the little guys **HUGE** confidence to know they can drive those big guys back - And they’ll do it too. I had one Super Bowl team with a right guard that only weighed 64 pounds. Yet he drove people back all season long.

PULLING LINEMEN

Our even foot stance allows up to pull equally well in all directions. When pulling left, simply point the left foot to the left at a 90 degree angle, jerk the left elbow back hard to square up the shoulders and you’re headed down the line for a kickout. Do the opposite for pulling right. Some guards will pull faster than others. Line them up and, using the described technique, see who pulls fastest left in a race. He’s your right guard. Your fastest puller to the right is your left guard.

TESTING THE PLAYER’S STANCE

Once we have our players in an even toed, three point stance, we must test their balance. We do this by putting them in their stance and then lightly shoving them back, left, right, and jerking their down hand up to see if they fall forward. Once they can remain steady with our pushing and pulling, they are ready to advance to the next step:

CENTERING THE BALL

Once you’ve got everyone in a good stance you need to find a center. I recommend you try out every single player at center and personally receive, and score, their snaps.

Basic centering skills are to hold the ball well out in front of you, nose up, with the laces about an inch away from the thumb. As you bring the ball back you turn it a quarter turn so that the ball hits your own buttocks. It does not fly up. A good center can hike the ball to him self without losing it and return it back to the pre-snap position.

To test his snap, place your hand up firmly up against his crotch from the QB position and receive the snap. The laces of the ball should strike your fingers. If the laces are striking lower on your hand (palm), it means the center's thumb is too close to the laces and that he should grip the ball with the thumb further away.

Once the player can snap properly, we teach him to step with either his left or right foot (playside foot) as he snaps (Step and snap at the same time.). This is a short, 6 inch step taken at a 45 degree angle playside. He keeps his free hand on his ankle for a low to high "punch". For a right handed center, if he's stepping off with his left foot, the left hand punches up palm up. If he has "no help" from the RG and he's stepping with his right foot, he places his left hand down on the ground one foot ahead of where his right foot is pointing. Now bring the left knee up between the defender's legs, wall off across the opponent's legs with the side of the body and crab *sideways* against him as described in the next section. Called a "crab" block, this allows him to take a NG by himself (If the center is too slow to crab, he brings his left hand to the defender's near hip and shoves.).

Every player should be scored for whether he is suitable to play center or not. However, your actual center is chosen by the process of elimination. Your QB, receiver, and running back positions are chosen first (by their scores on other tests). The next best remaining player becomes your center. Always look for "fast feet" at center. You want a quick first step. You can check for "quick feet" by putting a center on a NG, stand to the side, and watch what happens. If he has slow feet, the center will go backwards. If he has quick feet, the battle begins. You should see the center step first.

We teach the center up to three different blocks. They are, in order of importance:

- 1) Drive Block: Used when the center either has help from a guard or when he is stepping off with the same foot as his "free" hand.
- 2) Crab Block: Used when the center has no help from a guard and he is stepping off with same foot as his "hiking" hand. This was described above.
- 3) Cut Block: If a center can get to a linebacker downfield, a cut block may be legal.

Any linebacker within 3 yards of the LOS may be cut where the center dives under his feet. If the linebacker is more than 3 yards out, he would "crab" the linebacker.

"Crabbing" a linebacker is described in the next section.

BLOCKING TECHNIQUES

Our blocking rules are “Gap, On, Linebacker”. The techniques for each are:

Gap: To block a defender in your gap, the inside hand goes to the defender’s near jersey number and the outside hand goes on the near shoulder. The head is in front of the defender and the top of the outside shoulder surface is also making contact.

On: This is our standard drive block. On a drive block, the first step is a power step with the playside foot and is short (6 inches). The foot goes out at about a 45 degree angle. It only travels about six inches ahead but, owing to the 45 degree angle, travels about 9 inches to get there. This moves the blocker’s nose playside to the defender’s armpit which better positions him between the defender and the ball carrier while the toes being pointed out at a 45 degree angle produces more power (push off) than when the foot is pointed straight ahead.

On this first step the blocker brings both hands up to his hips, as if to draw two cowboy pistols from their “holsters”. The lead foot will be directly under one of these hands. The leg of the back foot will have a 90 degree bend. The helmet will rise slightly, ideally only an inch but expect more. The first step is short so that 1) we’re planted before the defender and 2) we can’t have too much forward lean or we are subject to "push/pull" by the defender.

The “pistols” are drawn on the next step, hands punching to defender’s armpits. This second step must be very fast. Both steps should be down in the time it takes to “draw”. Ideally, contact with the defender comes on the second step.

Teaching techniques: You can reverse teach this starting from a standing, two point position with both hands on hips (“holsters”) ready to “draw guns”. Teaching techniques for the first step is to give the player an outside, lateral point, such as a pop can, to step on with his first step and crush it (called a "pound" step) while, at the same time, drawing both his “pistols”. You can let players face each other and let them step and draw on each other to see who is the fastest. Then go to our three point stance and hold the same contest (Kids who stand up first will lose.). Next, test the player against a tackling dummy, head up on him. His first, lateral step forward should bring his helmet outside the bag. Have him step wider if this doesn’t happen. You can also check his helmet rise against the side of the bag (It must be less than six inches.). Fists go to the sides of the bag, thumbs up (“pistols out”), with elbows bent at 90 degrees.

Against an actual defender, the aiming point for the hands should be at the outside edge of the outside jersey number (armpits). Punch with both hands to stop his momentum and find the outside edge of his front shoulderpads near the armpits. Squeeze the hands towards one another and lift up high on his gear (Note: It is illegal to have the fingers under the opponent’s gear). The helmet follows the playside hand and, *in theory*, the blocker’s nose should remain in front of defender’s armpit. However, do not try and teach this as your own defenders will, in turn, be very low when you first go live.

Against your own players, accept head over defender’s shoulderpad. Any helmet contact against the defender is incidental. The helmet is not part of the blow. **Coaches who are teaching helmet or face to the numbers blocking are not only breaking the football**

rules, but are placing their players at risk for permanent paralysis or death. This type of tackling and blocking technique was the direct cause of 36 football fatalities and 30 permanent paralysis injuries in 1968 alone. In addition, if a catastrophic football injury case goes to a court of law, there is no defense for using this type of tackling or blocking technique.

Live: Two opposing lines are set up on an LOS with, each player “partnered” up with the player opposite him. All players are in three points. A ten foot section of PVC pipe is held over the LOS and 6 inches above the helmets of the linemen’s heads (They are not to hit it during the drill.). The coach will call cadence and the lead (playside) foot. Each player fires out on proper foot, without their helmets hitting the pipe, hands punch to fit, squeeze, and lift up as hips get low and feet fight play side. *Maintaining a wide base is the key to driving and elevating the defender while using short, choppy steps.* Do not let them extend arms after the blow - you have no leverage that way. Keep the elbows in and drive with your feet. Get your body and shoulder pads into the man and do not allow him to separate. Drive until the whistle or until your man is on the ground underneath you. Coach stands behind the players, polices first step and checks to make sure that no blocker ran his helmet into his opponent or hit his helmet on the PVC pipe. I usually let my entire team run this drill simultaneously, including QB’s.

This teaches proper footwork, use of hands, and leverage as well as coming out low.

Crab: A “crab” block is another way to “on” block a defender. Not only is it effective against a bigger, stronger, or faster defender, but it causes defenders to stop rushing hard, making them easier to drive block. For the agile player, it’s very simple. Just dive both hands over the playside hip of the defender in fists, plant them on the ground, and the blocker crabs *sideways* into the defender, keeping his knees off the ground. Against a blitzing linebacker, a guard should always crab block the linebacker.

A coach of questionable ethics once stated that, if his defenders were crab blocked, he’d tell his defenders to “knee” the blocker in the side. If you teach your blockers to constantly move sideways against the defender with pressure, he can’t do this.

Linebacker: Linebackers (or any downfield defender) are hard to “drive block”. All uncovered linemen should use a low 2 point stance (It’s easier to block a linebacker from – the rule is: *If no one is in your “Gap” or “On” you, two point.*). They should aim for where the linebacker will be, not where he is. The techniques for an open field block, by ability are:

Slow linemen: The blocker crosses both both arms across his chest in fists, thumbs to opposite nipple, and then raises his elbows shoulder height just as he strikes his opponent. With the large blocking surface area of the forearms, the blocker seldom misses – And against a moving target there is always the risk of a miss by a slow blocker.

All Others: Place the near shoulderpad to the stomach block. The blocker puts his helmet on the down field side of the defender, without hitting the defender with it. We are basically tackling the defender but without “wrapping up”. He can “chickenwing” the defender with the near arm (The thumb of the outside hand is held to near nipple and the elbow is raised to increase blocking surface.) or put both hands across the far hip (same as crab block) and then slide down him. This block is first taught on a bag to make sure

the player keeps his head to the side. It's a time effective teach because it allows the blocker to use his tackling technique, letting us combine two techniques into one. This is also a block the defending linebacker cannot shed.

The Double team: When the SE or WB is placed next to an offense tackle ("Super", "Tight Right", "WB On") these two players can drive a Defensive Tackle (DT) into the path of the linebackers behind. Each player gets hip to hip with the tackle, with inside hands to defenders near jersey number and outside hand to near shoulder. They then drive him backwards as fast and as far as possible.

Split Ends: The split ends are otherwise taught to use a "stalk" block against "nearest, deepest defender". This block ties up the defender for a longer period of time and is used against "third row" defenders behind the linebackers. In a stalk block our blocker heads straight at the defender (often as much as 10 yards away), slowing down just before he reaches him, strikes palms to bottom of his numbers, and then gets both hands to the defender's shoulderpads. He now moves with the defender, pushing him whichever direction the defender wishes to go, causing the defender to take himself out of the play.

BACKSIDE BLOCKING

We want our backside line blockers to accomplish the same five things every down. They are:

- 1) To successfully pick up a blitz
- 2) To be able to cover for a pulling backside guard
- 3) To be able to block a linebacker downfield
- 4) To make it appear that the play is coming to their side
- 5) To give no clue whether the play is run or pass

To accomplish #1 above, our backside blocker must defend the **gap** between himself and the next man center side of him. To do that, he steps towards the center and into the gap. To accomplish #2 above, our OT must be able to block a defender over the guard. This means our backside tackle replaces the position of the pulling guard next to him on snap. To do that, he must, again, step into his center side gap on snap. To accomplish #3 above, if the blocker stepped into his gap and found no defender there or over the guard, he steps upfield through the gap to block a **linebacker** outside of him. Thus, the backside blocking rules are "Gap-Over-Linebacker" or, again, GOL. This is so close to our playside GOL rules that # 4 is accomplished. By stepping into our gap first, we accomplish #5 because, until we take our second step, no one is headed upfield. Thus, run and pass blocking is the same on the first step.

All situations are covered by stepping into your playside gap to take anyone there or over the guard and then stepping upfield, blocking the first wrong colored jersey you meet. The only other thing to add is that, when stepping upfield, look to "scrape hips" with the next blocker inside you.

Next Man Over: Only tackles have to block "next man over". The tackle simply aims for his own teammate's guard's helmet at snap (Never directly at the defender). He then

get one hand across the front of the defender, one hand on his near hip, helmet across the front, and drive him into our center.

Gap: The skilled tackle (or guard) would use a crab block against a defender in his gap as gapped defenders are often blizing linebackers. We want our blockers to get used to putting linebackers on the ground (I **strongly suggest** a helmet star for every time they do.). Tackles don't like to crab but they like helmet stars and a crab block puts a linebacker on the ground. "Crab" blocks often tend to slow down the defensive rush. Defenders who are crabbed must either slow up their rush to protect their feet or "eat grass". If they slow up their rush, they become easy victims for our "drive" block. In seventeen years of coaching, I've only seen one defender not slow up his rush when crabbed. So we just kept crabbing him and he kept eating grass.

Crab blocks are made with the hands in fists. *Failure to ball up the hands into fists invites the fingers to be stepped on or jammed.* If kids get their pinkies hurt, that's just one more reason for them not to execute their crab block – And they don't like to do it anyway.

The blocking progression of a crab for "man over" are as follows:

- 1) The tackle steps with his center side foot towards the gap between himself and the guard.
- 2) He extends both arms out in front of himself, hands balled up into fists
- 3) He dives across the front of the defender, his extended fists aiming to pass by the defender at his far side hip. BOTH fists cross the outside hip!
- 4) Both hands are now planted firmly on the ground. The butt stays up! The knees stay off the ground! The player's head will be at his own knee level.
- 5) He now "crab" walks sideways on all four's into the defender.

Of course, if there's no defender over our pulling guard, the tackle can skip "man over" and just step upfield as he normally would through the gap between himself and the guard and find the backside linebacker (Thereby accomplishing our goals #1 and #3).

Scraping Hips: On non-pulling plays, the backside guard will always release at an angle that would cause him to "scrape hips" with a nose guard over the center.

Examples:



Illustration "A"

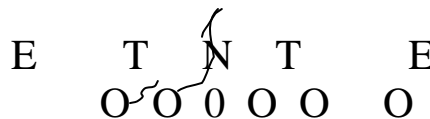
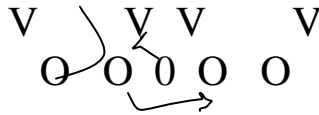


Illustration "B"

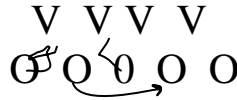
Shown above is an example of backside blocking for a play run to the right. In both illustrations the left guard is stepping into his playside (right) gap to "scrape hips". ***If he meets the nose guard (N) he will block him.*** If not, he will "scrape hips" with N, if possible, and step upfield to block a linebacker. In illustration "A", the left tackle is also stepping into the playside (right) gap. If "T" steps with him, he'll block him. If not, and "T" slants the other way, our tackle will find himself "blocking air" and will also step

upfield in search of a linebacker, *staying “hip to hip” with the left guard to create a “blocking wall”*. In illustration “B”, there is a DT in the gap that our tackle will meet and take as he steps into his playside gap. He will, preferably, “crab” block him.

A backside tackle does not try and block any defender past the guard’s helmet. That defender is in the guard’s gap. He only blocks down as far as anyone over the guard’s helmet. Shown below is an illustration of a tackle not blocking down past the guard. There is a defender between the tackle and the center but he’s not “over” the guard. He’s between the center and the guard, making him the center’s man (Hence, the reason for our 6 inch guard/center split which allows our center to cover this gap by “whipping” his left hand off his left ankle.) or he would be the guard’s man if the guard didn’t pull.

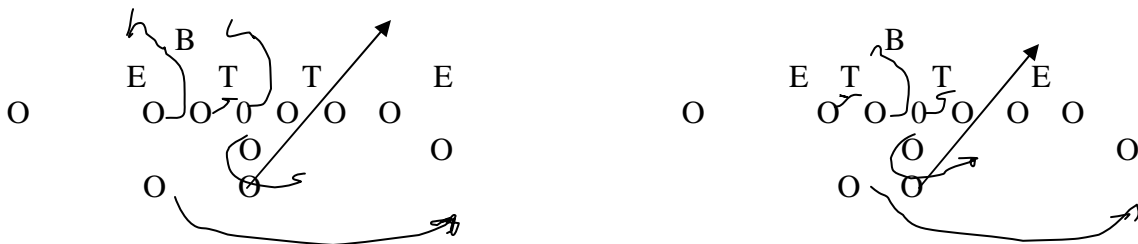


Now you might think the tackle should be helping the center in this situation but your center must be able to cover this gap by his self. Here’s why:



Here, the left OT has stepped down into his play side gap and, finding a defender there, is blocking him. The center then, has to take his backside gap defender *alone and by himself*. Somebody has to cover that gap and it can’t be our left tackle. So it is important to select a center that can do this. We also don’t want the tackle and center blocking the same man as an illegal “chop” block can occur.

Notice, the defense gets no read on the first step by the backside of the line whether the play is a run or a pass. Even the second step may not produce a “run” read if the OT is engaging a DT in his gap and our guard is “scraping hips” with a NG. Finally, since both the backside OT and guard are moving towards the center, they appear to be blocking down, causing both sides of the defense to think the play is coming to their side, which was our goal #5. Some examples of backside reach blocks are shown below. Again, all the plays being illustrated are all being run to the right.



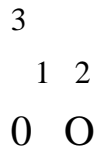
Notice, if the backside LBer tried to blitz through his assigned gap, he’ll be picked up by either the LT in the example on the left or the LG in the example on the right.

NOTE: All backside blockers who don’t have a defender in their “Gap” or “Over” them, except for the center, should be in a two point stance.

PLAY SIDE BLOCKING:

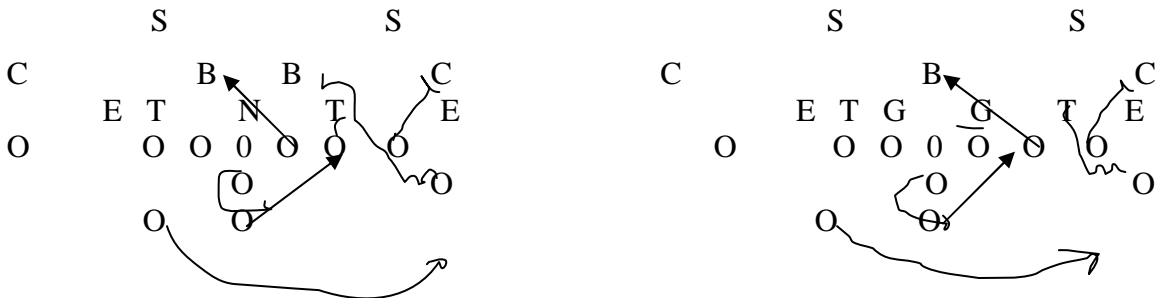
Our play side blocking must accomplish the same things as our backside blocking. That is, it must pick up the blitz and give no clue as to whether the play is run or pass or its direction. We accomplish this through our blocking rule of “GOL” (Gap, On, Linebacker). This means the play side blockers block their inside (center side) gap first (“Gap”). If there is no one there, they will look for a defender lined up directly over them (“On”). If there is no one directly on them, they can stand up and step into their inside gap (towards the center and block the first linebacker they are on track to).

Shown below are the GOL blocking rules for the right guard (The center is to his left). They are numbered (#1 is “gap”, #2 is “on”, and #3 is linebacker).



We teach our offensive linemen to point down at the gap between themselves and the center and say “One”. Then point at the ground TWO STEPS in front of their feet and say “Two”. Then the point downfield at a 45 degree angle (ahead of the center) and say “Three”. The first defender their finger points to while performing this identifies the man/area they are blocking. *We identify where a defender is lined up by his helmet.* To block “1” the defender’s helmet must be outside the center’s helmet for the right guard to take him. To block “2” the defender’s helmet must not be outside our right guard’s helmet. Assuming there is no helmet outside the center’s helmet (“1”) and no helmet over the guard’s helmet (“2”), he has a linebacker (“3”). If so, on the way to “3” he will scrape hips with any defender in front of the next blocker inside them (In this case, the center.). If the defender slants into him then the right guard will block him.

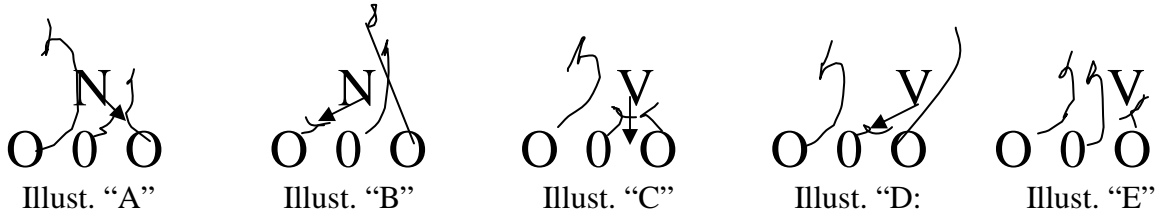
Here are some examples of the RG and RT scraping hips while blocking a linebacker:



The Center:

The center’s rule is to step off on his playside foot with a short, 6 inch step simultaneous with his snap. In other words, he steps and snaps at that same time. He then moves upfield, through the guard/center gap, blocking the first defender he encounters with two hands which is either a defensive lineman or a backside linebacker. On the next page are several blocking possibilities with the center being the middle player of the three players shown. In each case the play is going outside the right guard. The center is, therefore, stepping off on his right foot and trying to move upfield via the gap to his right.

If the center encounters a defender in the gap between him and the play side guard, he will block him as shown in illustrations “A”, “C”, and “D” below.



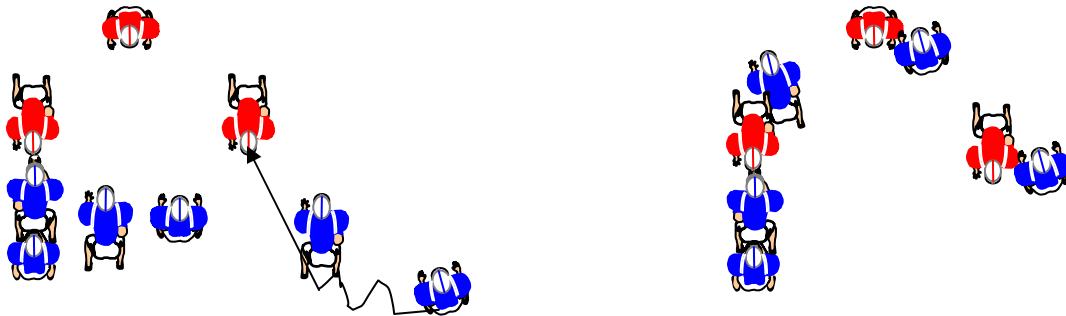
In illustration “A” the nosegaurd (N) in front of the center has stepped with the center and into his path. As this is the first defender the center encountered and he can get two hands on him, this is the center’s man. The right guard, by taking a track to “scrape hips” will also make contact with N. The right guard will block the N if he has two hands on him. If both players have two hands on him a double team will result (see page 34) and N is to be driven backwards. Otherwise, if the guard only has one hand on then, he will shove N with that arm and come off (“combo”) to the backside linebacker. The left guard, because N slanted away from him, failed to “scrape hips” and is headed upfield to take the backside linebacker. In illustration “B”, the nosegaurd has slanted away from the play, where he will run into the left guard moving upfield, who will now block him. As the center steps right, if he encounters no one (“air”) or only gets one hand on N, he and the right guard will look for a backside linebacker. **THE CENTER DOES NOT CHASE THE MAN (N) OVER HIM!** In illustration “C” both the center and the right guard have engaged a defender between them as the center steps off on his playside (right) foot and the guard defends his gap. Both the center and right guard will have both their hands on him and both will drive this defender backwards into the linebacker level (If this defender is on his knees or otherwise can’t be driven back, the center will let the guard take him alone, *skip him*, and step ***straight upfield*** to take the backside backer.). In illustration “D” the defender is over the right guard making him the right guard’s man. But when the defender slanted between the center and right guard, the right guard blocked “air” or only got one hand on his defender as he stepped playside. **HE ALSO NEVER CHASES THE MAN OVER HIM!** Instead, the center takes him. The right guard, blocking “on” and stepping into “air” will now look for a backside linebacker. In illustrations “E” the center has found no defender in the playside gap, as no one is slanting into it, and is, therefore, looking for a backside linebacker. The right guard is blocking “On” using his GOL rules and found his man, using both hands.

How do we know when we are chasing a man? **If we have to turn our heads from our original path to stay with a defender, we’re chasing him.**

A general rule is let your “feet follow eyes”. Go where you’re looking at the snap. Do not change direction in order to chase a down lineman.

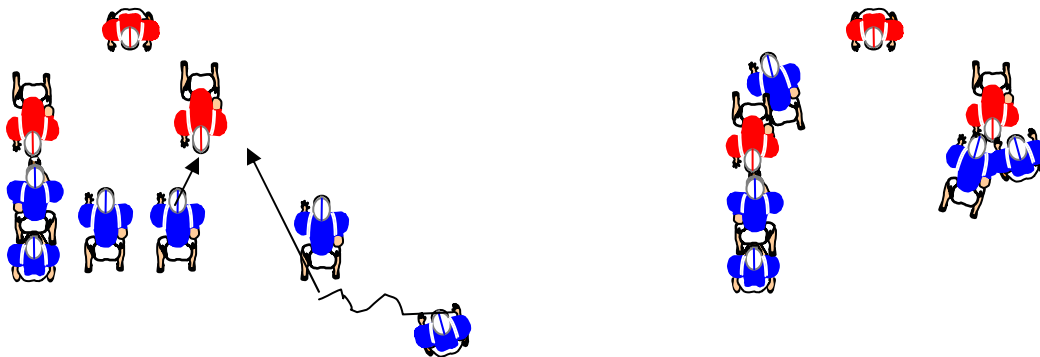
A playside tackle uses the same rules as a playside guard who gives a center help but with a wider split. If there’s a defensive helmet outside the guard’s helmet, that’s his man/area (“Gap”). Failing that, if there’s a helmet right over him, that’s his man/area (“On”). Otherwise, he has a linebacker. If there’s a defensive lineman over the guard, he’ll scrape hips with that defender to reach a backside or insidelinebacker. But, if there’s

no defender over the guard, *he steps off with his play side foot and finds an inside linebacker.* This is shown below for a run outside our right tackle:



On the left, we see the pre-snap motion by the WB who will track block to the linebacker. The DT, by moving his helmet outside the RT's, has placed himself in the WB's track. The RT has no one in his gap and no one "on" him and no one to "scrape" hips with and so is standing and takes the linebacker. On the right, we see the result. The RT has blocked the linebacker the WB couldn't get to and the WB has blocked the DT the RT couldn't get to while the RG "scrapes hips" with the nose guard for the backside backer.

This situation could have also ended in a double team between the RT and WB. This is shown below:



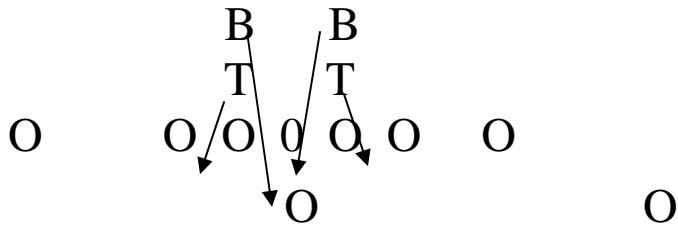
None of our blockers chase defensive linemen but here the RT, on stepping out on his right playside foot, has made contact with the DT as has the WB. They will both double team him (see page 34) and drive him back into the linebacker's path. Although the RT probably only made one hand contact with the DT, he stayed on him because his head did not have to turn left or right (chase) to do so. This is how double teams are created.

You should actually set up the situations shown on page 34 and let your players work through each one. There should always either be two blockers driving one defender backwards or one getting upfield to block the backside linebacker. Whoever the latter is should be able to slap the coach's hand in the backside linebacker position. Then reverse the illustrations and practice blocking for plays run to the left. Remember! When blocking "on", it's very simple: Everyone steps off on his playside foot and takes the first man he runs into. If he makes one handed contact, he should either find himself on a double team or shoving the defender away. Most of what has been discussed on what

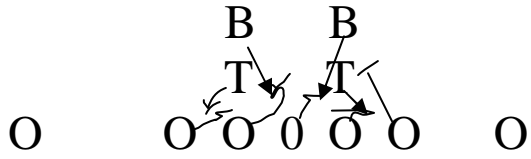
constitutes contact (one hand or two hands or “turning the head”) is actually unnecessary coaching and is included only to counter “stack linebacker” defenses shown below

The TE’s blocking rules are different in that he simply blocks “nearest linebacker”. The WB’s rule is to “track block” to the inside linebacker on any runs to the “6” hole, going through the heels of any defender in front of our RT (But skip blocking a DT on runs to the “2” or “4” hole.). This means the wingback will “scrape” hips with a DT over the RT and crack block or double team him if the DT’s helmet is outside the RT’s.

Let us now demonstrate how our line picks up the blitz. Shown below is a popular 4-4 “stack” blitz where the DT’s take an outside rush and the LBer’s stacked behind them take an inside rush. Stacked linebackers are easily identified because they are directly behind the butts of the linemen in front of them. They blitz 90-95% of the time and are, in fact, just extra linemen. Our own linemen handle them and not our HB, WB, or TE.

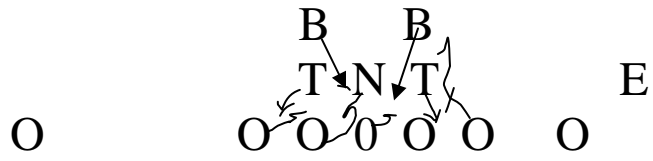


If our guards just blocked the man “on” them, one of the two linebackers would get through. The center can’t pick up both of them. But, when everyone steps playside (right) the blitz can’t get through:



Both the center and backside guard step playside into the path of the blitzing linebackers. Note: There is nothing special or different being taught here. This is the same blocking technique (GOL) used on all our plays. This page simply clarifies why we use the system we do. Since the play is going to the right, our RG stepped off on his right foot and intercepted the DT. The RT may end up double teaming the DT (two hand contact) or shoving (combo) him down (one hand contact) and looking for a backside linebacker.

A similar type blitz can be run from the “TNT” look shown below. It involves the DT’s slanting out while the linebackers slant in again but now the nose occupies the center. The idea is the center can’t pick up N and the two B’s by himself and the blitz gets in.

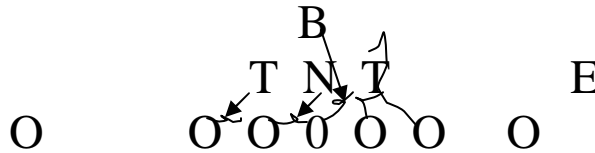


Notice though, our normal blocking rule has picked up this blitz. Our left guard has picked up the LBer as he steps upfield via “A” gap (The #1 hole). The center has stepped into the playside “A” gap (#2 hole) and intercepted the other LBer. The left OT will

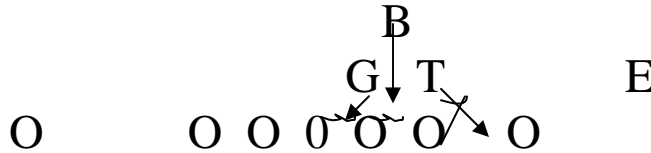
collision his DT and the right OT will combo or double team block his DT while looking for a linebacker.

Note that the center probably isn't actually blocking the linebacker. He's probably blocking N but he stepped right to do it. This leaves the linebacker only about a 6 inch wide hole for him to get through (Which is why our center/guard split is about 6 inches.).

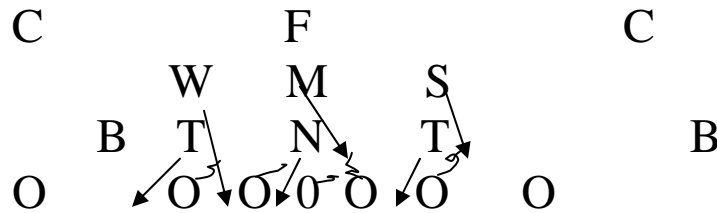
Some defenses will have the noseguard (N) slant one way, hoping the center will follow him, and allow that linebacker to get through. This is shown below. Our blocking picks this up because our center steps playside regardless of what the NG does. If the NG goes the opposite direction of the center, the backside guard has him. The center will not chase N since it would involve turning his head (changing direction).



You should always practice your line at picking up the blitzes I have shown. I also award our offensive linemen with helmet stars for picking up blitzes. Here's another:



The center would pick up the slanting DG which allows the RG to pick up the blitzing "B" (The RG should be stepping with right foot and aiming for right shoulder pad of DG which puts him in B's path.).



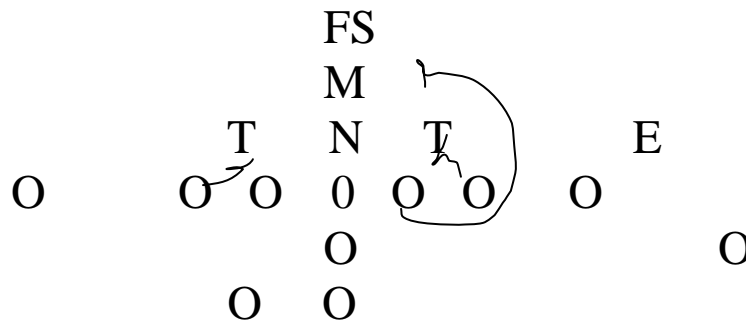
Here, again, is the "3-3 Stack" against a sweep play to the right. This is where the defensive linemen slant one way and the linebackers stacked behind them blitz the other. The defense expects our OT's to follow the DT's in front them. The linebackers then head at the hip of our OT as he steps out of the way. This is typical of *all* stacked linebacker defenses. The linebackers *tap* the DT's in front of them to the side they're slanting too. Our linemen step with the foot nearest the run hole, then picking up first man to show. If our players step with proper foot and don't chase a DT slanting away, we win. And, if the player we catch is the stacked linebacker, we can cut or crab him.

Notice how the DT on the right will actually get through. The RT can't pick up both T and S. This is because, if we count our blockers from tackle to tackle, we have five but, if we count the blitzers from tackle to tackle, they have six. They have more blitzers than

we have blockers. To prevent T from getting through, when running outside the offensive tackles versus a “stack” defense, we would call “Mini” and close up the line splits between the guards and tackles to “foot to foot”. This gives the slanting T a very narrow hole to shoot. However, when running inside the tackles, we would call “Maxi” against stacked linebackers. This is because the RT will now step with his left foot and intercept the inside slanter, be it T or S. Meanwhile, the outside slanter has taken himself either out of the play or into the WB’s block. The wider “maxi” split gives our runner a bigger hole to hit inside.

FOLD BLOCKING

For a big guard, we also have situation where a special block is used, called a “fold block”. It’s used where our playside guard and tackle would normally double team a defender between them but he’s either on his knees or in a four point and hard to drive back. This block puts a big guard directly on the linebacker:



Instead of trying to drive this defender back into the linebacker with the RT, the playside guard just loops around the OT to get to his linebacker (M above). The trick in running a successful fold is that the guard somewhat “slides” sideways to get around the tackle. This allows him to keep his eyes on his assigned linebacker. Of course, if “M” was only two steps away from the LOS and blitzing, the guard would skip the fold and treat M as “gapped player”, blocking M directly using a crab block. A linebacker that is two steps away is considered in the gap or “on” and is also in the “Free Blocking Zone” (FBZ) where he can be legally cut. Notice, the center now has “no help” with N from the right guard. The RG would normally call out “AA!” to tell the center he’s pulling and the center has the N himself. This allows the center to use a “crab” block on N.

NOTE: All play side blockers who don’t have a defender in their “Gap” or “Over” them, except for the center, should be in a low two point stance (And, if you want, with outside foot back).

PLAYER CUES BY POSITION

FULLBACK: The FB's base blocking assignment is to block the DE after taking three steps towards the outside foot of the play side tackle.

Cues: On "Left" calls, the first three steps are towards the left offensive tackle.

On "Right" calls, the first three steps are towards the right offensive tackle.

On "Option" calls he LOAD blocks the furthest #1 outside linebacker. If he cannot find a backer there, he turns back inside and blocks first unblocked defender he sees.

On "Lead", no handoff to the FB occurs. He lead blocks through the hole called and the QB keeps and follows.

"Swap Backs": Trade places with the WB. Do not go in motion.

QUARTERBACK: On base call the QB reverse pivots and moves play side.

Cues: On "Left" calls, the QB pivots to his right.

On "Right" calls, the QB pivots to his left.

On "Quick" calls, the QB skips the reverse pivot and steps directly to the run hole called to either handoff or pitch.

On "Pitch", pitch the ball to the called back.

On "Lead", do not hand off to the designated back. Instead, keep and follow.

HALFBACK: On base run call to your side, run "B" or "C" gap and block first linebacker starting in front of the left guard and proceeding left. On base run calls to the TE side, run pitch route.

Cues: On "Left" calls pretend play is going left.

On "Right" calls pretend play is going right.

On "Speed" or "Fake Speed", he load blocks the near DE.

On "Midline", pass between the near guard and center and block nearest LBer.

On "Rocket" motion behind the FB for a quick pitch.

WINGBACK: On base run to the TE side to either the "6" or "8" hole, track block through the "6" hole to the inside linebacker. If the linebacker has moved up to blitz and cannot be track blocked, "power" block anyone in front of the RT. Once the RT takes him you can then go upfield to the next defender. On a run to the "4" hole, skip the track block and go directly to the linebacker (If he's blitzing, again help out the RT.).

Cues: On “Power” calls, using motion, block the defensive lineman on the “away” side of the hole called. All plays to the “6” hole are track blocked to the inside linebacker, but only runs to the “6” and “8” hole are “track blocked”. If passing behind the QB in motion on a “power” call, tap the QB as you pass.

On “Jet” calls, motion across to the other side of the formation.

On “Midline” motion to behind near guard and center and block nearest linebacker.

“Swap Backs”: Swap positions with the FB.

“Swap Out”: Trade places with the TE.

CENTER: First step is to playside on all base plays except “Toss” (Step opposite way on “Toss”).

Cues: On “Left” step off on left foot and block left #1 hole. On “Right”, step off on right foot and block the #2 hole. If no defender in these holes to block, block man on.

LEFT GUARD: On base call block GOL or Reach.

Cues: On “Left” or “Toss” pull to hole called and lead up through it unless “Kick” or “Trap” is also added to the call, in which case kick the defender out on outside edge of hole called by aiming at his inside hip and keeping head on downfield side.

On “trap” calls to your side, take whoever is in front of the center.

On “Speed” pull and follow the left tackle for nearest linebacker.

On “Midline” block nearest down lineman away from the center.

RIGHT GUARD: On base call block GOL or Reach.

Cues: On “Right” or “Toss” pull to hole called and lead up through it unless “Kick” or “Trap” is also added to the call, in which case kick the defender out on outside edge of hole called by aiming at his inside hip and keeping head on downfield side.

On “trap” calls to your side, take whoever is in front of the center.

On “Midline” block nearest down lineman away from the center.

LEFT TACKLE: On base call GOL or Reach.

Cues: On “Trap” calls to your side, block nearest LBer.

On “Speed” pull left inside the DE and block furthest outside defender.

RIGHT TACKLE: On base call GOL or Reach.

Cues: On “Trap” calls to your side, block nearest inside LBer.

On “Rocket”, pull behind the near DE to block furthest outside defender.

TIGHT END: On base call block nearest LBer.

Cues: On “Sweep” kick block the DE outside you.

On “Draw” run your “#1” pass route even though the play is a run.

On “TE Over”, pull through the hole called on “Toss”.

“Swap Ends”: Trade places with the SE. Remain in a three point stance.

“Swap Out”: Trade places with the WB. Do not go in motion.

SPLIT END: Line up as far away from the center as the nearest, deepest defender is off the ball. Block that nearest, deepest defender. If you can block an outside linebacker too on the way, DO IT!

Cues: On “Speed” call block nearest LBer to next man up

On “Super” line up as a tightend.

On “Super Toss” pull and follow the left guard. Look to block a safety.

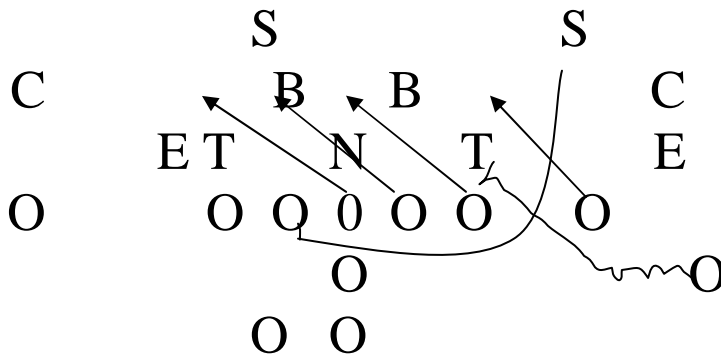
“Swap Ends”: Trade places with the TE. Remain in a two point stance.

OPTIONAL BLOCKING RULES

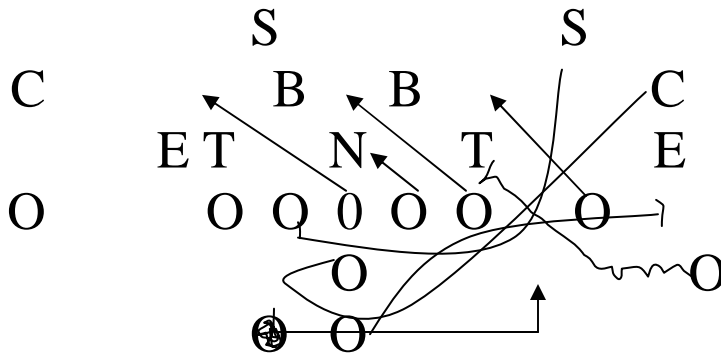
“Finger” Blocking: Sometimes, just having the little guys count “1-2-3 “to find who they are supposed to block doesn’t register – especially with the 7-8’s. If they’re having trouble finding their man, we use finger blocking. Here is out it works. As both sides of the line come to the line and set their line spacing, they then point straight ahead with their inside arm at the ground 2 feet in front of them. The other arm goes *over the top of the inside arm*, just over the elbow joint and points 2 feet ahead. All players follow their top hand first. The playside blockers look to see if their top hand (pointing at their inside gap) is pointing at a nearby defender. If so, that’s their man. If no one’s there, they check the finger pointing straight ahead for a defender two feet in front of them. If there is, that’s their man. If not, they go back to their first finger and, on snap, run in the direction it’s pointing and find a linebacker to block. The backside of the line simply follows the top hand pointing towards the center to find their man. Since both sides of the line hold their hands the same while pointing, the defense can’t tell the play.

SAB (Severe Angle Blocking) blocking: The playside blockers aim at an area three yards in front of the second lineman down (Center aims for 3 yards ahead of LT. RG aims for 3 yards ahead of LG. RT aims for 3 yards ahead of Center.). The blockers now run at this spot (which is about a 30 degree angle), staying on the same angle track and looking to hit someone in their first 2-4 steps. The WB tracks from anyone on, or on the outside shoulder of, the RT and 3 yards in front of RG. The TE normally has anyone in the middle of the “nasty split” to 3 yards in front of the RT. The backside guard ALWAYS pulls on a SAB play and blocks first wrong colored jersey he sees coming across the line (trap) or until he clears our tackle, at which point he turns straight upfield and blocks the first wrong colored jersey he sees. See example below).

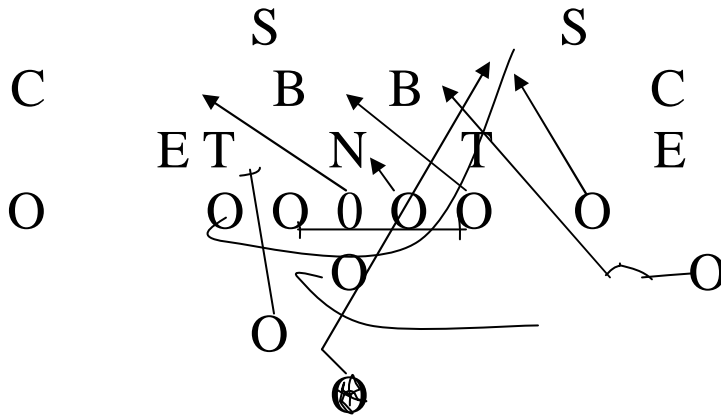
If you wanted, for training purposes you could have both side of your line, from tackle to TE, tilt towards the center at 30 degrees. Now they just follow their nose to find who they block. This same “tilt” will help them for “wedge” blocking. However, once you get into more advanced passing, you’ll have to remove the tilt.



Adjustments to SAB Blocking: If one notices the previous illustration, all players to the right of the center are blocking a defender inside, or over, the RT. In order to block three defenders outside our RT, we need the LG and the entire backfield. Since one of our backs must carry the ball, to block all three defenders the QB must remove one defender himself – either by becoming a blocker or by option. *If you do not assign the QB to take out a defender outside the RT, you cannot run SAB blocking.* The only other choice is to line up in two TE's and pull the left end (or run "trey" and pull the left tackle). It is normal to use the QB to take out the DE on option or to take out the cornerback if he's a blocker. Under both systems, the LG has the #3 defender from the right. Shown below is the QB lead blocking for the play shown on the previous page:



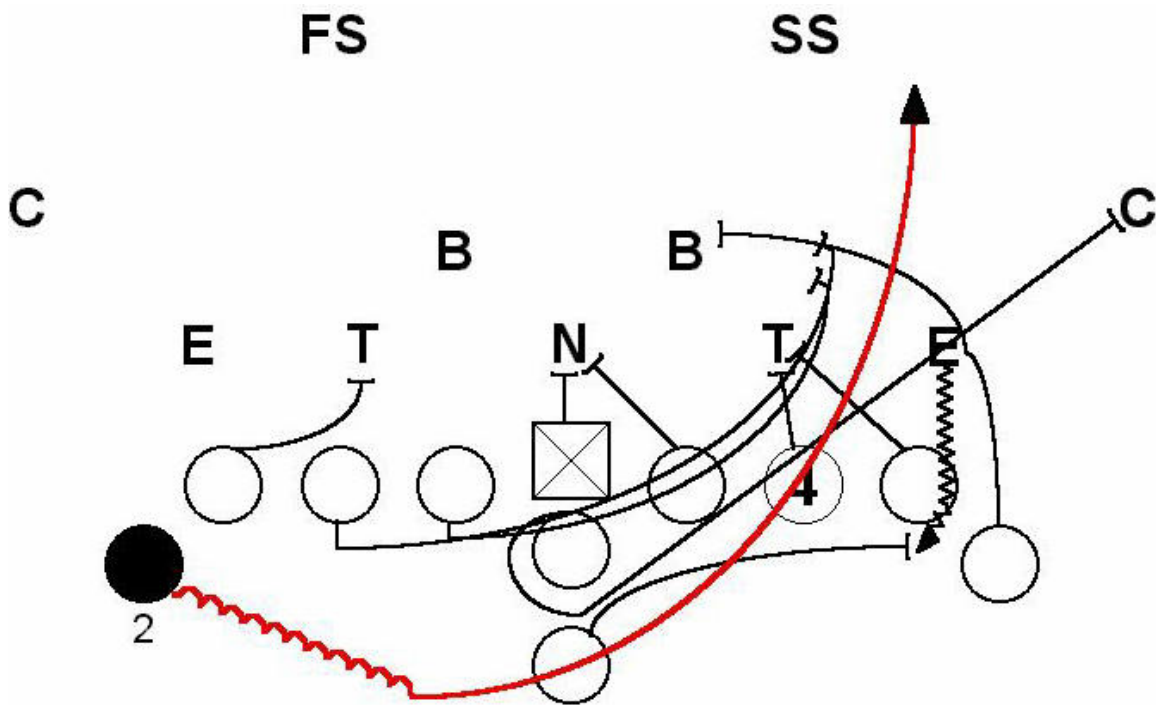
If you use SAB blocking, on all runs to the "2" and "4" holes, the WB always has a linebacker (passing through the "6" hole to get to him) and never a DT while the TE always has "nearest linebacker". Also, on counter plays (such as trap) you should use "trey" blocking and pull the LT. This is shown below:



For plays to the left, the left side of the line must use the "GOL" rule if your RG and HB collide.

THE “OFF TACKLE” PLAY

There are many ways to run “off tackle”. One of the most popular youth plays is the “Toss”. The “Toss” is a “Double Wing” play that usually uses the QB as a blocker. The “Toss” play as run by the Double Wing is shown below:

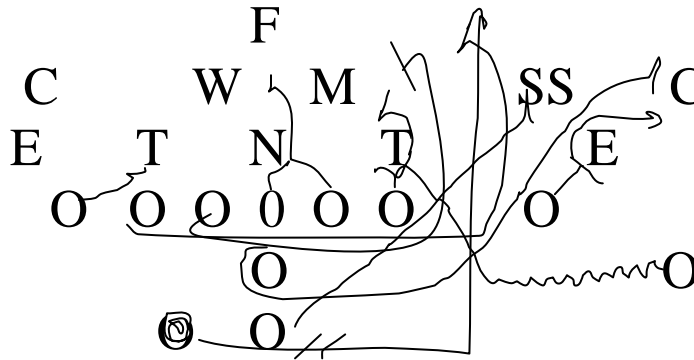


Our ability to run the same play has both advantages and disadvantages. The initial advantage is that we have a “bigger hole” to run through because our TE is split further out. The disadvantage is that the whole world knows we’re going to hit it.

To coach the “toss” play, lay down a tackling dummy in the place of the RG and RT and remove them from the offense. Set up as many defenders as you can, including a DT playside who has to go around the bag on the ground for the WB to track block. Our blocking is different from the above in that 1) We can pull either the SE or the LT and 2) Our WB has the TE’s blocking assignment shown above and 3) our TE has the WB’s blocking assignment shown above and the playside guard will “scrape hips”. These you can’t change. However, what changes is that you have three different ways to run this play. You don’t have to run any of them as there are other “off tackle” plays to choose from. But, if you choose to run one, rep it for at least an hour before your first game.

We need to be able run a play to the “6” hole if they don’t put a defender in it. The option offense attacks this automatically with the QB but, absent an option QB, we are forced to run a power play here. I got the idea for this particular play from watching another team scrimmage us. They were running a “Cover 1”, 5-2 Monster shown on the next page which was unbalanced towards our TE side. My game plan was to run away from the monster (SS below) and to the SE side but I also wanted to come up with a good play to the TE side that would encourage them to stay with the monster and not change to

something “new and different” that my kids (age 9) might not be so well prepared for. I came up with “Super, 36 Toss Sweep”:



You can also run this from “Wing On” and let the WB and RT drive the DT back.

A play like this makes it difficult for the defense to move the “monster” (SS) without giving up a “big gain”. The DE is stopped from “slanting” in the direction of the WB’s motion (As “monster defenses” want to do) by the TE blocking him. The TE will then turn him upfield and run a delay pass route outside for a HB pass. We are able to have the extra SS defender blocked because we are pulling two backside linemen (“Super”) to the playside with the LT blocking F and LG blocking M along with our WB who track blocks across the heels of the DT in front of our RT. The cues were applied as follows:

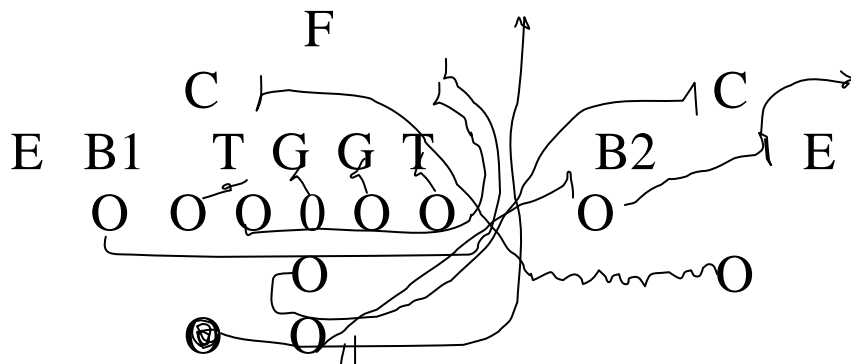
Super: This lined up our SE as a left TE ready to crab to let the LT pull to F on “toss” (One can also pull the LT instead of the SE.). You can pull the SE instead if you want.

Toss: QB will reverse pivot, pitch to TB and lead block on #1 outside DB (corner). This also pulls the LG. The QB should already be moving playside when he pitches.

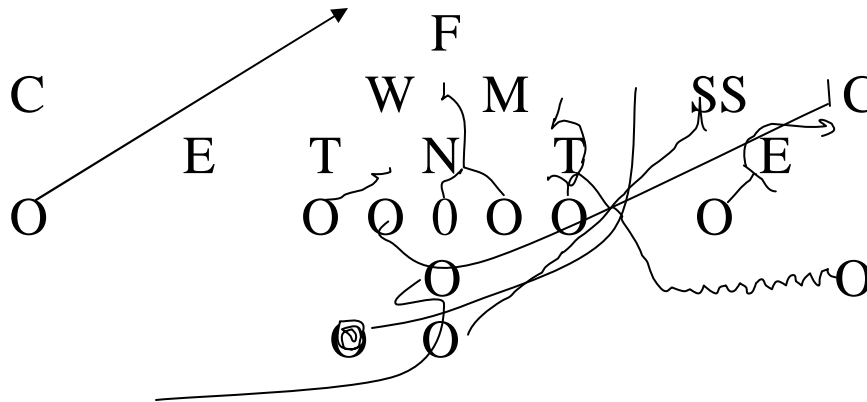
Sweep: The TE blocks out and the FB takes whoever is covering the TE.

The play is run from “mini” splits and the HB is often sliding sideways with the pitch to keep his shoulders square the “6” hole. You can have him put his on the QB’s back and following him through the hole if he has trouble finding holes.).

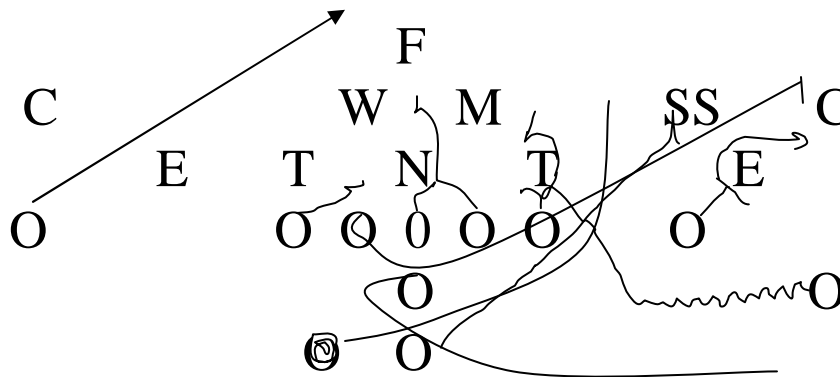
This play can be run against *any* defense provided your QB and LG can block their man. So, if you have the blockers, this is the way to go. Here it is again against Reed’s GAM:



There still remain two other ways to run "Toss". One is to have the QB "boot" back the other way. This is done when you have a "non-blocking" QB:



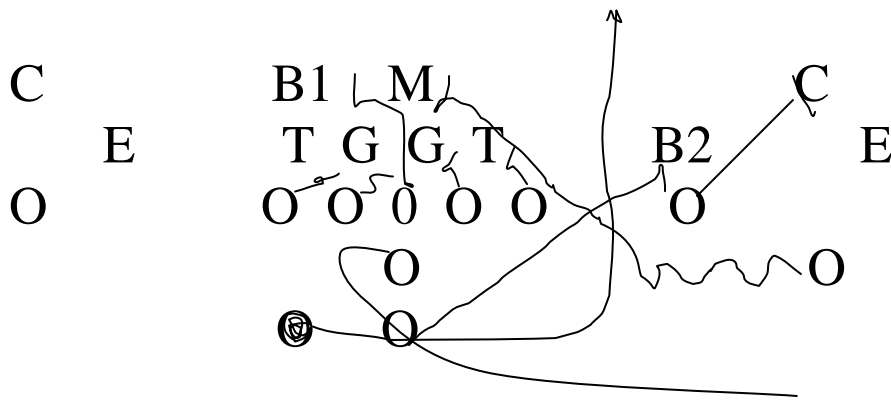
The QB "boots" the other way and posts the SE behind F to put him conflict. The drawback is we have lost the LT as a pulling blocker. If the QB is more of a passing threat, you would run it is like this:



This time the QB is rolling out playside instead of lead booting. It allows us to fake the same play and have the QB either throw the post to the SE or the delay to the TE or simply keep and sweep. This is my play of choice with a "non-blocking" QB. It can be run from "Super".

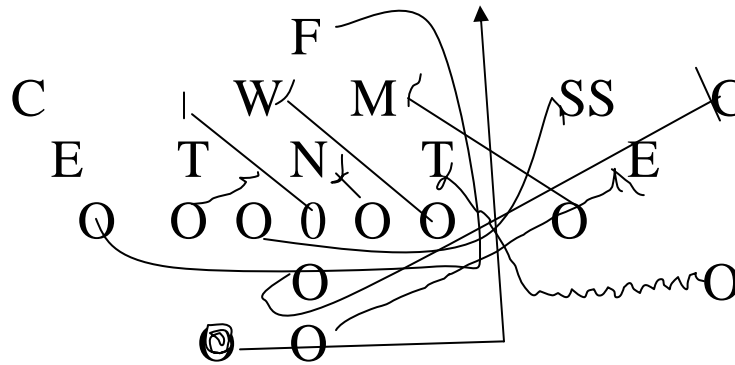
So we see that there are three different ways to run "toss" off tackle, depending upon how you want to use the QB (lead blocker, bootleg, or rollout). You don't teach all three different ways. You only teach one. The idea is to pick the one that best suits your QB's talent and that best resembles your other plays.

As previously mentioned, there are other ways to run off tackle besides "toss" and you should have two different ways to run it (One using "sweep" blocking and one that doesn't). You should run at least one of the following; "36 Power", "46 Quick On", "36 Cross", "36 Draw", and the very popular "Backs Over, 26 Power". These are faster hitting plays, simple to add, and allow you to hit off tackle a different way. Shown on the next page is "36 Power" versus a "bear crawling" GAM:



As can be seen, the DC Wing T can run “off tackle” pretty cleanly with just base blocking (The FB skipped blocking the DE as “too far out”). We always include the base system in our “off tackle” teaching because, in the end, it may actually work better.

The final way to run it is with SAB blocking. The call is “Super, 36 Power Toss”:



SAB blocking produces some very nice angles. The WB in motion will have an easy “crack” block, as will the TE. The QB is, once again, on #1 outside DB and the HB is, again, taking a toss pitch and sliding sideways to the hole.

Oddly enough, it is usually the rest of your offense that will score and not the off tackle play. Double Wing teams feature the “toss” as their primary play and a DW coach converting to DC Wing T would probably want to also (As it gives a bigger hole to run than the DW does.). Yet, in spite of the “bigger hole”, the DC Wing T does not get as many yards with this play as the DW does. There are two reasons for this. First, the defense can see the “nasty split”, and know it’s coming. They will often “pile up” their studs here. This becomes obvious when we run left with the FB and he just runs for yardage but we can’t make anything running right. Second, a Double Wing QB is primarily chosen for his ability to lead block on the corner (i.e. he’s big) whereas a DC Wing T QB is chosen for his ability to pass and is often a poor lead blocker (i.e. he’s small). We also have a WB primarily chosen for his speed and catching ability versus his blocking ability. Thus, a DC Wing T coach has to think through his blocking matchups when running “off tackle” and select the play offering the best matchups.

THE “WEDGE” PLAY

Until I ran the Double Wing I had never heard of a “wedge” play. Now I run it every game. A wedge is simply a wall of advancing linemen pushing on each other with a runner behind them. By the blockers pushing on each other they naturally protect their inside gaps, requiring the defense to either 1) Go around the wedging linemen to get to the runner 2) Push back and stop the wall from advancing or 3) “submarine” the blockers to cause them to fall down. I’ve had all three done to me and I still run the play. It’s that good. I have, however, made changes to the wedge from when I got it from the Double Wing. I created two different types of wedges – a wedge that’s designed to “break down” and a wedge that’s designed not to – and I use a different ball carrier (The QB).

The “collapsible” QB wedge: This wedge is run with very few blockers (5-6). The TE does not block on the wedge and neither do the backs. This wedge tends to advance about 3 yards before the defenders push back and stop it. At this point, the QB breaks out of the wedge (often to the TE side since the TE will “sweep” block the DE outside leaving the “nasty split” hole open.). If he can find a way out, he’ll run a long ways (40-60 yards) because the defense is all “piled up” in front of the wedge. I find a good QB tends to break out about one in every three plays. I tend to run this play on third and one. I either get a “first down” or a touchdown.

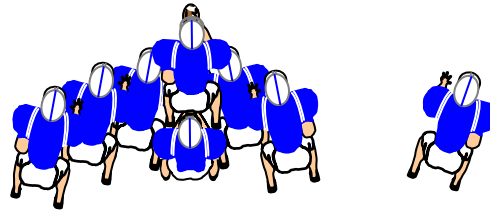
The “collapsible wedge” can also be run with pass plays. It is legal for the offensive line to push the defensive line 3 yards back on a pass play (i.e. the linemen can be downfield.). The DC Wing T throws its “quick slant” passes using this blocking.

The “power” wedge: This wedge is run with ten blockers. As such, it goes twice as far (Usually 6 yards) but is much harder for the QB to “break out” of (There are too many of his own players in the way.). The QB will break out of about one in six “power” wedge plays. The trade off for fewer “breakouts” is that the minimum gain is much greater. I tend to run this play when I’m inside my own 20 and have to “power” my way out for a “firstdown”, or on fourth down, or as an extra point play following a touchdown. Yet you can run it on “third and 10” too and have a 50-50 of getting the first down (Although the fans will think it was a terrible call if you don’t pick it up.). I often run this play as the first play of a game. It allows me to see how the play is going to do when I do need it and also gives me a chance to read how the defense is aligned and if it follows my WB in motion for my next call.

The Double Wing offense offers neither the “collapsible” nor the “power” wedge and runs the fullback instead of the QB. The Double Wing fullback does, indeed, tend to make more than the 3 yards the QB in the DC Wing T “collapsible” wedge does. One Double Wing team that kept stats averaged 8 yards per carry with its wedge. However, when you include the QB “pop outs”, the DC Wing T “collapsible” wedge has averaged 15 yards per carry for me and the “Power Wedge” averages about 13 - or almost twice as many yards as the Double Wing. I explain the difference in that my QB’s are smaller and faster runners than most fullbacks. Thus, when they “breakout” of the wedge they can not only do so using a smaller hole, but are harder to see, and then run faster into “open

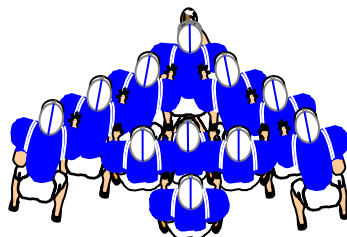
area” when they do. Finally, we have deliberately blocked a hole open between the TE and the FB for the QB to “pop” through which the Double Wing doesn’t do.

I usually spend about one hour coaching a wedge and then never coach it again all season. I’m sure that’s a mistake to do because I believe, if you spent more time on it, you could increase the base gain of the “power wedge” from 6 yards to 8-10. It’s potent enough that I’ve developed an entire “wedge offense” for Minimum Play Players using this simple blocking system. I very strongly recommend this play.



This is what a “QB Wedge” looks like moving downfield. The guards are pushing on the center and the tackles are pushing on the guards and the QB has the football. This wedge is being run from a “Super” call which lined the SE up as a TE. That’s why there is one more “wedging” lineman on the left side of the line than on the right. This is a “collapsible” wedge and the TE on the right is being deliberately kept off the wedge and is blocking his DE out, leaving a “breakout” lane open for the QB to the right. It will take a minimum of four defenders in front the wedge to stop or slow the wedge down. With two DE’s on the outside of the wedge and trying to get around it, that means at least six defenders are occupied when the QB “pops” outside to the right. Allowing for at least one defender to fall for the fake to the WB, which accompanies this play, and there are at most four, or fewer, defenders for the QB to beat for the score and they are all unaware that the QB is about to “pop out”.

Shown below is a “power wedge”:



The right TE has been added and the HB is behind the LG and the WB is behind the RG with the FB behind the QB (He has one hand on the back of the HB and one on the WB. It is illegal for him to have his hands on the back of the ball carrier.). This is a moving “mass of humanity” through which the defense is unable to reach the ball carrier in (When I first ran this play, my league voted to make it illegal but our Referee Association overruled them.). Obviously, the QB’s opportunities to “pop out” are much more limited but then so are the defense’s ability to stop the wedge from moving forward. Thus, it generally gets 6 yards. In fact, the power wedge generally moves forward until it falls

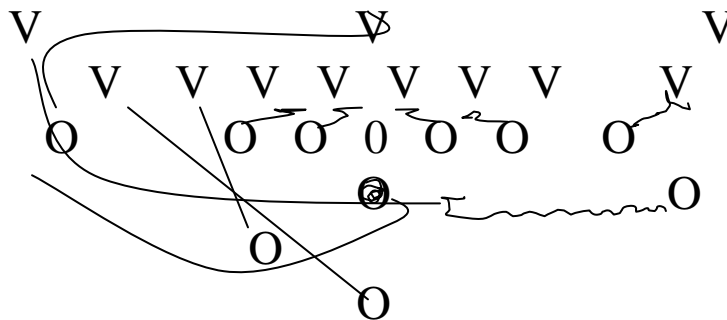
down (Feet get tangled up in such close quarters.) or it meets an equal mass of opposing humanity. It's very rare for the wedge to remain in formation for more than 10 yards (And this would require practice.). If anyone falls down the QB "pops out" at the point where this player fell off, so "pop outs" do occur.

The usual defensive response to a "power wedge" is to put a lot of bodies in front of it and "push back". Since we're pushing with ten that requires a sizeable defensive "mass" to counter. Defenders begin to hurl themselves at the wedge to try and "stand it up". If you ran the play enough they'd probably accomplish this. However, it actually works against the defense to try. This is because you should be mixing running the "QB wedge" with the "power wedge". The "QB wedge" is designed to collapse. If the defense "mass attacks" your collapsible wedge the same as it attacks your "power" wedge, your "QB wedge" will score because, as the defense attacks the wedge in mass and collapses it, the QB "pops out" and runs around the defensive mass of humanity piling up in front of our wedge. Thus, it is to your advantage to have both plays.

My experience is that, unless you have a Double Wing team in your league, the defense is not used to seeing wedge and, even if they are, they won't have faced either a "collapsible" wedge or a "power" wedge – Let alone both. Further, I don't run the plays enough for the defense to expect them (4-5 times a game total for both.).

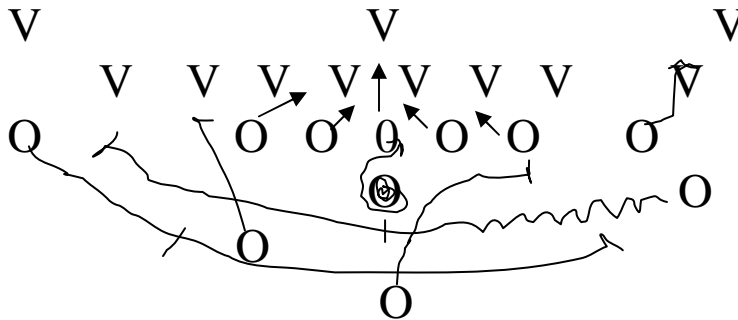
The DC Wing T contains an entire series of plays that use wedge blocking. I doubt that you'd want to use it as your only blocking system but it works well for "bobbleheads" and Minimum Play Players because it does not require talented blockers. Those plays follow:

"27 LEAD JET WEDGE"



QB follows the wedge for a step and then pulls out behind FB's lead block. The WB in motion *at full speed* is also lead blocking. QB must be fast in order to outrun the backside pursuit (But the play can also be run as "17 Jet Wedge" and the FB will block the backside). This play is based on the "QB Wedge" which has already been described and is shown on the next page with a detailed description of the line's blocking.

“QB WEDGE”



Line Spacing: Mini

Formation: Base, Super, Flip, Slot

Snap Count: 2

Line Coaching Points: On snap, EVERY offensive linemen steps with their near foot towards the center. This should be about a 6 inch step. The center drive blocks the defender in front of him or, if no nose guard, waits to feel the line push on him before he leads the wedge downfield..

The other linemen raise their INSIDE hand, palms up, and apply to the back of the next blocker inside them, close to the spine. Their outside hand goes on his near shoulder and their shoulder makes contact and presses against the near shoulder blade. Both hands and their shoulder should be in contact with the next blocker inside them. They now push that blocker downfield. It's as if someone just dropped a \$ 20 bill two feet in front of your center and everybody's trying to get to it. That's the angle the line is taking – but, in this case, they stay in formation.

Backfield Action: QB pivots right on snap, and faces his own goal posts. His elbows are tucked to his sides and the ball is held to his stomach, NOSE UP, until the WB passes. He DOES NOT EXTEND the ball for the fake handoff. AFTER THIS, he then crouches, completes the pivot, and gets behind the center, following him until the wedge ceases to advance or a “hole” opens up for him to “pop out” through.

The WB will count approximately 10 steps from the ball and go in rapid motion towards the QB on first “hut”. He will form a “pocket” for the ball as he approaches the QB, clamp his arms down as he passes to fake receiving a handoff, and then (Optional) put his left hand in the stomach of the SE as he passes. WB now blocks first wrong colored jersey he sees. All responsibility for fakes are the WB's and not the QB's.

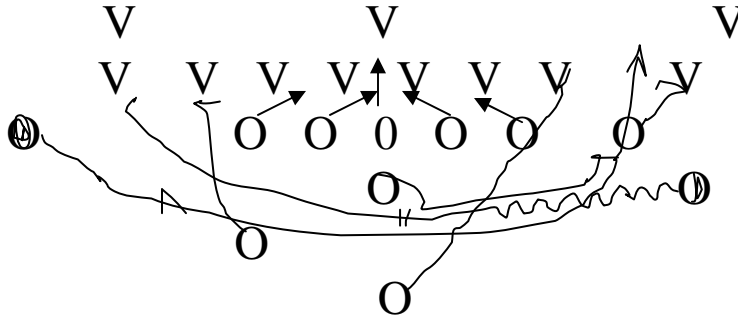
The SE fakes a reverse from the WB (Or he's on the wedge in a “Super” call).

The TE blocks and rides his DE outside (“Sweep”). You could add “Sweep” to the play call (“QB Wedge Sweep”) but I just let the TE memorize he “sweep” blocks on wedge plays except “Power Wedge”.

The backs divide. The HB picks up anyone coming around the left side of the wedge and the FB picks up anyone coming around the right side of the wedge.

Recommended Complimentary Play: “47 Speed” or “27 Lead Jet Wedge”

“REVERSE, 56 WEDGE SWEEP”



Line Spacing: Mini

Formation: Base

Snap Count: 2

Backfield action: QB stance is with right foot back. On snap, he pivots right, faces his own goal posts, hands to the WB, and then lead blocks through the “6” hole.

The TE rides the DE outside (“Sweep”).

The backs divide. The HB has anyone coming around the left hand side of the wedge and the FB has anyone coming around the right side of the wedge.

The SE comes around the outside of the WB, 2 yards deeper than the QB, and takes the handoff, going inside the TE’s block (or outside if necessary).

The WB gets one extra yard deep after taking the handoff from the QB. He can forward lateral the ball to the SE if the DE tries to tackle him before the handoff point.

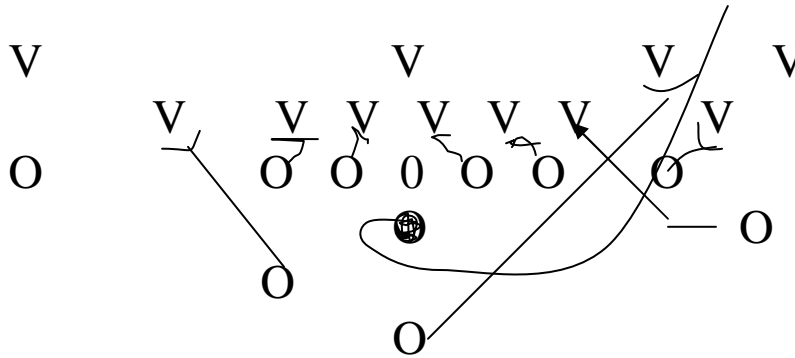
My 2005 SE who ran this play for me, scored seven times on the eight times he ran it. This is a “be sure and include” play.

Recommended Complimentary Play: “47 Speed” or “27 Lead Jet Wedge”

“50 Wedge Reverse”

Exact same play as above except the SE doesn’t run the “6” hole, but gets behind the center and follows the Wedge – but can still “pop out” to the “6”. The QB still lead blocks through the “6” hole. The complimentary play is “Reverse Wedge Pass to the QB”.

“26 Lead Wedge”



Formations: Base, Super, Slot, FB Over, FB On

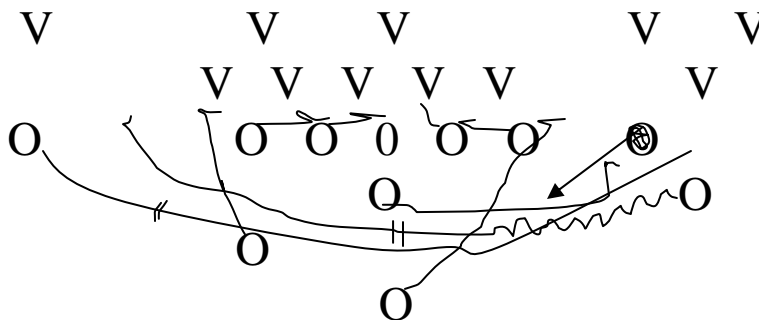
WB: Track block to seal outside edge of wedge

FB: Lead Block

QB: Put your left hand on center's back and follow him for 3 steps, then break to the "6" hole (Optional: Have him follow center watching the nearest linebacker. As soon as he comes forward to stop the wedge, then run the "6". Note: If this works for you, you can train QB to do this on "QB Wedge" also.).

Can be also be run with "Swap Out".

“67 WEDGE DOUBLE REVERSE”

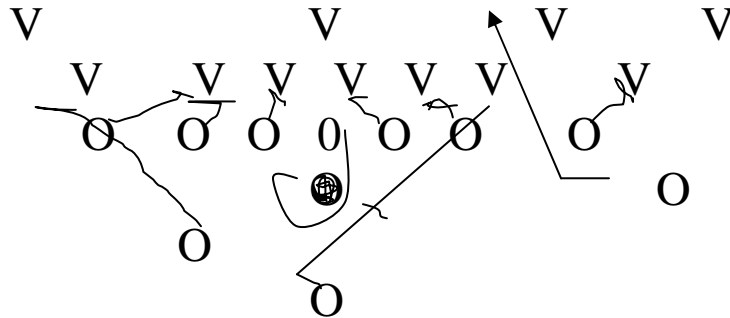


QB turns and hands off to the WB and then blocks the DE for the TE. The WB hands off to the SE, who will be on his outside shoulder. The SE, in turn, hands off to the TE, on his inside shoulder, who uses the WB as his lead blocker.

Complimentary play: 47 Speed, "56 Wedge Reverse", "Wedge Pass to the QB".

We can also run "counters" from the wedge. These are shown on the next page:

QB COUNTER WEDGE



Line Spacing: Mini

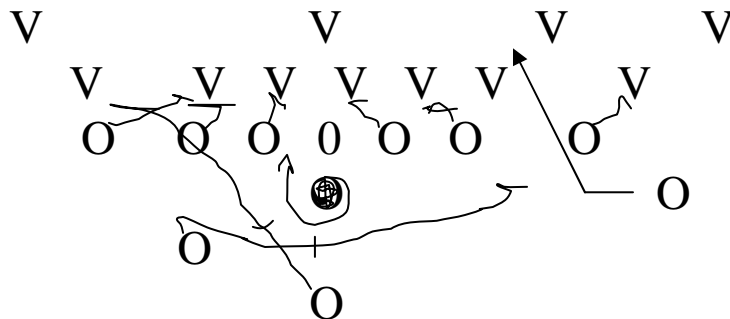
Formation: Base, Super

Snap Count: 2

Backfield Action: Same as “Counter”. The FB is responsible for executing the fake handoff and not the QB. He does this by coming as close to the QB as possible. The QB extends ball towards the HB as he pivots left, tucks ball to his stomach NOSE UP. With elbows tucked to his side, he continues to pivot, allows the FB to come by him, stops, turns his head left to follow the FB (“head fake”) and then continues to pivot left to get behind the center.

WB: Track block

“SUPER BUCK WEDGE SWEEP”



Line Spacing: Mini

Formation: Base, Super

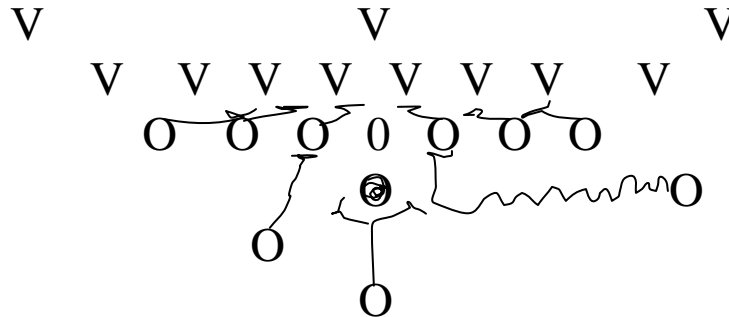
Snap Count: 2

Backfield Action: Same as “Buck”. QB fakes to FB with open right hand. Hold ball on left hip with left hand as HB executes fake.

HB and FB block outside.

TE sweep blocks DE. WB track blocks .

“SUPER POWER WEDGE”



A “Power Wedge” adds more blockers to our “QB Wedge”. The offensive line wedges as before but now the HB gets behind the LG while the WB motions to get behind the RG. Both will put their center side hand on the center side of the guard shoulder in front of them, and push him upfield. Their outside hand can go on the near shoulder of the tackle (or both hands on the guard). The FB comes straight forward, places his left hand on the HB’s back and his right hand on the WB’s back and follows the play. It is illegal for anyone to have their hands on the QB’s back. I like to play my HB and FB one step closer to the line for this play. They can also line up one step closer on “47 Speed”. **A “power” wedge is the only “wedge” play the TE joins the wedge on.**

Here are the basic things we look for:

- 1) Center fires out. If a NT is head up he explodes into him low and drives him back. Knees high. If no man is head up he aims for the next man directly in front of him or downfield but waits until he feels contact and drive from our guards pushing.
- 2) All of the line men not at the apex must slide their inside foot as they stay low and get their inside shoulder into the ribcage of the inside man and then drive upward with high knees. The slide is the key. If they don't first slide and then move upward they will not mesh. We tell them that the ends of the line should collapse into the back of the center as the wedge moves forward.
- 3) We tell our lineman to use the outside hand to leverage defenders. Meaning as they move inside they use their outside hand to make contact on a defender and push themselves inward. This does two things for us; it allows the line to mask off defenders as they wedge forms and it uses the defenders force of movement into the line to speed up the meshing process. We stress high knees.
- 4) We tell our QB in the wedge he has to mesh with the center's back. He has to get a shoulder into the center's back and push the center as well. That instantly puts four blockers essentially on one defender as the rest of the wedge forms.

“27 Power Wedge”

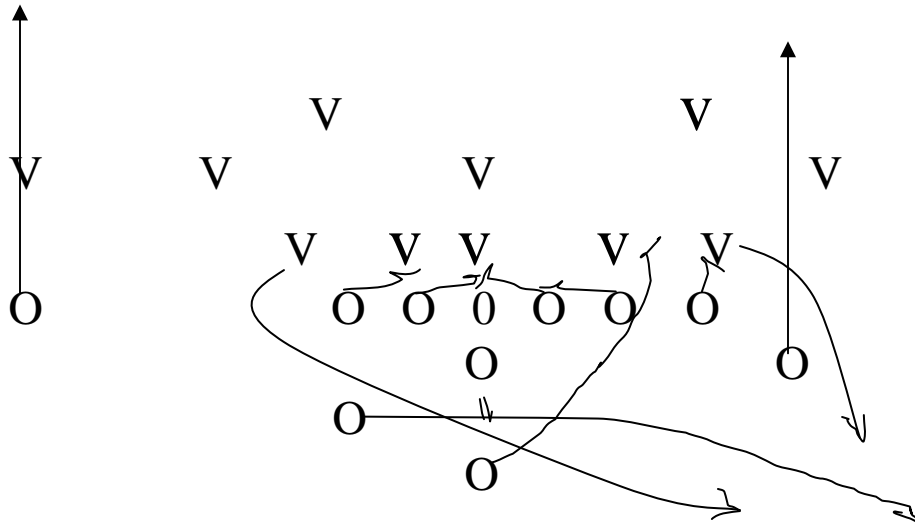
Everyone gets on the “power wedge” except the FB who takes one step forward and stops. QB follows the wedge for 3-4 steps or until it stops, whichever comes first. He then stops, turns, and pitches back to the FB, pitching one yard to the outside of the FB (FB’s left) to let him catch it on the move. FB does not move left until the ball leaves the QB’s hands. It is also known as “Power Wedge Flea Flicker”.

WEDGE SCREENS

You can also throw screen passes using wedge blocking. Screen passes are thrown to receivers behind the LOS, making it legal for the linemen to be downfield. They’re simply “long handoffs”.

On a wedge screen, the receiver catches the ball right behind the center, or right where the normally QB stands. In fact, he can be the receiver as shown below.

HB WEDGE SCREEN ZERO OPEN



This screen is a very good complimentary play to a halfback run. The HB sweeps right as the line wedges, then turns and throws back to the QB once the backside DE clears the QB. This can also be run with “rocket” motion by the HB or as a sideways pass to the SE who then passes back to the QB.

Screens usually work best at age 12 and up.

WEDGE PASSING

Just as we can throw screen passes using wedge blocking, we can also throw regular passes downfield using wedge blocking. This is because the line can be legally downfield 3 yards on a pass play if in contact with a defender. Thus, the wedge can move 3 yards downfield on a pass play which happens to be the very distance the “collapsible” wedge normally goes anyway. Hence, from our normal formation we can throw to all our receivers while the line wedges (If you’re concerned with the line getting too far down field, have the center deliberately fall down on his third step. This will stop the entire wedge.).

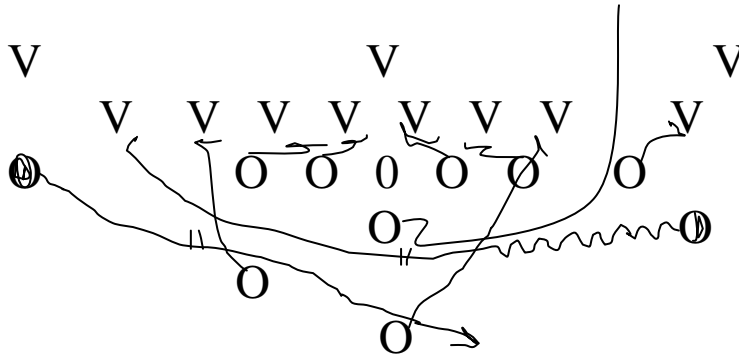
“Wedge” passes are “quick slants” to the SE, TE, or WB in motion (or the HB in “freeze” motion or in “slot”) but make sure your SE is far enough out that the pass won’t be intercepted by an inside LBer. The most “open” receiver is always the WB running a slant through the “6” hole from motion. These are very effective passes against teams that play few defensive backs such as “Cover 0” (zero deep defenders) or six down linemen. The QB takes the snap, straightens up, and throws fast to the called receiver. The QB **does not drop back even one step!!!**

The receiver is normally 2 yards downfield (4 yards for the WB in motion) releasing at 45 degree angle to the inside when the QB throws to him and will usually get about 5 yards on the play or a TD. There are five advantages to it. First, it’s easy to complete. Second, if the other team is in “Cover 0” the receiver *can go all the way*. Third, if the defense is blitzing, the receiver *can go all the way*. Fourth, we have “trick plays” off it in which the receiver *can go all the way*. Fifth, if you throw it from the “Trips” formation, you can spread the defense and throw to the FB. Also, throwing this as an extra point play is very demoralizing to the defense. It looks ridiculously simple – And it is since almost all goal line defenses are “Cover 0”. The receiver goes in, standing up, and with no one on him. The defense is trying to rally its moral after giving up the TD by trying to stop the extra point. **To just “walk” into the endzone is humiliating to the defense.**

To call a “quick slant” to a receiver, simply call “Wedge pass to the...SE/WB/TE” (If in “Trips” formation, you can call to the FB and HB as well.). If the receiver is covered, the QB just keeps and follows the wedge for a good yard gain.

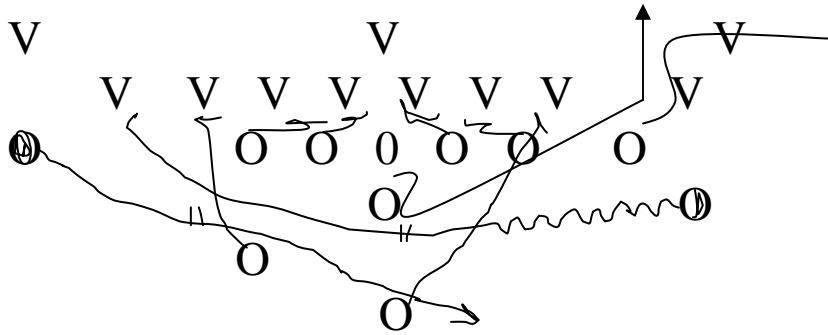
If the defense is massing to stop the wedge so it won’t go three yards, we can call a slower developing pass play. On these plays we use the SE as the thrower. They are shown on the next page.

“REVERSE WEDGE PASS TO THE QB”



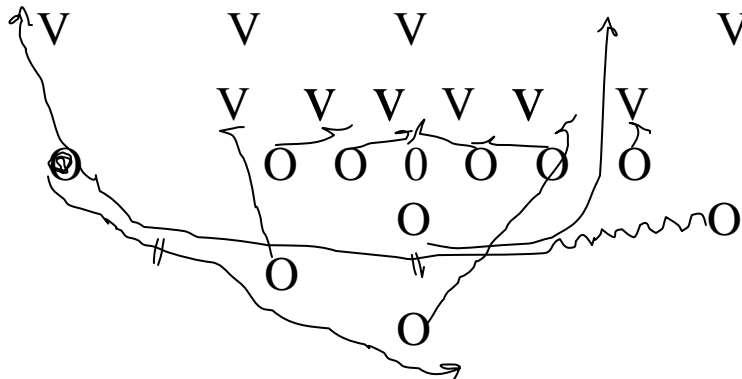
The SE takes the reverse hand off and throws to the QB. Good complimentary play to “56 Wedge Reverse”. Most youth defenses do not assign coverage to the QB.

“REVERSE WEDGE PASS TO DELAY TE”



Same play as above. The TE delay blocks the DE and then slips out into the flats. He should hold his block for 3 seconds. If they have coverage on the QB, the TE will be open.

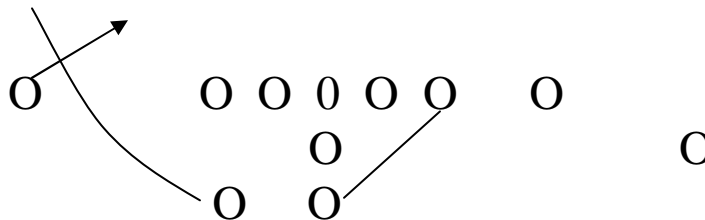
“REVERSE WEDGE PASS TO THE WB”



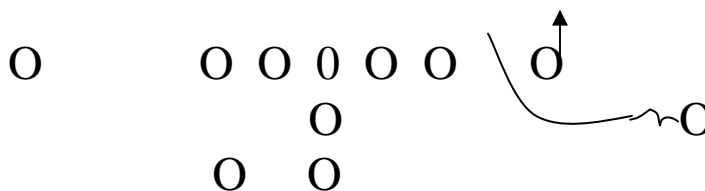
This time, the SE pulls up and throws back to the WB, who handed him the ball on the reverse. Notice, the defense is massed to stop the wedge. This prevents the wedge from getting more than 3 yards downfield. Remember! You can also teach your center to drop to his knees after three steps on a wedge pass. This also keeps the wedge from getting too far downfield.

Notice, that on all wedge passes either the QB is throwing quick slants (wedge pass to...) or the SE is throwing downfield ("Reverse wedge pass to..."). Notice also that, if you have "Reverse 56 Wedge" the defense will leave all three receivers uncovered at least once for each of the first times you throw each pass. Thus, all three plays can score and all can be thrown in the same game. This is important because, allowing for one missed pass and/or dropped ball, not only should you score twice but all three of these "reverse passes" are actually just one play with three different receivers (The blocking doesn't change, the receiver routes don't change, and the thrower doesn't change.). They're extremely easy to teach and extremely difficult for the defense to cover. Check them again and see if I'm not right. Failure to include the "Reverse Wedge Pass" is the same thing as subtracting 7 points off your end of the scoreboard. Just because a play is simple and produces easy (i.e. cheap) touchdowns does not mean we should not include it. It is very common to find an SE who can throw – no matter how little he is. By adopting this play you accomplish two things. You put 7 points on the board and you send a little kid home after the game who had the fun of throwing it and who, on any other youth team, would have been a "wasted" player.

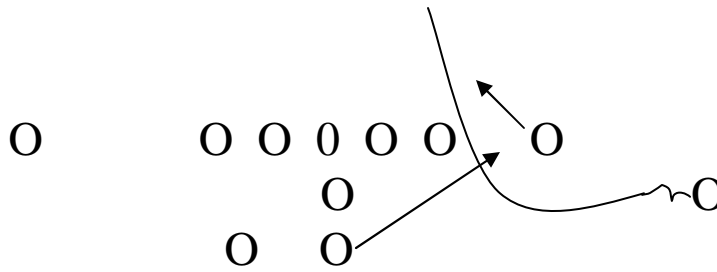
We also have the three "trick plays". Here they are:



This is the "Wedge Pass to the SE with Lateral". After catching the slant pass, the SE laterals back to the HB coming behind him. It will score about 50% of the time. Here's the same play thrown to the WB on the other side ("Wedge Pass to the WB with Lateral"), with the WB lateraling back to the TE. The TE does not move out of his stance until he sees the ball hit the WB's hands.



Here's the same play again, only now thrown to the TE who laterals back to the FB ("Wedge Pass to the TE with Lateral").



Again, this is a very simple throw to make and yet very difficult to defend the first time. And, again, all three “trick” plays work the same and all three can, and probably will, score.

In all, the “wedge series” of the DC Wing T offers eight possible touchdown plays, two short yardage plays, quick passes, and other running plays which all use the exact same blocking that can be effectively taught to the line in about one hour. Training the line to wedge is included in the drill section.

Notice, there is a touchdown play to *all six* eligible backs. The goal is not only to score but to include all the players in the scoring. When all six eligibles can score, we’re not only maximizing player fun but maximizing our offensive weaponry.

The DC Wing T also tends to score very quickly. This is because it passes so well (Six of the eight possible touchdown wedge plays are passes.).

THE “JAILBREAK”

A “jailbreak” is similar to a wedge but sends all five offensive linemen at the nearest linebacker (including the TE, SE, and WB if not ball carriers). The first step of the linemen is towards the center before heading upfield (Causing the defensive linemen to take an outside rush around them.). The defensive linemen are all left unblocked except the two nearest the QB who are blocked by the HB and FB. You can move the HB and FB up to block them or move the QB back for an indirect snap.

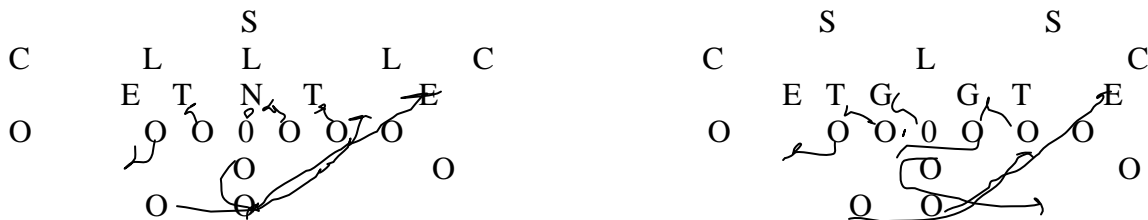
You can run the ball with a QB sneak (“10 Jailbreak”) or handoff to the WB in motion (“Quick 40 Jailbreak”). Or you can have the QB drop back and throw a screen to either the SE (“50 Jailbreak Screen”), the TE (“60 Jailbreak Screen”), or the WB (“40 Jailbreak Screen”). These screens are thrown to where the center was.

“Jailbreaks” are best run against even fronts as it is easier for the center to get downfield and because all five linemen are likely to block the middle linebacker (forming a “downfield” wedge). The line is told they are “breaking out of jail” and the middle linebacker is the “jailer” which helps them remember the play. Any age can “jailbreak”.

Defenses that have their defensive linemen “bear crawl” are susceptible to “10 or 40 Jailbreak”.

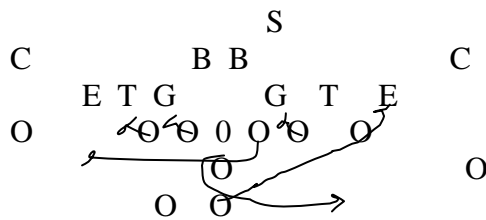
PASS BLOCKING:

To save time and teaching, our linemen use run blocks on all our pass plays. The splits from tackle to tackle are foot to foot (“mini”). The FB and one running back are kept in as pass blockers. The linemen listen for the play direction in the huddle and block in the opposite direction of the call. They look to either block the defender in front of the man next to him in the opposite direction of the call or, if no one there, to block whoever is in front of them while checking for an inside blitz. Whenever possible, the guards are to help the center rather than block straight ahead. The backfield runs in the direction called and the QB fakes a handoff to the second back and then rolls out behind the DE’s block. Some examples of “Pass Right” are shown below.

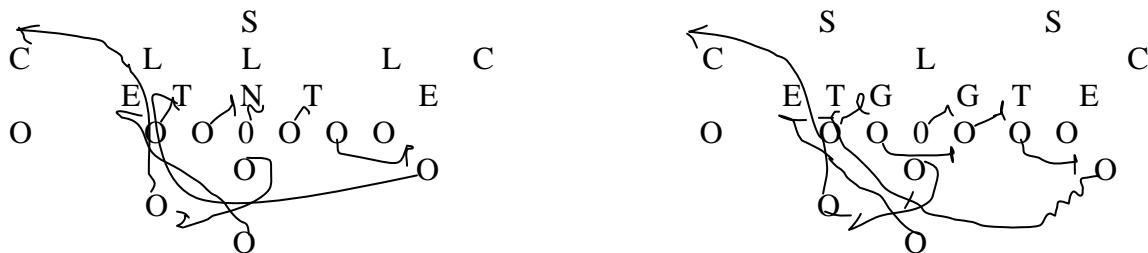


The OT on the backside must take a bucket step backwards with outside foot to make his block on the DE outside him. The FB always blocks the DE on the side called. The HB picks up any blitz inside him or the defender over the right tackle (RT). In the pass block example on the right, the right guard is helping the center. He does so by stepping behind the center and taking the first wrong colored jersey he sees. However, he would first check for a blitzing linebacker coming through his inside gap before doing so.

Here, against a “wide tackle 6” the right guard finds himself taking the backside DE:



Examples of “Pass Left” are shown below.



Here the fake handoff is to the WB who blocks anyone over, or outside, the LT.

THROWING THE TIMING PATTERN

A “timing pattern” involves a QB throwing, not to a receiver, but to a specific area on the field. The concept is very simple. First, find a receiver that can catch the #3 (post) pass. Once you have determined which of your receivers can catch this pass, you are now ready for the next step, timing the QB up to the receiver. This is done with five cones. The QB is told to make his fake hand off and roll out to the designated side, pull up, *close his eyes*, and, *without hesitation*, throw downfield in the *general area* of #3. The coach counts aloud, “One Monkey, Two Monkeys, Three Monkeys, Four”, which is 3 seconds. The QB must have put the ball in the air on “Four”. The receiver does not go downfield to catch this pass. Instead, the ball is allowed to hit the ground and a cone is placed to mark where the ball landed. Repeat five times. You should now have five cones downfield marking where each pass fell. The five cones mark the QB’s throwing pattern. Now find the centermost cone and remove the other four of the cones. This cone marks the most likely spot the ball will come down at on an “area throw”.

Now take the desired receiver and have him run for the cone as the QB rolls out and, again, with eyes closed, throws for the cone (I usually don’t tell the QB that the receiver is trying to catch the pass, but only to bring it back. Telling the QB that the receiver is going to try and catch the pass can cause him to stop throwing “blind” and try and hit him.). If the QB’s pass overthrows the receiver, add one more step to depth of the QB’s rollout. If he still overthrows, move the cone one yard further downfield. You should connect at this point. If the QB underthrows the receiver, subtract one step from his drop back depth, and try again. If he still underthrows, move the cone one yard closer. It is up to the receiver to memorize the angle of his release and catching point.

The concept here is that it’s easier to match the receiver up to where the ball comes down than it is to match the QB up to where the receiver is. This system works perfect 50% of the time. Unfortunately, I have had two QB’s who failed to “link up” with the post receiver by a matter of inches (The ball usually hitting the outstretched hands of the receiver, but just being too far for him to gather it in.). This happens. If it does, then you must change the height of the QB’s throw. We do this by placing him in the endzone and making him throw over the top of the goal post upright bar, and then starting all over with five cones again. If the QB’s angle of throw is already above the uprights, make him throw below them. This will change the QB’s distance.

Another advantage to an “area” throw is that it makes it very difficult for a free safety to read the QB’s eyes when the QB is throwing *blind*.

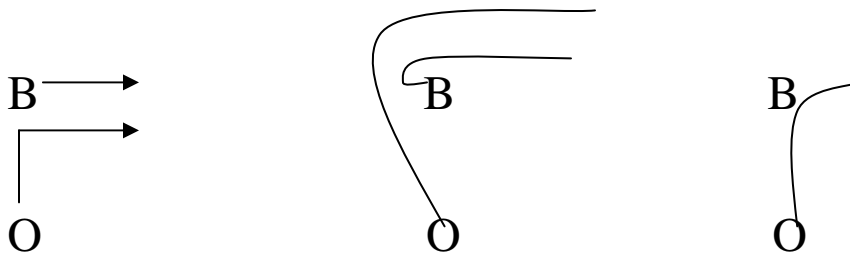
One of my QB coaches (Who played for Stanford) taught me that, if a right handed QB “kariokie”(cross over) steps left on a “Pass Left” (Rather than just runs left), he will be more accurate and have more power on his pass on throws to that side because his shoulders will be “square” to the goal posts. The reverse is true of a left handed QB rolling right (He would also Kariokie step.). This coach had to demonstrate this to me on four different occasions before it finally got through my thick head that it works.

This “kariokie” step may not be necessary for your QB to learn. Many right handed QB’s throw well enough to their left as to make this unnecessary. However, if your QB

can roll out and throw well to one side of the field but not the other, this is the solution to employ. This would apply for ages 10 and up.

The “Theft” Pass: This is a remarkably simple pass. The QB deliberately throws right at the “farthest, deepest” defender, throwing a perfect INTERCEPTION. The called receiver crosses in front of the defender and “steals” the interception (“Theft”). You can “theft” pass any youth defensive back because he hasn’t been taught to intercept the ball at its highest point. Instead, the RECEIVER is taught to catch the ball at its highest point. The defender will ALWAYS stand there and wait for the ball to come to him while the receiver crosses in front of him. This pass is so simple its pure genius.

The Tight End’s Pass Release: The TE has the most difficult pass release for his #1 route. If he comes three steps straight out and cuts outside, whoever has him will think “Pass!” This situation for a TE is shown below against a linebacker (B), three different ways, for “Pass Right #1 Open”:



Draw Release

Turnaround Pass Release

Blocking Pass Release

In the “Draw” release, the TE has cut 90 degrees to his right in front of the linebacker, requiring an equal, 90 degree, turn by the linebacker to cover him. But, in the “turnaround pass release”, the TE has executed his 90 degree cut *behind the linebacker*, requiring a 270 degree turn by the linebacker to match him. This is known as “turning a defender around” because the defender always loses. It takes him three times as long to turn 270 degrees as it does the TE to turn 90 degrees. In the “blocking pass release” the TE has put his left shoulderpad into the linebacker’s stomach, DRILLED HIM with the intent of knocking him down, and then turned outside.

The DC Wing T uses all three of these releases. If the TE hears the cue “DRAW” in the huddle, he’ll use the “draw” release. This is actually used on running plays to run the LBer off. On a real pass, he’ll use either the “turn around” release or the “blocking” release, depending upon his size, speed, hands, and the QB’s accuracy. If he can knock the LBer down the TE is open and the throw is short. We can use this release because the QB is trained not to throw for 3 seconds, plenty of time for the TE to legally make the hit and then release before the ball is in the air. The “turnaround” release is used where our TE can’t knock down the linebacker but the QB can hit him on the “out” route.

“Draw” plays are another way to place a defender in conflict. If the linebacker covers the TE on the draw, the run to the “6” hole is open. If the linebacker lets the TE go and covers the run, the TE is open on “Pass Right #1 Open”. Thus, no matter what the linebacker does, he’s wrong. We usually use “draw” plays against a linebacker who is too good for our TE to block.

The HB can be taught these same identical releases for plays to the left. He can cut in front of the linebacker on a “Draw” call or use “turnaround” or “block release” to get open on “Pass Left #1 Open”. It’s exactly the same principal our TE uses.

Unlike most offenses that use a “passing tree”, the DC Wing T uses a “passing umbrella”. If we connected “the dots” of our receiver positions in a diagram, the result would look like an umbrella. This “curve” is intended to make all the QB’s throws as close to “equal distance” as possible. A pass to “#3 open” is about 14-17 yards max. A pass to “# 2 Open” is also about 14-17 yards and a pass to “# 1 Open” is about 10 yards, assuming the QB is throwing from 4 yards behind the LOS. So, either the distance for every throw is the same (14-17 yards) – or it’s shorter and easier. We want to continually rep our QB for the same repetitive distance of pass. Distance is a variable. When you reduce the variables you reduce the difficulty of the QB’s job.

The designed routes also include the more advanced concept of “clearing patterns”. This is where one receiver opens an area for another receiver. On “Pass Right”, the best example is the TE running #1 and the WB running #2. No matter whom the corner “jumps” on the other receiver is open. A huge hole opens up between the TE and WB. I have completed so many “Pass Right #2 Open” passes that I can’t even count them. But I can say this. *Not a single one has ever been intercepted.* Other coaches have had similar success with the TE coming open.

On “Pass Left”, #2 also comes open, but for a different reason. The corner on this side is in conflict. Should he cover the SE who is track blocking a safety, or play the run? Since we pass 20% of the time (one in five plays) he’ll be right 80% of the time if he lets the SE go and plays the run. So he lets him go and the SE breaks off his track block route and onto this curl route and gets behind the corner. I’ve been coaching seventeen years and have yet to throw an interception on “Pass Left #2 Open” either. The corner isn’t there and he’ll never be there because, if he was, he’d be wrong 80% of the time. The corner is not stupid. If he plays the run, he’ll be right 80% of the time. Given this, they all choose to play the run.

We still haven’t touched on the “Throwback” pass, one of the most deadly passes in the DC Wing T arsenal. We won’t cover the passing game in detail until we have presented the running plays (And there are over fifty of them.). This is because our pass plays are designed to look like our running plays and so it makes more sense to present the running plays first. So a lot of pages are about to go by with no more mention of passing. But we will get back to it.

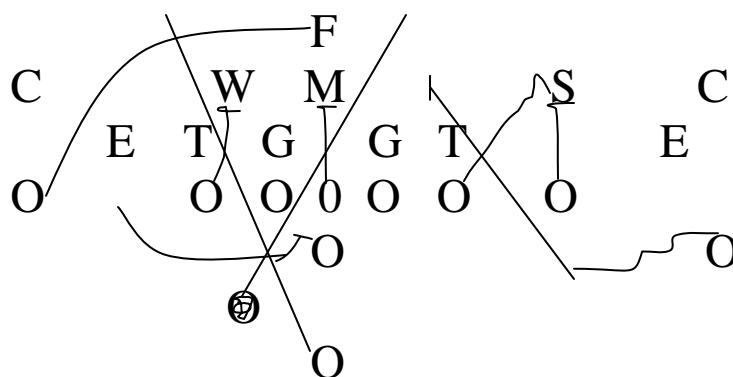
For now, I leave you with the following advice on passing: Never teach your QB to pump fake *while standing*. He’s going down if you do. He only “pump fakes” on the run.

The running game is next. We will begin with the “Quick Hit”. The “quick hit”, like the DC Wing T “QB outside belly play”, is no longer seen in football. However, in 1947 and 1948, Army’s national championship team made more yards running the “quick hit” than they made with all their other plays *combined*.

And it is one of the simplest plays in all of football. That’s next.

THE QUICK HIT

“Quick hits” were developed back in the early days of “T” football and is the primary reason the QB was moved up under the center. A “quick hit” is any play in which the ball is quickly delivered to a runner moving in either in an east/west or north/south direction. The original “north/south” quick hit was a dive play while the east/west play was the “quick pitch”. In either play, the QB quickly gets the ball away to a fast moving back. The reliance of the play isn’t on deception or power. It’s on SPEED. It was the biggest yardage gaining play in the nation in the late 40’s and became the basis of the *Houston veer* attack in the late the late 50’s through 70’s. The HB was the “T’s” ball carrier in all “quick hits”. This was because he was perfectly positioned to get the ball *fast*. Shown below is example of a “Quick Hit”. It’s a play developed by Bobby Dodd (Record: 165-64-8 (.713), 22 years).



The HB is running the “Quick Hit” and the line is simply blocking straight ahead, often with a “crab” block by the guards. If the linemen can block their man for one second, the HB is by. The QB has only to turn to his left to give to the HB, who runs right at the LG. Since the HB is only 3 steps back, he hits the hole fast. It happens so fast that there’s not even time for the QB to reverse pivot. He just takes the snap, turns, and the HB’s already there. The play shown is called “30 Quick Trap” with “Quick” telling the QB to skip his reverse pivot and “Trap” telling the tackles totake “nearest LBer”. In the old days, F was blocked by the LT (with FB taking the DT) and the HB would cut back into the middle of the field for the score. This worked well against deep playing free safeties. In youth ball, this depth of safety play is rare so this cutback block would probably be skipped. But the play still goes for a long ways because F has a tendency to step towards W and our SE or WB may block him.

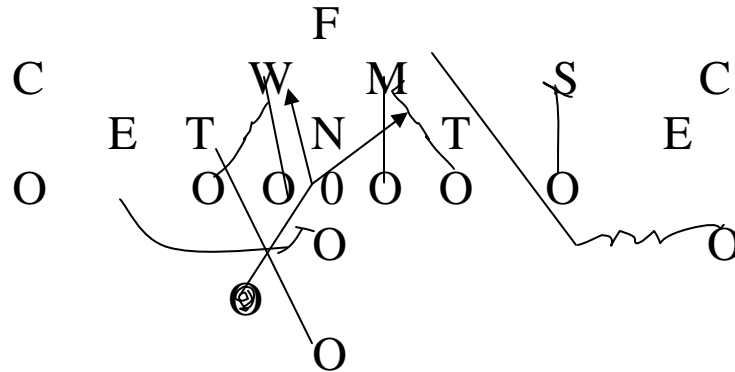
One of the advantages of the “quick hit” is that it forces the defense to react fast to the play. The defender only has one second to beat his blocker so if he waits to see if the HB gets the ball or not, the HB is already by. The defense has to begin looking for the HB to get the ball. The moment they do, Bobby Dodd would call the next play in the series, “Fake 31 Quick, 23 Cross”. This gives the ball to the FB in the “3” hole with “Cross” telling the LT and LG to cross block. If the defenders W and F both jump on the HB who

comes through pretending he has the ball the FB scores. Indeed! W will get in M's way on the play.

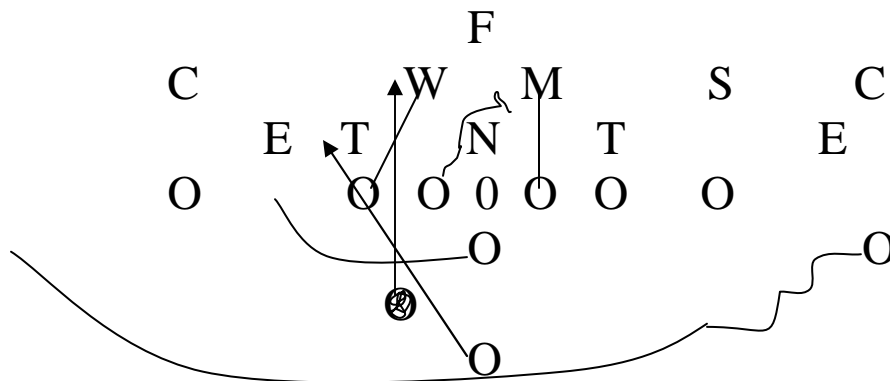
In the third play of the series, the LG pulls and kicks out the DE on the left and the HB blocks the DG in front of the LG. The FB goes through the "3" hole and blocks W. The QB now fakes both handoffs and runs the "5" hole. The play call is "Quick 15 Left Kick" with "left" telling the LG to pull and kick and for the FB and WB to go left. If the FS tries to tackle the QB, he pitches to the trailing WB.

The final play of the series is "Quick 47 Option Left". This is exactly the same as the last play only the LG has been told not to "kick". Instead, he'll pull up through the the "5" hole and block the FS and let the QB option the DE (Who is now assumed to be crashing to stop the "15" play.). The WB is now running down the field with the ball. Bowden went 31-6 running this offense.

Against an odd front, the base action looked like this (The call is "30 Quick Trap"):



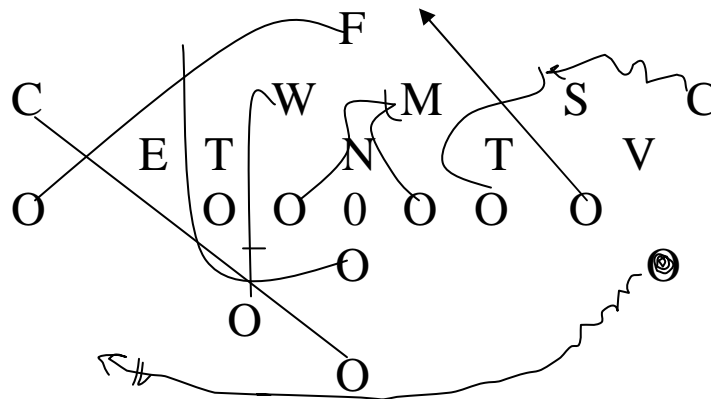
The HB simply cut the opposite direction the nose guard tried to pass the center on. But this is a more difficult teach for the HB (I have not tried to teach it) and so, against odd fronts, I believe the play should be run like this:



The play shown is "33 Quick Trap". The QB takes one step left with his right foot and holds the ball out in front of the "3" hole. By this time, the HB is on his third step and, once again, coming through the line at speed and hitting an open hole. In 1982, *Washington State University* ran this play over and over again on the nation's #1

Washington Huskies and beat them in a major upset which knocked the Huskies out of the Rose Bowl and a national title.

The complimentary play is, again, option:



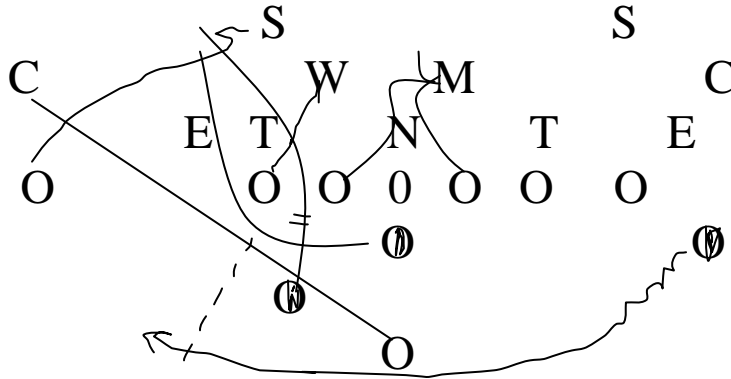
The play call is “Fake 33, 47 Option”. We are now base blocking. This has put the LG on M, and he is going “hip to hip” with N to keep him from “sliding down” the line. Combined with the RG, we have a double team on M. W is taken out of the play by the fake handoff (Make sure your HB forms a pocket for the ball). The SE is blocking “nearest deepest defender” and the FB has continued on his “counter step” path and has blocked the corner out, creating a cross block on C and F. The QB fakes the quick hit and options the DE. If the DE takes the QB, he pitches to the WB. If the DE takes the WB, the QB keeps upfield between the cross blocked C and F.

The “option” play *is only run* if the DT on the left starts slanting inside on the snap to try and stop the “33 Quick On”. Otherwise, this offense just keeps “quick hitting” its way down the field while waiting for either the DT to slant in or the NG to slide down. The idea is to run as little option as possible.

The “33 Quick” can be run from either normal splits or from a “maxi” call.

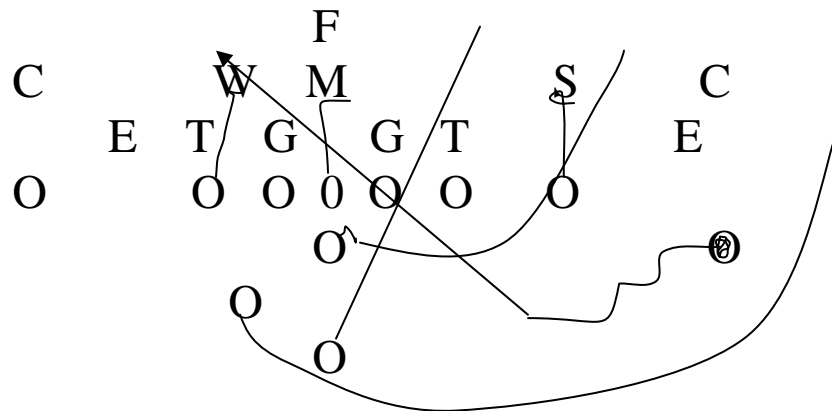
The “quick hit” of the “T” should not be associated with the fullback dive play of the wishbone or the “I”. No fullback dive is a “quick hit”. The fullback always has further to run to hit the hole and, therefore, the play does not happen “quick”. Because a fullback dive happens so slowly by comparison, the player usually weighs 230 pounds in college in order to both deliver a hit and take a hit – because he gets hit every time. On a “quick hit” this doesn’t happen. The HB gets the ball faster and is by the defense so now he doesn’t get hit every time. He doesn’t need size. He needs speed.

So enormously successful was the “quick hit” that the *University of Houston* combined the “33 Quick” and “47 Option” into one play. This is shown on the next page:



This is run from a “maxi” call to widen the “3” hole. The DT is left unblocked and our LT blocks W with a good angle block just like we have on M and S. This gives our HB a great running lane to the outside once he gets past the DT. The QB reads the unblocked DT’s helmet, handing off if the stays or moves away or keeping and running the option if the helmet comes inside (This manual will show you how to do this.). Thus, no matter what the DT does, he’s always wrong. The play is “33 Quick Trap Option”.

We can also run “Quick Hits” to the other side:



The advantage to running a “quick hit” to the TE side is that the QB almost always keeps on the option (“38 Quick Option”) because the DE is so far out. If you have a good running QB, this is a good play. W almost always takes himself out of the play as he follows the HB, allowing our WB to hit “empty space”. The play call is “42 Quick Trap”. Again, we can fake this play and run “Fake Quick 42, 24 Cross”.

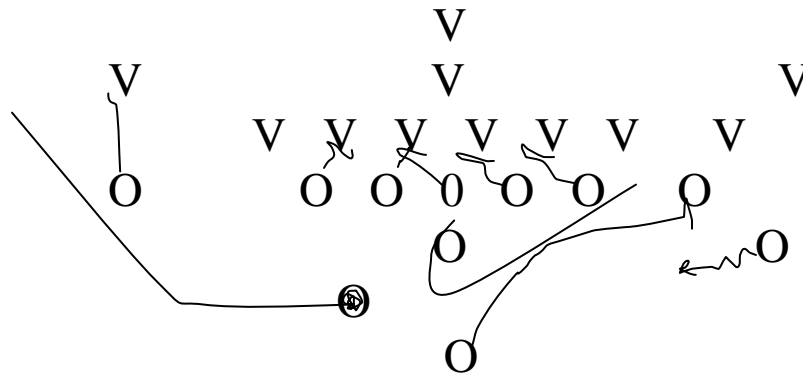
Two important points – First, no “quick hit” play ever uses **cross blocking**. The runner is hitting the hole too fast and will run into the cross block. Second, although the series of “quick hits” that I’ve shown all include an option play as part of the series, I’m simply showing you the history of the “quick hit” as it developed at the college level. You don’t have to run option to run a “quick hit”. If the DT’s are slanting in to stop the “quick hit”, *any play run outside them will work.*

Most everyone who runs the DC Wing T includes “33 Quick On” in their offensive play selection and most do not run option. Second, you can use a “Maxi” call on these “quick

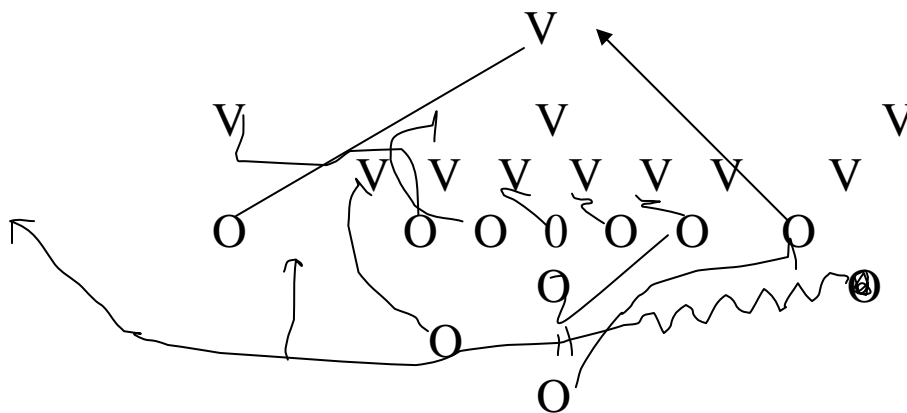
hits". The "maxi" will widen the LT and RT splits and create a bigger hole. If the DT moves out with the maxi split, "child psychology" causes him to step across the line when he's unblocked. A DT cannot step across the line and make the tackle against the "33 Quick" even when he's unblocked. The DT must step inside and assume the "breakdown" position. If he steps up field, and he almost certainly will, the two trains will pass right by each other. This is why the "Houston veer" wasn't bothering to block the DT. Unless the DT is looking for the play and steps inside, the play will go right by him. That's how FAST a "quick hit" is.

We've covered the "north-south" quick hits (except for "46 Quick" which is shown later) but we haven't covered the "east/west" quick hits. There are currently three "quick hit" plays in football to the outside. There is the original "quick pitch", the more recent "jet sweep", and the even more current "rocket sweep". The DC Wing T runs all three. They don't use "cross blocking" calls either and, like the "Maxi, 33 Quick Trap", they also leave defenders unblocked. They do so by using the exact opposite philosophy. Instead of calling "Maxi" to open the inside holes we call "Mini" to open the outside holes. From "foot to foot" line splits, the runner goes by so fast that any defending down lineman in front of our tackles need not be blocked. They just can't get to him.

We'll begin with the original "T" formation's "Quick Pitch":



This play is called "37 Quick Pitch" and it is not recommended. The old "quick pitch" play is just too much of a dinosaur to bother with anymore. The more modern (and safer) play is the "jet sweep" or "speed sweep". The DC Wing T not only runs this play, it runs it better than any other team in the country. It is shown below and it is known as "Mini, 47 Speed":



On a “speed sweep” the WB goes in motion towards the QB with the ball snapped as he reaches the RT position. The QB simply turns towards him, faces his own goal posts, and hands to the WB as he goes by. The DE, who might have been able to make the tackle before in the old “37 quick on”, is now being blocked by the HB. The LG and LT are foot to foot with the center and pulling left and are pulling behind the DE’s heels and not in front of him. As soon as the LG clears the DT he is looking for first linebacker inside the corner. The LT is aiming for the corner with the intent of knocking him into next week if he sees the front of his jersey or doing nothing at all if he sees the back of his jersey. Note: Because of the close split of the DC Wing T SE, **it is a very short distance for the LT to reach the corner.** The corner will usually not have a chance to see him coming.

Most coaches are happy with a 5 yard gain from “speed sweep” but, if you’re getting a 5 yard gain with the DC Wing T’s “Mini, 47 Speed”, you’re running it *wrong*. Run properly, I have averaged 35 yards per carry with this play all season long. Only one season have I averaged less than that and I used that experience to note how to run it wrong. This manual will cover coaching and running this play in detail.

Oddly enough, for a play that gets so many yards, I seldom run it more than three times in a game. I save this play for “third down and long”. Obviously, I pick up the first if not the touchdown. But, by saving it for only when I need it, I keep forcing the defense to defend my other plays. If they’re defending my other plays, they’re not defending this one. So I get my 35 yards when I need it. If they do try and defend it then you can run the “wedge” plays that mirror this play (Go back and check them and see if they won’t score if the defense tries to stop this play.) and get your 35 yards again.

Although this is a MUST play to have in your playbook if you have a fast WB, *never use it as your primary attack*. I had one coach E mail me how he was putting up 50 points a game on this one play alone. What he ended up managing to accomplish by doing that was every team he faced after awhile was trying to stop this play. Once they managed to do that he no longer had a guaranteed “third and long” play. His scoring dropped dramatically.

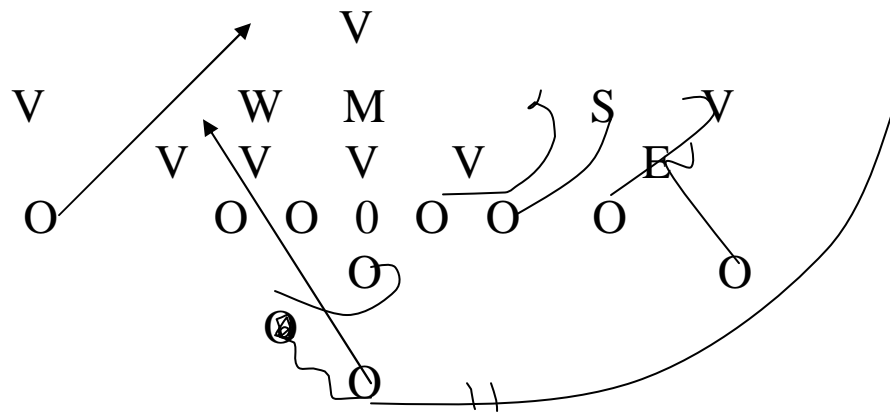
Now I have since made it far more difficult to defend this play (Check “Big Swap, 27 Speed”) but, nonetheless, the philosophy of the DC Wing T is to make the defense defend the FB, who doesn’t score, versus the WB who does. Make your FB your workhorse (A point we have yet to get to.).

The other play is the “rocket sweep”. There is great debate on how to block this play because, the means first presented by its creator, actually didn’t work. I watched football cutups of this play and noticed how, in every case, that a defender had fallen down or simply missed the tackle and that was the only reason it went for a gain. And the reason I was watching the cutups was because I couldn’t make the play work either. I eventually combined two coach’s ideas who were having some success with my own ideas in order to make this play work.

The “rocket sweep” is run to the TE side. This, right off, creates a problem for us because our formation is designed to run inside the TE and not outside him. Our formation naturally moves the DE further out on the TE side. Trying to run around a DE 4-6 yards further out than normal is tough to do and, in fact, we don’t. If he wants to play

out there, we leave him out there and let him defend air. But it's still nice to have a run to the "8" hole. The play is called "Mini Freeze, Quick 38 Rocket Power". The cue "Freeze" tells the WB not to move (i.e. go in motion) while telling our HB to go in motion. The cue "quick" tells the QB to skip his reverse pivot while "mini" tells the line to reduce their splits to pull that DE in a little closer. The cue "power" tells the WB to crack block the inside edge defender of the "8" hole which, in this case is the DE.

In most cases the QB does not need to be told "Quick" and it can be dropped from the play call, "rocket" being sufficient to get the QB to not reverse pivot.



The first key to success here are that the HB motions behind the FB. This places the HB 5 yards deep when he takes the pitch at speed and will let him get past the DT and DE, or anyone else, coming upfield. If he's not 5 yards deep the play won't work. The second is to have the FB run "23". This is because, if W follows our HB in motion, we can run "Freeze, 23 Lead Cross" as our next play and possibly score. In fact, most coaches will admit they only run the "rocket" to get the defense to move or get the DE to play honest. The RG and RT are "rocketing" upfield, the RG for "whoever" and RT for the outside linebacker. The saving grace to this play is the fact that the HB is "trucking" when he takes that pitch. If the defense stands flat footed, the HB will be all the way to the TE when he tucks the ball in. At that point, the race is on. It's unlikely you'll be stopped for a loss. Most times it gains 5 yards.

By comparison, "Mini, 38 Option" averages about 8-9 yards per carry. Thus, if you can run option you would not run "rocket".

This completes the description of the offensive features of the DC Wing T. The next section will tell you how to read defenses in order to know what plays to call or, based upon the defenses prevalent in your league, what specific plays should be in your offense. If you're not interested in reading defenses, the simplest way to run the offense is to give the ball to the FB on first down, someone else on second, run "47 Speed" in long yardage situations long, pass every fifth play, wedge for 3 yards, throw on third and short, and **never, ever, run the same play twice in a row.** To skip the section on reading defenses, go to page 97. The basic running offense begins there followed by the complete passing game.

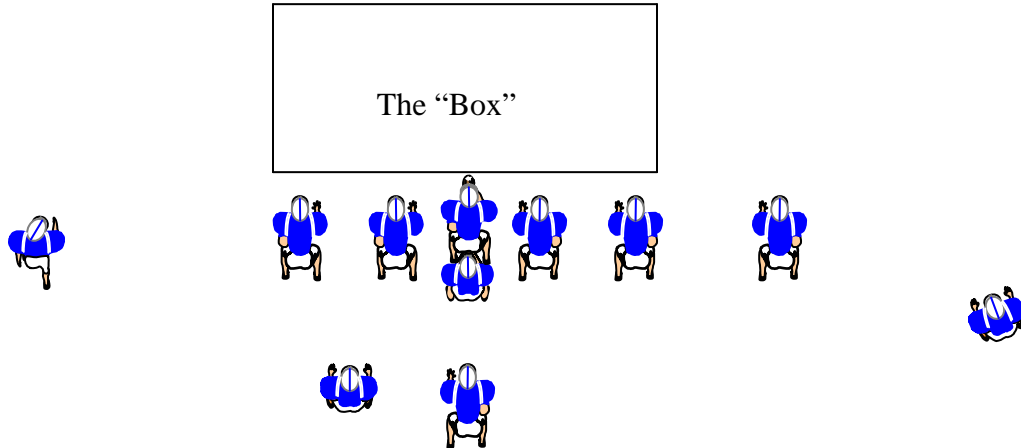
COUNTING THE BOX

The “Philosophy” chapter told us how we know what pass plays are open and how we create problems for the DE. This section deals with how we know what running plays are open. We figure out where they are and then run where they aren’t. This is done by counting the box. You’ve probably heard of “counting the box” (such as “an 8 man box”). In the days before headsets and observation booths, a coach had to call his play from the sideline and do so from the “worst seat in the house”. It’s very difficult to tell how a defense is aligning while standing on your own 50. Prior to headsets, coaches solved this problem by “counting the box”.

There are two definitions for “the box”. There is the right one (which I use) and the wrong one (which everyone else uses). The “right” one is the area *between and including* our offensive tackles and four yards deep. This is also a description very similar to that of the Free Blocking Zone.

To find out how many defenders are “in the box”, we don’t hand count them. It’s actually easier and better to count the number of players outside the box, and then subtract that from 11 and this will give you the number of defenders “inside the box.” So if the defense is Cover 1 (one deep defender out of the box) and you count two defenders outside your offensive tackles on both sides, you’re facing a “6 man box” ($11-1-2-2=6$).

The area of the “box” against the DC Wing T is shown below:



The manual is designed so that you don’t have to count the defenders in the “box” or know how they’re aligned. We really don’t care. We’re interested in the DE’s, who are outside the “box”, and how they’re aligned. They’re not only easier to see and count, but dictate what we do.

You can use the illustrations in this manual to practice counting the “box”. For example, the defense on page 43 is a “5 man box” whereas the defense on page 14 is a “6 man box”. Try counting the players outside the “box” to determine the number inside.

Coaches count the number of defenders “in the box” in order to see if the offense outnumbers the defense here or if the defense outnumbers the offense. The DC Wing T

offense has eight players aligned against “the box” (five linemen, one QB and two backs) or up to seven blockers for one ballcarrier (However, since the QB is often not a ballcarrier or a blocker, the usual number of blockers against the box is generally considered to be six.). If the defense plays less than six defenders “in the box”, we begin to have more blockers for runs up the middle than they have tacklers. Notice that DE’s, corners, and safeties are always outside the box. Unless the defense plays no safeties, it must play a minimum of five players outside the box leaving a maximum six players that can play inside the box.

Notice how our formation only aligns three players outside the box; the SE, TE, and WB and we only have one player outside the box on the SE side but two outside the box on the WB/TE side. This pressures defenses to play two pass defenders as well as a DE on the TE/WB side, or three players to our two. Yet we have just as many players to the left of center (4) as we have to the right of center (4). If they play more defenders to our TE/WB side than they do to our SE side, it is to our advantage to run to the SE side.

ATTACKING A SIX MAN BOX

It is generally not to our advantage to attack a “walled city” but to go around it. A “six man box” is considered to be a “walled city”. It can only be attacked with the QB (See “**Freeze**” play.). It is, instead, to our advantage (but not always) to go to a “mini” call to close up the line spacing so that their six can’t get through our five by blitzing, and then run around them (Go outside the tackles to either the left or the right.).

To go outside the “box” we bring over extra blockers to the playside. Again, we can bring them over three different ways; alignment, motion, or pulling. Let’s begin by running left and how we would add blockers to that side:

Alignment: we can take a player from outside the box on the right and put him outside the box on the left. These calls would be “WB Over” or “TE Over”. If the defense moves with us, we would run back the other way against the reduced number of defenders who now have to cover “more field”.

Motion: We can bring the WB across the formation. If the defense follows the motion man, we would fake the motion (“Jet”) and run back the other way against the reduced number of defenders who now have to cover “more field” (**We can also put the HB in motion left and run the “Freeze” play.**).

Pulling: We can pull both the left guard and tackle left (“Speed”) or pull the right guard and the QB left (“Toss”). We can also remove a defender(s) from the left by faking the play to the right and then pulling our right guard to the left (“Right”) to lead block for the counter.

Option: Running option left allows us to use our QB to possibly take out the DE.

It’s also possible for us to try and *reduce* the number of defenders on the left before running there, creating more “open field” to this side. We can do this by alignment or motion. Alignment would be if the corner on the left covering our SE moves with him.

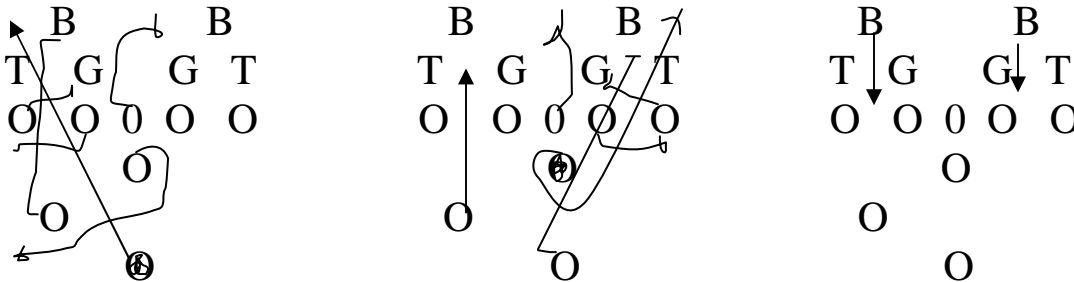
We would move the SE from the left side to the right side (“SE Over”) and the corner would follow, leaving the area he vacated on the left side open.

If we opted to attack the right side of a six man box, we can overload the right hand side by same three means as before; alignment, motion, or pulling. By alignment, we can call “SE Over” or “HB Over” to increase the number of blockers or, if the defense moves with us, we can call “TE Over” or “WB Over” to decrease the number of defenders. By motion we can bring the HB over to increase our numbers or, if they follow motion, put our WB in motion to the left (“Jet”) and let him take a defender away with him to create increased “open area” for the now reduced defenders to cover playside.

By pulling, we can bring up to two blockers from the left (“Super Toss” and “Trey”). By faking the play left, we can also reduce defenders on the right and then pull the left guard (“Left”) to lead block against the reduced right hand side.

We can also run option to the right in order to use our QB to take out a defender.

It sometimes “looks” possible to attack a six man box without using our QB and using our normal line spacing. Shown below is a version of a “6-2” defense that uses a six man box. This defense can be very deceptive because “on paper” we can run against it:

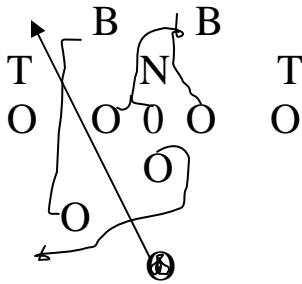


In the play on the left, we have cross blocked the T&G and are lead blocking with the HB – the popular “iso” play. In the middle play, we have again cross blocked the hole, have faked the “iso” and the QB is following the FB’s lead while, in both plays, the center is blocking the backside linebacker. Yet neither play will actually work as the diagram on the right shows. If the two linebackers blitz (and that’s exactly why they’re over those gaps), both plays will run into the blitz. We are attacking a “walled city”. Counting the “box” shows that there’s no way that our front five can pick up six blitzers. One solution is to call “mini”, to close up the line spacing to keep those blitzers out, and then go outside. You need at least one outside play in your playbook designed to go outside against a six man box. The “Freeze” play is also nice to have. Another solution is to call “Slot” as this should force the left side LBer out of the box.

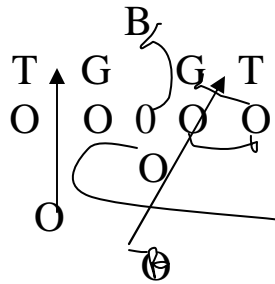
Passing: Versus a “6 man box” you must keep two backs in to pick up the blitz on pass. The DC Wing T does this automatically. However, **you cannot call any “Zero Open” plays (Which send one of the two backs out in the pass pattern) unless you’re feeling “lucky”.**

ATTACKING THE FIVE MAN BOX

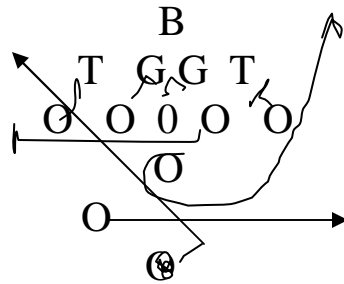
If the six man box can't get in ("mini") and gives up yards outside, this pressures the defense to reduce the number of defenders in the box in order to add to the number of defenders outside. Shown below are three examples of a five man box:



"Max 23"



"24 Counter Cross"

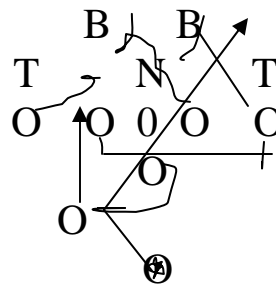
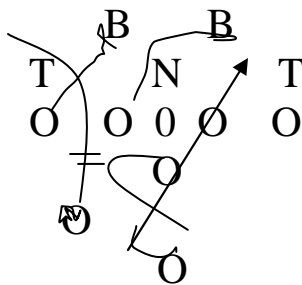


"Right Kick 23 Counter"

The blocking is now five on five versus the blitz. In the example on the left, if the linebacker over the hole blitzed, he can't cover both holes to the left of center. To make certain he can't, we have called "maxi". The tackle/guard hole now increases. It doesn't matter if a DT lines up in the gap as we will just run around him (See right hand illustration.). We used "Maxi" because the DT was head up on our tackle and had to defend two gaps. "Maxi" increases the area of the two gaps he must defend. In the other two plays, the DT is not defending area by himself (He has an adjacent DG) so, instead of using "Maxi", we are using regular splits and pulling the guards ("Cross" and "Right").

We can also have run "mini" against two linebackers. We do this to throw deep, power wedge up the middle, or sweep to the outside (By closing up our line splits we draw the DE in closer in order to block him.).

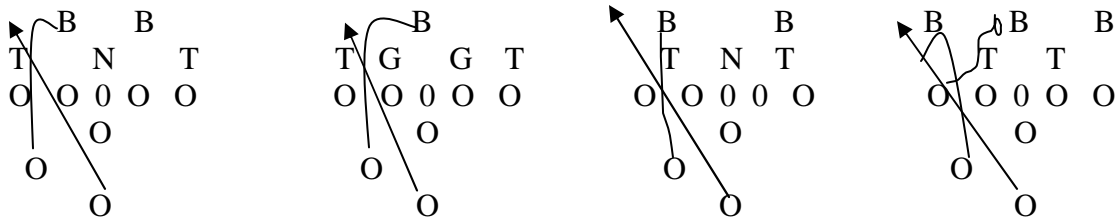
Here are examples of attacking two LBers using "Maxi":



Our HB is only 3 steps off the line and hits very quick. By widening the box with "maxi", we give more room for the HB to get past the LBers before they can "move" while improving the blocking angles on the LBers by our OT's. We're use "double dive" action on the play to left "33 Quick Counter") to freeze the two linebackers. The play on the right ("Left 22 Trap") uses misdirection to freeze the two linebackers. Both give the OT's a good blocking angle. Another way to attack two inside linebackers is with "freeze" motion. The HB goes in motion towards the SE and the QB watches to see if

one of the two inside linebackers follows him. If neither does, he throws a sideways pass to the uncovered HB (A sideways pass allows the line to be downfield blocking the linebackers.). If a linebacker follows the HB, the inside “wall” is broken and the QB runs the “13” play or gets behind the FB on “23 Lead”.

You can also “dive” the ball up the gut against a five man box. Here are some possible five man “box” alignments versus the “23” play:

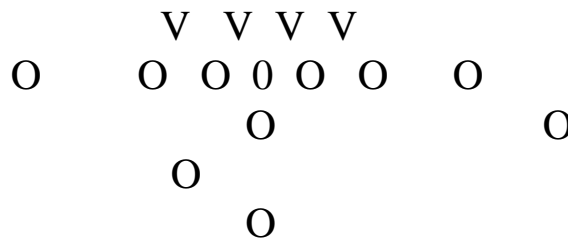


To dive the FB to the right of center (“24”) simply have the WB “track block” to the inside linebacker *or go straight through the “4” hole*. When you make your play selection, always have a selection that allows you to attack the inside of a five man box.

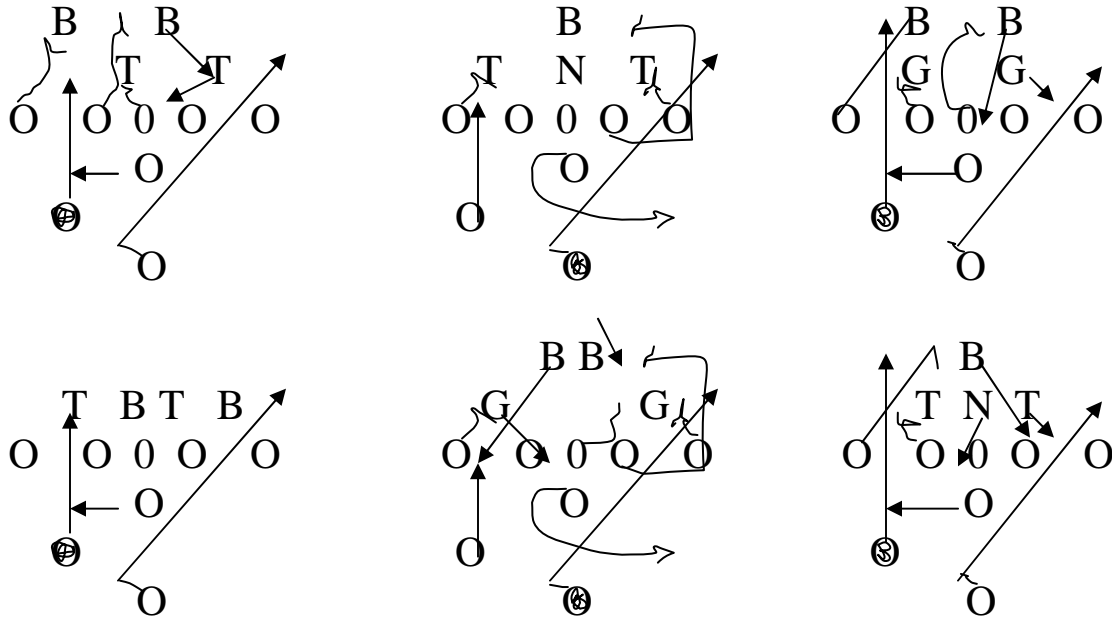
Note: a “5 man box” with the DE’s playing just outside our OT’s is trying to take away either the “3” or “4” hole (or BOTH). Against this, we must run the “1” and “2” holes with Trap, Midline, and Wedge.

ATTACKING THE FOUR MAN BOX

Four man boxes represent the simplest way to defend the middle. Jack Reed’s popular youth GAM defense uses a four man box as its starting point. The concept is based on the fact that there are only four gaps between our five offensive linemen so if you put a defender in every gap all inside runs are stopped. It is shown below:



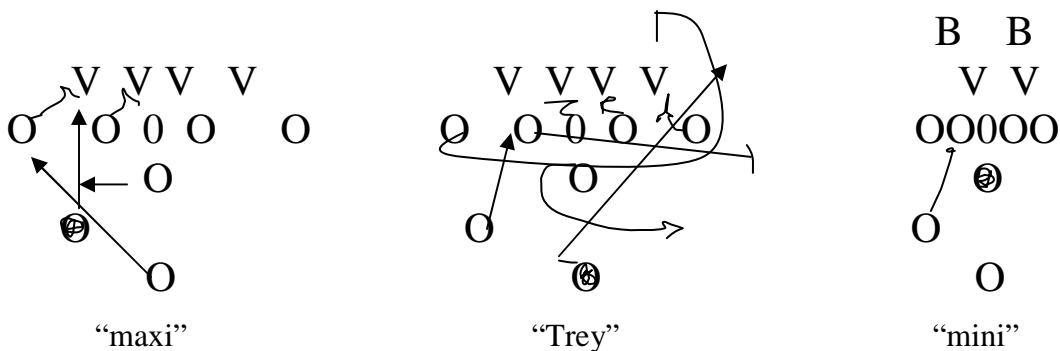
Although it is an effective way of filling the four gaps, offenses found it was fairly easy to block down on the four defenders and keep them out and pulling linemen was easy. To improve their penetration and to follow the pullers, one or two of the four defenders usually backed off and became linebackers who then blitzed. Here are some examples of a “four man box” versus “33 Quick Counter” and “24 Counter”:



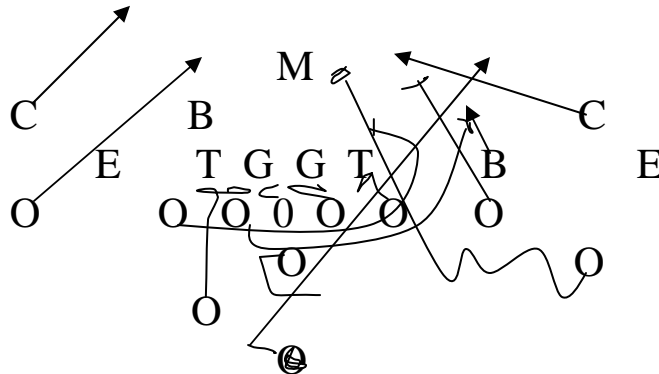
The blitzing linebacker changes gap assignments with the down lineman to his side. An example of this is shown in the upper left diagram where the right side is blitzing. Were both linebackers to blitz, they would end up in the positions shown in the lower left diagram. A blitz is shown in all the above diagrams except the top middle and lower left.

Against a four man box we look to use our numbers blocking advantage if we see any linebackers we can go to a “mini” call and wedging the two-three down linemen backwards. Two linebackers mean a “**4 yard wide wall**”. To run other than wedge, we need to increase the area the outside the wall with a “maxi” call and then run the outside edge of the wall with either “33 Quick” or “24 Counter” or **go to normal line splits and run trap**. We can “maxi” the four defenders because they don’t normally move with the increased tackle splits. This is because they base their alignment position on being able to slant across the guard’s face, so they have to stay fairly close to him.

When all four defenders are in the gaps, we go back to our normal line splits and run either trap or what is called “trey” blocking. “Trey” blocking is when we pull both our left guard and left tackle to the right to block for our fullback (FB). The blitz will not penetrate any of these three calls. Our three different line splits and some of their plays are shown below:



The handoff to the HB on the left (“33 Quick”) happens too fast for the blitz to reach the QB. In the “trey” scheme the HB has altered his track to the outside foot of the left guard. He’ll pick up the outside gap blitzer on this path. The left guard will either kick out a DE or pull up through the hole and block outside, while the pulling tackle turns up into the hole and blocks inside. The left tackle will reach the hole in 5 steps, the same number of steps the FB will reach it in. This puts the FB right behind his lead inside blocker. Notice, that if the center were to miss his block on his man, the left tackle would run into the blitzer as he will reach the center/guard gap in 2 steps. Thus, the blitz fails again. The “trey” play is shown below against Jack Reed’s popular GAM defense:



Although the above is technically a “5 man box” it uses a “four man box” alignment as a starting point. The WB went in motion and track blocked to M, causing the corner to also go in motion and follow. Our TE has gone downfield to block the corner in case he changes his mind about chasing our WB. This has caused the linebacker over our TE to chase him for pass. Our left guard is tracking that same linebacker for “kickout” and our left tackle is blocking back inside on the other linebacker, who should be watching our HB for dive or pass. None of the four down linemen got through and the only difficult block was for our center and, even if he missed it, his defender had two pulling linemen in his way.

We can see the principals of the offense again at work here. If the defense doesn’t chase our receivers, they’ll be open for a pass. But if they stay and defend the run, they’ll still be blocked, our left guard blocking the playside linebacker and our TE playside corner. Thus, whichever the defenders do, play run or pass, they’re wrong.

Remember! The “mini” wedge play (QB sneak) is used if *any* of the four man box are backed off of the line as linebackers. The five offensive linemen simply form a wall (called a “wedge”) and simply push the remaining 2-3 defenders back. It’s hard to push four, but you can push three, and pushing two is easy. This play is not like the QB sneaks you see on TV. The QB doesn’t dive one side of the center or the other. He stays behind the center for as long as the center is going forward and then runs off to one side or the other. These “sneaks” can go for 50 yards and seldom go for less than 3.

When you make your play selection you must have at least two plays in your offense designed to attack a four man box.

You can attack a “3 man box” with “20 Midline”.

READING COVERAGES

The number of defenders outside the “box” dictates the coverage. We counted up the “coverage” and subtracted it from 11 in order to find the number of defenders in the “box”. So when we counted five defenders outside the box we have counted up the number of defenders assigned to pass and sweep coverage. Two of those defenders will always be assigned to “contain” (Although they may have pass coverage assignments as well.). Thus, when we count five defenders outside the box, that means they have three pass defenders (to cover our TE, WB, and SE) and two contain players (usually DE’s). If we count six, they have an extra defender somewhere. If we count seven (four man box), they have two extra defenders outside somewhere.

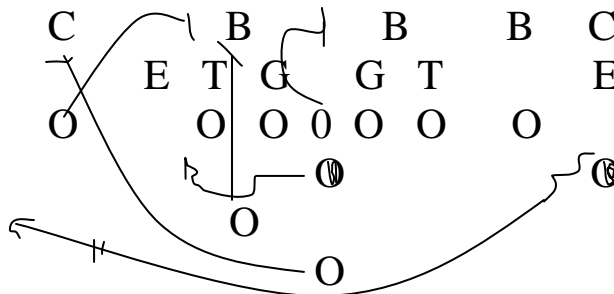
Five Man Coverage: When only five are outside the box, we check for “Cover 3” (Zone). Otherwise, they are in “man to man”. There will be two defenders to our SE side and either two on our TE side (zone) or three (man). Further, our QB is uncovered (Which means he is open for a “naked” run or as a receiver.). Given our choice of which side to run, we would run towards the SE if man or to the TE side if zone (We always want to run at the fewest number of defenders.). Our preferred ball carrier to the SE side would be the WB in motion (“47 Speed”) with SE on a reverse if they followed the motion. Our preferred ballcarrier to the TE side would be the HB in “rocket” motion or “13” if the followed the motion. If they’re in zone, they can’t follow our receivers by alignment and my favorite formation would be “Slot, Tight Right”. Not only can I run rocket and “13” but “24” (Actually “26”) and “36 Toss”.

Six Man Coverage: This coverage (5 man box) is usually installed in order to cover the QB, which tells us why “13” is open above. If there are three deep defenders in the third row, the coverage is typically zone. If there is only one, the coverage is usually man.

Seven Man Coverage: This coverage (4 man box) places three defenders on both sides of the box and one deep over the middle. Again, if there are three deep defenders, the coverage is typically zone. If there is only one, the coverage is probably man.

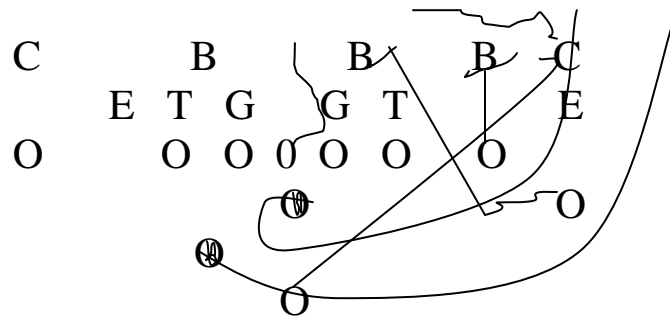
ATTACKING FIVE MAN COVERAGE

As mentioned before, our first choice is to sweep the SE side using the WB. Here we will find only two of the five defenders. There are five different ways to do this. The first, and most effective, way is with option:



The previous play is called “Fake 33, 47 Option”. We’re faking one play between the guard and tackle. The fake is done for two reasons. First, it allows our HB to block the linebacker (“B”) if he’s blitzing. Second, if he’s not blitzing, we’re giving him reason to stay where he is. With our SE track blocking to the inside, we get two blockers on the outside linebacker (If the linebacker blitzed, the SE would proceed to the next linebacker allowing us to double team him with the center.). The QB will then step past the fake point and option the DE (pitch to WB in motion or keep). The corner is caught in the usual conflict of whether to cover the SE or not and, as usual, he’s wrong either way.

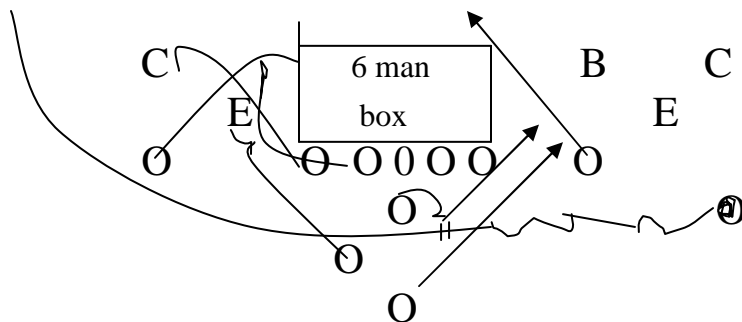
If the defense follows the WB in motion in order to cover him on pitch, we run the same play the other way. The play here is “38 Option”:



The outside linebacker is, again, double teamed. The corner, in following our WB, has taken himself out of the play and the “4 yard wall”. The QB reverse pivots for deception and to allow the FB to get out in front of him. The QB will stay on outside shoulder of the FB in case the inside linebacker is blitzing (In which case the WB goes to next linebacker down.). The QB almost always keeps on this play because the DE is simply too far out to tackle him. If he keeps, he can still pitch to the HB past the DE if C shows.

This manual provides instruction on how to coach the pitch. QB’s can be taught to pitch as early as age 9 but usually must be told whether to keep or not (The call “Fake 33, 17 Option” would tell him to keep on the first play or “16 Option” would tell him to keep on the second.). A 10 year old QB can usually be taught to read the DE. There are two deciding factors in whether to run this play or not. Do you have the time to install this and do you have the QB to run option?

Most youth coaches don’t have the ability to run this. However, it is shown first because it is the “first choice” to beat five man coverages. The next most popular choice is our “47 Speed” sweep. It looks like this shown against 5 man coverage:



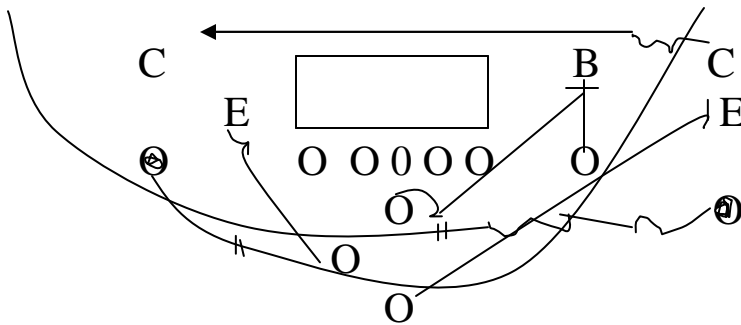
Although also time intensive to install (about one hour), most teams can run it. The yardage gained is based upon the mentality of the WB. He must realize he only has ONE MAN TO BEAT – the “C”. His eyes should be on “C” all the way.

This play meets all the conditions of the last play. The corner is placed in conflict as to whether to cover the SE or not and whichever one he does is wrong. We have a double team on the outside linebacker with the SE and left guard. The play is run from “mini” spacing (Our standard response to a “six man box”.) which keeps the blitz out and moves the DE in even closer for the HB to block.

Many youth coaches wonder whose blocking the defenders in front of our left guard and tackle? The answer is that when the left guard gets behind the left tackle and pulls outside he crosses in front of anyone in front of the left tackle which is the same thing as a block. What about anyone in front of the left guard? That becomes a foot race between the defender and the WB. The ball is snapped when the WB reaches the right tackle. The WB will cover the distance from the right tackle to left guard in less than 3 steps. It’s also about 3 steps for the defender to reach this position. However, the defender begins from a standing start while the the WB is at, or near, full speed. It’s a three step race the WB always wins.

The defense’s solution to this play is to have a defender run with the motion man. If they do, we don’t have him blocked. When that happens, we have two choices. One is to not use motion at all. We can run the exact same play above without motion by having the QB turn left and “quick pitch” to a point about 4-5 feet to the left of the FB. The FB goes left and catches the pitch and away he goes – and with the same blocking. For added speed, let the WB and FB change places with the FB playing WB and the WB playing FB (Called “Swap Out”). This is based on the well known “Quick Pitch/Rocket sweep” and is called “27 Speed”. The FB playing WB never uses motion.

The other solution to the defense following our motion is to fake the “Speed” sweep and run the play back the other way. There are two ways to do this. Here is the first:

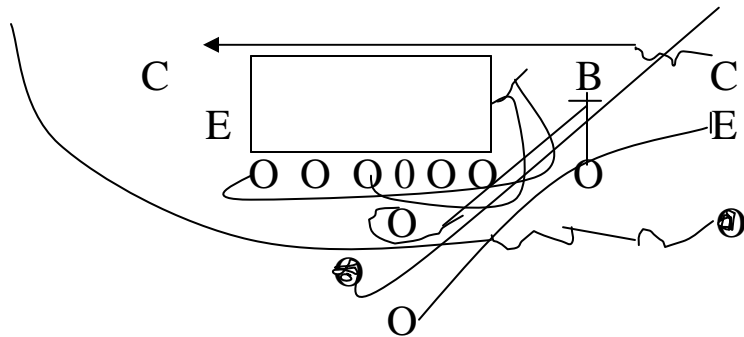


This simple reverse play will almost always score because the DE is expecting the reverse to go around the *outside* of him and not the *inside* of him. But the DC Wing T philosophy is to move the DE out and run inside him. Because of this, the play will work *even if the corner doesn't follow the motion*. This is because separation begins to occur between B and C as one, or both of them, begin chasing the WB post snap. The play is, again, run from “mini” spacing in order to keep the blitzers out.

After the defense has seen this play a few times and stopped it, we let the SE pull up on his reverse and throw downfield to the QB. There are several SE type kids that have good arms and, versus a “six man box”, no one is assigned to the QB so he is wide open.

Again, after the defense has seen this, the regular “47 Speed” play is called and the SE comes around for the reverse and the WB fakes the handoff to him and keeps going. The defense, expecting reverse, gets caught trying to change direction.

Our second choice is also run from “mini”. This is the famous “toss” play and is shown below:



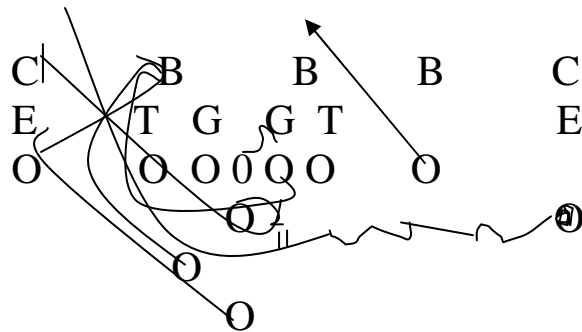
We are now using the “unaccounted for” QB as a blocker. This play “walls off” the inside linebackers with a pulling guard and TE (The SE now lines up tight). You can add the WB on a track block to the inside if you want which will cause him to help the right tackle with his man before going up to the linebackers. Note, for this play to work, the corner **MUST** be following the WB in motion. If they’re not following the motion, you need to go back to running the SE side. This is because we must increase the *separation* between B and C. While we may have a huge hole at the line to run due to the separation between the DT and the DE, B and C are still only 2 yards apart. If these two players can successfully defend one yard on each side of themselves against our two lead blockers (and QB’s make lousy lead blockers), they become a **“4 yard wide wall”** at which our running back is headed straight for. But, if C moves with the motion, B becomes a 2 yard wide wall which becomes 0 when he is double teamed.

In order to use this play if the defense isn’t following the motion, you would run it as a “draw”. On a **“draw”** call the TE will pass release outside. This puts B in conflict. Does he cover the TE on pass or play the run? If he plays the run, we pass to the TE. If he covers the TE, we run the “toss” against C who now suffers *separation* from B. We can also separate the C further out by calling “SE Over”. Again, we can run “Swap Out” which aligns the WB as the TE and the TE as the WB, both both block their same assignment (WB has “track block” to inside linebacker and TE cracks outside backer.).

You might have to run this “36 Toss Draw” if the defense finds a way to stop your WB on plays to the SE side without following the motion. Almost all my opponents try and defend against the “Speed” sweep without following the motion as they are familiar with me coming back the other way. They almost all try and defend it with the DE. Some may move him out farther but most replace the DE with “Godzilla” whom our HB simply bounces off of. Our solution to “Godzilla” is to block him with our own “Godzilla”. We simply let the HB and FB trade places. This is called “Swap In”. I once also faced a

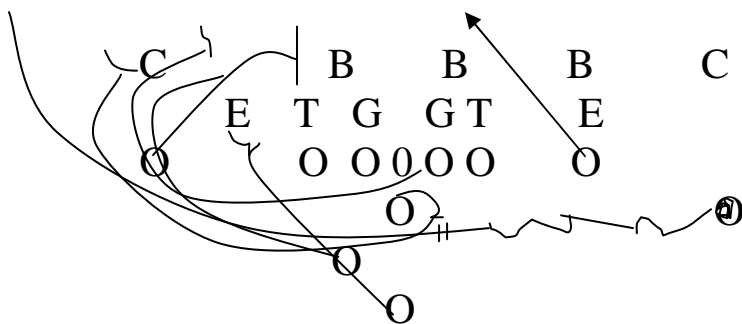
team with “Godzilla” playing at outside linebacker and my SE just bounced off him on the “Speed” sweep. The solution to this is to let the SE and TE trade places. We put our “Godzilla” on their “Godzilla”. This is called “Swap Ends”.

In the event that the defense moves the DE farther out we can tell the SE to “crack” block the DE inside him. This places a “double team” on the DE and is one of the reasons we play our SE in close. However, we have now lost our double team on the outside linebacker. We could “Swap Ends”, let the TE crack the DE and put the HB on the outside linebacker to restore the double team. But you either must have this practiced or you better have a grease board and time out and hope their little heads follow. Further, it’s possible the DE will align head up on our SE, making a “crack” impossible. In that event, we want to run inside the DE using a play that looks like “Speed” sweep. Once again, that play is the “toss”. It is shown below versus a “head up” DE.



The defense sees “speed” sweep developing and the playside corner may actually start to back outside to play it. Instead, we run inside behind a massive number of blockers. Again, the QB is lead blocking. The play has more chance of success than a toss to the TE side because there is more *separation* between the playside C and B. To gain even more separation, you can have the SE pass release outside (“Draw”) and take the corner downfield with him.

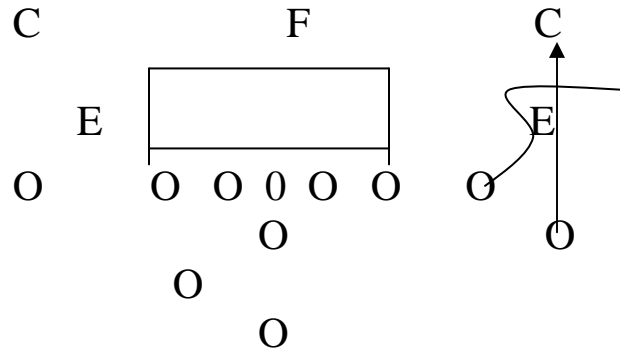
You can also run a “toss” outside a DE. This is shown against a DE aligned in “tight” below:



We have pulled two players playside (the pulling right guard and WB in motion) plus the QB. A play like this is used when the other team is faster at getting to the outside than you are. If you can’t outrun them to the outside with the “Speed” sweep, you can at least try and “slow them down” by putting a lot of bodies in the way.

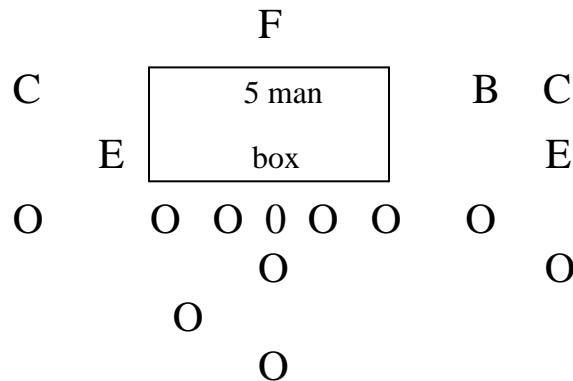
There are still two other ways to attack a “6 man box”. Both are with running the QB. With us having five receivers and the defense have five pass defenders, the six man box cannot cover the QB. So, the first of the two attacks would be if the QB runs between the guard and tackle on one side of the line and both backs run to the other side of the line, there should be no linebacker in front of the QB as he comes through the hole. This is known as a QB “counter” and is not a QB “bootleg”. If you bootleg the QB against a six man box, you won’t have a blocker on the DE for the QB unless you pull a lineman.

The final play is to roll the QB out, fake a throw, and keep going. This is known in football as a “sprint pass”. But, in our case, we don’t throw the ball. We just pretend we’re going to. The QB “pump fakes” the ball as he gets outside and then runs for the first down marker. If the five defenders each cover their man, there’s no one to tackle the QB. One final note on “five man coverage”. If you see a “6 man box” in “Cover 3”, **something’s wrong!** This is shown below:



One should always be suspicious of “Cover 3” at the youth level. It’s a virtual guarantee that F is a stud and that the two C’s are MINIMUM PLAY PLAYERS. If at all suspicious, tell the SE to continue to track block to F and consider “Swap Ends” when you do it. Forget those C’s and get F! Notice also, the defense has only two defenders on the right versus two pass receivers. It is likely E has some kind of pass (zone?) coverage assignment as well as sweep contain. If so, against this defense the TE will come open on a “TE delay” pass as shown above.

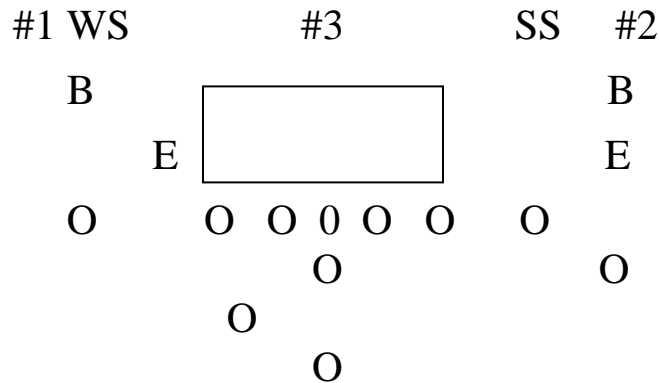
ATTACKING SIX MAN COVERAGE



Shown on the previous page is a common six man coverage scheme. It allows the defense to cover the QB with F (Although he often doesn't know that's his job.) while adding one deep defender against the pass (It's called "Cover 1" because it has one deep defender.). Once again, our first choice is to sweep left outside the DE on the SE side and, if they follow the motion, to run inside the DE on the other side. On sweeps left, our SE would try and block from an outside linebacker to F.

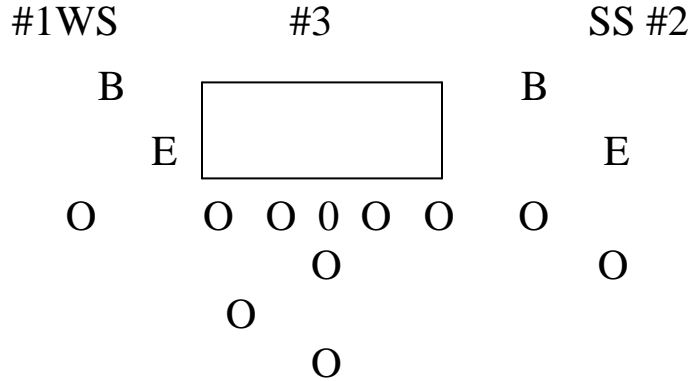
Notice, this defense has more defenders to the right than to the left. When that happens, it is called "unbalanced". Against an unbalanced defense we want to pull guards because if we line up unbalanced, that's the side of our formation they unbalance to (If they're smart.). This means that, not only would we be running "Speed" sweep to the left but also "toss" plays to the left. Running to the right, without C following our motion man or B following our TE on "Draw", creates the 4 yard wide wall between defenders B and C. We don't want to run that unless our "Jimmy's" are bigger than their "Joe's".

A six man coverage scheme can line up balanced:



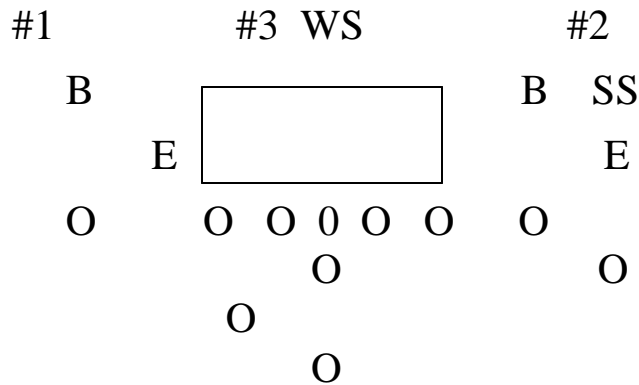
This defense has two deep defenders (Hence, the name "Cover 2"). It has three defenders to both sides of the "box", making it balanced. Not all "Cover 2's are balanced. The SS over our TE may line up over our center, causing the defense to have more defenders to the left than to the right ("monster" coverage). The SS tends to move against the DC Wing T because, wherever he aligns, he's always wrong. For example, if SS stays where he is, a pass to area #3 is open. If he moves to area #3 (unbalances) to cover that pass, a pass to area #2 comes open. If WS moves to cover area #3, area #1 comes open.

The goal of this defense is to put three defenders outside the "box" on each side against the sweep and take their chances against the pass. However, while they have the right numbers to stop us outside, *they have the wrong alignment*. Here's why. In order to stop our outside game, the defense must have two defenders, side by side, and standing two yards apart in order to create the "4 yard wide wall". Such a wall runs "east-west". But the above defense lacks this feature. If WS were 2 yards behind B, there would be a wall but it is running "north-south" or, *the wrong way*. What this defense is actually trying to do is hide two small players at the safety positions. It may also look like this:



I call this the “geese” formation because, with the safeties outside the B’s, it starts to look like a “V” formation of a flock of geese. This is a dead giveaway that the defense is hiding two “wasted” players at safety. You can run *both* sides of this formation because *it never builds the “4 yard wide wall”*.

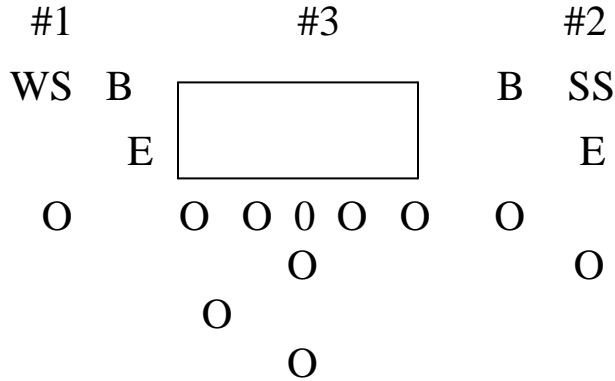
Over time, some youth coaches have come up with a tradeoff on how to run this defense. It looks like this:



The “4 yard wide wall” now exists on the right side of the defense (The safety brought up to form the wall is called a “monster”). They have shut down the run here but not on the left. So, again, we would run left. Further, this defense is unbalanced (The SS moves to whichever side of our formation we have two receivers on.). That tells us we can either pull a guard to go left or motion the WB to go left. As soon as they start to follow our WB motion that breaks the “wall” between B and SS and we can run back the other way.

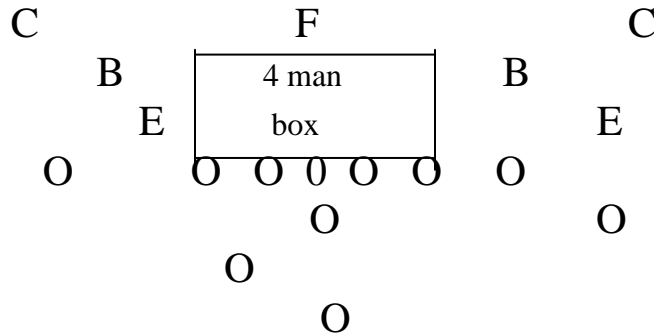
This gives us an important lesson about running the DC Wing T. Although it is of critical importance that we count the “box” so as to not run inside against six defenders, the number of players outside the box is not as important as how they are aligned. Two defenders, standing side by side, two yards apart, create a “wall” four yards wide. We can’t run against this. Anything else, we can.

In theory, the defense could “monster” both sides of the field like this:

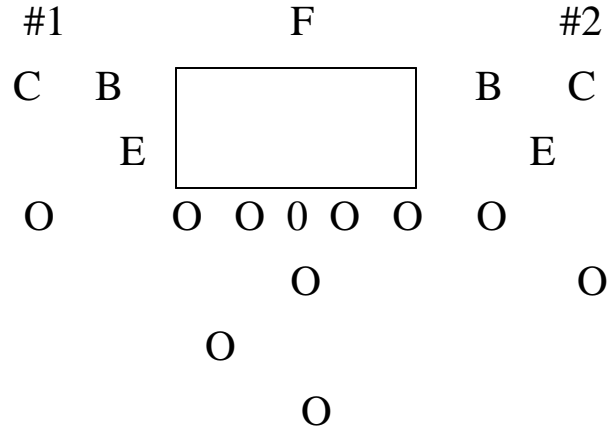


The defense has now successfully built a “wall” on both sides of the “box”. But this “wall” will only work if we let it work. Because, if you run “draw”, someone has to break off the wall and cover our receiver or he is running into open area (#1, #2, #3). If you see the “wall”, run “draw”. If the defense doesn’t cover the receiver, throw to him. Even if it’s incomplete, the defense will put coverage on him the next play. You can now run “draw” and the wall will break down. **Therefore, to be successful, your offense must include the “Draw” play.**

ATTACKING SEVEN MAN COVERAGE



A defense playing a “four man box” has seven defenders outside the box. In most cases, seven man coverage lines up in “Cover 3” like the above. If it does, it’s either playing “zone” coverage or is trying to hide two inferior players at corner (“C” positions). In either case, it has failed to build a “4 yard wide wall” on either side of the field due to the depth of the corners. Unless they bring the corners and play them outside the outside linebackers, we can run both inside and outside on this defense. It might not take them long to build a “wall” though by “monstering” both the corners like this:



In spite of the “wall”, there are two weaknesses to the above. First, we can run “Draw” plays outside and “break the wall” or they risk our throwing to areas #1 and #2. Second, notice the DE is aligning outside our TE? If you see that, it means you can call “Super” which places the SE as a TE on the left which will cause the DE to align outside of him. Once he does so, the four defenders inside the box become “stretched”. Our “33 Quick” play and the rest of our inside game is “wide open”. We have “8 versus their 4 in the box”.

The defense could counter this by refusing to move the DE out (Some will play the DE on the right inside our TE). In that case, we can run “speed” or “rocket” by him.

MISCELANEOUS READS

DEEP COVERAGE:

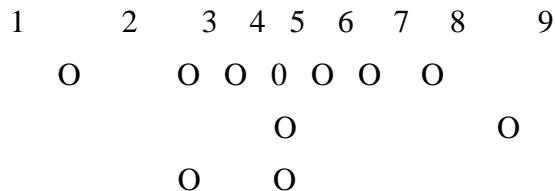
COVER 3: Hard to throw deep on. Try and throw in front of, rather than behind, the corners. It's usually Zone Coverage but can weak corners in man.

COVER 2: Usually associated with "option" defenses if the two deep defenders are studs. Otherwise it is used to hide two weak players "out of reach". It is usually Zone Coverage and struggles in man because you can spread the safeties apart and then throw between them to the TE.

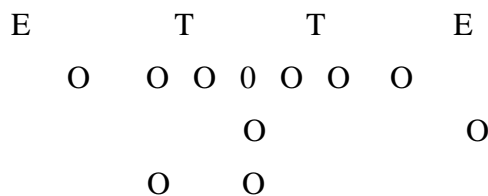
COVER 1: A Man Coverage placed in conflict immediately by the DC Wing T.

COVER 0: Man Coverage that is often beat deep. It is often hard to run on.

Down linemen: The number of defensive linemen dictates the number of undefended run gaps the defense presents our offense. The more defensive down linemen, the fewer undefended gaps, and the harder it is to run inside. Similarly the fewer the number of down linemen, the more undefended gaps and the easier it is to run inside. The number of gaps our base formation creates is 9. The simple rule of thumb is you want to have two gaps per each opposing defensive lineman. If we take the number of gaps we have and divide by 2, we get the ideal number of down linemen our formation attacks which is 4.5 ($9/2=4.5$). We are best suited to attack four down linemen.

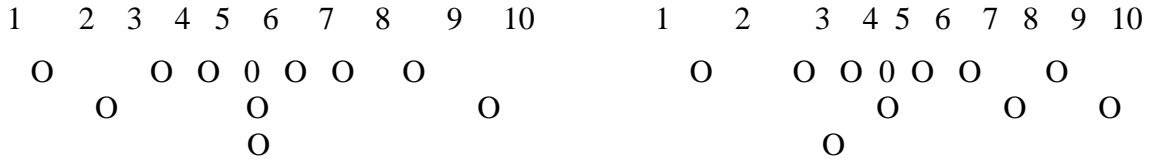


It's difficult for the defense to play us with four down linemen because, unless a slanting, blitzing linebacker is behind them, each defending lineman has to cover two gaps. If we face four down linemen, we would try going "Super" (two TE's) and see if the DE's play outside our TE's. If they do, it looks like this and we can run inside them:

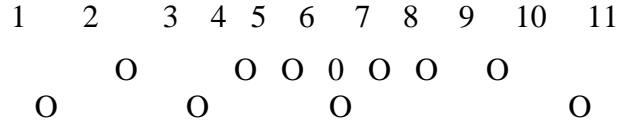


There is simply too much open space for them to cover versus inside runs.

If the defense is playing 5 down linemen, the ideal number of gaps for us to have is 10 ($5 \times 2 = 10$). We create ten gaps when we go to "Slot", "Slot On", "Slot Over", or "FB Over". This is shown below:



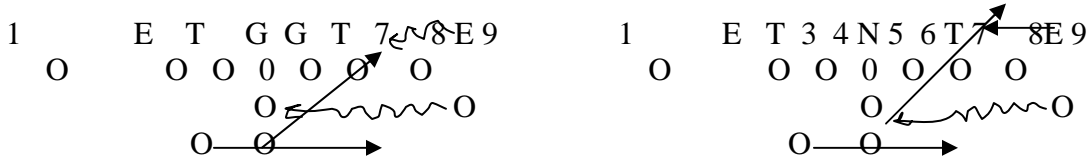
Versus six down linemen our ideal number of gaps is 12 (6x2=12). However, the maximum number of gaps we can obtain is 11 when we run our "Trips" formation. This is shown below:



Although we are one gap short of the ideal formation, the defense, with six down linemen, can only cover five of our receivers. We can either look for the receiver they can't cover or run the QB. From the above, quick slant passes are likely to be open, including to the FB. However, when we run the ball, one of the six defenders will only have to cover one gap. It's likely you'll have to "scheme out" how to block him.

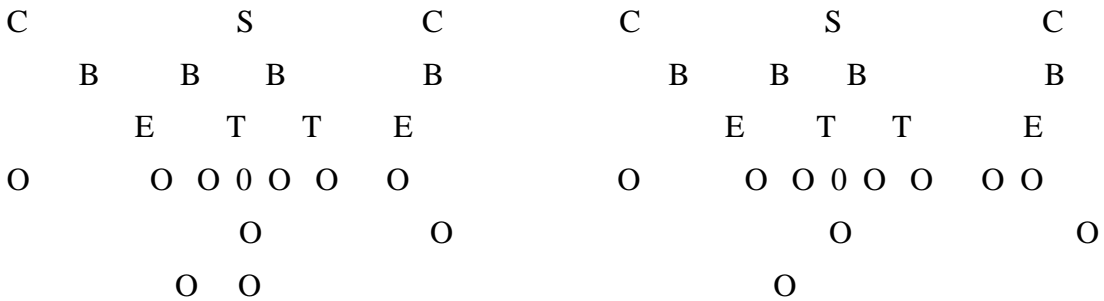
Many "two gap" defenses want to make you guess which of their two gaps each defender will fill. The DC Wing T attacks this "guessing" defense by handing off to the FB on "Quick" handoffs and letting him run directly at a "two gap" defender, reading him before, or as, he takes the handoff. If the defender slants left, the FB slants right. If the defender slants right, the FB slants left. Thus, the DC Wing T places the "head up", two gap defender in conflict. Whichever gap he guesses to slant into, he's wrong. The play "20 Midline" is an example of this.

Slanting: Some "two gap" defenses don't slant at random. They slant according to the action of our WB. If the WB goes in motion towards the QB, they'll slant all the down linemen, including the DE on the WB side, in the direction of the SE. If the WB doesn't go in motion, they slant out towards the WB. To interfere with this, the DC Wing T always puts the WB in motion on every play. We can do this because he's playing farther out than in a high school wing T. Since our WB almost always goes in motion, if the defense slanted on our WB motion, it would always slant towards the SE. This is fine unless we are running the "8" hole. We can tell if a defense is slanting with our motion or not simply by watching the DE on the WB side. If he is, as our WB goes in motion, the DE will take a hard, inside rush after our WB passes him. This, of course, is why we always watch the near DE. If we do see the DE slanting or moving in the same direction as our WB, we automatically know to run outside him. We can do so two different ways. We can "load" block him with the FB or "option" him with the QB. Shown below are the two possible examples of a DE slanting inside to gap "7" on our WB's motion:



In the example on the left, the DE is moving “in motion” with our WB to reach gap “7”. In the example on the right, he’s racing to get there, post snap. Notice, however, that he’s moving in the opposite direction of the play. That’s because we have called “sucker” motion by the WB (“jet”). We are deliberately giving the DE a “crash” read while letting our FB “load” him inside, leaving our HB free to run the undefended gaps “8” and “9”. If the cornerback is also following the WB’s motion, we’ll be running to “open area”.

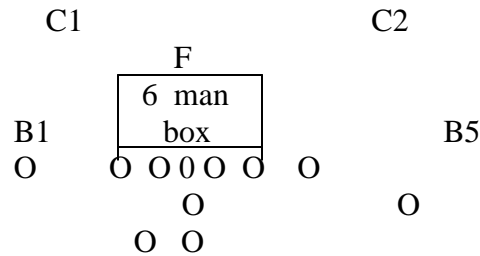
“6” Techs: Another rare, but possible defense you might encounter will be to line a defender “head up” over our TE to keep him from blocking a linebacker. This is shown below on the left, with the solution, “FB On” shown on the right:



By going “FB On” we let the FB hit the defender over our TE and then circle the TE around him through the “big hole” to get to his assigned linebacker. Notice, the FB is still blocking his normal assigned defender, the DE.

TESTING THE READS

As I was writing this, a coach had posted on the internet a defense that was said to stop the “Rocket” sweep. I asked this coach if I could test my reads against his defense and he was kind enough to agree. Thus, we “played a game” of my offense versus his defense on the internet. I did not know how his defense worked and so I called a “wedge” from “mini” splits on first down in order to get my reads. This is how the defense lined up on me. I would not have been able to see more than this on the first play:



I first counted the defenders outside the “box” – or five (B1, C1, F, C2, and B5). I knew that B1 and B5 had to be outside linebackers with some sort of pass coverage because, against my two receivers outside the box on the right, there were only two defenders. Therefore, B5 could not be a DE. I also knew that I was facing a “6 man box” (11-5=6). When the WB went in motion, C2 moved, making me think I had man coverage (C2 actually only moved to take my TE. It’s called “bump down”). Knowing a “6 man box likes to blitz (He did but could not get through my “mini” splits), I promptly ran the “Freeze” play where the QB would read B2 to see if he followed my HB in motion. If B2 followed my HB the QB would keep and follow the FB on “23 Lead”, running right at the spot B2 vacated. If B2 didn’t follow my HB in motion, the QB would throw to him. Either way, I’m about to make big yards or “something’s wrong”.

I did not make big yards. Something was wrong (A common feature with “Cover 3”). C1 followed the HB out and the QB threw to the HB when B2 didn’t move. **B2 was not in man coverage on the HB. He was in zone.** C1 made the tackle. I was in third down but now I knew that B5 was not in man coverage but had the flats in zone. So I threw an easy quick slant to the WB and hit him for the first down. I was in “maxi” splits and the “D” blitzed again but, with no drop step by my QB, he completed the throw without being sacked. Here is the other coach’s reply:

"Your quick slant to motioning WB is probably a good call and a completion but he's (most likely) going to get drilled by F (biggest stud on the team who is keying QB at the snap so he'll see the pass coming all the way... be careful here)...If your WB is tough enough to take that all day, more power to him and you since I won't be able to stop this without having a B try to jump the route."

I had no intention of throwing this pass all day. Instead, next time I threw it, it would be as a “quick hitch” where the WB laterals the ball back to the TE outside him after the catch. With both F and C2 homing in on the WB, the TE should score. As he noted:

"... if I got you running Hook-n-Ladders and various passes to move the ball I'd say I'm doing ok against a Wing T....Just MHO"

And that observation is correct. I did not go to this play as my fourth play. With a “6 man box” the reads of this manual tell you to “go outside” (Only “go inside” with the QB). Since there were two defenders outside the box on the left (B1 and C1) to my one blocker (the SE), it was to my advantage to pull the LG and run right where I had two blockers to his two defenders from “mini” splits. The call selected was “36 Toss”. Running it to the right with my SE lined up as a TE backside (“Super” call), my WB in motion tracked block as my LG and SE pulled. The TE tracked for S (his linebackers were up to blitz making “S” nearest linebacker), the FB took B5 and QB stalked C2. The HB runs through what looks like a helluva big hole due to the fact that there is no “**4 yard wide wall**” to beat. I was pretty sure I seeing daylight here. But was it a mirage?

Nope! Here was his reply:

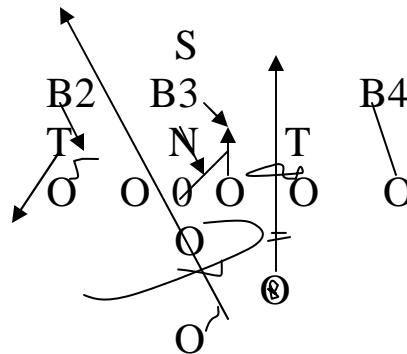
“I would need to know that you run Toss ahead of time to set things up correctly I suppose.”

He got hammered. Who knows how far the HB would have run? C1 was the only defender with a chance to make the tackle. So, in four plays, using the manual’s reads, against an unexpected zone defense, and not knowing what the “6” in the box were doing, I had a back bust loose down field. And, I also knew that anytime I needed a “quick touchdown”, the “hitch and lateral” was open (**).

How would he adjust to this? His reply:

*“Unstacking the OLB as soon as WB motion happens and then crashing him *behind* the WB could give you a few headaches too I imagine...”*

He’s talking about having a linebacker leave the box on WB’s motion. But WB goes in motion every down. As soon as I see a backer jumping out of the box every down, I know the former “6 man box” is now a “5 man box”. That tells me to run to the right of my center (The area the back vacated.) as WB automatically goes in motion. Here is how he defended that:



After B4 jumped out of the box on WB’s motion, N slanted to the “2” hole and B#3 blitzed the “4” hole. It was a very good move on his part since he (evidently) had figured out I was going to run here.

* The DC Wing T does not consider linebackers moved up (in this case “stacked”) to blitz as linebackers but as additional down linemen. The TE would ignore B4.

** The “Quick Pass and lateral” to the SE with lateral back to the HB was also open, as was “Swap Slot, 45 Toss”.

I countered it three different ways. First, I went to “maxi” splits. I now had “five” on his “five” so I was no longer worried about the blitz coming from the “box”. Next, I called “HB Over, 34 quick Counter”. This allowed me to hand off very quickly to the HB before he could close the “4” hole down (The WB in motion tracked blocked S.). It also allowed me to fake a double dive handoff to the FB running “23 Counter”. My left DT should have picked up B2 allowing the FB to hit “green grass”. If I watched the FB (instead of the HB) I would see him break into the clear and my next call would have been “HB Over, 23 Counter”. So I gave him wide splits and two different ball carriers in two different holes to deal with.

His reply:

"You might recall from an earlier post I mentioned that the backside (assuming I was setting up to defend Toss Strong) might provide a good place to find an unoccupied gap...Your (34) 'Quick' appears to have located that seam...Well done. This leaves only F and maybe a C to make a down field tackle."

Another team had also run “crossbuck” on him last year (double dive) and the FB had scored 14 points in that game:

"They faked the HB strong and cross-bucked the FB back to the weakside. FB would read the base block and cut accordingly...14 of their 19 points came from the FB Counter play and then faking this and running PA Pass and catching my F biting hard on the play fake."

This is pretty much the exact same play as my “HB Over, 23 Counter”.

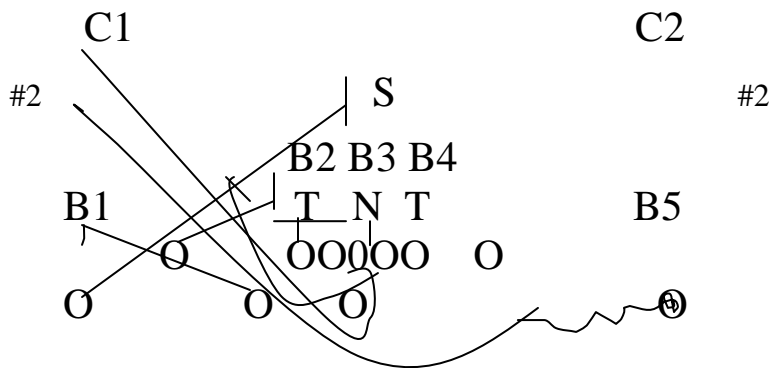
His defense, shown complete on the next page, does indeed stop “47 Speed” as claimed. B1 is too far out to be load blocked by our HB or cracked by our SE. The solution would be to run inside him from “Slot” formation. With the HB in “Slot”, I could run “Slot Swap, 45 Toss” inside B1 or “Slot, 36 Toss” the other way inside B5. His reply:

"I'm going to respectfully bow out of the discussion about slotting your HB because I know it's a good adjustment and although I'm pretty sure I could adjust equally well to it I can see where it might lead us both into a circular argument with each of us tweaking things to make our scheme work vs. what the other guy does."

He had beaten five wing T teams with this defense last year so I took it as a compliment when he added:

"FWIW- The WingT's I faced last season weren't nearly as dynamic as yours. I don't believe their coaches were as well studied as you are either."

Now I didn’t apply all the reads to this defense. For example, when he went to a “5 man box” I didn’t trap him. I also didn’t count the down linemen (six – or the entire box). B1 and B5 were outside linebackers and wouldn’t have been counted. The “six down linemen” read would have told me to go to “trips” and then “scheme” the odd defender. The “Trips” formation would have looked like this:



According to our math, we will put five of the six box defenders in conflict and then have to “scheme” how to get the last. Immediate conflicts do occur for the defense. B1 can now be kicked by our FB on “45 Toss” shown above and our stud HB is now blocking their stud S. With the QB blocking the corner, everyone is blocked except the DT/B2 stack. This is the block we would have to “scheme out” and our solution would be to tell the SE to track block across the heels of the DT defender in front of our LT. Obviously, a “Trips” call is made based on scouting so that you can “scheme” out the odd blocking assignment and practice it during your pregame week.

The passing areas that are open from “Trips” are the #2’s **as well as the slants**. “Slant” passes are open against any zone defense because they allow you to throw to the areas between the zones. The “Trips” formation, by maximizing your number of receivers, allows you to maximize your number of slant passing opportunities.

In sum: Count the defenders outside the “box” before your WB goes in motion to get the coverage. Subtract that from 11 to get the “box”. Check to see if anyone follows your WB in motion presnap and then watch the end man on the LOS (EMLOS) post snap to see what he does. Now run where they ain’t. To stay balanced use the following formations:

- 11) Super 12) Slot 13) Slot On 14) Backs Over
- 15) Ends Over 16) HB Over, TE Over 17) Flip

If you need to unbalance, either to gain an advantage or to run back the other way, here are your unbalanced formation calls to do that:

- 1) Slot Over 2) TE Over 3) HB Over 4) WB Over
- 5) SE Over 6) FB Over 7) FB On 8) Tight Right

If you have scouted the defense, here are your “Trips” calls versus six down linemen:

- 9) Trips Left 10) Trips Right

BELLY SERIES

The “Belly” series is the only option series in this manual. It is named for the fact that you just keep putting the ball in the belly of the fullback until somebody comes inside to stop him and then you take the ball outside whoever the “somebody is.” There are two types of belly series. There is the more common fullback belly (outside belly) and the less common quarterback belly (inside belly). In the “outside belly”, the FB runs “26”. In the “inside belly” he runs “24”. We run the inside belly – But we can also run “26”.

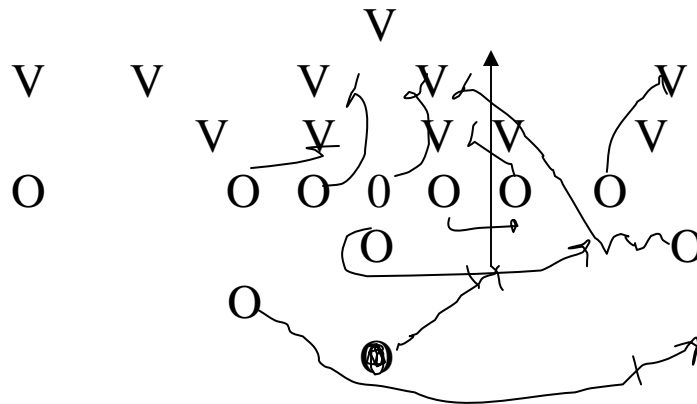
We run “inside belly” because it allows us to utilize the simplest of all option plays; the “lead option”. Here, the QB options the DE. This is an easy youth option because DE’s seldom “crash” inside. Thus, the QB is not hurried in his pitch and this leads to better execution. We also use “inside belly” because only one out three plays to each side (“24”, “16”, and “38 Option” to the right) involves a pitch (“38 Option”) and the fewer times we pitch, the fewer fumbles we’ll have.

Although both the FB and QB plays work very well by themselves, if you try and run the “belly” series without teaching the option, the defense has no reason to assign a defender to follow the pitchman. In that case, if they don’t follow the pitchman, you’ll run into an extra defender. You might be able to get around this by running the “belly counter” series which is the belly offense without a pitchman. This is shown at the end of this section. If you opt for this, you’ll have the same problem of no one following your WB on plays to the left. In that case, he would either run flat, fast motion right behind the QB at snap (“Jet”) or turn up through the “6” hole just as does on plays to the right.

The Belly series utilizes a QB with running skills. It’s best to have two QB’s trained to run this offense in case your #1 running QB gets hurt or misses a game.

The plays follow:

“24 Cross”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Cross block. Note: You can also run this play without “cross”.

Right Tackle: Cross Block, tackle first

Left Guard: Reach

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Reverse pivot, hand to FB. Sweep

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut up into #4 hole for handoff.

HB: Run pitch

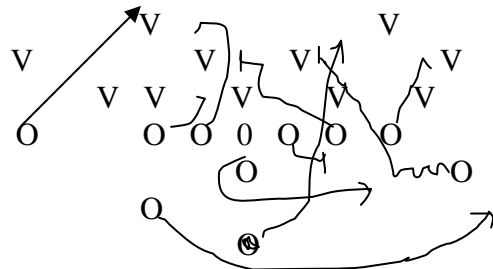
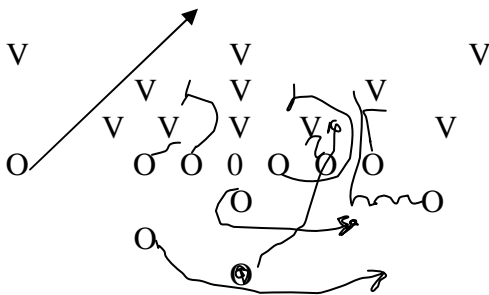
WB: Inside linebacker. Because of the “cross” call, he runs the “6” hole instead of the “4” but skips his “track blocking” since the run is to the “4’ hole.

SE: Post (The SE always posts on plays away)

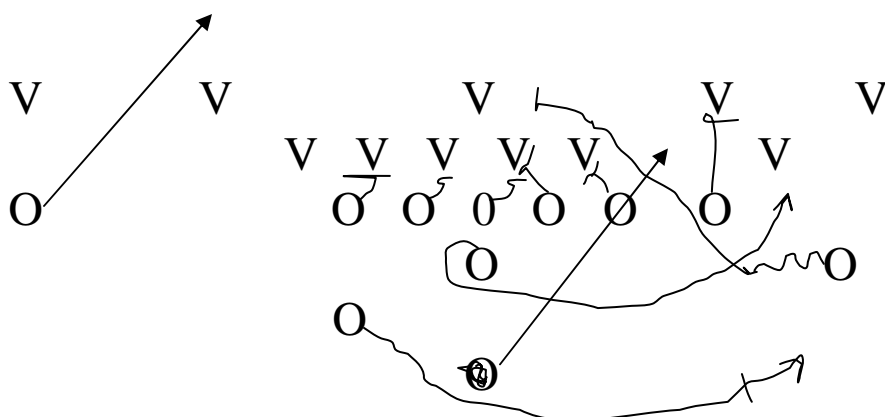
TE: Nearest linebacker (Defined as “nearest 2nd row defender”)

SNAP COUNT: “2”

COACHING POINTS: Have the QB step outside and fake a pitch to the HB after the handoff. By adding the cue “Cross” to the play call, the play side guard and tackle would cross block, outside man first. The “cross” is normally called when there are two safeties deep. Otherwise, the “cross is often called off. It can also be run as “24 Jet” or “24 Power”. **Make sure the FB does not read the DT on “Cross”.**



“24”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Guard: Reach

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Reverse pivot, hand off to FB, sweep hole #8, and fake option pitch to HB.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, read the DT, and run #4 or cut outside and run #6.

HB: Run pitch.

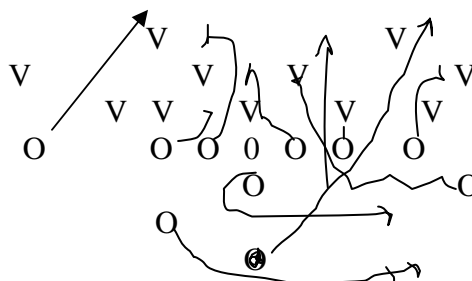
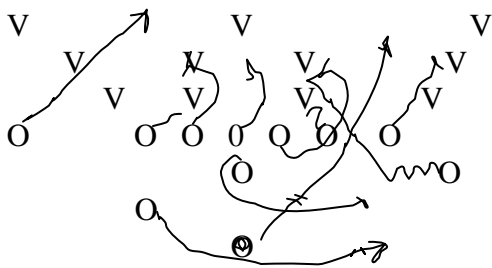
WB: Inside linebacker (skip “track blocking” since run is not to # 6 hole)

SE: Post

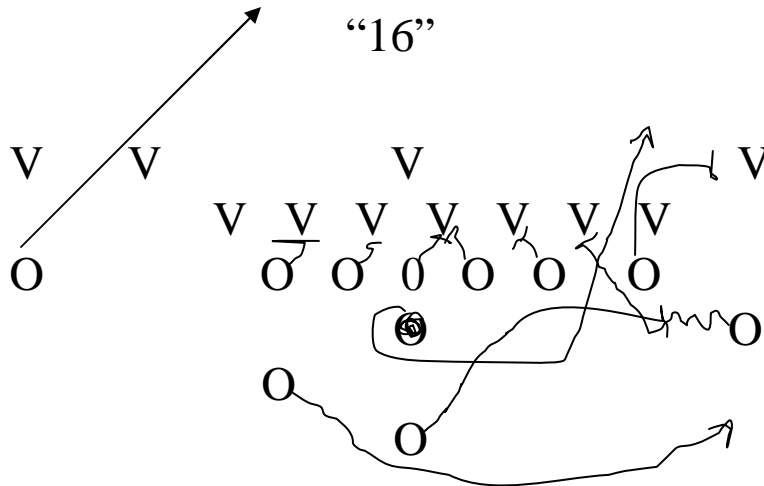
TE: Nearest LBer

SNAP COUNT: 2

Coaching Points: This play allows for a more “square hit” to the hole by the runner than does “16”. Like most FB plays, it works best against a two safety defense. The “24” can also be run with a “Draw” call. The WB can go through the “4’ hole as shown below right.



This is the “24 Cross” without the “cross”.

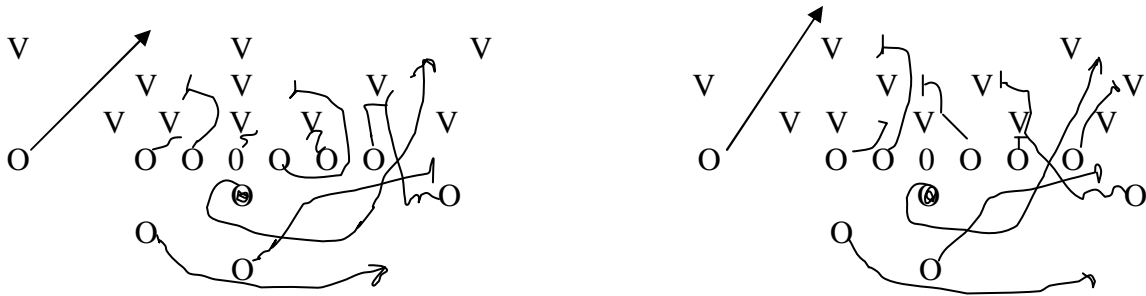


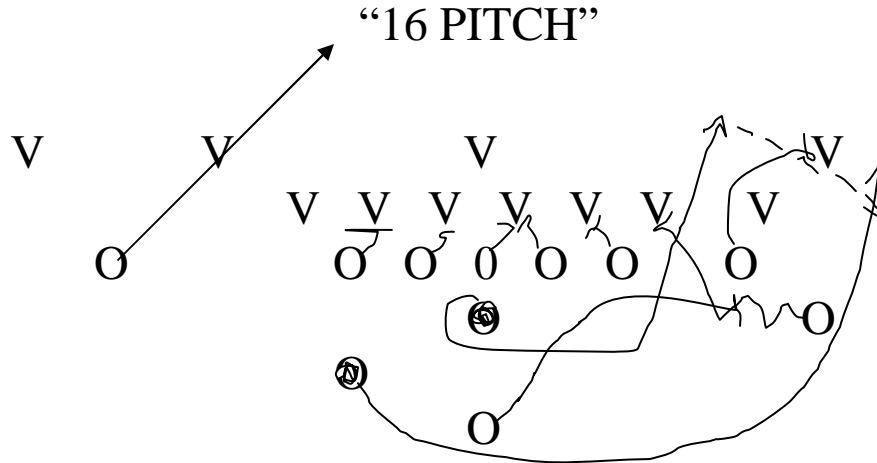
Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.
 Right Guard: GOL
 Right Tackle: GOL
 Left Guard: Reach
 Left Tackle: Reach
 QB: Reverse pivot, sweep hole #6
 FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut outside and block DE.
 HB: Run pitch
 WB: Track block to inside LBer
 SE: Post
 TE: Nearest LBer

SNAP COUNT: "2"

COACHING POINTS: The QB gets behind, and slightly deeper than, the FB and follows him to the hole. If he does not follow the FB, the QB will have a hard time finding the hole. There is a fake handoff to the FB in that the FB puts his hands up and the QB puts the ball out, but no effort is made to actually put the ball in the FB's stomach or make a fake pitch to the HB. The QB tucks the ball and GOES! The FB must be careful to take his first three steps at the OT before attacking the line side shoulder of the DE.

Coaching variation: **By calling "Fake 24, 16" you will get a double team on the inside linebacker with the FB and WB. The DE is left unblocked as "too far out".**



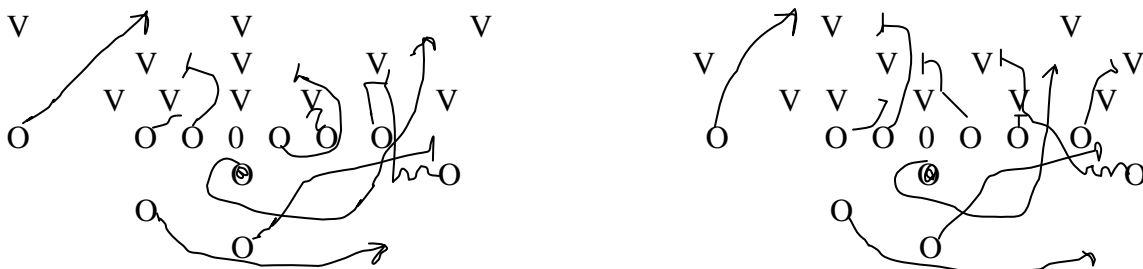


Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.
 Right Guard: GOL
 Right Tackle: GOL
 Left Guard: Reach
 Left Tackle: Reach
 QB: Reverse pivot, sweep hole #6. On the 3rd step through the hole, pitch to the HB.
 FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut outside and block DE.
 HB: Run pitch. Do not get ahead of QB.
 WB: Track block in inside LBer
 SE: Post
 TE: Nearest LBer

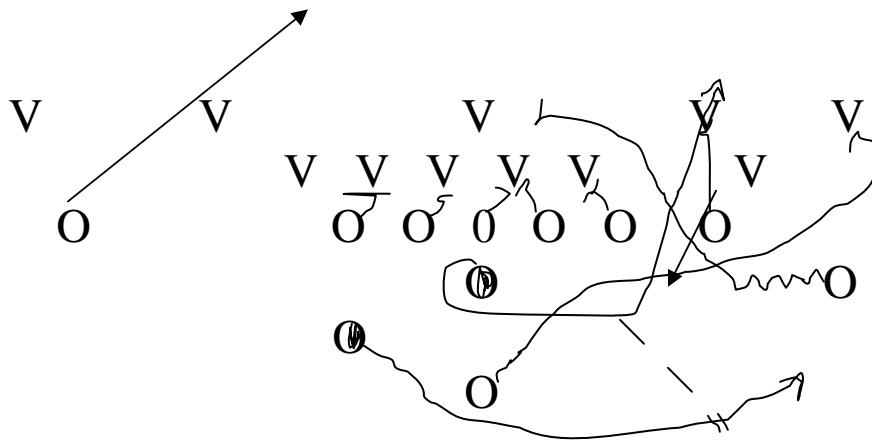
SNAP COUNT: "2"

COACHING POINTS: The QB gets behind the FB and follows him to the hole. If he does not follow the FB, the QB will have a hard time finding the hole. There is no fake handoff to the FB or fake pitch to the HB. The QB tucks the ball and then pitches once he's through the hole. He should be slightly deeper off the LOS than usual in order to avoid being tackled by "leaks". The FB must be careful to take his first three steps at the OT before attacking the far shoulder of the DE. He can use the "push-pull" technique to control the DE. You can also have the TE and WB reverse assignments with the WB blocking the inside gap and TE taking "nearest linebacker".

This play can also be run from "Split Right" formation.



38 Option



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Guard: Reach

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Reverse pivot, sweep hole #6 or option pitch to HB off DE.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut outside and block #1 outside defender.

HB: Run pitch. Take the pitch and run it all the way to the outside.

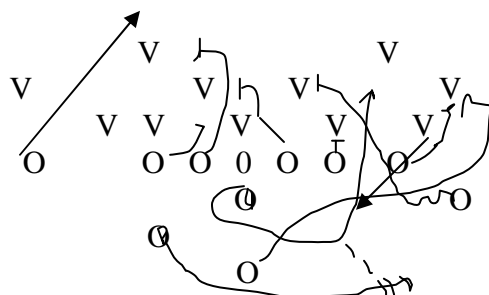
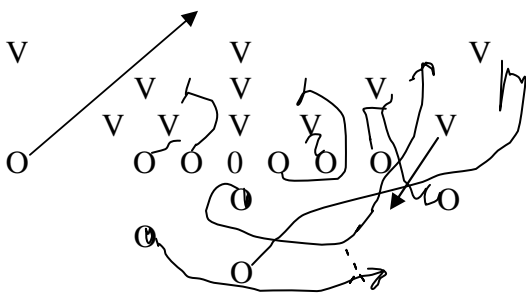
WB: Inside linebacker

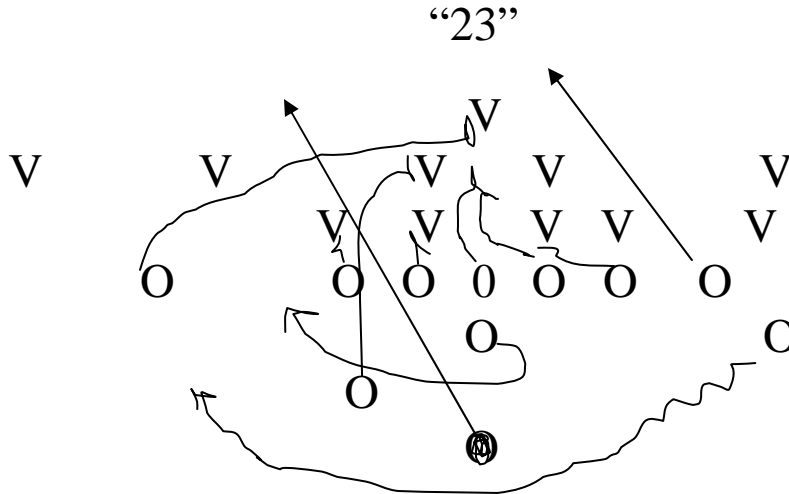
SE: Post

TE: Nearest LBer

SNAP COUNT: 2

Coaching Points: QB must break down and come to a stop before pitching. Use a rib protector. If concerned the defender will deliberately hurt QB, have QB put his hands out in front of himself, palms up, after pitching and fall down. The HB takes the ball outside the FB's block **WITHOUT CUTTING BACK**. He is to run the sideline for the TD or first down. The FB can use "push/pull" on the #1 outside defender for his load block.





Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL (or cross block on "23 Cross")

Left Tackle: GOL (or cross block on "23 cross")

QB: Reverse pivot, hand to FB. Sweep

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut up into #3 hole for handoff.

HB: First linebacker starting from in front of the left guard and going to the left (On "Cross" call take sideways step with either left or right foot before diving to avoid the crossing linemen.).

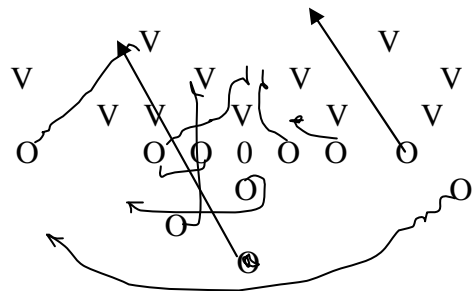
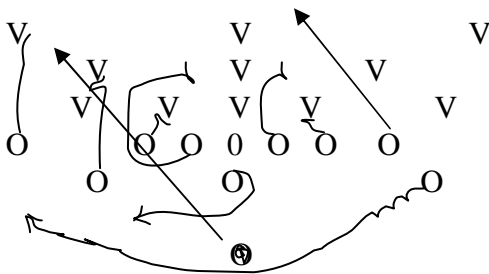
WB: Motion left.

SE: Nearest, deepest defender

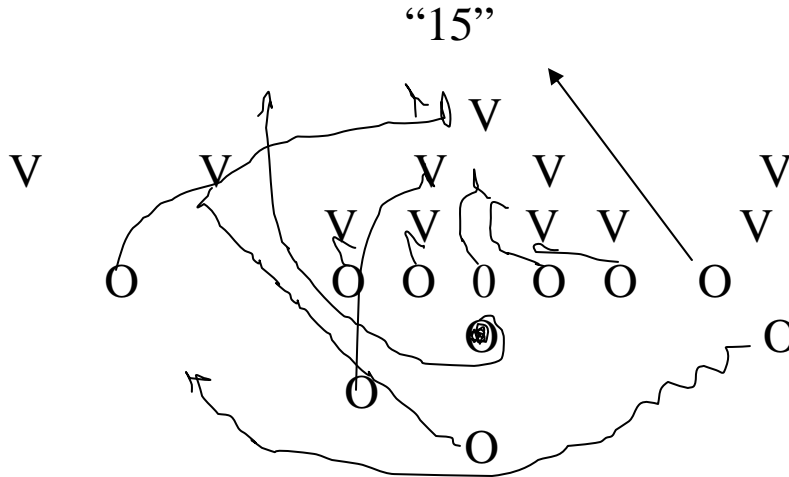
TE: Post

SNAP COUNT: "2"

COACHING POINTS: Have the QB step outside and fake a pitch to the WB after the handoff. By adding the cue "Cross" to the play call, the play side guard and tackle would cross block, outside man first. The "cross" is normally called when there are two safeties deep. This is shown below on the right. The lower left shows the play run from "slot" formation. The lower left play could also be run as "25 Power" which would add the WB as a blocker on the playside DE.



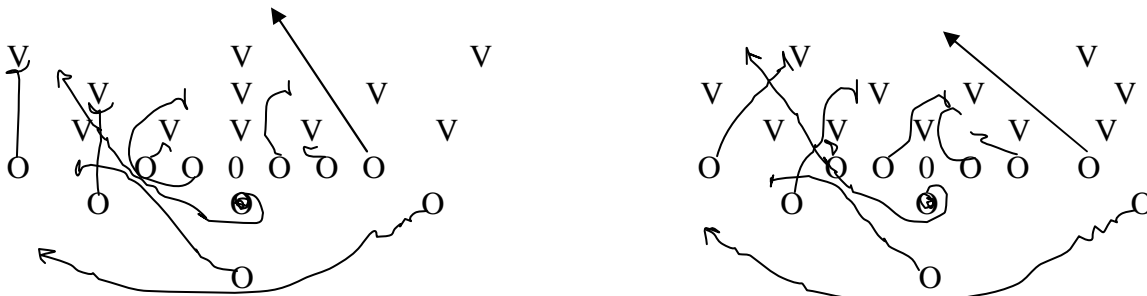
"23 Cross"



- Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.
- Right Guard: Reach
- Right Tackle: Reach
- Left Guard: GOL (or cross block on “23 Cross”)
- Left Tackle: GOL (or cross block on “23 cross”)
- QB: Reverse pivot, keep inside the FB’s block
- FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, ten kick out DE.
- HB: First linebacker starting from in front of the left guard and going to the left
- WB: Motion to 47 Option (Can block corner).
- SE: Nearest, deepest defender
- TE: Post

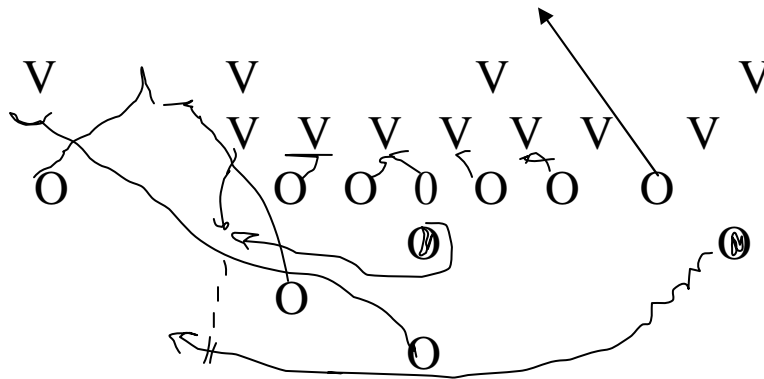
SNAP COUNT: “2”

COACHING POINTS: Against most defenses, this play will be hard to run from the base formation as the DE will be in tight. However, if he DE is in “tight” then just run either 47 Gut Speed” or “47 Option” until he moves out. To force the DE to move out, you can run the play from “Super”, “Slot”, or “TE Over”. “Slot” is shown below.



Note that in the example on the right, the HB “chip” blocked the DT getting to his linebacker. This is done “hip to hip”.

“47 OPTION”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Reverse pivot, option DE

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut outside to log block #1 outside defender

WB: Run pitch.

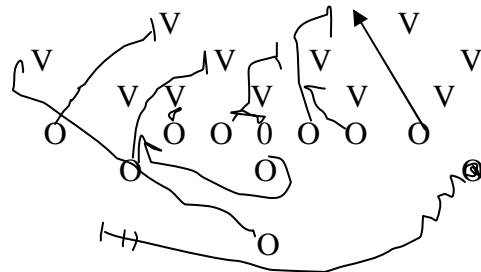
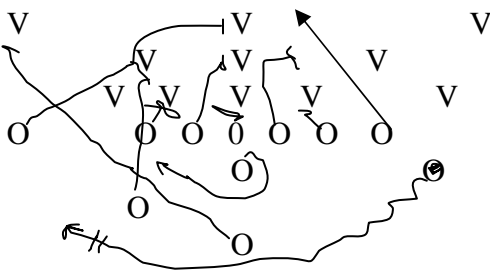
HB: First linebacker starting from in front of the left guard and going to the left to slot

SE: Block nearest, DEEPEST defender inside you.

TE: Post

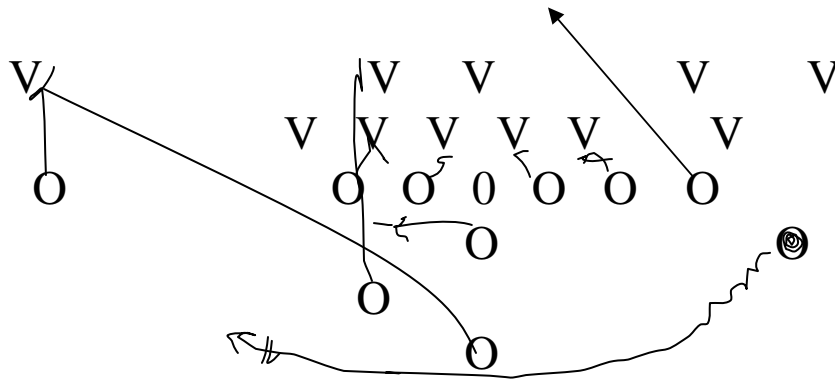
SNAP COUNT: 2

COACHING POINTS: Make sure FB takes his three steps. This “freezes” the inside LBer who doesn’t know if the FB is getting the ball and running “B” gap or if he’s going to block outside for a running play to “C” or “D”. QB needs to attack the inside shoulder of the DE. Once the WB takes the pitch, he must run all the way to the sideline without cutting back on the defense and then go AROUND the FB’s block. The WB needs to be behind the RT and 3 steps behind him on snap (the HB position).



Slot

FAKE 33, 47 OPTION



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

TE: Post

QB: Open pivot, fake handoff to HB, and option DE.

FB: Block #1 outside defensive back

WB: Run pitch.

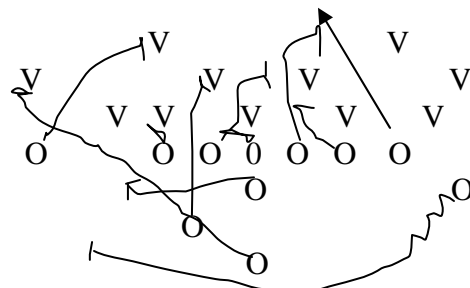
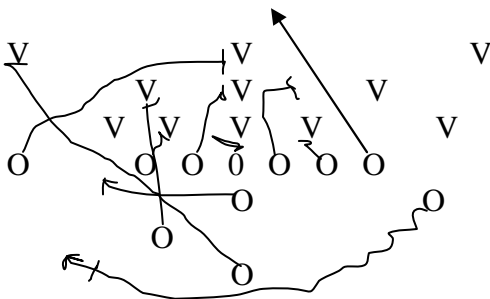
HB: Line up on hole #3. Run straight ahead for the fake handoff.

SE: Block nearest, DEEPEST defender.

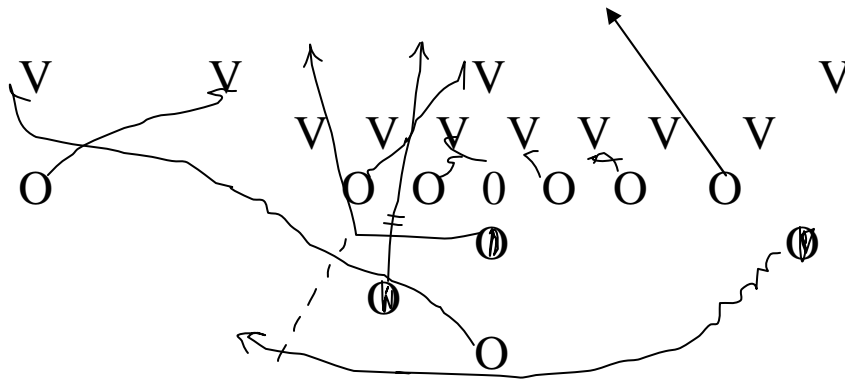
SNAP COUNT: 2

COACHING POINTS: Make sure QB holds the ball out in front of himself and the hole. Make sure the FB takes his 3 steps. This “freezes” the DE who doesn’t know if the ball is going inside or not. QB needs to break down for option to WB afterwards. In the above example, the center has helped the LG, which can allow the LG to then release to a linebacker afterwards.

Selling the inside run is the objective here.



“33 TRAP OPTION”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: Nearest LBer

QB: Open pivot, read first helmet on or outside LT for keep/handoff. If “keep”, option DE.

FB: Log block #1 outside linebacker.

WB: Run pitch.

HB: Line up on hole #3. Run straight ahead for the handoff.

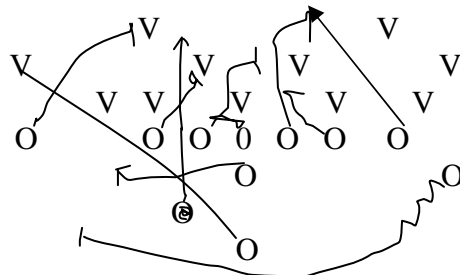
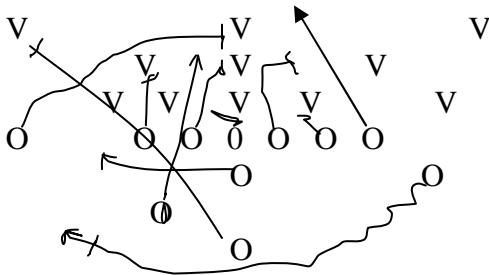
SE: Block nearest, DEEPEST defender inside you.

TE: Post

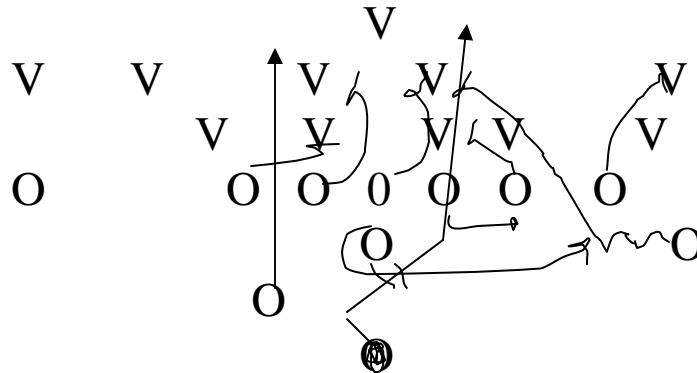
SNAP COUNT: 2

COACHING POINTS: Use a “Maxi” call. Make sure QB holds the ball out in front of himself and the hole. If handoff read, QB needs to carry out option fake to WB afterwards.

This is the famous, “inside veer triple option” play.



“24 Counter”



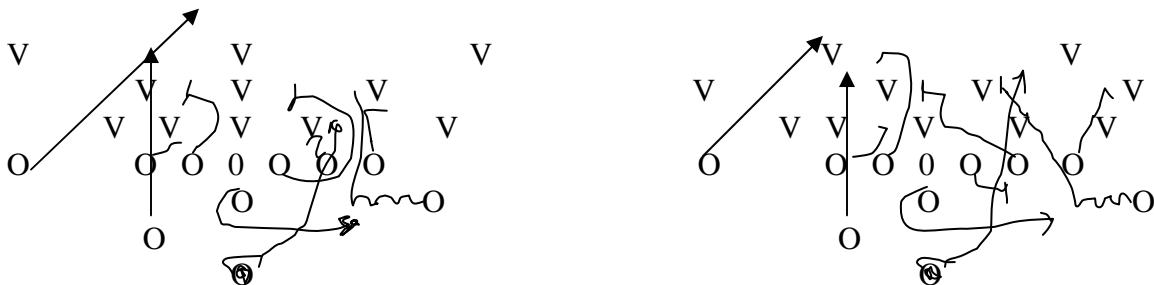
If you do not have an option QB, you can run the “24” play like this (The play shown above is “24 Counter Cross”). The blocking is EXACTLY the same. The only two players who do anything different are the HB and FB. The HB runs straight ahead while the FB takes a jab step left, turning his head left at the same time, and then run to the “4” hole for the handoff. Note, if not for the “cross” block call, the WB could have led through the “4’ hole.

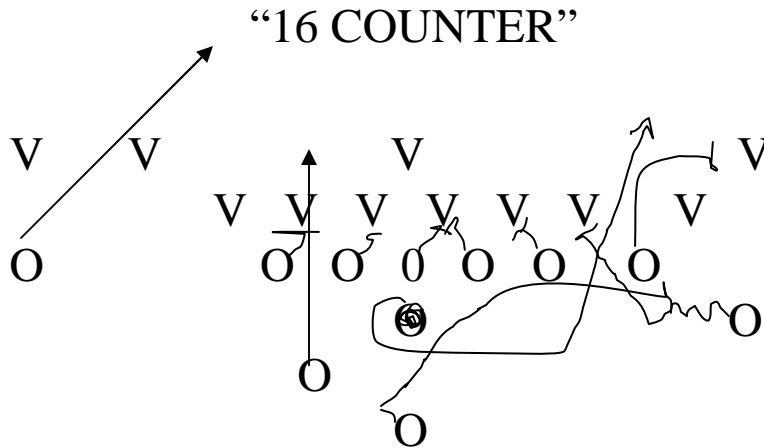
The action is designed to freeze the defense into believing the play is going to the left. This non-option feature is added because, otherwise, if you never pitch to the HB running the pitch route on the “belly” series, no one will cover him.

SNAP COUNT: “2”

COACHING POINTS: By adding the cue “Cross” to the play call, the play side guard and tackle would cross block, outside man first. The “cross” is normally called when there are two safeties deep. Otherwise, the “cross is often called off. It can also be run as “24 Jet”, “24 Power”, or “24 Draw”.

You should always run “24 Counter” with a reverse pivot by the QB. If the QB opens to the right to handoff on this play, then no one will fall for the “33 Quick” action by the HB and the FB’s counter step is wasted. The defense will follow the QB to the “4” hole.



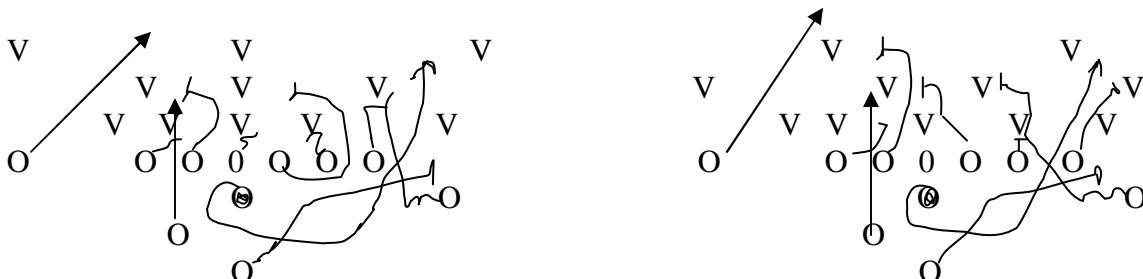


Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.
 Right Guard: GOL
 Right Tackle: GOL
 Left Guard: Reach
 Left Tackle: Reach
 QB: Reverse pivot, sweep hole #6
 FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut outside and block DE.
 HB: Run 33 Quick
 WB: Track block to inside LBer
 SE: Post
 TE: Nearest LBer

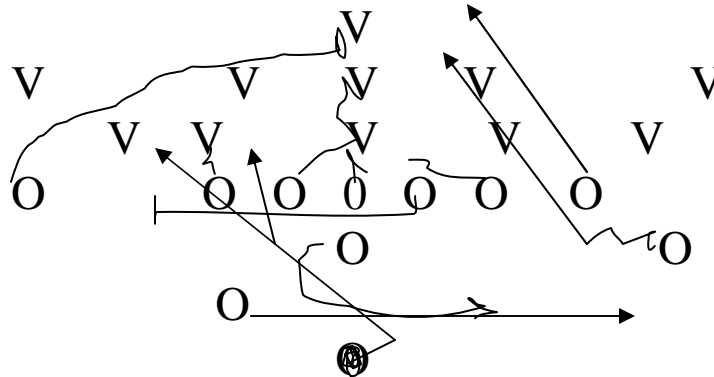
SNAP COUNT: “2”

COACHING POINTS: The QB gets behind, and slightly deeper than, the FB and follows him to the hole. If he does not follow the FB, the QB will have a hard time finding the hole. There is a fake handoff to the FB in that the FB puts his hands up and the QB puts the ball out, but no effort is made to actually put the ball in the FB’s stomach or make a fake pitch to the HB. The QB tucks the ball and GOES! The FB must be careful to take his first three steps at the OT before attacking the line side shoulder of the DE.

Coaching variation: By calling “16 Pitch”, the QB will stop and pitch the ball to the HB after he has taken three steps through the “6” hole.



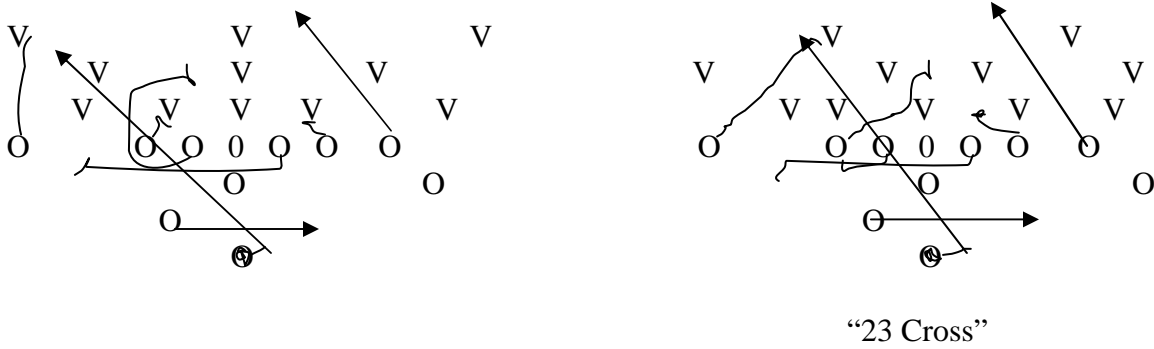
“Right Kick 23 Counter”



- Center: Step with right foot, looking to cover for the pulling RG
- Right Guard: Pull right and Kick
- Right Tackle: Reach
- Left Guard: GOL (or cross block on “23 Cross”)
- Left Tackle: GOL (or cross block on “23 cross”)
- QB: Reverse pivot, hand to FB. Sweep
- FB: False step right, cut up into #3 hole for handoff.
- HB: Run right.
- WB: Motion left, cut up into “6” hole (“Right”).
- SE: Nearest, deepest defender
- TE: Post

SNAP COUNT: “2”

COACHING POINTS: Have the QB put his left hand out as the HB as he passes, but do not extend the ball. Hand off to the FB with the ball in the right hand. step outside and fake a pitch to the WB after the handoff. By adding the cue “Cross” to the play call, the play side guard and tackle would cross block, outside man first. The “cross” is normally called when there are two safeties deep. This is shown below on the right. The lower left shows the play run from “slot” formation. The lower left play could also be run as “25 Power” which would add the WB as a blocker on the playside DE.

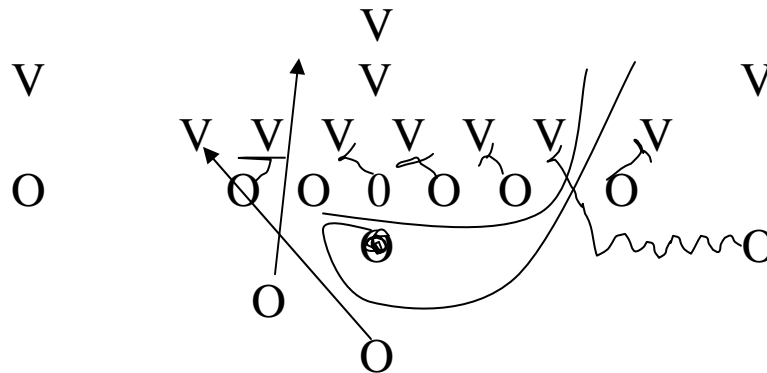


BELLY COUNTERS

The belly counters are complimentary plays to the “Belly” series. They start out looking like the inside belly but then go the opposite direction.

Remember, the cue “Left” pulls the left guard to the right and tells the backfield to go left.

“LEFT 16 SWEEP”



Center: Step off on left foot. Engage left side defender first, then NG

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Guard: pull to the run hole called and pull up through it, blocking back inside for a linebacker.

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Reverse pivot, sweep hole #6, placing football on the right hip for first few steps.

FB: Head at outside foot of left OT. Block DE. Click shoulderpads with the QB and pretend to have the ball.

HB: Dive left – Pretend to have the ball.

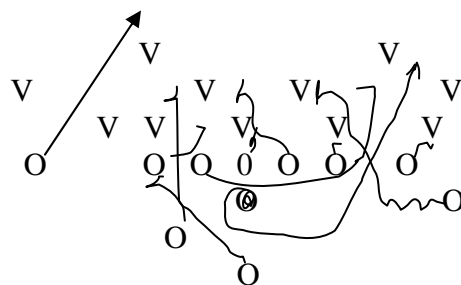
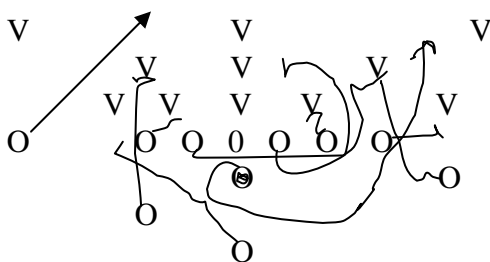
WB: “Track” block

SE: Post

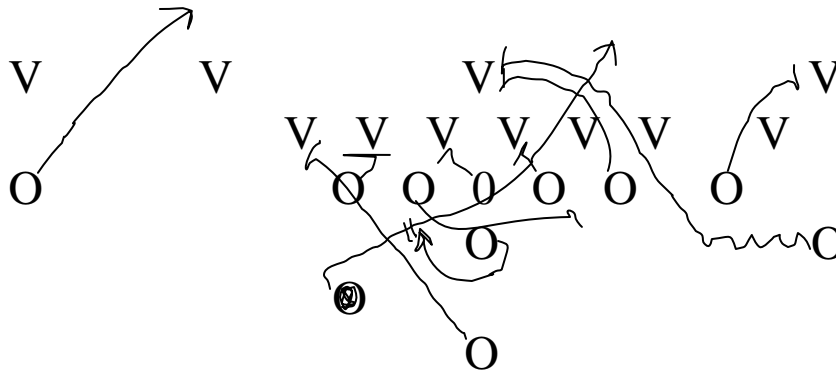
TE: Sweep block DE

SNAP COUNT: “2”

COACHING POINTS: This play is simply a QB bootleg with a pulling blocker. It can also be run from “Split Right” formation.



“LEFT 32 TRAP”



Center: Block left first. If no defender in your gap, block straight ahead.

Right Guard: Take extra one foot split. Gap or help center

Right Tackle: Block nearest LBer.

Left Guard: Pull to hole called and kick out outside edge defender.

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Pivot right. Get in “23” hand off position, hand to HB in front of you, and then bootleg “15”. QB and FB should pass very close together. There is no fake handoff to FB

FB: Head left at outside foot of OT for 3 steps. Block first wrong colored jersey.

WB: Inside LBer. Since play is inside the “6” hole, skip “track” block.

HB: Take misdirection step left, cut right for handoff, follow left guard to hole #2.

SE: Post

TE: Nearest Linebaker

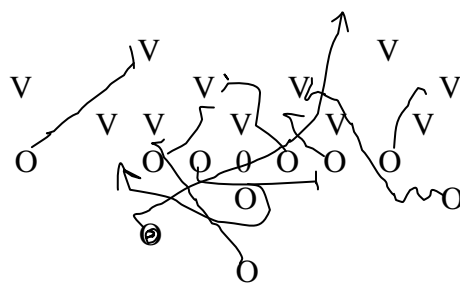
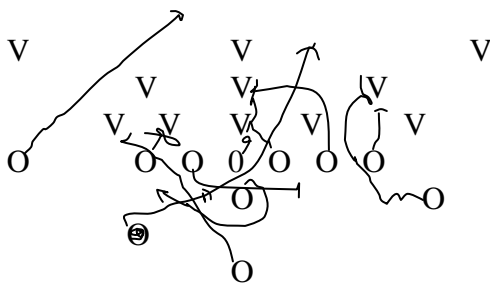
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: Make sure HB turns his head left with his misdirection step. The pulling left guard should try and kick his man out but may have to go into the hole to find him. QB shows ball to the FB and then puts ball in HB’s belly as HB cuts behind FB.

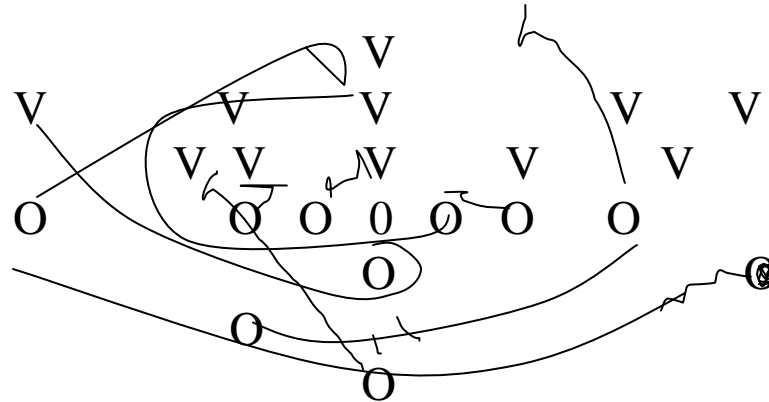
The HB aims for the outside hip of the center and the QB pretends to still have the ball.

Make sure the pulling guard throws his right elbow back as they pull. Against the 5-3, shown below, it is recommended the right tackle doubleteam the TE’s man as shown.

This play is designed to look like the “23” call.



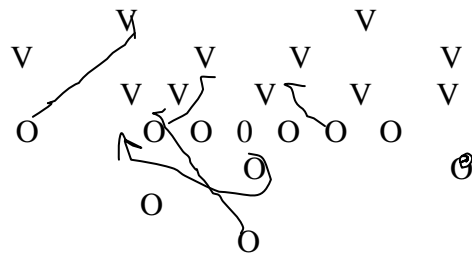
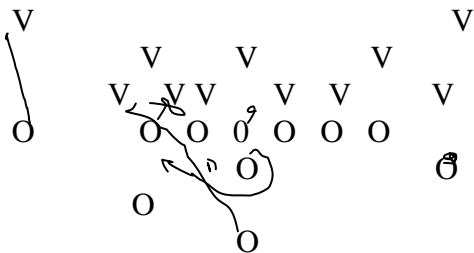
“47 Toss Reverse”



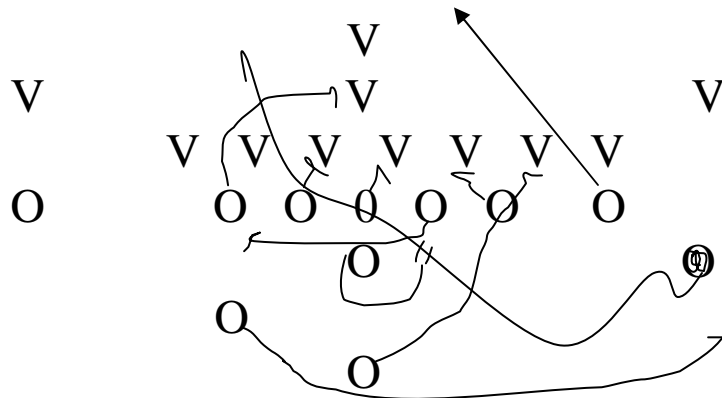
- Center: Block right first. If no defender in your gap, block straight ahead.
- Right Guard: Pull left and follow QB, taking first linebacker to show.
- Right Tackle: Reach
- Left Guard: GOL
- Left Tackle: GOL
- QB: Pivot right and hand to HB in front of you, and then bootleg “17” as lead blocker.
- FB: Left side DE.
- WB: Use short, slow motion from extra split. Take reverse handoff behind RT.
- HB: Run 36, hand ball back to WB on your outside shoulder.
- SE: Nearest, deepest defender
- TE: Post

SNAP COUNT: 2

COACHING POINTS:



“RIGHT 41 TRAP”



Center: Block right first. If no defender in your gap, block straight ahead.

Right Guard: Pull to hole called and kick out outside edge defender.

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: Gap or help center

Left Tackle: Nearest LBer

QB: Pivot left, get in “24” handoff position, hand to WB in front of you. Make sure handoff takes place in front of right guard or wider.

FB: 3 steps at outside foot of RT. Block first wrong colored jersey.

WB: Take three steps towards FB. Run between QB and RG for handoff.

HB: Sweep right

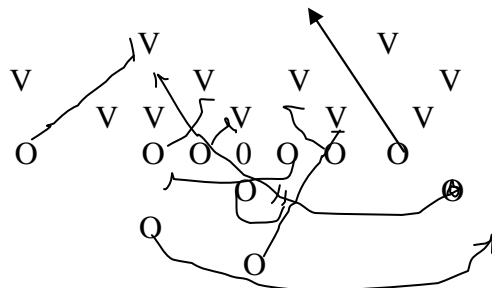
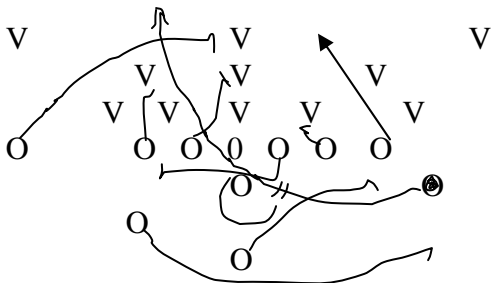
SE: Track block nearest, deepest defender

TE: Post

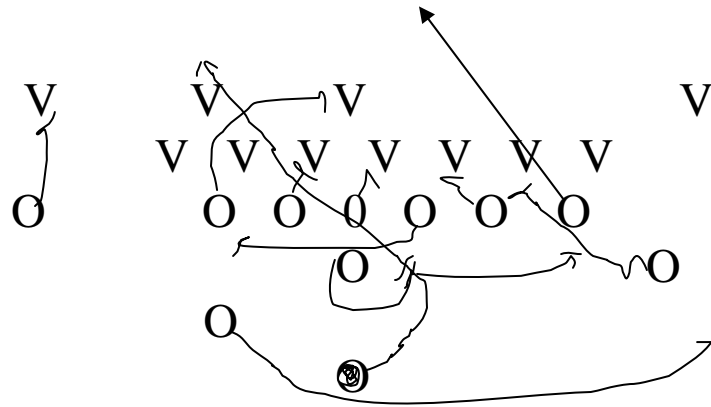
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: The pulling right guard should slightly turn up field in kicking his man out. Make sure the pulling guard throws his left elbow back as he pulls. QB shows ball with a quick jab out to the FB and then puts ball in WB’s belly who finds center’s far hip. The WB needs to get depth in order to berunning “downhill” for the handoff. He cuts off the pulling guard’s block (“See butt cut”).

This play is designed to look like the “24” call. It can also be called as “Jet, Right, 41 Trap”. You can also fake the handoff to the HB (“36”) instead of the FB.



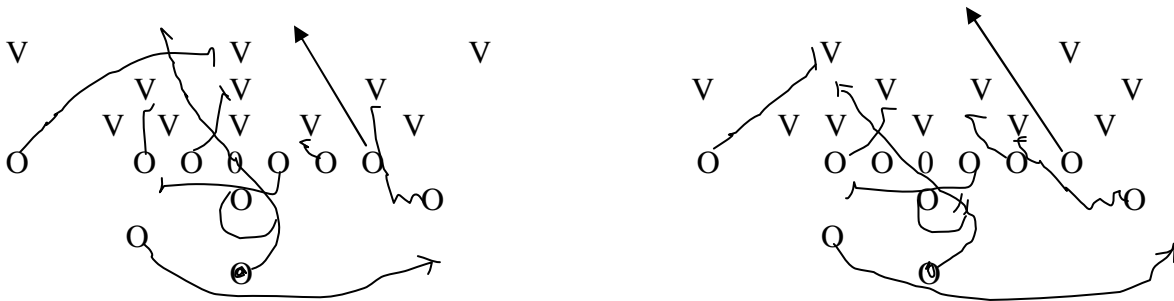
“RIGHT 21 TRAP”



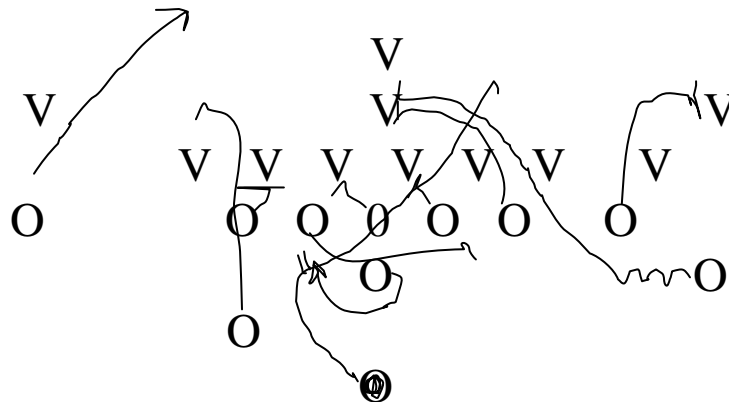
- Center: Block right first. If no defender in your gap, block straight ahead.
- Right Guard: Pull to hole called and kick out outside edge defender.
- Right Tackle: Reach
- Left Guard: Gap or help center
- Left Tackle: Nearest LBer
- QB: Pivot left, handoff to FB, and run option
- FB: Head right at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, then aim for far hip of center.
- WB: Track block (as if play is to right – i.e. listen to the direction call)
- HB: Sweep right
- SE: Track block nearest, deepest defender
- TE: Post

SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: The pulling right guard should try and kick his man out. QB hands off to the FB and then shows option to HB. He pretends to still have the ball. Make sure the pulling guard throws his left elbow back as he pulls. FB follows the pulling right guard to find the hole. This play is designed to look like the “24” call.



“LEFT 22 TRAP”



Center: Block left first. If no defender in your gap, block straight ahead.

Right Guard: Gap or help center

Right Tackle: Block nearest LBer.

Left Guard: Pull to hole called and kick out outside edge defender.

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Pivot right, handoff to FB, and bootleg

FB: Head left at outside foot of OT for 3 steps. Cut back to hole #2. Follow pulling guard to the hole.

WB: Inside LBer. Skip track blocking since play is to inside the “6” hole.

HB: Block outside LBer

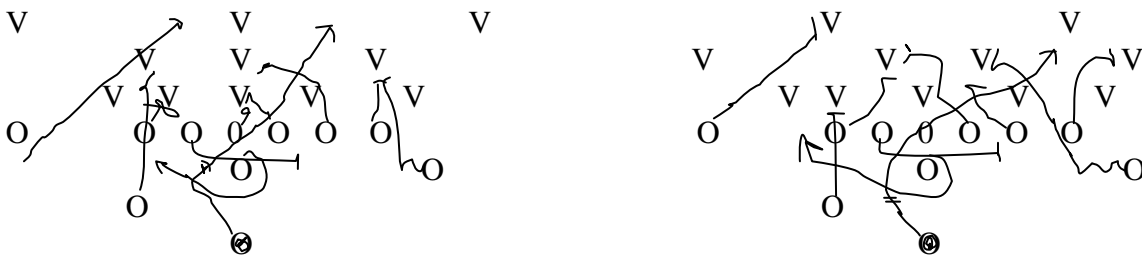
SE: Post

TE: Nearest LBer

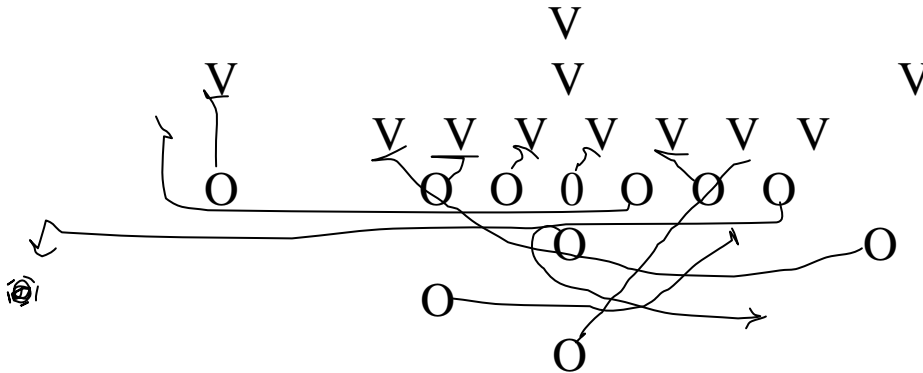
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: The pulling left guard should try and kick his man out. After handoff to the FB, when QB bootlegs, he pretends to still have the ball. Make sure the pulling guard throws his right elbow back as he pulls. Against the 5-3, shown below, it is recommended the right tackle double-team the TE’s man as shown.

This play is designed to look like the “23” call.



“RIGHT 67 SCREEN”

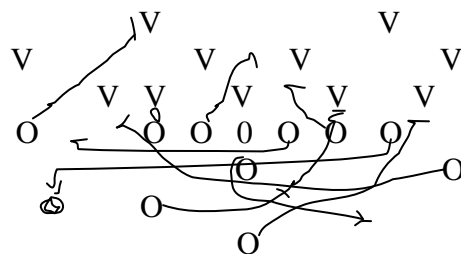
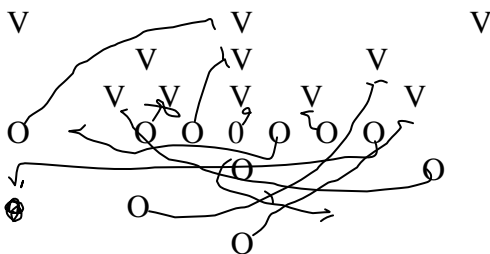


- Center: Block right gap first. If no defender in your gap, block straight ahead.
- Right Guard: pull to the run hole called and pull up through it, blocking back inside for a linebacker.
- Right Tackle: Reach.
- Left Guard: GOL.
- Left Tackle: GOL
- QB: Pivot left, fake handoff to HB, roll right, throw back left
- FB: Head right at outside foot of OT for 3 steps. Block DE.
- WB: Block backside DE – Note: This is not within his normal rules.
- HB: Run #6 hole for fake handoff. Block any defender in #6.
- SE: Block nearest, deepest defender
- TE: Reduce split and pull left for 3 seconds. Turn around. Catch pass behind the LOS!

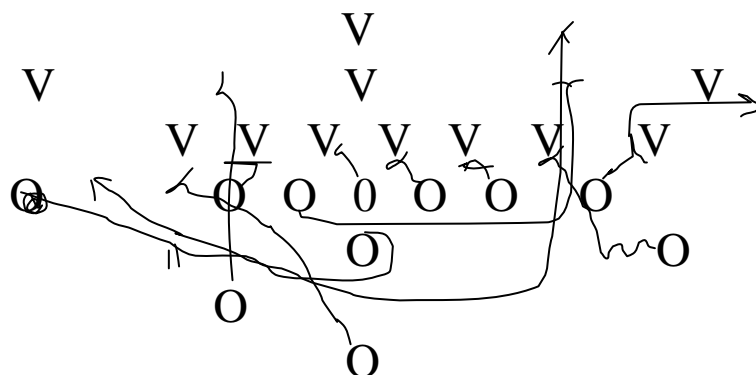
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: The pulling right guard takes anyone he wants. HE CANNOT LOOK BACK OR QB MAY ACCIDENTALLY THROW THE BALL TO HIM! QB shows ball to the HB, rolls right, and throws back in 3 seconds to TE to avoid sack by backside DE. Make sure the pulling guard throws his left elbow back as they pull. Since this is a screen, not a pass, the linemen can be downfield. Make sure the TE and RG make a deep pull or they might collide with penetrating defenders who disrupt the play.

This play is designed to look like the “36” call **and is a popular play.**



“LEFT 56 SWEEP”



Center: Step with left foot and block left first. If no defender in that gap, block playside.

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Guard: pull to the run hole called and pull up through it, blocking back inside for a linebacker.

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Pivot right, handoff to SE, and bootleg

FB: Head left at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, block DE.

WB: Track block.

HB: Head at left OT. Block first wrong colored jersey to show.

SE: Run reverse for handoff

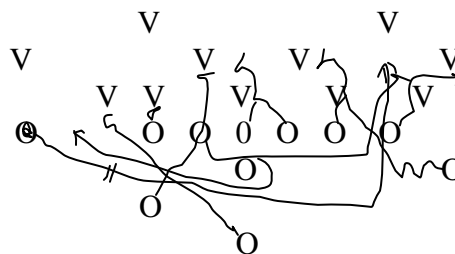
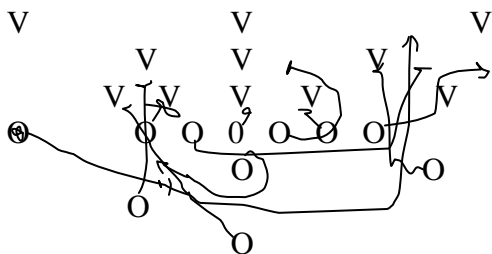
TE: Kick out DE. Delay release outside.

SNAP COUNT: 1

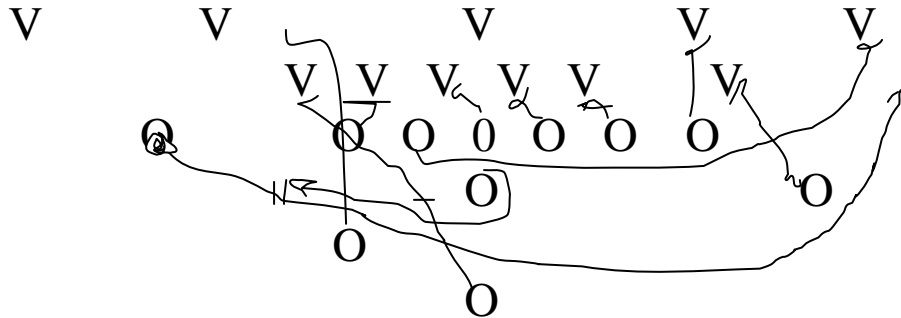
COACHING POINTS: Make sure SE runs wide of the QB, then wide of #6 hole. This “freezes” the outside CB who doesn’t know if the SE is running the #6 or the #8 hole.

QB hands to the SE with his left hand. When QB bootlegs, he pretends to still have the ball. Make sure the pulling guards throw their right elbow back as they pull.

This play is designed to look like the “23” call. It either gets big yards or none. Avoid calling it at the goal line or in short yardage situations where there can be four defenders across the 1-4 holes such as the 4-4 or the GAM. You can see the right “A” gap defender is unblocked on this play in the above example. **Can also be run as “Fake 33, Left 56 Sweep”.**



“LEFT 58 POWER”



Center: Step with left foot and block left first. If no defender in that gap, block playside.

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Guard: pull to the run hole called and pull up through it, blocking back inside for a linebacker.

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Pivot right, fake to FB, handoff to SE, and bootleg

FB: Head left at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, then run hole #2. Block first wrong colored jersey.

WB: Block down on DE.

HB: Block backside DE.

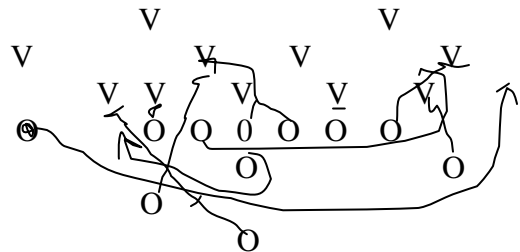
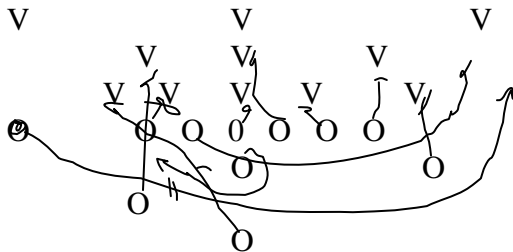
SE: Take reverse and run wide to #8

TE: Nearest linebacker

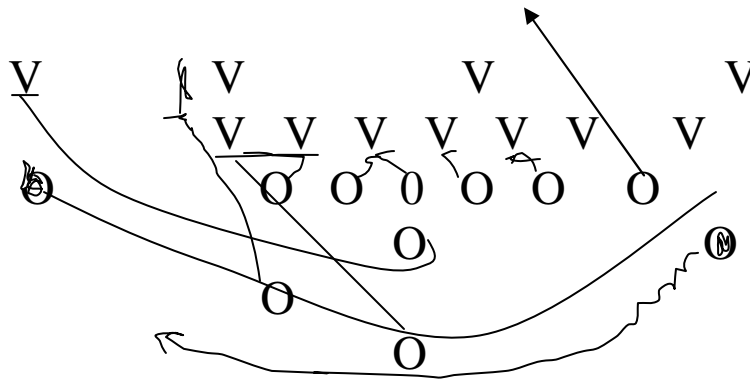
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: Make sure SE runs wide. The pulling right guard should try and log the CB. QB hands to the SE with his left hand. When QB bootlegs, he pretends to still have the ball. Make sure the pulling guards throw their right elbow back as they pull. Do not call this play in short yardage situations or against the 4-4 or GAM or at the goal line since you do not have the defender in right “A” gap blocked.

This play WILL NOT work unless the right side DE is within one yard or less of our TE. If he’s more, run it as “Super, Left 56 Sweep”.



“47 DOUBLE REVERSE”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Reverse pivot, hand to SE, and lead block left.

FB: Block DE

WB: Line up wider than usual and use slow, delayed motion.

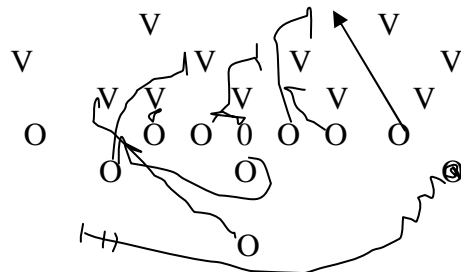
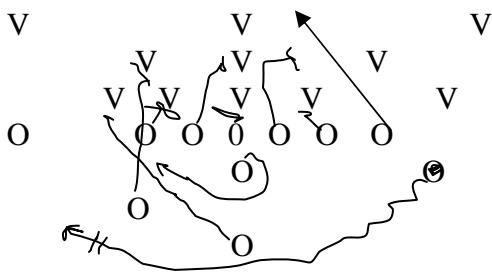
HB: First linebacker starting from in front of the left guard and going to the left to slot

SE: Hand off to WB on your outside shoulder.

TE: Post

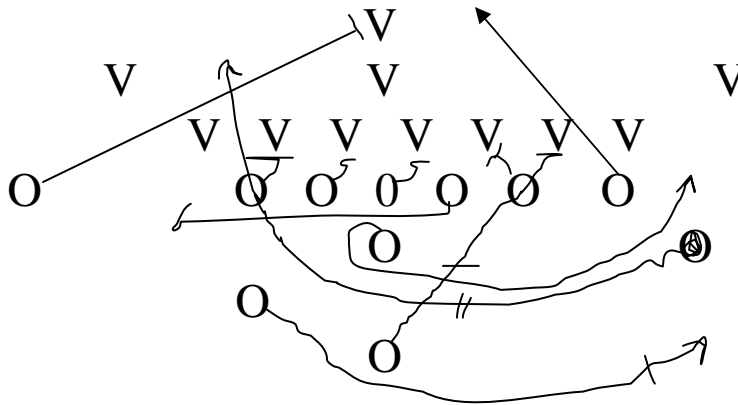
SNAP COUNT: 2

COACHING POINTS: The SE/WB exchange should be behind the RG. QB needs to attack the inside shoulder of anyone he meets.



Slot

“RIGHT 45 KICK”



Center: Block right “A” gap or straight ahead.

Right Guard: Pull to hole called and kick out outside edge defender.

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Reverse pivot, fake hand off to FB, and hand to WB.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, block first defender to show.

HB: Run pitch.

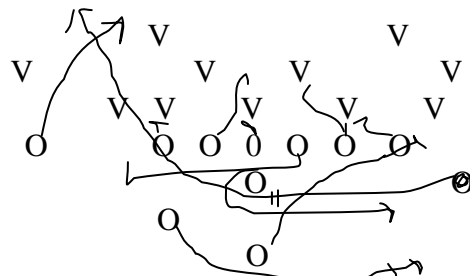
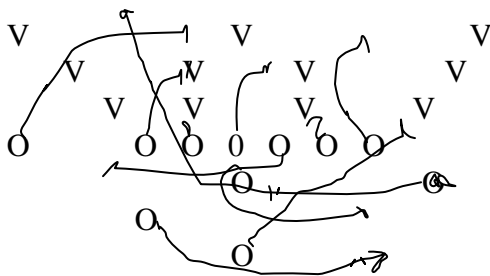
WB: Run #5. Take handoff behind QB. Follow the pulling guard.

SE: Block deepest, nearest inside defender

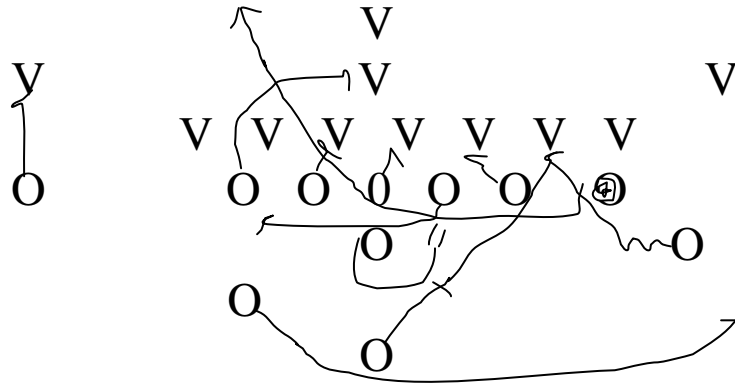
TE: Post

SNAP COUNT: 1

Coaching Points: This play is a version of “24”, “16”, and “38 Option”. The responsibility for a good fake lies with the FB, not the QB. We don’t try and block every defender on this play. Most of the LBer’s should take themselves out of the play. Can also be called as “Super, Right 45”.



“RIGHT 61 TRAP”

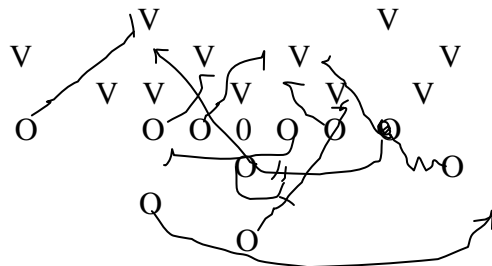
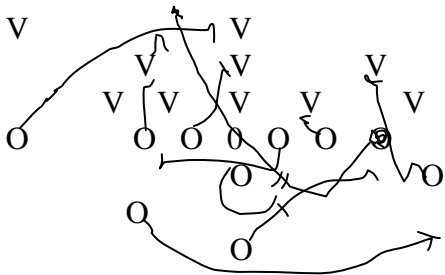


- Center: Block right first. If no defender in your gap, block straight ahead.
- Right Guard: Pull to hole called and kick out outside edge defender.
- Right Tackle: Reach
- Left Guard: Gap or help center
- Left Tackle: Nearest LBer
- QB: Pivot left, fake handoff to FB, hand to TE, and bootleg
- FB: Head right at outside foot of OT for 3 steps. Block first wrong colored jersey.
- WB: Track block
- HB: Sweep right
- SE: Block nearest, deepest defender
- TE: Pull for the handoff and follow the right guard to the hole.

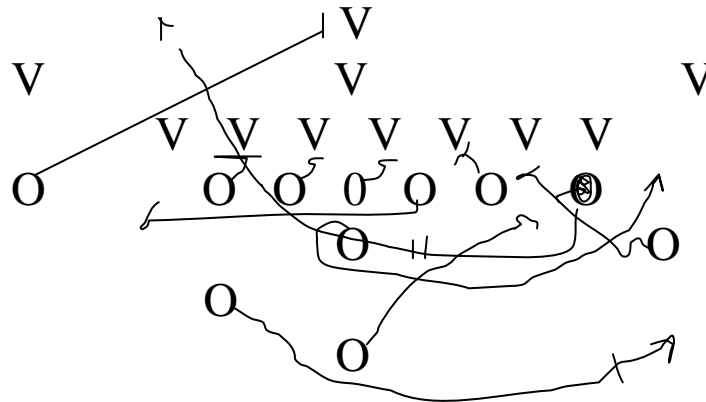
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: The pulling right guard should try and kick his man out. QB shows ball with a quick jab to the FB and then puts ball in WB's belly. When QB bootlegs, he pretends to still have the ball. Make sure the pulling guard throws his left elbow back as he pulls.

This play is designed to look like the “24” call.



“RIGHT 65 KICK”



Center: Block right “A” gap or straight ahead.

Right Guard: Pull to hole called and kick out outside edge defender.

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Reverse pivot, fake hand off to FB, and hand to WB.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, block first defender to show.

HB: Run pitch.

WB: Track Block

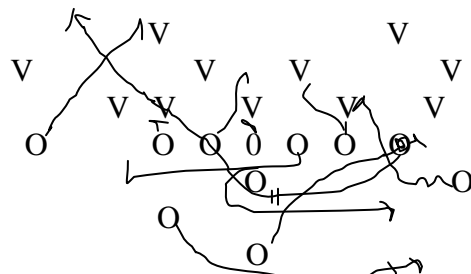
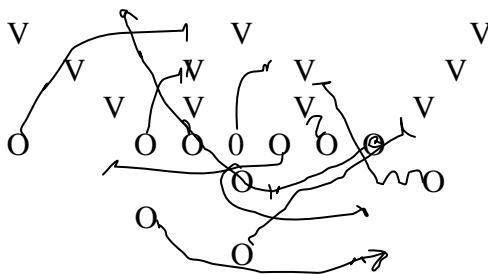
SE: Block deepest, nearest inside defender

TE: Pull for handoff. Follow the right guard.

SNAP COUNT: 1

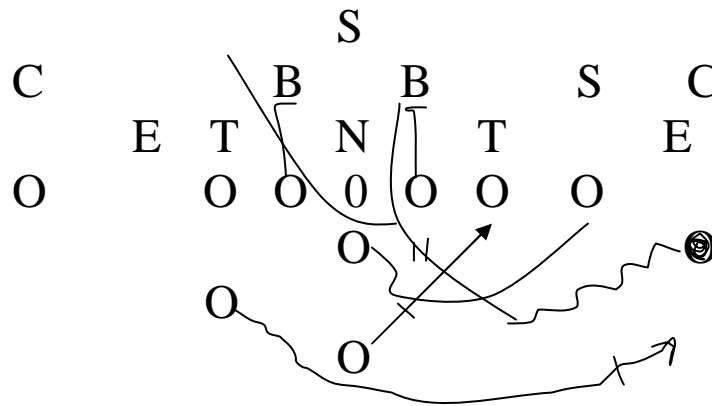
Coaching Points: This play is a version of “24”, “16”, and “38 Option”. The responsibility for a good fake lies with the FB, not the QB. We don’t try and block every defender on this play. Most of the LBer’s should take themselves out of the play.

Can also be called as “Super Right 65”.



BOBBY DODD SERIES

This is a very simple series on “paper” but it requires the WB and HB to be able to take a handoff and read a defender at the same time. The “training the FB” section covers how to do this. The required cuts can be very sharp. An example of this is shown below:

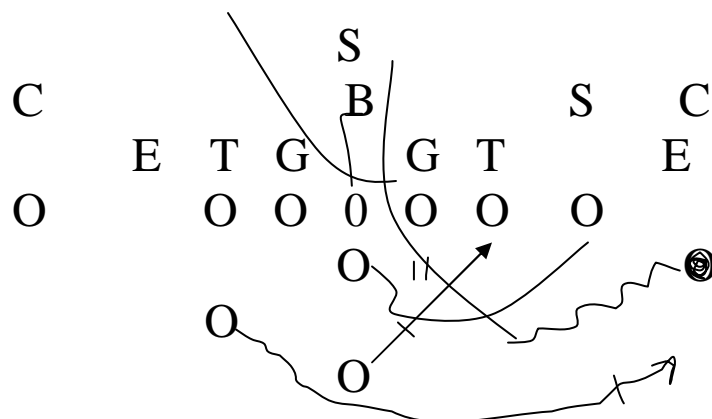


“42 QUICK ON”

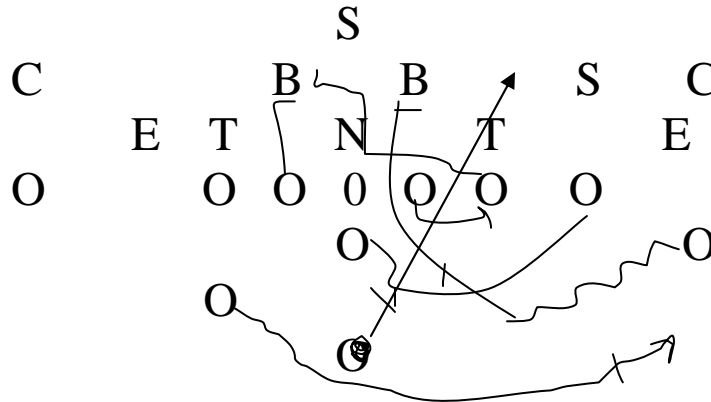
The WB has gone in motion towards the FB. The ball is snapped when he gets behind the RT. He then heads directly at the center. If there’s a defender directly in front of the center, he reads that defender and cuts the opposite direction he goes (**usually left or “41”**). The blocks are “On” blocks, meaning the blockers are blocking straight ahead. Down linemen are often cut or crabbed.

The QB goes through three progressions. First, he puts the ball out behind the RG (“quick”) for the handoff, then pivots slightly further to his right for a fake handoff to the FB running “24”. The QB then runs “16” and fakes an option pitch to the HB.

Here is the same play against an even front:

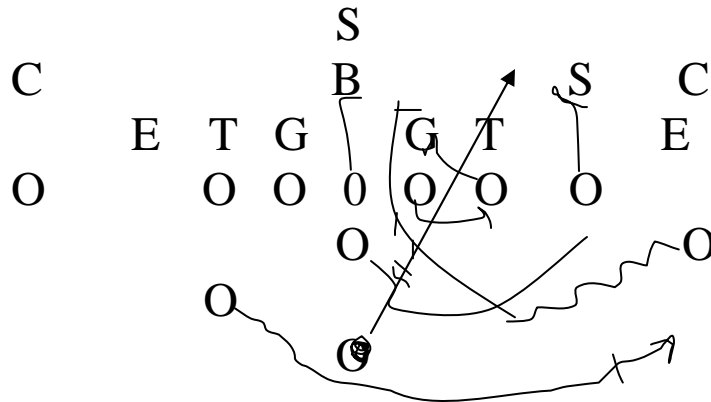


The next play in the series is to hand off to the FB:



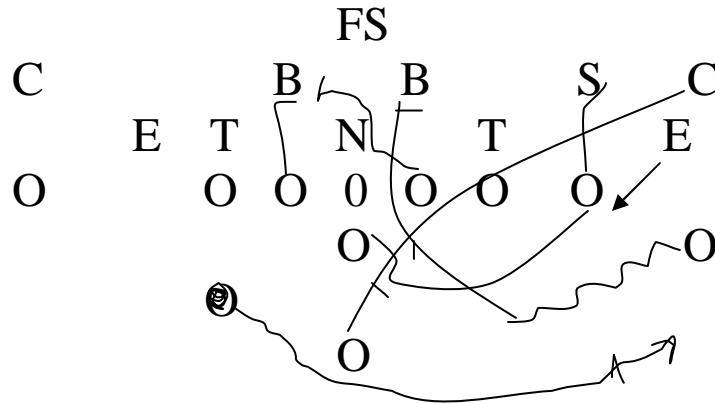
“Fake 42 Quick, 24 Cross”

You probably wouldn't actually call the “cross” (But Bobby Dodd did) against an “odd” front due to the risk of the WB colliding with the cross blockers. The same play is shown below against an “even” front.



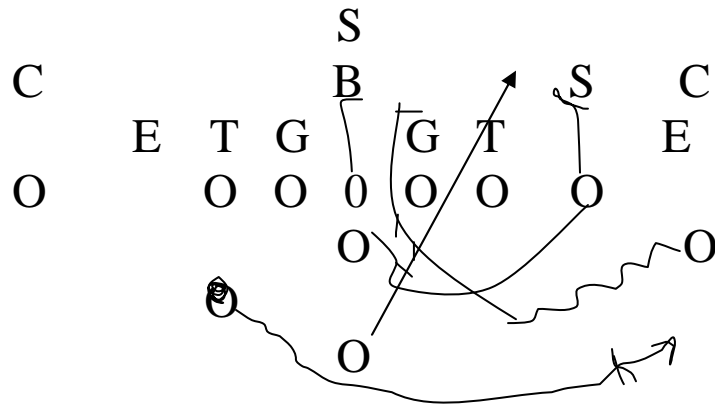
The first two handoffs are really fast – just “bang-bang!” The football is only jabbed towards the WB (The responsibility for selling the fake is the WB's.) Notice the WB always heads directly at the center and does not go through the “4” hole in order to avoid colliding with the cross blockers and to “freeze” the defense in order for them to make sure the handoff isn't to the WB.

The third play in the series is to option the DE:

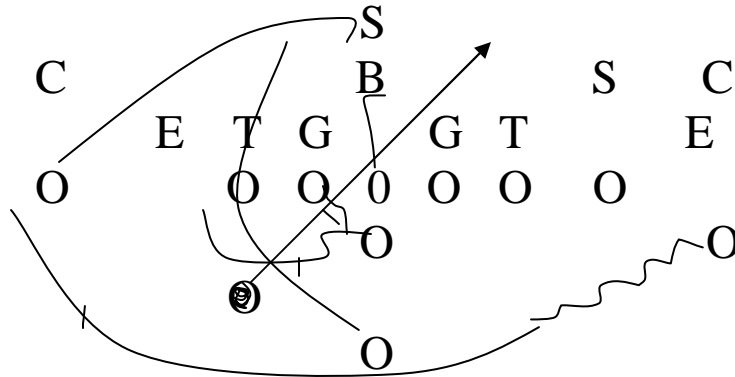


If you're wondering why the FS is not blocked it's because the defense shown is a "monster" defense and is playing one more defender on the right than on our left.

The same play is shown below against an "even" defense:

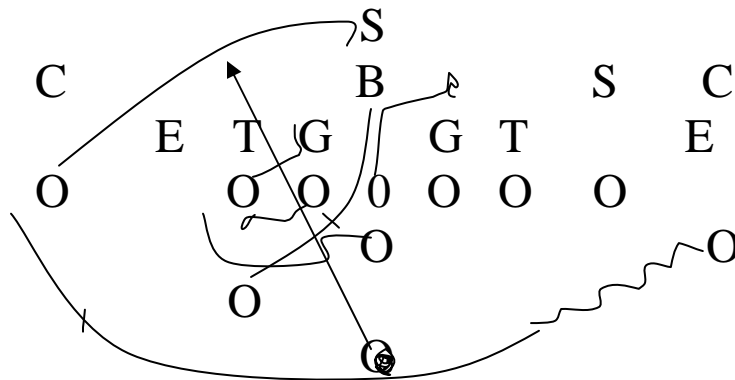


The "Bobby Dodd" series can also be run to the SE side:

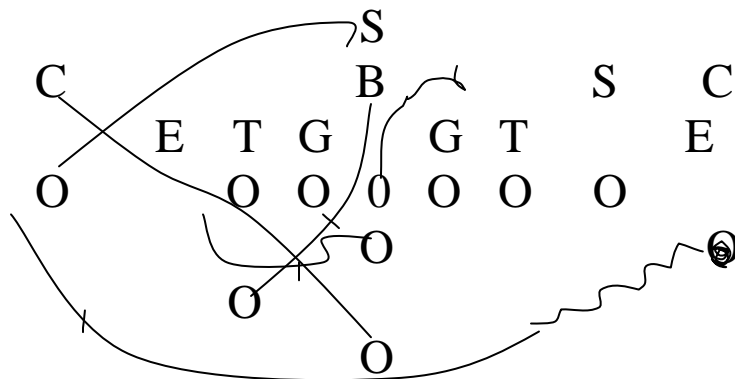


31 QUICK ON

The key to the success of this play is the SPEED the HB hits the hole at. He's not "dodging and ducking". He's running past the defense before they can even disengage from their blocker.

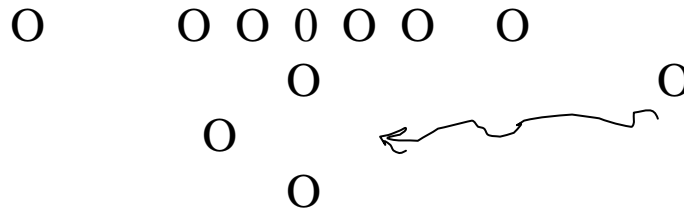


FAKE 31 QUICK, 23 CROSS



Fake 31, 47 Option

JET SERIES



The “Jet” series differs from the “belly” series in that, in the belly series on plays to the left, the WB is the last player in the series to get the ball (“23”, “15”, “47 Option”). Whereas, in the Jet series, he’s the’s the first player to get the ball in the series (“47 Speed”, “45 Toss”) or becomes a lead blocker (“57 Power Screen”, “25 Power”, “23 Power”). As such, he uses flat motion to a point about one yard behind the QB. On “power” calls to the left, he lines up about 7 steps from the QB, otherwise about 10.

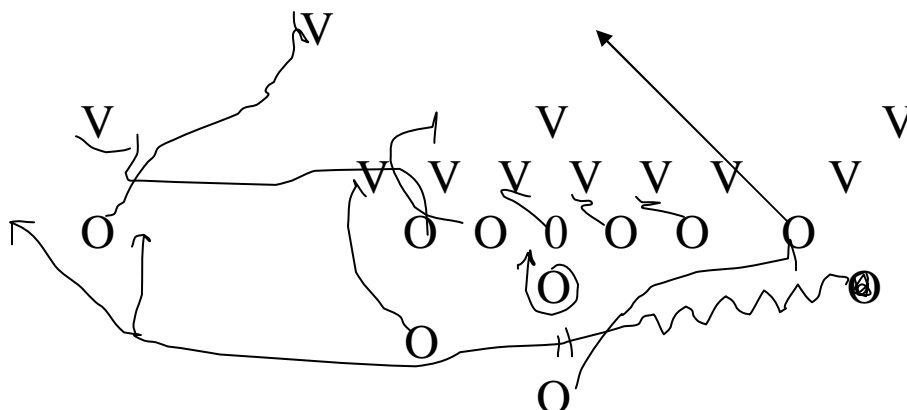
On non-power calls, or plays he’s not getting the ball on, he turns up through the “6” hole. This makes him a blocker for plays to the right and keeps the defense from recognizing that the play is going left simply because the WB passed the QB. To make this read even more difficult, the WB will pass behind the QB on all “Jet” calls. On a “Jet” call the play is actually run to the right. So, on “33 Quick”, the WB would run through the “6” hole even though the play is going left and on “Jet 36 Toss” or “Jet 38 Option” the WB would pass behind the QB even though the play is going right.

In the jet series the offense primarily runs left until the defense follows the WB in motion, at which point it primarily runs right using either the SE or HB as ball carriers.

The “Jet” series makes frequent use of “Slot” formation calls for power runs to the inside.

You can also run a “Rocket” series, calling “Freeze, 38 Power Rocket” as the base play and “Freeze, Rocket, 23 Lead” and “Freeze, Rocket, 17” as the changeups.

“47 SPEED”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield. Hike ball with LEFT HAND UP.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Tackle: Pull and lead block on #1 outside defender (“Speed”). Block him out of bounds. Pull behind the DE and not in front of him.

Left Guard: Pull upfield (Gut) to LBer (“Speed”). Pass in front of any defender between you and the DE. Be right on the left tackles butt.

QB: Start with left foot ONE FOOT back for extra handoff depth. Pivot towards WB with back to the defense at handoff point with elbows at side to keep handoff close. Finish pivot and screen WB with your body against “leakage” past center.

FB: Block backside DE.

WB: Motion to #4 hole. Stay even with HB’s starting position after handoff until outside.

Pass behind HB’s block. Do not collide with him. Read tackle’s block on #1. If tackle has made contact, go around #1. If no contact, go inside #1 defender.

SE: Track block to nearest, deepest man to inside.

TE: Post

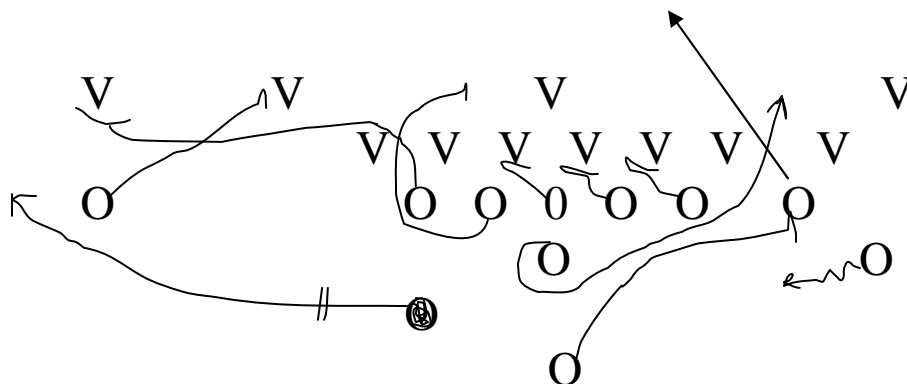
HB: Block DE inside.

SNAP COUNT: “2”

COACHING POINTS: The snap is timed so that the wingback is even with “B” gap (#4 hole) when the ball is hiked. He should be at full speed. Make sure he uses flat motion and does not veer towards the QB (Illegal procedure, minus 5 yards). This is a **very popular play** to run. The companion play calls to this would be “Jet, 36 Toss”, “Jet 24”, “Fake Speed 56 reverse”, and “38 Jet Option” as well as the “wedge” offense.

Do not worry about a defender head up on LG and LT as the two pulling linemen seal these defenders off. I have seen an “A” gap defender make the tackle if the WB is late for the handoff or the QB does not have his right back. To reduce the chance of this happening, center has his left hand up to intercept the “A” gap defender. **This play may be difficult to run from “Slot”.**

“37 QUICK SPEED”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Tackle: Pull and lead block on #7 hole (“Speed”)

Left Guard: Pull upfield to LBer (“Gut Speed”)

QB: Quick Pitch to HB. Bootleg the Toss.

FB: Block backside DE.

WB: Base motion left (Sweep)

SE: Block nearest, deepest man to inside

TE: Post

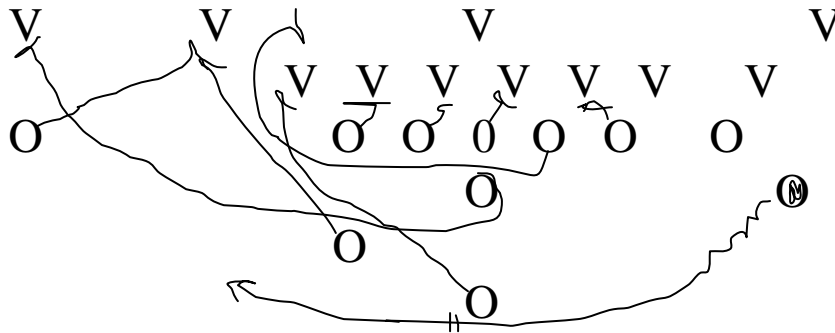
HB: Run outside sweep. Use no motion. Beat the DE!

SNAP COUNT: “1”

COACHING POINTS: This is the old “Quick Pitch” play designed for use against slanting DE’s. If you run “47 Speed”, the left DE is likely to be caught with his eyes on the WB in motion.

If the defense is following the WB in motion and you still want to run “47 Speed”, simply call “Big Switch, 27 Quick Speed”. This puts the FB at WB and the WB at FB. The FB at WB goes in motion but hits the “6” hole, letting the defense follow him, while the WB at FB takes a “quick pitch” left, similar to the above play.

“47 TOSS”

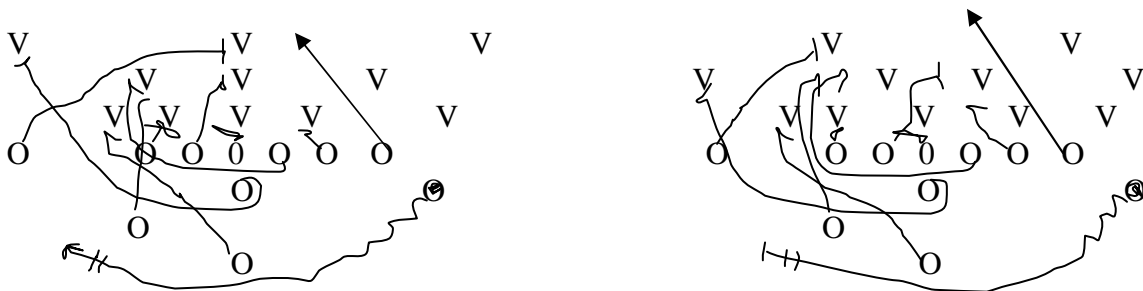


- Center: Block back first, then playside.
- Right Guard: Put hand on QB and follow through hole, blocking back inside.
- Right Tackle: Reach
- Left Guard: GOL
- Left Tackle: GOL
- QB: Reverse pivot, pitch to WB and lead block on #1 outside defensive back.
- FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, then load DE.
- WB: Run pitch and take short toss.
- HB: First linebacker starting from in front of the left guard and going to the left
- SE: Block nearest, DEEPEST defender inside you. If an outside LBer, chip off to FS.
- TE: Post.

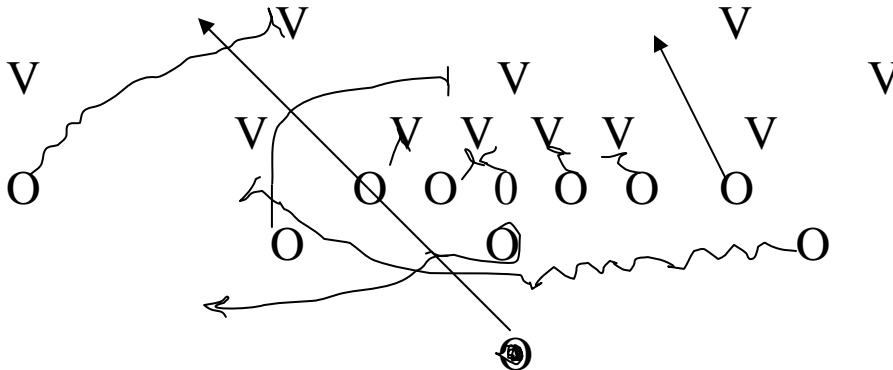
SNAP COUNT: 2

COACHING POINTS: Make sure FB takes his three steps. This “freezes” the inside LBer who doesn’t know if the FB is getting the ball and running “B” gap or if he’s going to block outside for a running play to “C” or “D”. QB needs to attack the inside shoulder of the CB. This play requires a fast QB to work. **If the QB is slow, run it as “Slot 45 Toss”.**

This “47” play may be difficult to run from “Slot”.



“SLOT 25 POWER”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Reverse pivot, handoff to FB.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut straight up field for handoff.

WB: Line up 3 steps closer to QB. Motion to hole #5 and power block outside man of hole. Tap QB as you pass him.

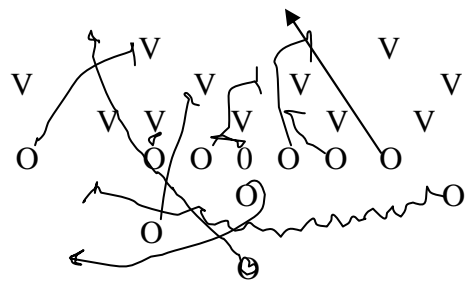
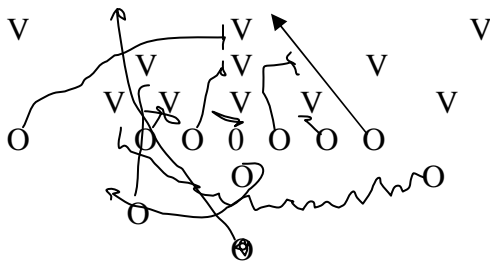
HB: Block inside LBer from LG to in front of slot. If no one there, turn inside and find someone.

SE: Block nearest, DEEPEST defender.

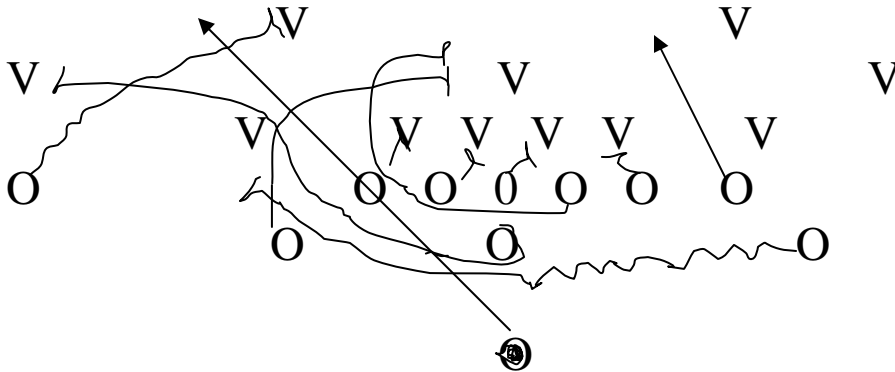
TE: Post

COACHING POINTS: QB calls Hut one, hut..." but does not say "two" until tapped.

This is a very popular play.



SLOT 25 POWER TOSS



Center: Block back right

Right Guard: Pull through #5 hole and block back

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Reverse pivot, toss to FB, lead on #1 outside defender.

FB: Take toss, put right hand on QB's left shoulderpad, and follow.

WB: Motion to hole #5 and power block outside man of hole. Tap QB as you pass.

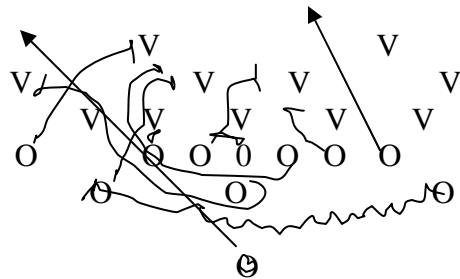
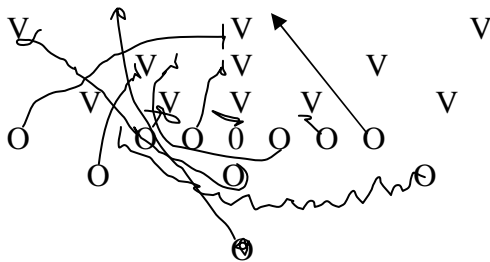
HB: Block inside LBer from LG to in front of slot. If no one there, turn inside and find someone.

SE: Block nearest, DEEPEST defender.

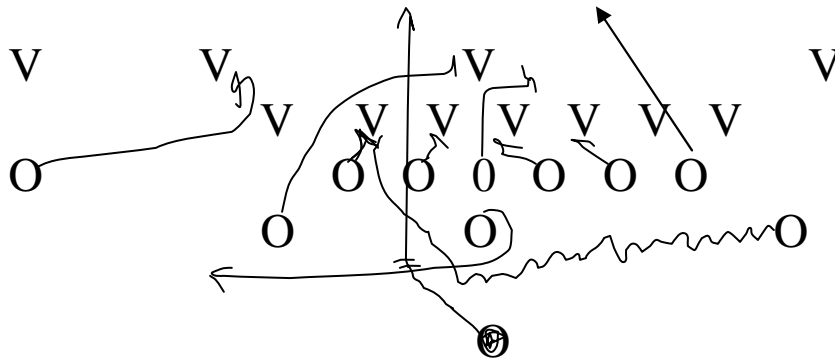
TE: Post

QB: Calls "Hut one, hut..." but does not call "two" until tapped.

This play can also be run as "Slot 45 Toss".



“SLOT 23 POWER”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Reverse pivot, handoff to FB.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, take handoff for daylight.

WB: Motion to #3 to block outside gap defender. Tap QB as you pass.

SE: Block nearest, deepest defender

TE: Post

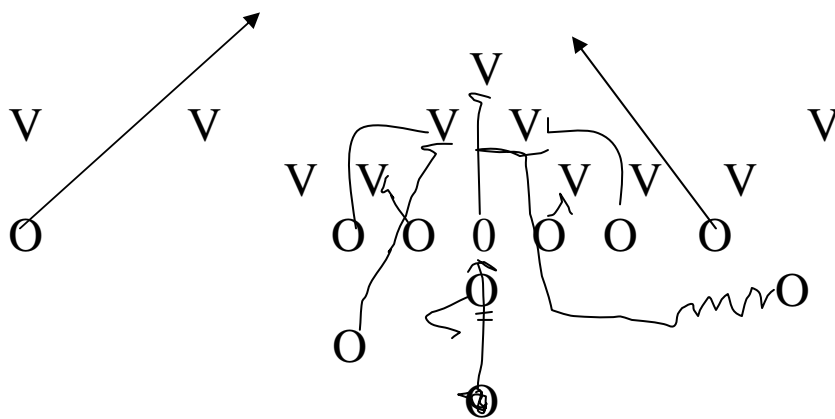
HB: Lead block on LBer from LG out to slot. If none, find one.

SNAP COUNT: “3” (Jet)

COACHING POINTS: This is simply a “23” with a power (down) block on the DE by the WB. You can bring the WB in motion between the QB and FB since the snap is on “3” (Jet call). To the defense this play will look like “20 midline” or “57 Jet Screen” or “47 Speed). It may not be necessary to say “Power” on this call.

Can also be run from “Slot On”.

“20 MIDLINE TRAP”



Center: Block straight ahead. Engage first defender. Take him whichever way he wants to go.

Right Guard: Kick out nearest DL (crab block).

Right Tackle: Nearest LBer

Left Guard: Kick out nearest DL (crab block)

Left Tackle: Nearest LBer

QB: Stand behind center with left foot back. On snap, move right foot way back from 12 o'clock position and swing it around to 9 o'clock position. QB should now be facing right holding football out over the top of his left foot. Hand off to the FB up the gut.

FB: Head at QB. Do not trip over QB's left foot. Read NG.

HB: Run near "A" to block ILBer. Avoid QB's back foot.

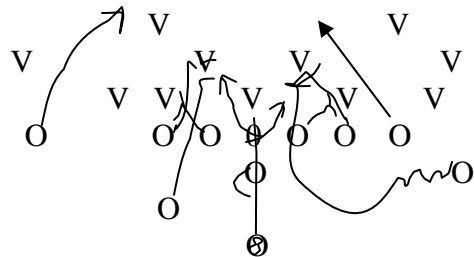
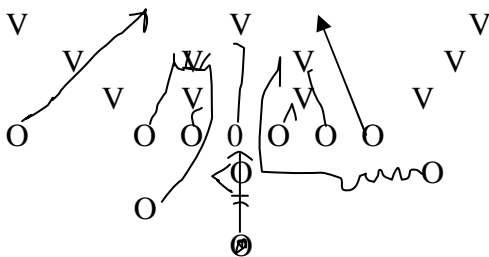
WB: Motion to near "A" gap. Block nearest ILBer.

SE: Post

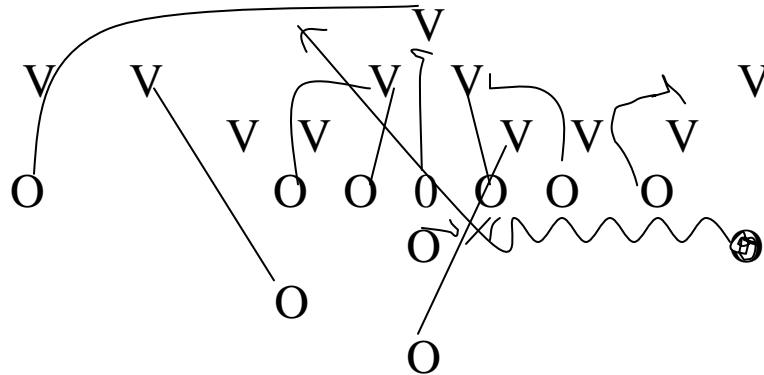
TE: Post

SNAP COUNT: 2

Coaching Points: This play can best be run against "3" or "4" tech fronts with "maxi" splits and the FB cutting left or right off the center's block. It does not work against two "A" gap defenders. You should always test it against the expected defense in practice. It works well with the "Speed" series.



“QUICK 40 JAILBREAK”



Center: Block straight ahead. Engage first defender. Take him whichever way he wants to go.

Right Guard: Nearest LBer.

Right Tackle: Nearest LBer

Left Guard: Nearest LBer

Left Tackle: Nearest LBer

QB: On snap, turn right foot and hand to WB in motion (Same timing as “20 Midline Trap”).

FB: Head at RG. Level first defender.

HB: Nearest LBer

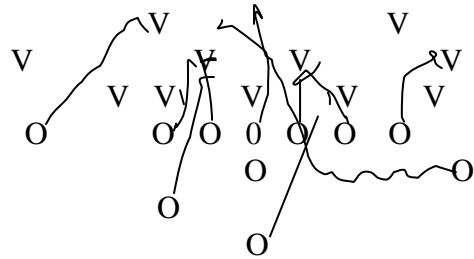
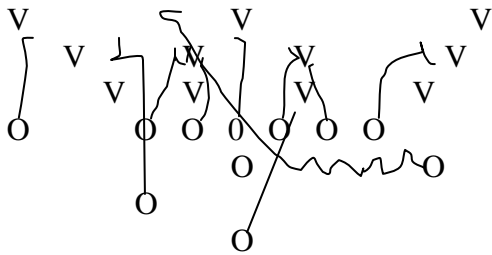
WB: Motion to near “A” gap for handoff. RUN FAST!

SE: Nearest, deepest defender

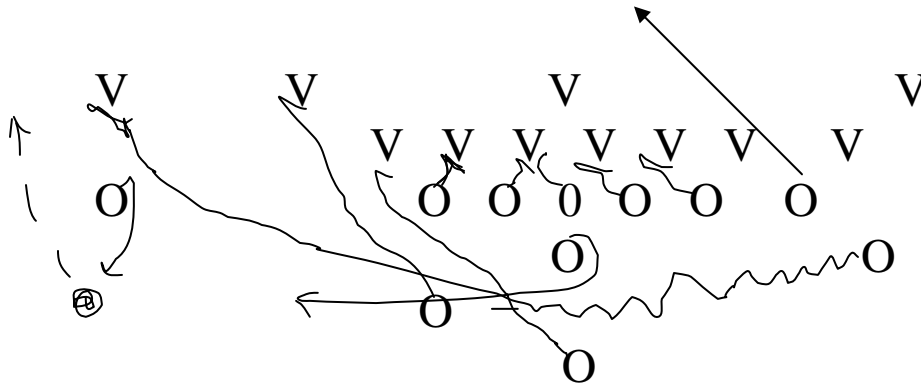
TE: Nearest LBer

SNAP COUNT: 2

Coaching Points: This play can best be run against “2” or “3” tech even fronts using “maxi” splits. It does not work against two “A” gap defenders. You should always test it against the expected defense in practice. It works well with the “Speed” series.



“57 POWER SCREEN”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to FB. Throw to the SE.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, block DE.

WB: Motion to #7. Kick out last defender.

SE: Take one step on post route, step back three steps for pass, follow WB's block. Run to the outside of his block if possible.

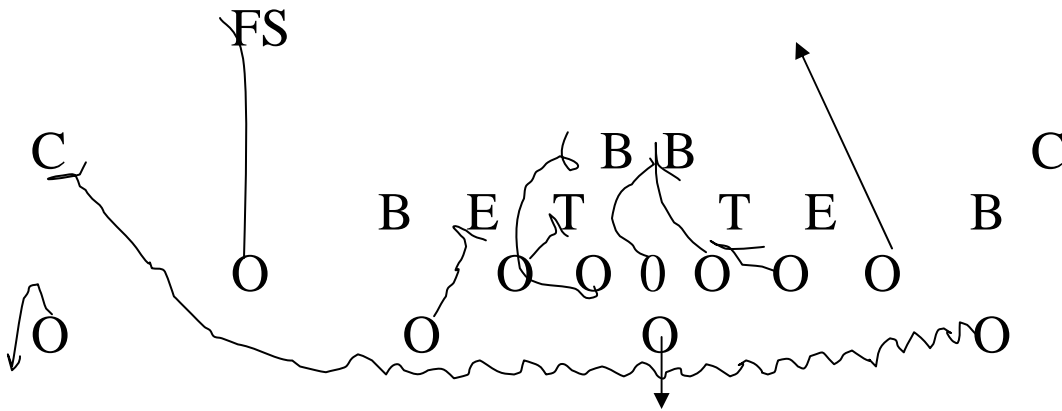
TE: Post

HB: Block first linebacker starting from in front of the left guard and going to the left

SNAP COUNT: "3"

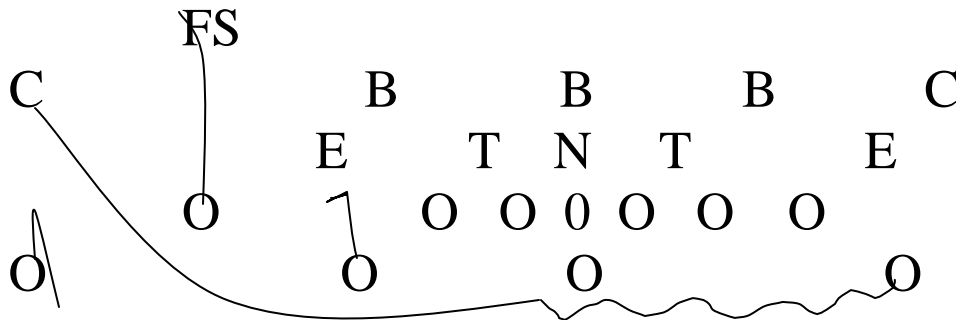
COACHING POINTS: Screens are just running plays with long handoffs. The linemen are told screens are runs, not passes, and to run block. This play is designed for use if the outside LBer is coming inside hard to stop the "23" or "33 Quick" plays. The play resembles "20 midline", "23 Down Jet", and "47 Speed". The WB can pass between the QB and FB on his motion. This play also works well with the "Speed" series.

TRIPS, 37 POWER SCREEN



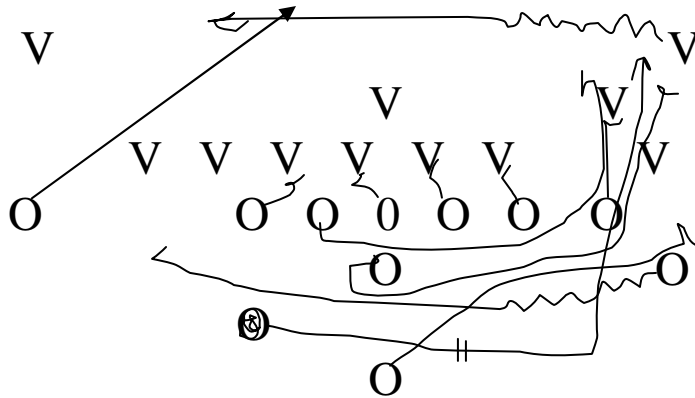
- 1) WB motions across formation to block #1 outside defender
- 2) Line run blocks
- 3) QB drops one step straight back
- 4) HB takes on step down field. Turns 360 degrees on comeback

Snap Count: 3



JET COUNTERS

“JET, 36 TOSS”



SE: Line up tight. Reach.

LG: Pull and lead up through #6 hole (Toss). Place right hand on QB's left shoulderpad

LT: Reach

C: Block back left or straight ahead.

RG: GOL

RT: GOL

TE: Nearest linebacker

WB: Motion and fake "47 Speed". Block backside penetration.

QB: Reverse pivot, fake to WB, and TOSS ball to HB using option style pitch. Lead block through hole #6 on #1 outside defender (Toss).

FB: Three steps at RT, then kick out DE.

HB: Take misdirection step left, then take short Toss/pitch from QB, put left hand on QB's right shoulderpad, and follow him into #6 hole.

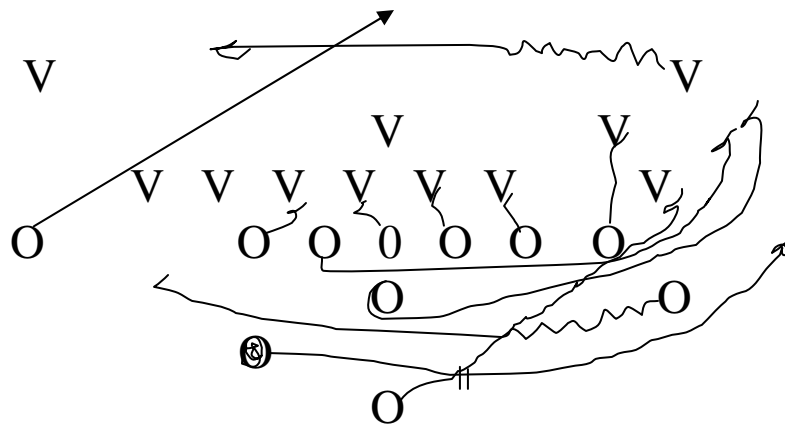
Snap Count: Can be run on "2" or "3".

Coaching Points:

See "Jet, Pass Right, HB Pass"

You can coach this also as an "On" block where HB cuts left or right off the block on the DE.

“JET, 38 TOSS”



SE: Post

LG: Pull and lead up through #8 hole (Toss). Place right hand on QB's left shoulderpad

LT: Reach

C: Block back left or straight ahead.

RG: GOL

RT: GOL

TE: Nearest linebacker

WB: Motion and fake "47 Speed".

QB: Reverse pivot, fake to WB, take 3 steps, and TOSS ball to HB using option style pitch. Lead block through hole #8 on #1 outside defender (Toss).

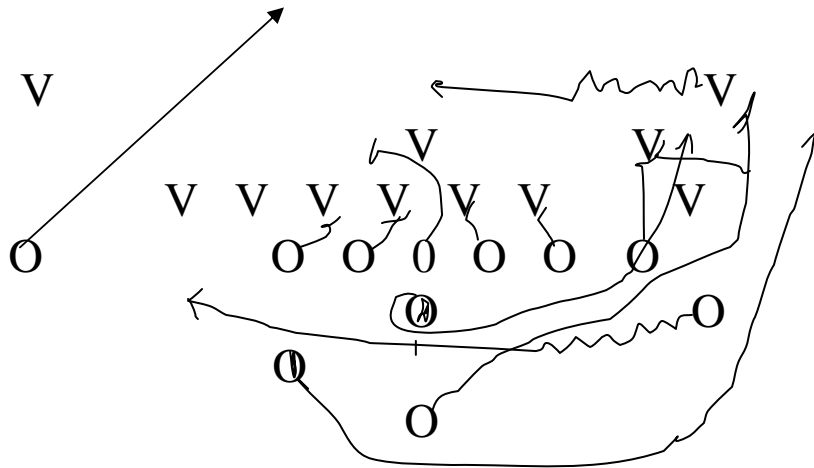
FB: Three steps at RT, then kick out DE.

HB: Take short Toss/pitch from QB, put left hand on QB's right shoulderpad, and follow him into #8 hole.

Snap Count: Can be run on "2" or "3".

Coaching Points:

“JET 38 OPTION”



SE: Post

LG: Reach

LT: Reach

C: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

RG: GOL

RT: GOL

TE: Nearest linebacker

WB: Motion and fake “47 Speed”.

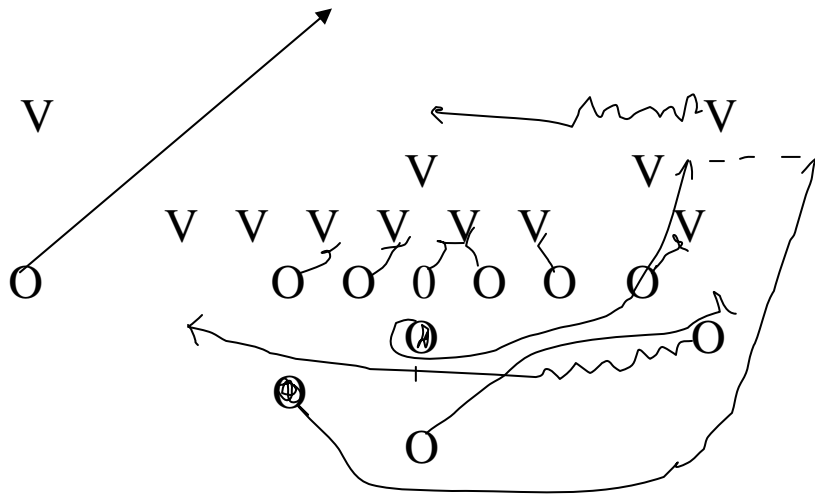
QB: Reverse pivot, fake to WB, and option DE.

FB: Block #1 defensive back

HB: Run pitch route.

Coaching points:

“JET 16 SWEEP PITCH”



SE: Post

LG: Reach

LT: Reach

C: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

RG: GOL

RT: GOL

TE: Kick out DE

WB: Motion and fake “47 Speed”.

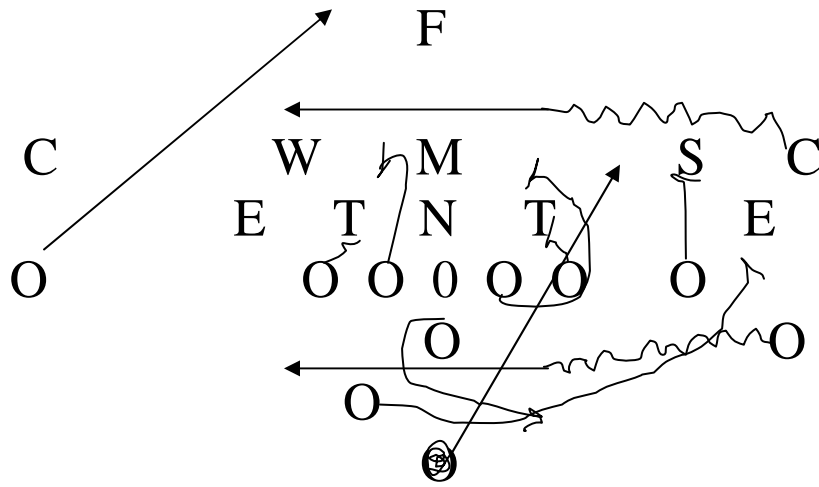
QB: Reverse pivot, fake to WB, and run through hole #6 to pitch to HB on outside.

FB: Three steps at RT, then kick out DE.

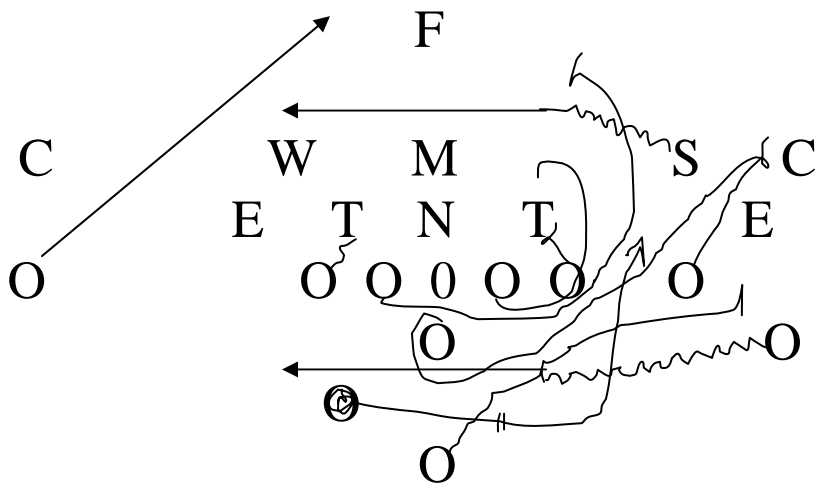
HB: Run pitch route.

Coaching points: QB looks to see if pitchman (HB) is covered before pitching. If he’s covered, he keeps.

“24 JET”



Can also be run as “Slot Jet 24 Counter”.



Jet, 36 Toss (and also Jet 38 Toss)

BUCK SERIES

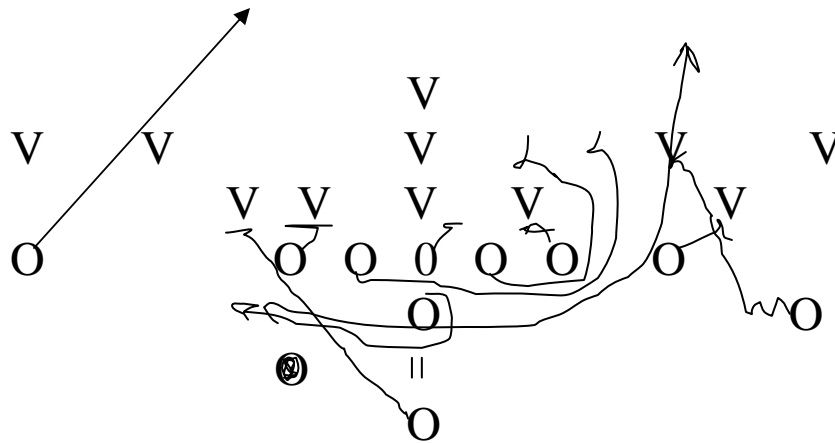
The “Buck” series is a misdirection offense which does not rely on power. It is very popular at the high school level. The principal feature of the misdirection is that the QB’s elbows are tucked to his sides when he makes his handoffs. Thus, the ball is not extended more than a few inches from the QB’s waist. This requires the backs to pass very close to the QB to get the handoff (So close the QB’s and backs shoulderpads “click”). It is not the responsibility of the QB to carry out any fakes. That is the responsibility of the runner (It is not unusual for running backs who are tackled while not carrying the ball to be given a helmet star for the quality of their fakes.).

The offense is best known for two plays – the “Buck sweep” and the “waggle pass”. The buck sweep is supposed to be difficult to stop (There is even a message board called “Bucksweep”). However, I don’t know why. The playside corner is left unblocked (He’s supposed to be blocked by the big, fat, slow left tackle but I’ve never once seen him get there.). Yet the play seems to work for everyone who runs it with the exception of me. I ran it for one game and the corner made the tackle. I once asked at Bucksweep.com what keeps the corner from making the tackle but received an unsatisfactory reply.

I’ve included the bucksweep as the very first play so that you can see the problem but you can have the pulling LG take him, which I didn’t try (Bucksweep.com told me the corner would miss.). High school coaches send the LT downfield across the face of the center to block that corner (but he never gets there) while the FB blocks anyone from the LT in. I don’t have the play diagrammed that way. I simply kept the LT in and let the FB take the DE. The offense is proven to work but I would suggest talking with someone who has actually made it work (versus me who did not). Note: Even though I didn’t get the “bucksweep” to work, I got the reverse off it to work.

The “waggle” pass (called “buck pass” herein) is a GREAT pass. It is included in the running game section because it is specific to that offense.

“LEFT 36 BUCK SWEEP”



Center: Block left first. If no defender in your gap, block left or straight ahead.

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Guard: pull to the run hole called and pull up through it, taking first man.

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Pivot right, handoff to HB, fake to FB, and bootleg

FB: Head left at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, then run hole #2. Block first wrong colored jersey (Or just have him black DE).

WB: Track Block

HB: Take misdirection step left, cut right for handoff, sweep hole #6.

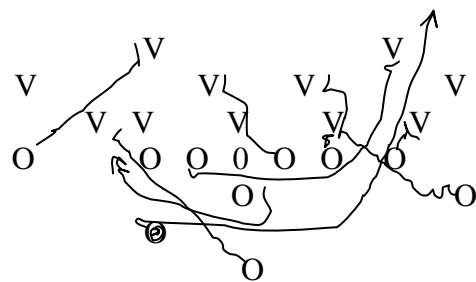
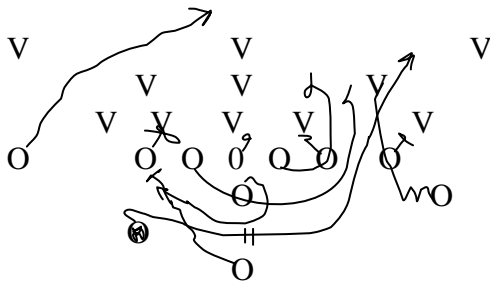
SE: Post

TE: Kick out DE

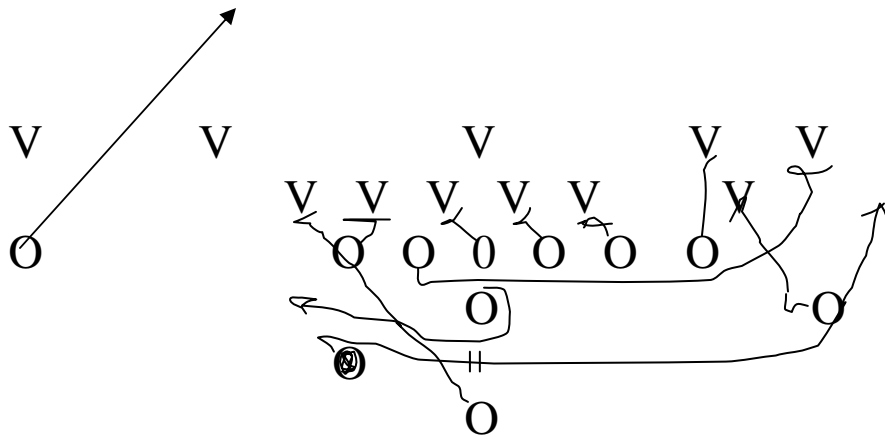
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: QB hands to the HB with his left hand and then puts his right hand in FB's belly. When QB bootlegs, he pretends to still have the ball. Make sure the pulling guards throw their right elbow back as they pull.

This play is designed to look like the “23” belly call.



“LEFT 38 POWER BUCK”



Center: Block left gap first, then playside.

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Guard: pull to the run hole called and pull up through it, blocking back inside for a linebacker.

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Pivot right, handoff to HB, fake to FB, and bootleg

FB: Head left at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, then run hole #2. Block first wrong colored jersey.

WB: Block down on DE (“Power”).

HB: Take misdirection step left, cut right for handoff, sweep hole #8.

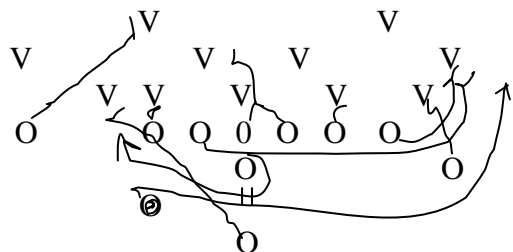
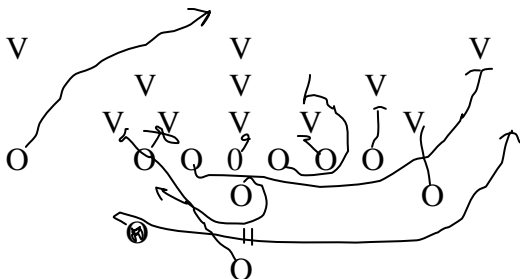
SE: Post

TE: Nearest linebacker

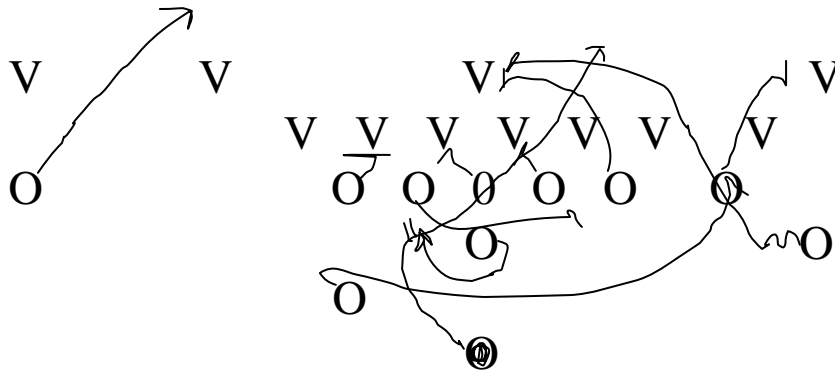
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: Make sure HB runs wide. The pulling right guard should try and log the CB. QB hands to the HB with his left hand and then puts his right hand in FB’s belly. When QB bootlegs, he pretends to still have the ball. Make sure the pulling guards throw their right elbow back as they pull.

This play is designed to look like the “23” call.



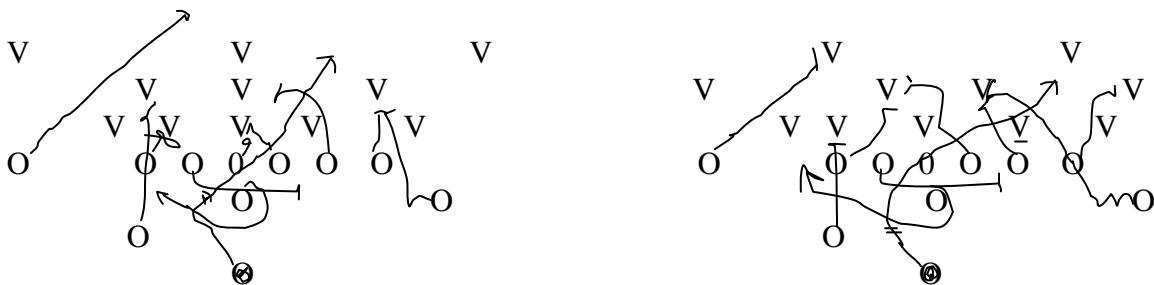
“LEFT 22 BUCK TRAP”



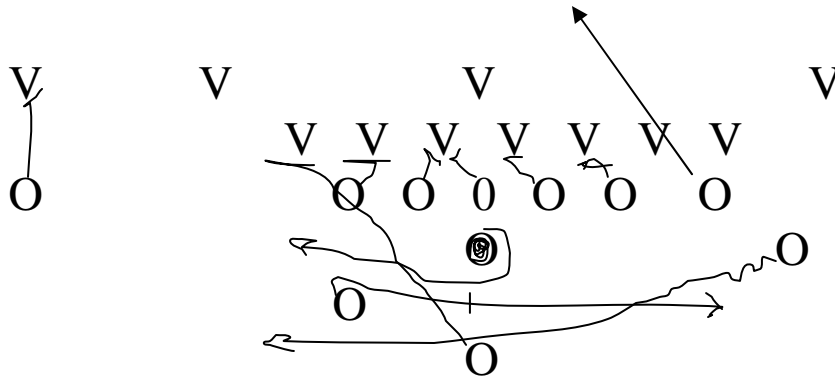
- Center: Block left first. If no defender in your gap, block straight ahead.
- Right Guard: Gap or help center
- Right Tackle: Block nearest LBer.
- Left Guard: Pull to #2 hole. Look for wrong colored jersey.
- Left Tackle: Reach
- QB: Pivot right, handoff to FB, and bootleg. Do not fake handoff to HB (No time).
- FB: Head left at outside foot of OT for 3 steps. Cut back to aim for center’s far hip. Follow the pulling guard to the hole.
- WB: Skip track block since run is inside #6.
- HB: Run Buck Sweep. Execute proper fake when passing QB
- SE: Post
- TE: Nearest linebacker

SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: The pulling left guard should try and kick his man out. After handoff to the FB, when QB bootlegs, he pretends to still have the ball. Make sure the pulling guard throws his right elbow back as he pulls. Against the 5-3, shown below, it is recommended the right tackle double-team the TE’s man as shown. This play is designed to look like the “Left 36 Buck Sweep” call.



"17 BUCK"



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach.

Right Tackle: Reach.

Left Guard: GOL.

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Pivot right, fake handoff to HB, and bootleg.

FB: Head left at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, then log DE.

WB: Base motion left. Fake a reverse handoff from HB

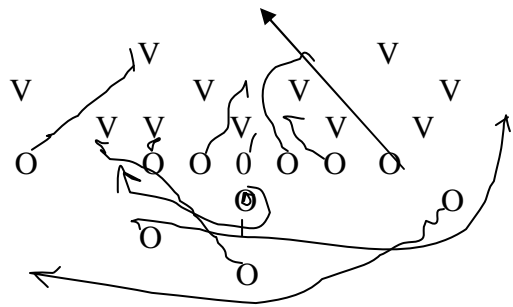
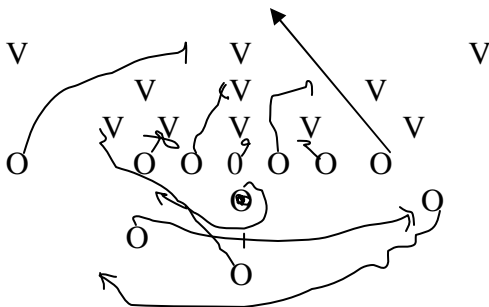
HB: Take misdirection step left, cut right for fake handoff, sweep hole #8.

SE: Block nearest safety.

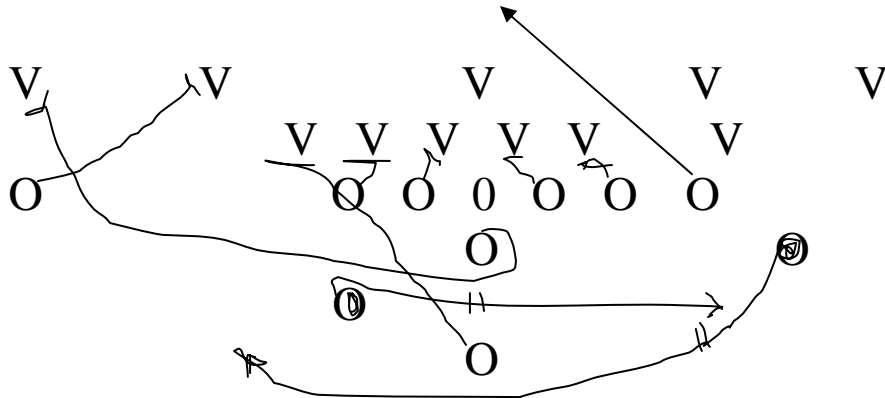
TE: Post

SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: Make sure HB runs a good fake. Skip the fake to the FB. When QB bootlegs, he shifts the ball to his outside arm. This play is designed to look like the "38 Buck Sweep" call.



“47 BUCK REVERSE”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach.

Right Tackle: Reach.

Left Guard: GOL.

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Pivot right, handoff to HB, and bootleg to lead block on #1 outside defender.

FB: Head left at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, then log DE.

WB: Turn full circle and sweep outside shoulder of HB.

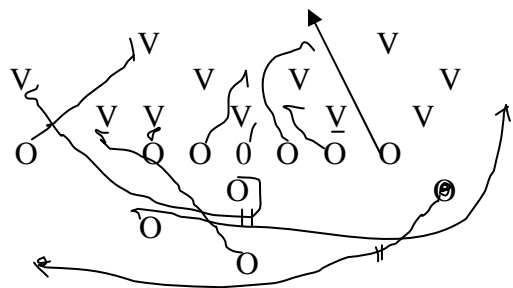
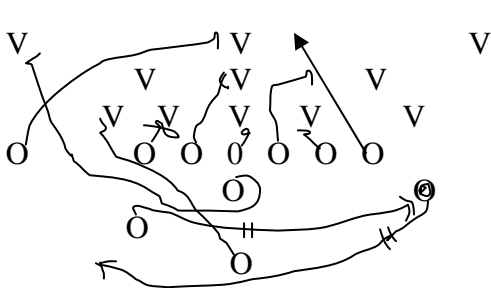
HB: Take misdirection step left, cut right for handoff, give ball to wingback.

SE: Track block nearest, deepest defender.

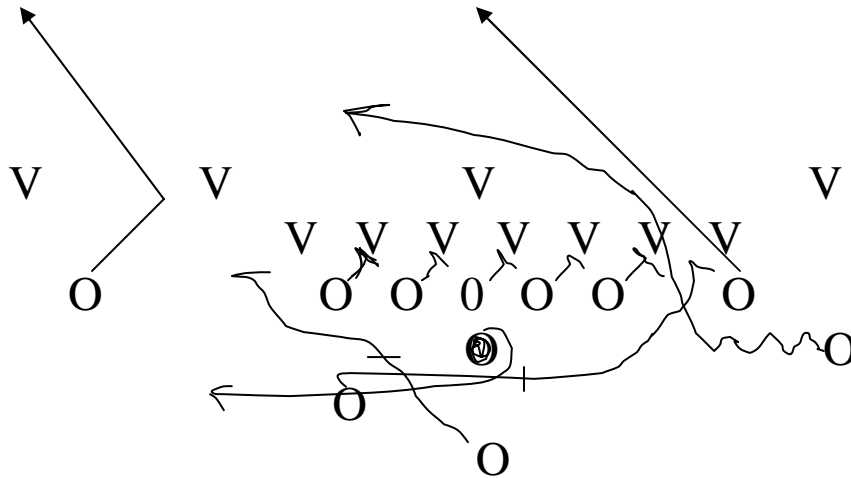
TE: Post

SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: Make sure wingback passes to the outside of the HB. When QB bootlegs, he becomes a blocker. This play is designed to look like the “36 Buck Sweep” call. The WB should use no motion and turns all the way around in order to slow down when he reaches the reverse handoff point.



“BUCK PASS LEFT”



Center: Block right

Right Guard: Block right

Right Tackle: Block right

Left Guard: Block right

Left Tackle: Block right

QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to FB with right hand, ball on hip with left hand. Roll out to the left. Run or look for a receiver from right to left.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, log block DE.

WB: Motion to #6 and run drag

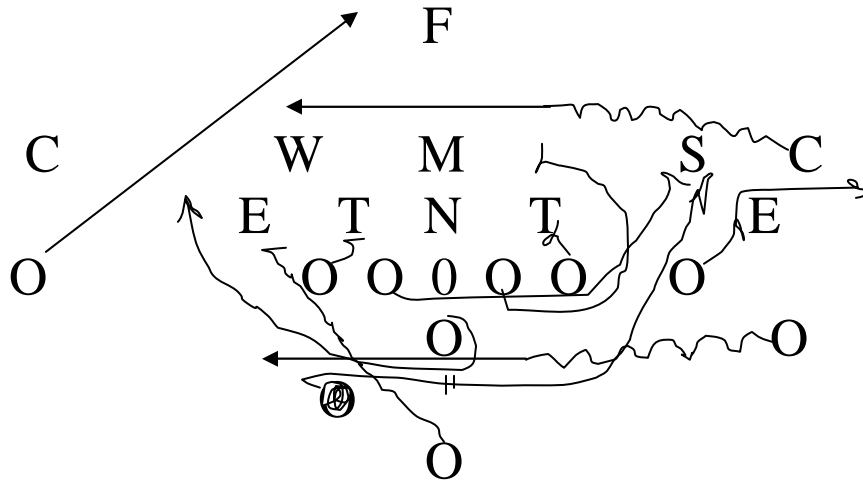
SE: Run #2

TE: Post

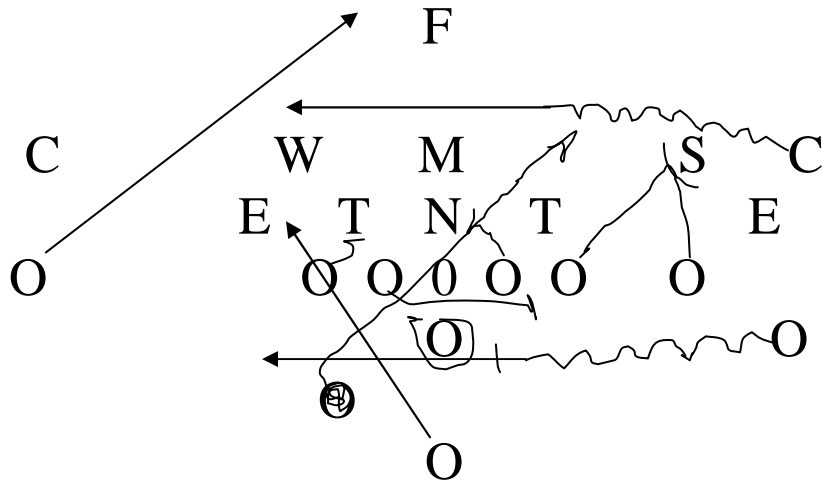
HB: Fake 36 Buck, block backside.

SNAP COUNT: “3”

COACHING POINTS: The receivers are not numbered on this play. The QB will keep the ball and run first and throw second. This is my version of the “waggle” pass.



Left 36 Jet Buck Sweep



Left 32 Jet Buck Sweep (or Left 22 Jet Trap)

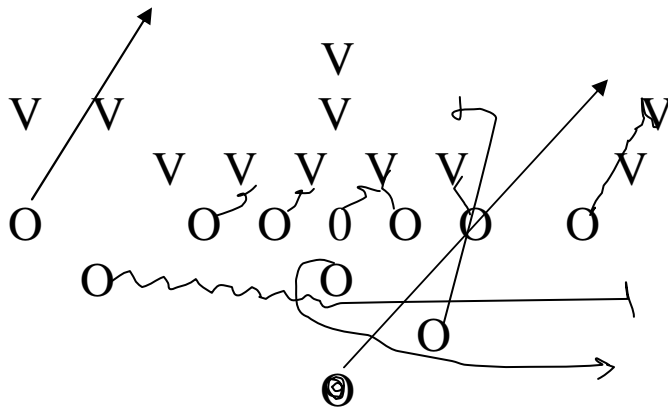
POWER PLAYS

Power plays are plays that use the WB block down on a down lineman. They can be used to create a double team. Power plays are used where we want to get a guaranteed minimum number of yards on the play, usually when we want to get a first down. It is more important that a down lineman not make the tackle in that situation. It's a pretty safe bet if the safety made the tackle in a third down and three yards to go situation that we made the first down. The same cannot be said if the defensive tackle made the stop in the same situation.

To achieve a "power" block simply add the cue "Power" to the play call. This will tell the wingback (WB) to motion to the hole called and block the defensive lineman "away" from him. If he has to pass by the QB to do so, he taps the QB as he passes. The QB will delay his final snap count until tapped.

It is unnecessary to call a "power" block when running the "6" hole except from "WB Over" or "Backs Over".

“BACKS OVER, 26 POWER ”



SE: Post

LG: Reach

LT: Reach

C: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

RG: GOL

RT: GOL

TE: Nearest linebacker.

WB: Motion and “power” block outside man “6” hole. Tap QB as you pass.

QB: Reverse pivot and hand ball to FB. Roll out as if on pass.

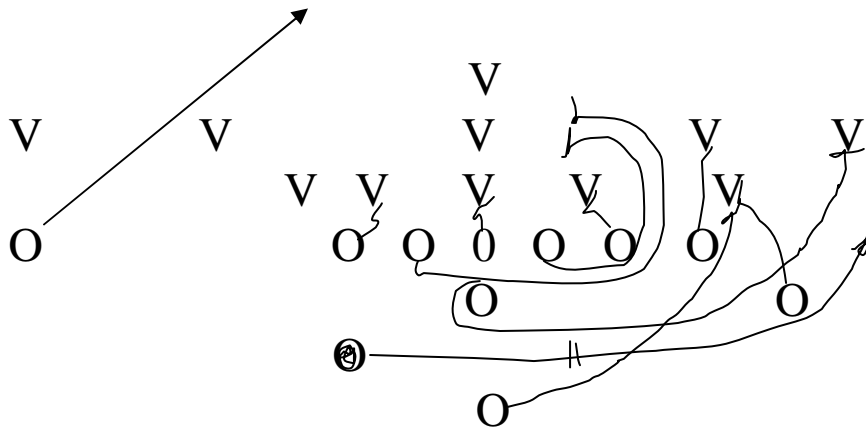
FB: Three steps at RT for handoff

HB: Lead block inside LBer from RG to TE. If you can't find one, go inside and look for one.

Coaching Points:

QB calls “Hut one, hut...” but does not say “two” until tapped.

“38 POWER TOSS”



Center: Fill backside “A” (Toss), else block straight ahead.

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: Pull to #6 (Toss)

QB: Reverse pivot, pitch to HB. Lead block on # 1 outside defender.

FB: Block DE.

WB: Power block DE inside. When FB joins, go up to nearest linebacker.

SE: Post

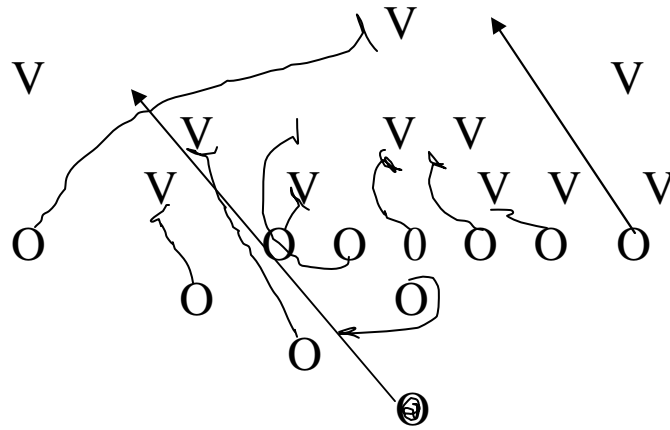
TE: Nearest linebacker

HB: Run #8 hole and take soft toss from QB.

SNAP COUNT: “2”

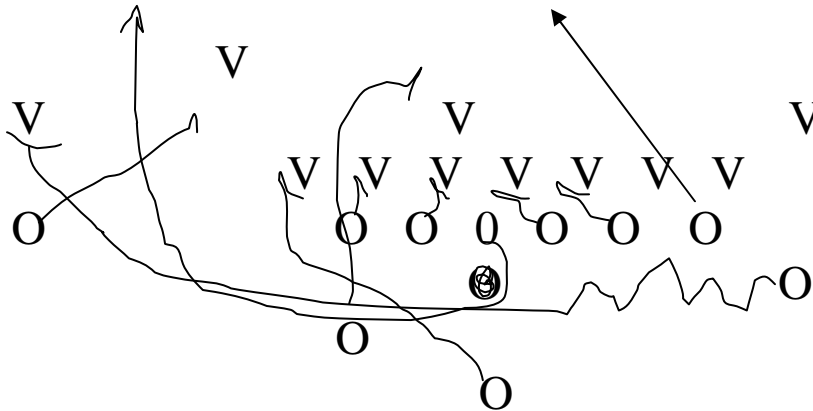
COACHING POINTS: You can teach the WB, that when the FB arrives, to chip off to help the TE.

Wing Over, 25 Power



Can also be run as "WB Over, 25 Power Toss"

“17 POWER”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Tackle: GOL

Left Guard: GOL

QB: Reverse pivot, sweep.

FB: Block playside DE.

WB: Motion to #4 hole. Tap QB as you pass. Lead block on outside defender of # 7 hole.

SE: Block nearest, deepest man to inside

TE: Post

HB: Block DE inside.

SNAP COUNT: “2”

COACHING POINTS: The snap is timed so that the wingback is even with “B” gap (#4 hole) when the ball is hiked. He should be at full speed. He then deepens up his route after the handoff to pass behind the HB.

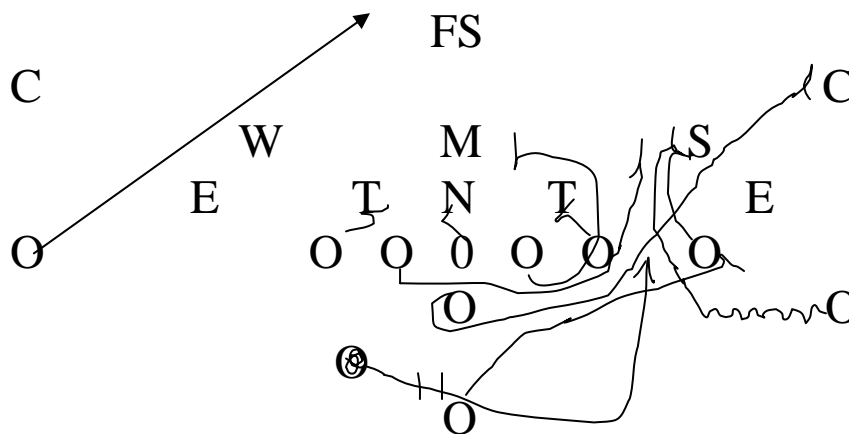
QB calls “Hut one, hut...” but does not call out “two” until tapped.

Note: Do not try and run “18 Power”. The play is too slow.

THE TOSS SERIES

Another form of a power play is the “Toss” series. This series adds the QB as a blocker.

36 TOSS



SE: Post

LT: Reach

LG: Pull and put right hand on QB's left shoulder. Follow QB to hole. Block first wrong colored jersey to your inside.

Center: Block *backside* hole first. Otherwise block playside.

RG: GOL

RT: GOL

TE: Nearest linebacker

WB: Track block the “6” hole

FB: DE

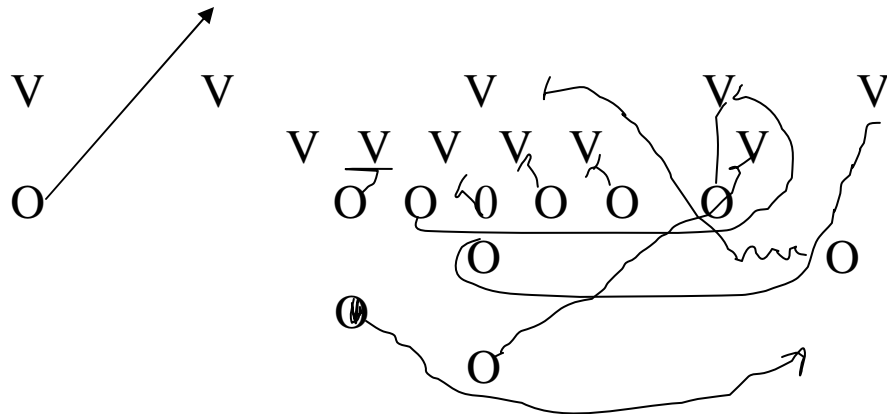
QB Toss ball to HB, follow FB to find hole, block #1 outside defender.

TE: Nearest LBer

Coaching points: This defense is balanced so we want to attack it unbalanced. By pulling the LG we gain an extra blocker (two if we pull the LE too). Can also be run as “Super”, which is what I highly recommend.

Snap Count: 2

"38 TOSS"



Center: Check backside hole first. Otherwise, block playside.

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Guard: Put right hand on QB and follow to hole, looking inside for your man

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Reverse pivot, sweep hole #8 and block #1 defensive back. If he's already being blocked, go to nearest, deepest defender.

FB: Load DE.

HB: Take the toss and run it all the way to the outside.

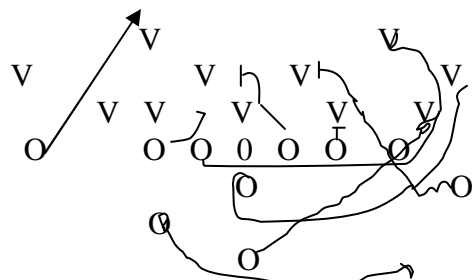
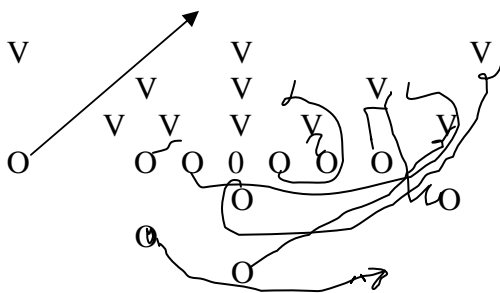
WB: Inside LBer

SE: Post

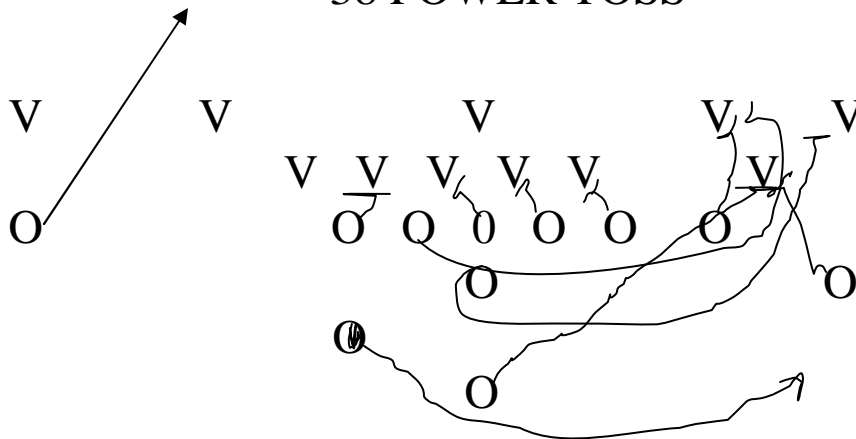
TE: Nearest LBer

SNAP COUNT: 2

Coaching Points: This is the same as "36 Toss" but run one hole wider. I find it keeps the DE honest. Again, this can be run from "Super", which I highly recommend.



“38 POWER TOSS”



Center: check backside hole first, then block playside.

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Guard: Follow QB. Pull up through #8 hole

Left Tackle: Reach

QB: Reverse pivot, sweep hole #8 and block #1 defensive back. If he's already being blocked, go to nearest, deepest defender.

FB: Load DE.

HB: Take the toss and run it all the way to the outside.

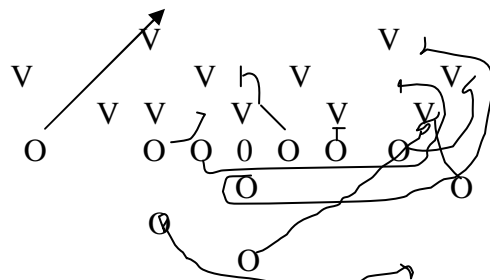
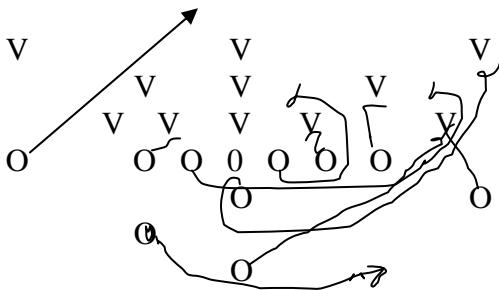
WB: Power block down lineman defender away from the WB in the hole called (DE)

SE: Post

TE: Nearest LBer

SNAP COUNT: 2

Coaching Points: This is “38 Toss” with a double team on the DE. It can also be run as a ‘Draw’.



SINGLE WING

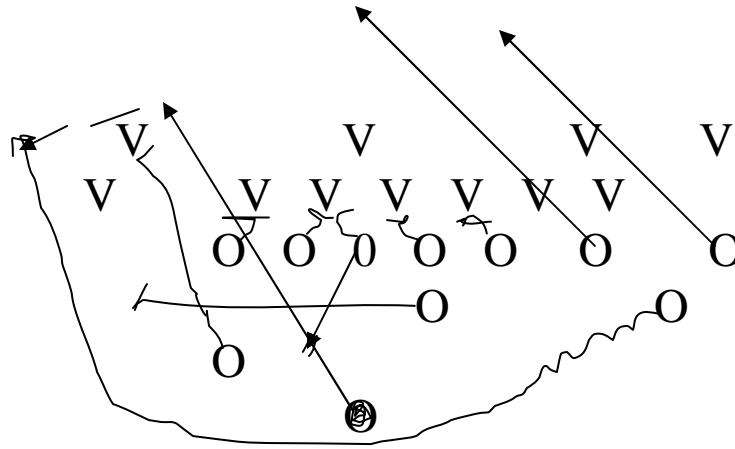
In the “Single Wing”, the QB moves over behind RG and the SE lines up outside the WB. The blocking rules are normal except as follows:

HB: If not getting the ball, don't go right

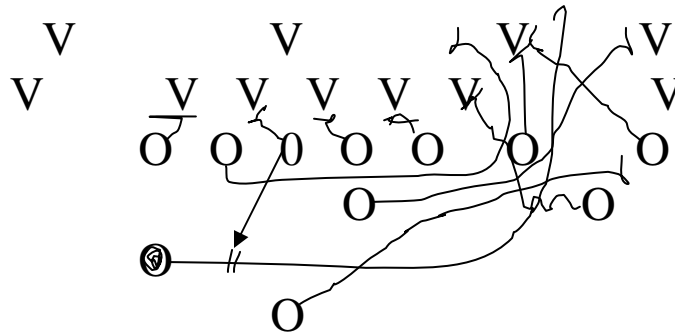
QB: Block outside down lineman to hole called except on “24”. Lead block on “24”.

Center: Snap ball halfway between HB and FB.

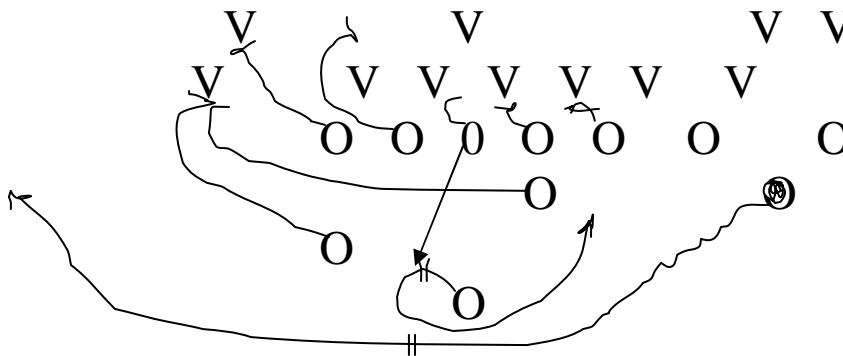
“SINGLE WING “23 LATERAL”



“SINGLE WING 36 TOSS”

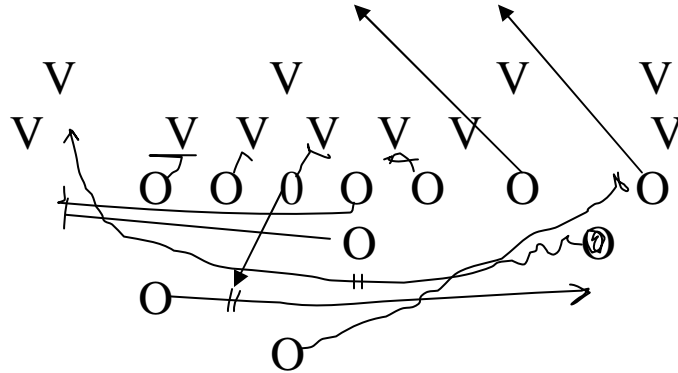


“SINGLE WING 47 SPEED”

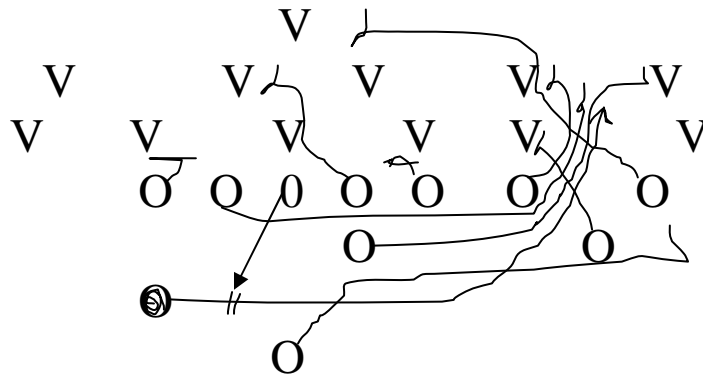


SINGLE WING RIGHT 45 KICK

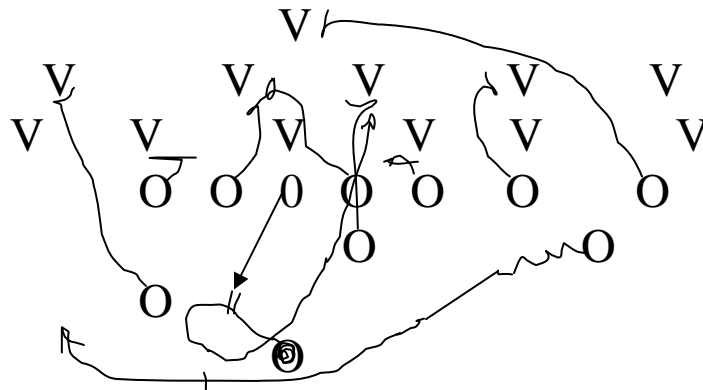
(can also be run without "kick")



SINGLE WING 38 POWER TOSS



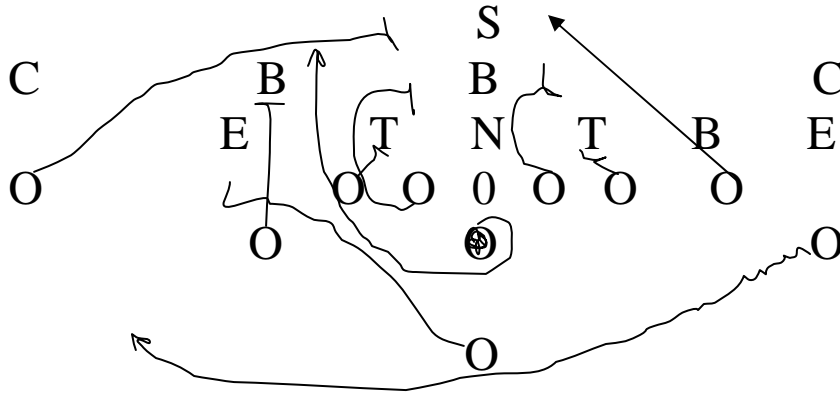
SINGLE WING 24



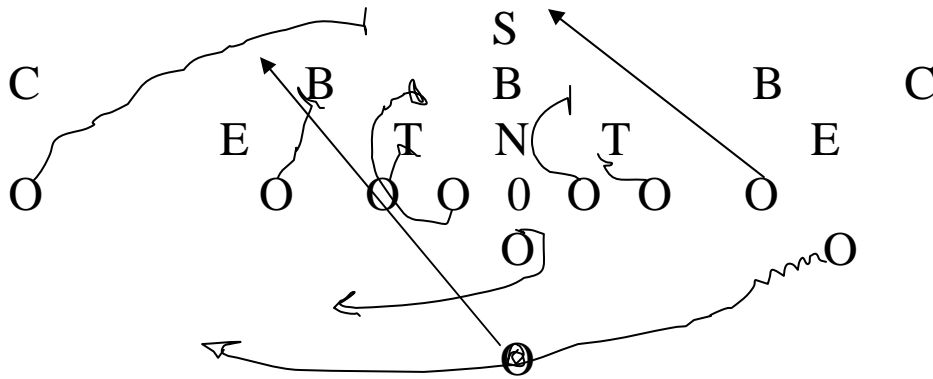
USING DIFFERENT FORMATIONS

USING THE SLOT FORMATION CALLS

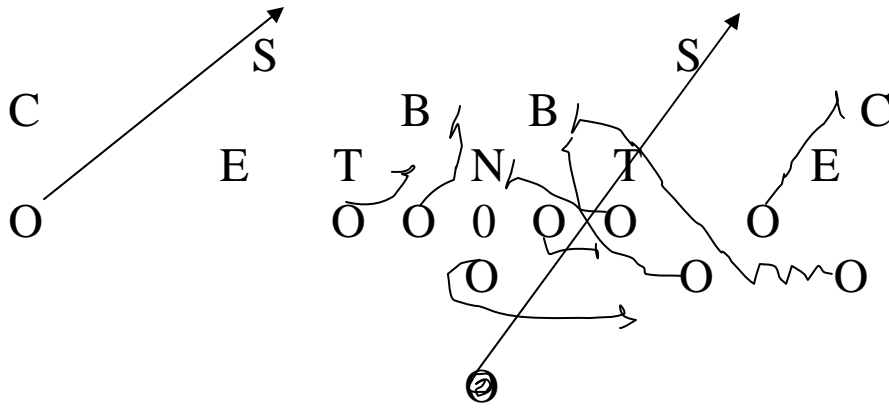
As mentioned in the first section, the slot calls (“Slot”, “Slot On”, and “Slot Over”) are primarily used against five down linemen when you want to run inside because it moves the DE and/or corner further out. Here are some examples:



Slot 15

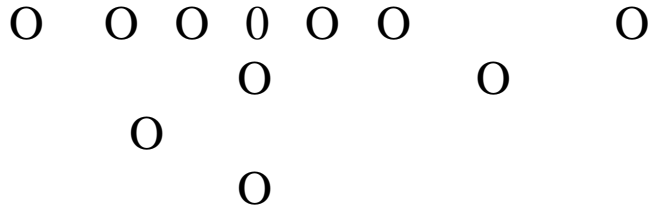


Slot On, 23

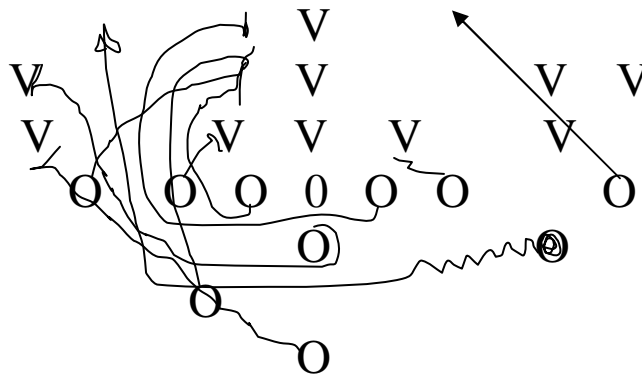


Slot Over, 24 Cross

ENDS OVER

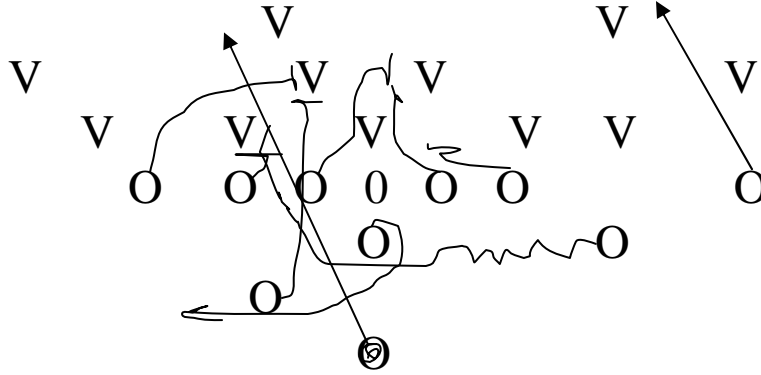


The “Ends Over” formation is run when we’re on the left hashmark and we want to power that sideline. It has two features to it. First, it moves the DE “out” on the left and “in” on the right. We would want to run the ball inside the TE on plays to the left and outside the WB on plays to the right. Second, we get double team opportunities since both the HB and the TE are both assigned to block the same player, the LBer covering our HB. This provides us with a double team on the LBer if he’s a stud or we can “cross block” the TE and the LT and double team the DE. Our inside plays (23, midline, and trap are unchanged (except the LBer is double teamed on “23) and can all still be run. Our pass plays are, however, affected as players run duplicate routes. Therefore, except for “Pass Right, 0 Open” we would not pass from the formation. Let’s begin with the run to #5 hole. We must run “toss” if we want a block on the corner. Notice the amount of force we are able to apply on this play to the middle LBer (“Mike”) if the defense does not follow the motion. Even if the Sam LBer does follow our WB, he must come “over the top” of our double or triple team block on Mike:

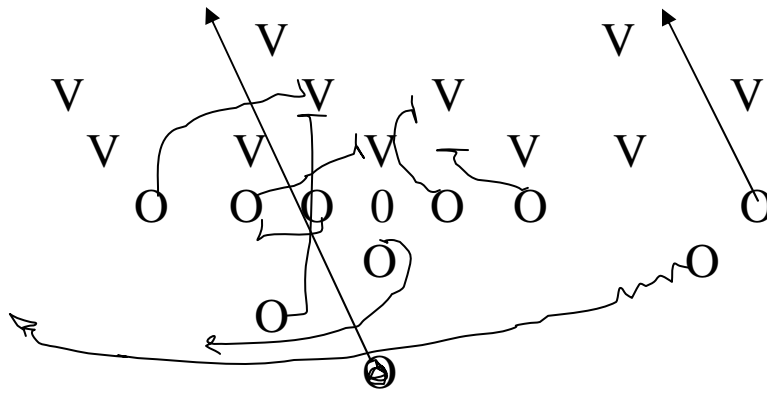


ENDS OVER, 45 TOSS

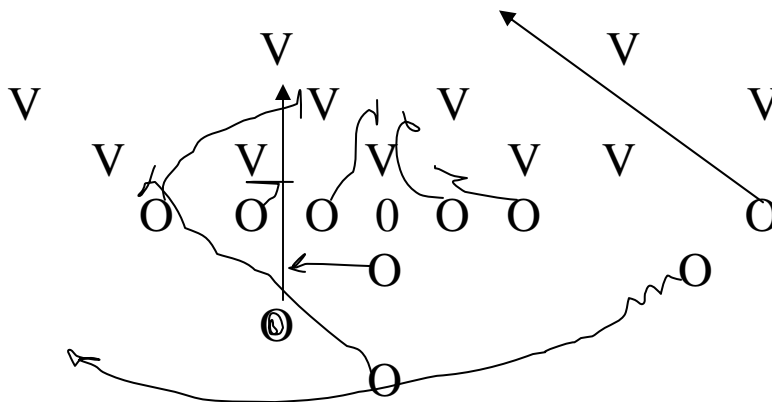
However, the true choice of holes to run is the #3 hole in order to get away from the corner. If the defense is not following the motion man we can run it as “23 Power” and get a double team block on the inside LBer and the DT or, if the defense is following the motion, run it as “23 on 1” or call “33 Quick on 1”. The quick snap count of “1” will tell the WB not to use motion. These three plays are shown on the following page:



ENDS OVER 23 POWER

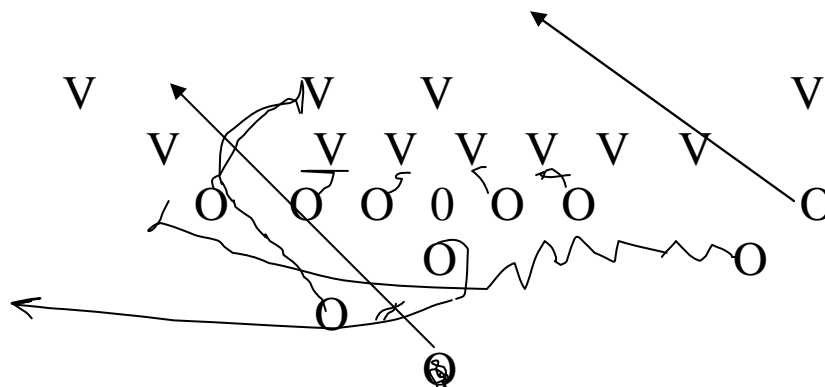


ENDS OVER 23 CROSS



ENDS OVER 33 QUICK

ENDS OVER, 25 POWER



The balanced defense tells us to go unbalanced.

Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Reverse pivot, hand to FB. Roll out.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut off OT's block.

WB: Count 3 fewer steps from the ball than normal. Motion to #5 hole, tap QB as you pass, and power block outside defender.

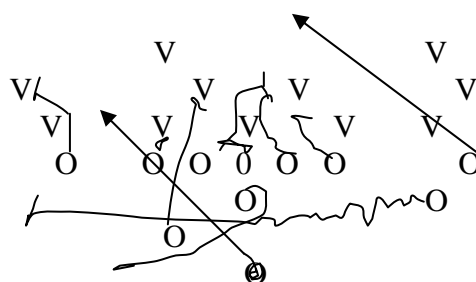
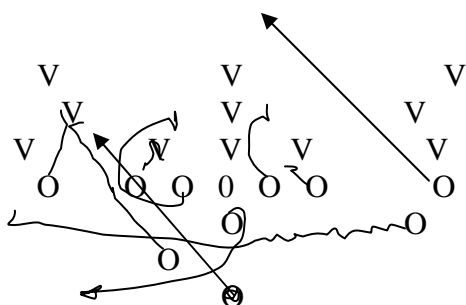
HB: Block nearest LBer via hole #3 or #5.

SE: Line up "Over": Post.

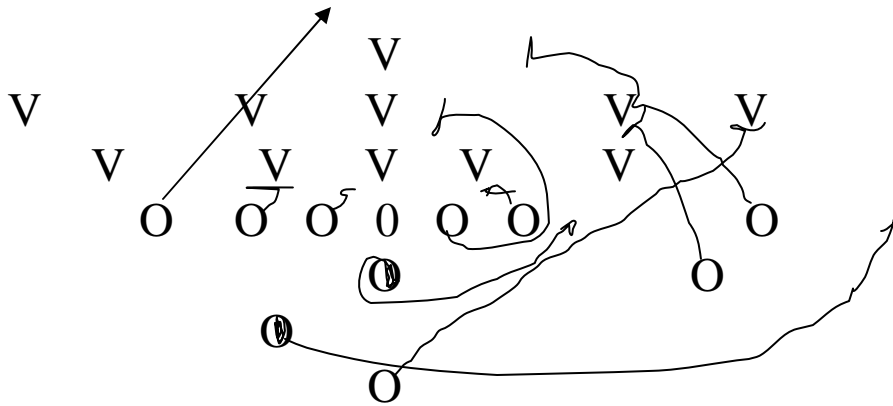
TE: Line up "Over", block nearest LBer

SNAP COUNT: 2

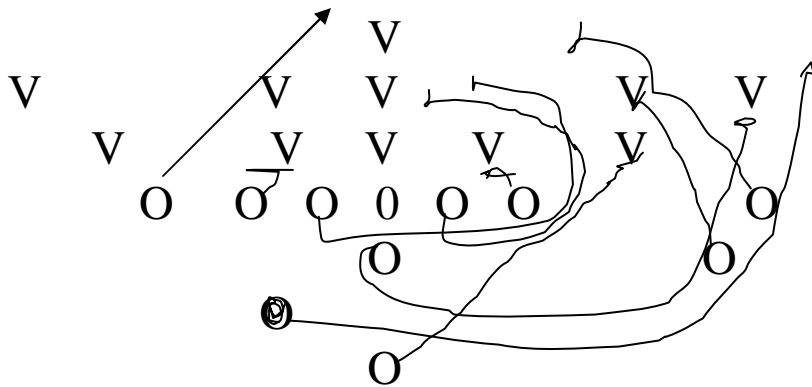
COACHING POINTS: Make sure FB takes his three steps. **This is a very popular play amongst coaches.** "Bucks Over 26 Power" is the same play to the other side.



ENDS OVER 38 OPTION

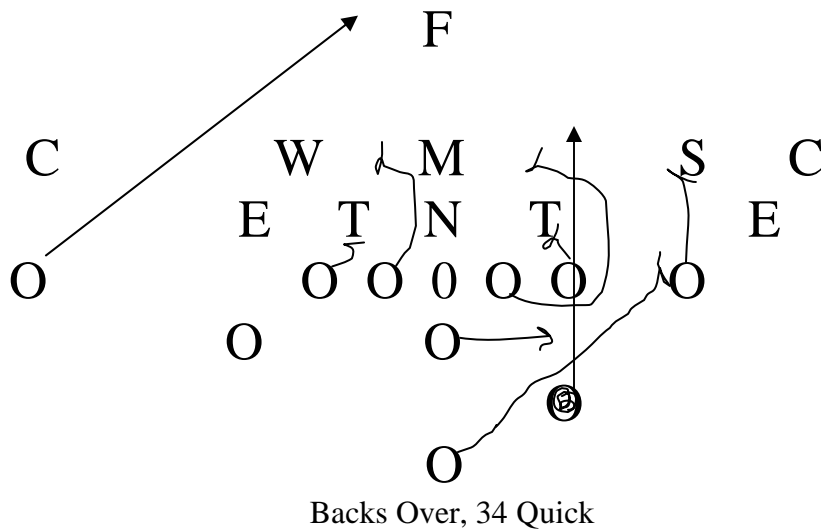
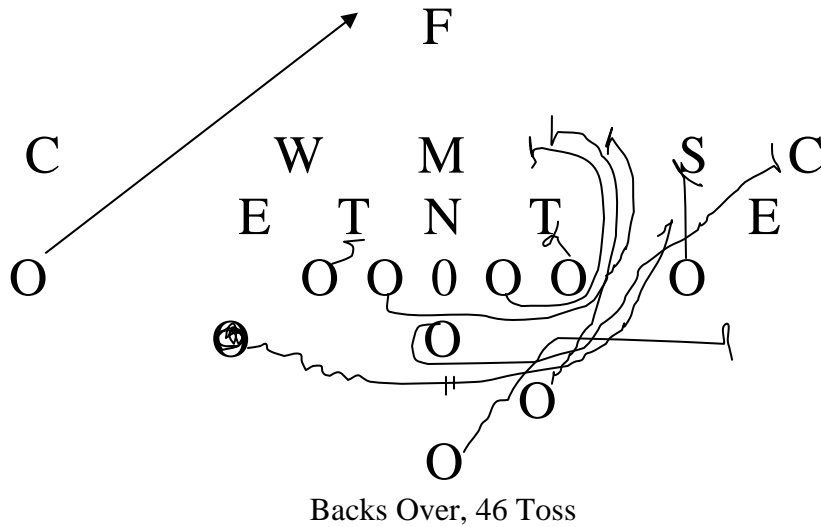


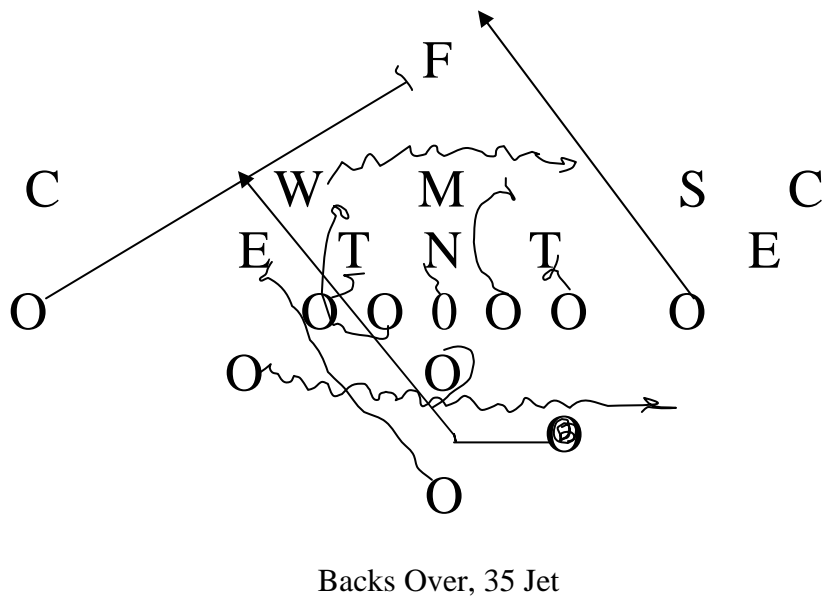
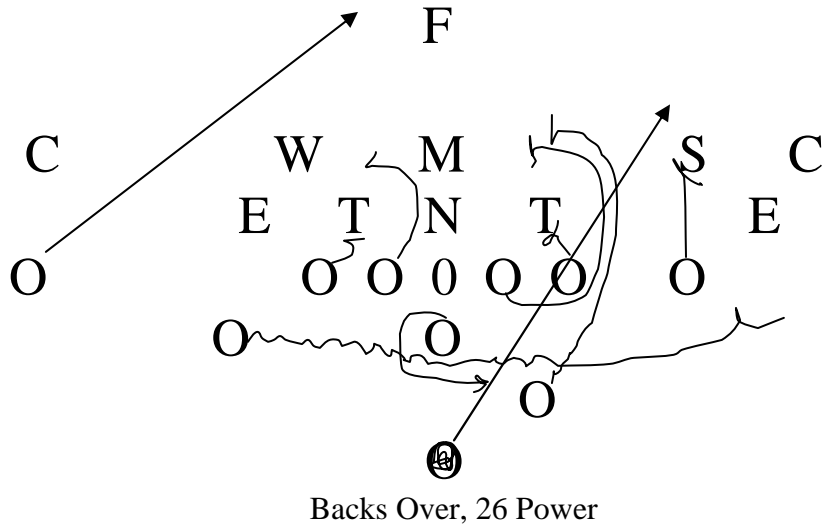
ENDS OVER 38 TOSS



BACKS OVER

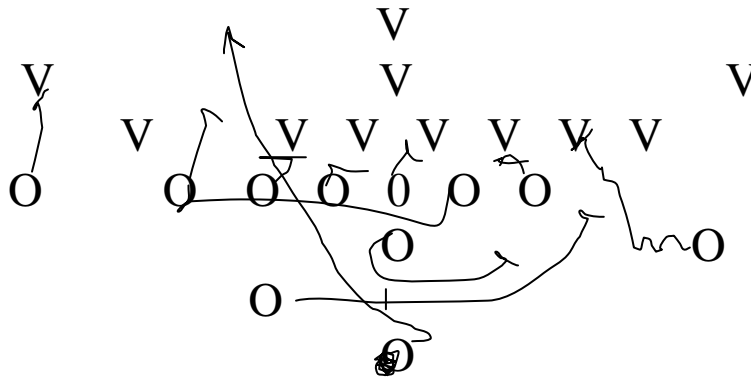
The “Backs Over” formation works the same as the “Ends Over” formation except, instead of calling it on the left hashmark, we call it on the right hashmark. It allows us to run into the near sideline with power while still remaining balanced and with our SE to the wide side of the field.





You can also run “Backs Over 57 Power Screen” from this formation.

“TE OVER, RIGHT 23 KICK”



Center: Block right first. If no defender, straight ahead.

Right Guard: Pull to hole called and kick out outside edge defender.

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

QB: Pivot left, fake toss to HB, hand to FB, and bootleg

FB: Step right with right foot and look right with helmet. Wait for HB to clear. Take toss and run “3” hole.

WB: Track

HB: Run right, faking 36 Toss.

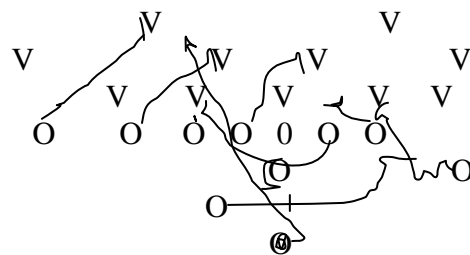
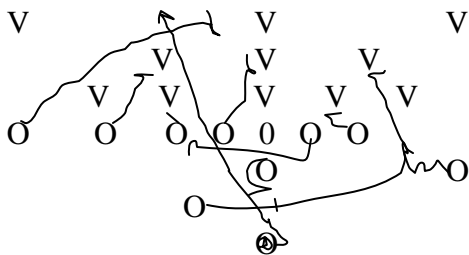
SE: Nearest, deepest defender.

TE: Change sides and block nearest linebacker

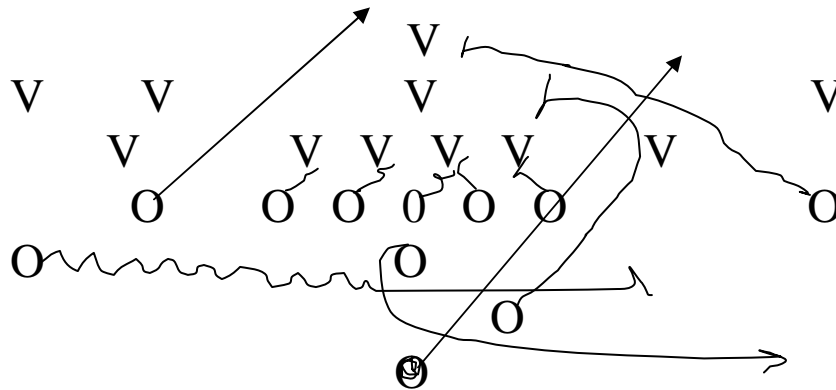
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: Make sure HB runs wide. The pulling right guard should look for his man as he comes to line. QB fakes toss to the HB and then steps right, using option style pitch to the FB. Make sure the pulling guards throw their right elbow back as they pull.

This play is designed to look like the “36 Toss” call.



“FLIP, 26 POWER”



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: GOL

Right Tackle: GOL

Left Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: reach

QB: reverse pivot and hand to FB the same as "24". Roll out.

FB: Run "24" for handoff – then slant to "6" hole.

WB: Align left ("Flip"). Motion to #6 hole. Kick out DE.

SE: Block nearest, deepest defender

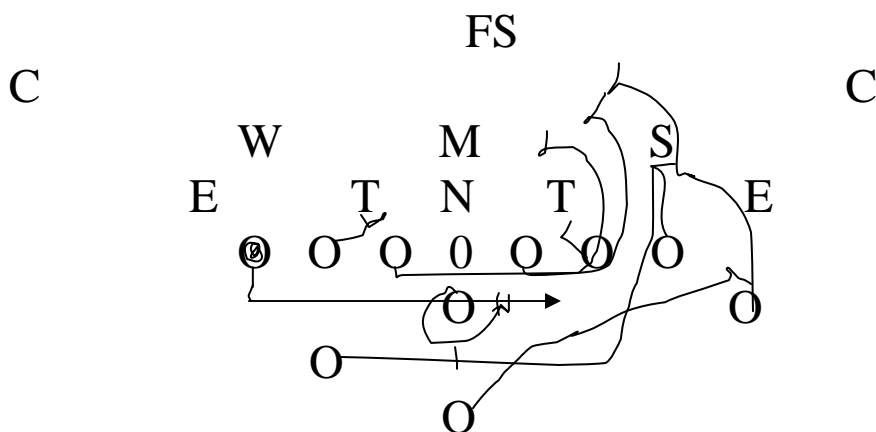
TE: Post

HB: Block inside LBer.

SNAP COUNT: "2"

COACHING POINTS: This play sets up "Flip 48 Speed". You can also run "23" from this formation.

SUPER 54 TOSS



LE: Pull for inside handoff to #4 hole

LT: Reach

LG: Pull to #4 hole and kick out first defender to show. If no defender shows, pull up through #6 and block toss.

Center: Block first to left, else straight ahead.

RG: GOL

RT: GOL

RE: GL

WB: Track Block

FB: DE

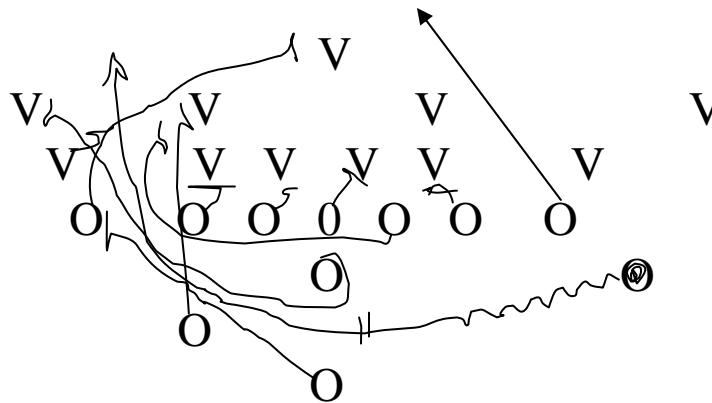
QB: Fake to HB. Hand off to TE in front of you after 360 degree turn. Block backside.

HB: Execute fake handoff on toss. Block LBer from RG on out.

Coaching points: This defense is balanced so we want to attack it unbalanced. By pulling the LG we gain an extra blocker (two if we pull the LE too). Make the HB hunch over for his fake. Can also be run as "Super 54 Toss Sweep"

Snap Count: 2

SUPER 45 TOSS



SE: Line up tight. Nearest, deepest defender (Can also be told to help the LT)

LT: GOL

LG: GOL

Center: Block first to right, else straight ahead.

RG: Pull and put left hand on QB's right shoulder. Follow QB to hole. Block first wrong colored jersey to inside.

RT: Reach

RE: Post

WB: Short motion, take toss, put hand on back of QB and follow.

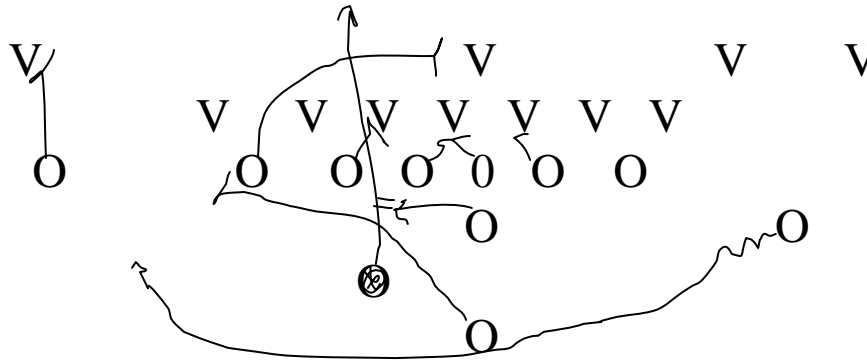
FB: DE

QB Toss ball to HB, follow FB to find hole, block #1 outside defender.

Snap Count: 2

This is the companion play to the "Super 36 Toss Sweep"

TE OVER 33 QUICK



Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.

Right Guard: Reach

Right Tackle: Reach

Left Guard: GOL

Left Tackle: GOL

TE: Line up "Over". Block nearest linebacker

QB: Open pivot, handoff to HB, and fake option pitch to WB.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut straight up field for handoff.

WB: Run pitch.

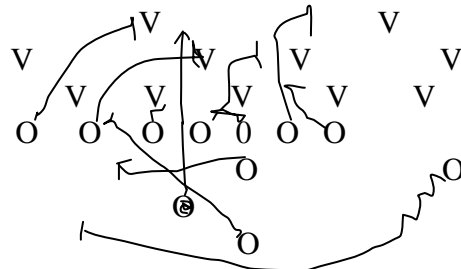
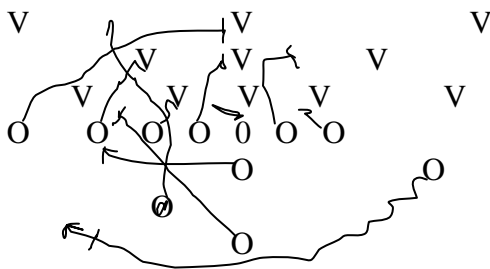
HB: Line up on hole #3. Run straight ahead for the handoff.

SE: Block nearest, DEEPEST defender.

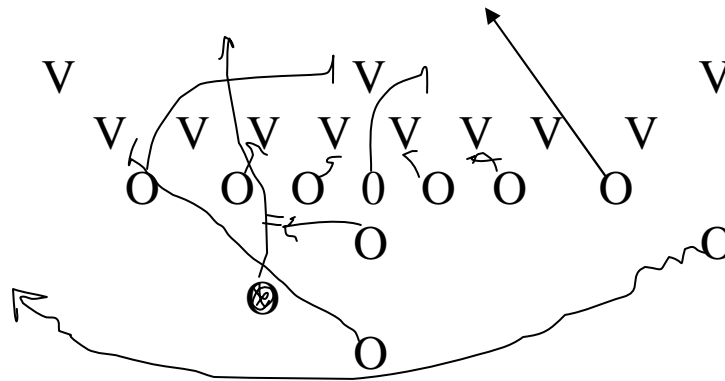
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: Make sure QB holds the ball out in front of himself and the hole. Make sure the FB takes his 3 steps. This "freezes" the DT who doesn't know if the FB is getting the ball or not. QB needs to carry out option fake to WB afterwards. In the above example, the center has come straight out and then put his back to the ball carrier in order to block the right cornerback should he try and follow the WB's motion. He does this because the middle LBer probably will be gone before the center can get to him (But if he was still there, the center would take him). Against a NG, center blocks the NG.

SPEED is the objective here. The play is to happen so fast the DT has no chance to react. It can also be run as "HB Over 34 Quick".



“SUPER, 33 QUICK”

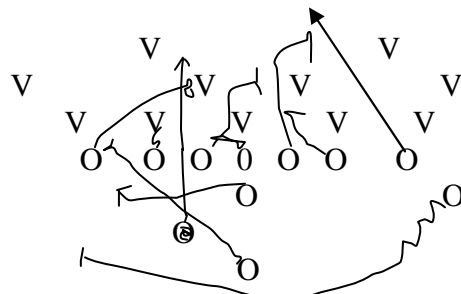
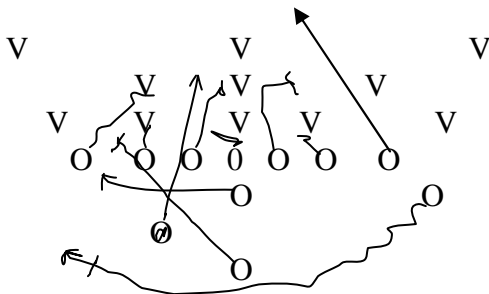


- Center: Step into playside hole. Engage first defender while heading upfield.
- Right Guard: Reach
- Right Tackle: Reach
- Left Guard: GOL
- Left Tackle: Nearest LBer
- QB: Open pivot, handoff to HB, and fake option pitch to WB.
- FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, cut straight up field for handoff.
- WB: Run pitch.
- HB: Line up on hole #3. Run straight ahead for the handoff.
- SE: Block nearest LBer inside you. The coach tells him this on the side line.
- TE: Post

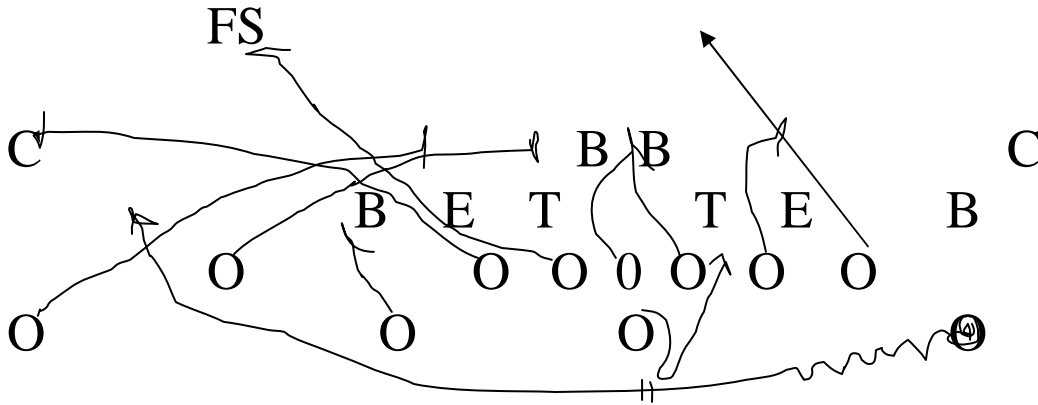
SNAP COUNT: 1

COACHING POINTS: Make sure QB holds the ball out in front of himself and the hole. Make sure the FB takes his 3 steps. This “freezes” the DT who doesn’t know if the FB is getting the ball or not. QB needs to carry out option fake to WB afterwards. In the above example, the center has come straight out and then put his back to the ball carrier in order to block the right cornerback should he try and follow the WB’s motion. He does this because the middle LBer probably will be gone before the center can get to him (But if he was still there, the center would take him). Against a NG, center blocks the NG.

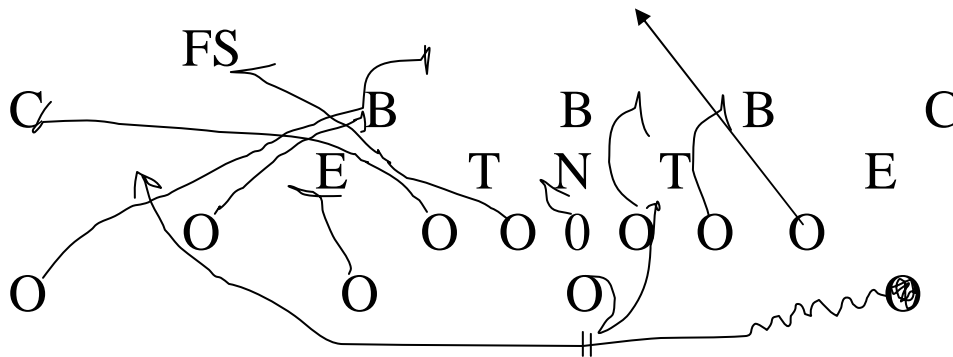
SPEED is the objective here. The play is to happen so fast the DT has no chance to react. The coach has to tell the SE to block the inside LBer. The play can also be run as “Backs Over 34 Quick”.



TRIPS, 47 SPEED



- 1) QB starts with his left foot (SE side) foot back.
- 2) RG, RT and RTE are all blocking upfield, looking to block anyone covering the motion man.
- 3) FB blocks end man on LOS (B)
- 4) QB pivots right to face WB on snap with midline footwork. This allows WB to take a deeper handoff. This is why QB's foot is back.
- 5) With QB's right elbow touching his side, he hands off to WB. After handing off, he wedges #2 hole.
- 6) Center steps left and fills #1 hole. LT and LG pull. LT has CB. LG has OLBer but must follow LT (no shortcuts) to cut off DE. SE has nearest, deepest defender. HB has cleanup inside.



The "Trips" formation is best used against Cover 1 or Cover 3. The defense must move the FS from the middle of the field which opens up the middle. But, because we have moved two players to the left for their one, we have a blocker on every defender. The WB takes a deep handoff to be certain he clears the penetration coming from holes #1 and #3. We cut the penetration down at #3 hole by pulling the LG across it. The QB will get tackled so he needs a rib protector.

PASSING

The DC wing T passing game is specifically designed to pick up a seven man rush and to let the QB outrun the eighth man of an eight man rush, a system developed by the University of Hawaii's "Rainbow Warriors" back in the early 90's. If you practice it, no one's getting through. To make certain of this I also adopted the 3 second passing game used so successfully by USC's Pete Carroll.

In addition, the passes to the SE are specifically designed for his close in alignment. A close in alignment is usually associated with a "down and out" pattern to give the receiver more room. However, we let the HB run this pattern (#1) because he's in even tighter to the QB than the SE. Instead, we let the SE come off his track block after 3 steps (*) and run a "curl out" to #2. It has the exact same effect of giving the receiver more room while also giving the QB an easier throw. *The SE is always eventually uncovered on this route.* This is because, if the corner followed the SE out on his track block route and we only pass 20% of the time, he'd be wrong 80% of the time. But the actual percentage figure is much higher than this. Passing 20% of the time, in a game of 50 offensive plays, we'd only pass 10 times. Since we have more than 10 passing plays, we'd probably only throw to the SE one time in a game on each of his patterns or once for "#2 Open" and once on "#3 Open". Hence, 96% of the rest of the time the corner would be wrong to follow our SE on his track block – And so he eventually won't. And, of course, if the corner does cover him, the QB will keep and run into the area vacated by the corner, making the corner wrong 100% of the time.

When the SE runs "#3 Open" he will up, because of his close in alignment, running a steep angled "post" pattern. To begin with, the post is already a dangerous pass:

"The post is not a blitz check or a hot route, but is instead designed and intended to put a knife in the heart of the defense. The post route is a relatively easy route to run and probably the easiest throw for a quarterback to make. On the flip side, the post is the toughest route for a cornerback in man coverage. The post route enables the receiver to use half the field, and all the quarterback has to do is throw to the open area in the middle of the field." - Tim Shaffner, Defensive Coordinator, Butler Community College

The steeper release angle by the SE is hard for a defender to get under ("under cut") to intercept. If he tries, the SE's angle causes him to "drift deep". Here is warning by a defensive coach to his corners about this happening:

"Avoid undercutting the post. Do not undercut the receiver unless the pass is under-thrown and you can get your hands on the ball. We do not undercut the post because as soon as the quarterback sees you underneath the receiver he is going to throw the ball over your head, and as soon as the receiver feels you underneath him, he is going to drift deep and away from you. You can expect a 90-95% failure rate when you try to undercut the post too early - and it's going to be a touchdown." - Tim Shaffner, Defensive Coordinator, Butler Community College

* Three steps are used before the cut because the defense will be watching the FB for the first three steps of the play. Thus, the SE cuts out on the very step in which the FB is ready to take the ball. It's very difficult for the corner to watch the SE and FB both on that 3rd step.

Thus, the corner, even if he does follow the SE, is still beat 90-95% of the time versus “#3 Open”. He can’t get in a position to defend the pass because the SE is automatically “drifting deep” and the QB is automatically throwing deep. It’s built right into play! It’s best run when you’re in “second and one” or “third and one”. If the pass is incomplete, you can always “power wedge” to get the first down.

Our other passes to the SE also come off his “track block”. On a “throw back” he’ll follow his track block for three steps and then run right through the inside linebackers for “#2 Open” on the opposite side of the field. Again, there’s no one to cover him and his “close in” alignment allows him to reach this area in the required 3 seconds. This throw, however, is about 23-25 yards and may be beyond the range of your QB. The SE, however, can turn around and stop anytime he’s open if that will help.

The simplest pass to the SE is the “Quick” slant. Some would say the SE should be “farther out” on a slant to give him “more room”. Actually, we don’t need that. Because, if the SE pitches back to the HB on the “Quick and Lateral”, we’re now giving the HB “more room”. And, if we don’t call the “lateral” it’s because the defense is not playing a safety (“Cover 0”) and the SE is now running into “more room”.

Thus, even though our SE plays “close in” to the QB, this does not negatively affect our passing game to him.

Our HB is ideally positioned to run “Pass Left #1 Open” or “Pass Left, HB Throwback”. You always want players positioned “inside” to catch passes “outside”. The TE runs the identical routes to his side (“Pass Right #1 Open” and “Pass Right TE Throwback”) for the identical reason. Yet he can also run “Pass Left #3” and get that same steep, post angle the defense can’t cover.

There is an additional area throw, “Zero Open”, to the flats. This is used against defenses that are rushing six (and not 7-8). It works like a screen pass. “Zero Open” tells all the other receivers that they’re not getting the ball and to run straight down field (“Fly”) and take their defender with them. The QB sets up to throw deep behind the FB’s block and then swings the ball outside to either the HB or WB. It’s very effective against six down linemen. The QB is taught to throw routes #1-3 first and then the “Zero opens” and “throwbacks”. Try every kid at every pass because differences occur due to “right footedness”. This refers to the fact that some kids can catch better on a route to the right than to the left and vice-versa. The inability to “go left” is prevalent amongst right handed players and requires about two days of practicing “going left” to overcome.

In addition to being “pass route” specific, the QB only has to learn four areas to throw to; #0, #1, #2, #3, and Throwback. This makes learning so simple that I’ve never had to explain it to a QB twice. It’s equally easy for each receiver to learn his routes making the entire system very simple to learn. Indeed! There are only two dangers to the system. The first is a receiving coach that gets bored and starts adding “new routes”. This is a complete waste of time. The second danger is when you see a receiver fail to run his assigned route. This is a sign of **Attention Deficit Disorder** (ADD) and is a serious problem. Such a receiver can usually only be used on quick slants. Although this player will often have great hands it is wisest to keep him off the field on a passing down. Two things can, and will, go wrong. If you call the pass to him, he won’t be where he’s supposed to be and the now confused and surprised QB will find himself looking at

empty “area” and wondering where his receiver is? Second, if you don’t call the pass to him, there’s a good chance that this kid will still run right at where you’ve just called the pass and bring a defender with him. Although ADD can be medically treated, there is nothing you as a coach can do about this player’s erratic pass patterns *except replace him*. I have written an article on coaching ADD players and the solution to this problem does not exist.

Keep in mind that you actually have more passes than you can throw in a game when you only throw once every five plays. This tells you that 1) extra pass plays are unnecessary and 2) you can be receiver specific to your route. What that latter means is that you can pick certain receivers to run certain routes. You may have one SE that catches “#3 Open” better than the others. So you would specifically put him on the field for that play. Another SE catches “#2 Open” just as well as the other player but not “#3 Open”, so you let him catch “#2 Open” in order to be fair. Almost anyone can catch the quick slant so you can drop further down in receiving talent and still be fair. In fact, you can have each receiver specialize in that one pass and stop practicing the passes he can’t catch while practicing the one pass he can catch.

This is very important because someone once said, “When you throw the ball, three things can happen and two of them are bad.” As a coach, you must eliminate the “bad” or you will learn to simply not throw. So we rep the QB to make the throw, throw only what he can hit, and throw it only to a kid that can catch it. Failure to do this is just plain stupid. You will find something here your QB can throw and you will find something here your receiver(s) can catch. Do it. Two out of every three pass completions often end up in touchdowns. I complete 67% of my passes which means that, in theory, I have a 45% chance of scoring every fifth play of a game. You have to learn two things. They are 1) kids drop more passes in a game than in practice and 2) the most likely pass a receiver will drop is *his very first one*. I solve problem #1 by making sure the receiver catches 80% of his throws in practice. Catching 80% in practice equals 67% on game day. I solve problem #2 by telling the receiver that he is most likely to drop the very first pass I call to him because he will take his eyes off the ball in order to run with it afterwards. Many times just my telling them this is enough. But there is a right way and a wrong way to everything. Never tell a kid, “Don’t drop it” as a threat. You’ve actually increased his chances of dropping it and then crying afterwards for doing so. It’s much easier and better to tell a child, “I bet you drop your first pass.” He’ll remember that bet and he won’t take it as a threat. He’ll take it as a challenge. Remember! You’ve got a benchload of kids dying to catch a pass. At least one has a 45% chance of scoring. Who is the stupid one if you don’t throw?

Here’s my average (subject to good coaching help being available). I get about 27-28 plays in a game (five possessions) to my opponents 24 (*) (game duration, one hour and twenty minutes). I score, on average, in five plays which means I should average 35 points per game but, in reality, it’s 28 points because I usually end up running the clock out on my last possession. In those 27-28 plays, I’ll throw five times and score twice through the air. One fifth of my plays account for half of my score!

* Against my DC-46, the other team also gets five possessions, but often only one first down, or 24 plays.

Notice how, on average, it takes me five plays to score and I pass on every fifth play? There's a direct relationship here. This section is important. It not only puts you in the winner's circle, it puts those "wasted" players on the bench in the winner's circle. The more weapons you have to score with, the harder you are to stop. Somebody on that bench is a touchdown waiting to happen – even if it's only "Quick Pass and Lateral to the SE" (And you have three such passes.).

Which brings us to the question, why do we only throw once every five plays?

The answer to that is simple. It's because passing is technically not a youth offense. Not only do we need good hands at the receiver position but also an accurate QB. The chances that you'll have both are not very good. Therefore, we must throw to uncovered receivers. Throw every fifth play and they're uncovered. That is a proven football statistic (*). Coach JB threw every third play and his kids were still uncovered. Why? Because the defense was still right 67% of the time and he wasn't dropping the ball. We can't say that we won't drop the ball. In fact, 33% of the time, I do. Could I raise that figure? Yes. But it would require that I switch from coaching the offensive line to coaching the receivers. *The receivers need coaching.* Yet the last coaching spot filled is usually the receiver coach. It gets ignored – even with me. So, when I throw, I need to be confident that, if it's incomplete, I can still pick up the first down on the next play. I can do that if my FB averages 5 yards per carry but, just to be sure, I'd like it to be only 4 yards to go for a first down. Hence, I tend to throw in "Down X and 4 (or less) yards to go". The odds of being in that situation are about one in five. But, with a good receiver coach, you can take more risk and up that to one in three plays simply because you don't have to worry about a *wide open* kid dropping the ball and putting you in third and five.

Sometimes, you don't even have to complete the pass to get the first down. This is because we change our snap count to "3" on pass plays. With defenses used to us snapping on "2" (and often "1"), changing to "3" is an invitation to the defense to jump offsides (and which is why we change the count). That's a five yard penalty and first down for us even if the pass was incomplete. Make sure, however, that your kids don't "pop" the defender coming offsides, or the penalty is on you. To prevent this, on pass plays, you can have your offensive line close their eyes for the first two counts.

So how do we actually pass once in every five plays? Who is keeping track?

The receivers are. The SE's are instructed to tell the offensive coordinator every down how many more plays it is to "pass". So, when you give to the FB on first down, the SE standing beside you and waiting to take the play in, says "Four more plays till pass, Coach". The next SE will tell you, "Three more plays till pass, Coach."

This isn't intended to nag you. It's intended to make you look at the first down marker. Somewhere, in the next four plays, you can afford to pass, have it fall incomplete, and still pick up the first. They're just reminding you to notice when that opportunity comes up because, otherwise, you'll just keep reading the near DE to decide whether to run inside, or outside, of him *and he'll never give you a pass read.* Both the yard marker and computer statistics will tell you when to pass.

* Calculated by the West Point, Air Force, and Annapolis military academies.

The yard marker tells you when you can afford to pass but the computer statistics tell you *when you can't afford not to pass*. Because, if you ran the FB to both sides and he picked up less than 5 yards each time, that's a statistic *screaming at you to pass*. Either the defense is piled up at the line to stop the run or they're bigger and better than you are and you need to try something else. The bottom line is that you pass whether you're making good yards or bad on the ground.

You should average about one yard passing for every three yards rushing. Thus, Georgia Southern, a highly successful team and whose offense our own is patterned after, averaged 370 yards rushing per game and 113 passing. That ratio has taken them to several national championships. If you find yourself falling short of this ratio in passing, you're either not throwing enough or executing the passing game poorly.

CALLING THE PASSES: To see who is open, on the play before you call your pass, watch the "posting" backside end on your run play to see who is covering him. If the safety is covering him, call a "QB Keep" pass or a "#1 or #2 open". If a corner is covering him, call a "throwback" or screen pass into the area vacated by the corner chasing #3 receiver. "Pass right" examples are: "TE Throwback", "WB Throwback", or "Right 67 Screen". If the posting end is uncovered, throw to him on "#3 Open". If you make this one read, you'll always throw to an open receiver.

PASSING FOR 7-8's: Very young QB's and receivers will probably have more success with "area" throws. Here the QB throws to a certain spot on the field and the receiver runs to that same spot. The "spot" is wherever the defender back is standing. The QB will throw a soft, easy pass directly at the defender and the receiver will run directly in front of that defender. This gives the QB and receiver a common reference point and keeps the pass short and underneath the defense.

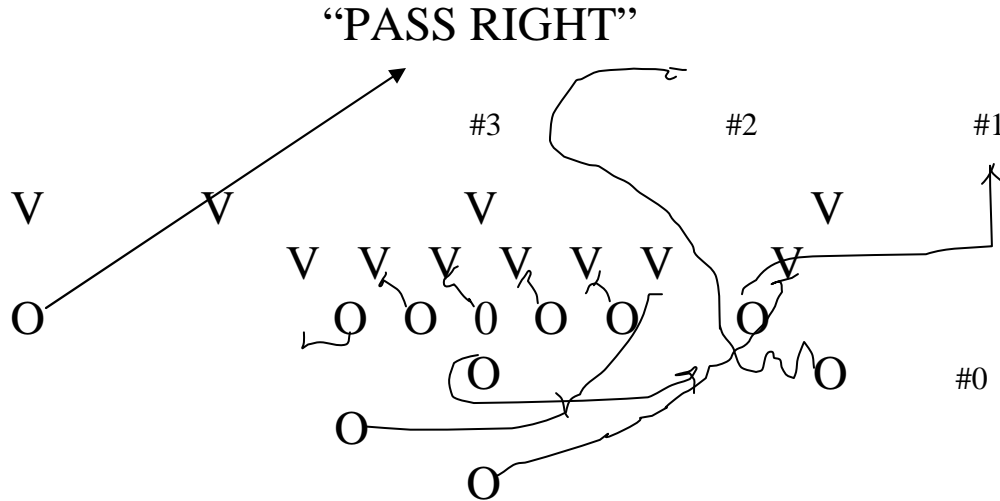
This may seem like an odd way to throw a pass but it gives both offensive players a common aiming point as well as "freezes" the defender. The defender doesn't move. He stands and waits for the ball to come down. Our receiver intercepts it in front of him. This is a normal response for a defender and results in our receiver not only catching the pass but doing it on the run versus a standing defender resulting in a big gain after catch.

Example: Bring your TE 3-4 yards across in front of your center on a "down and in" and have the QB throw to the MLBer. TE intercepts and runs by the MLBer. Now have the SE and "WB Over" both doubleteam the outside LBer to their side. Who makes the tackle? You can have the SE run the same "down and in" from the opposite direction with the TE and WB blocking.

You can also run reverse handoffs on your passes. Use the same play thrown to the TE above, only now have the SE or "WB Over" run "down and in" and take an inside reverse handoff from the TE.

You can also throw screen passes to 7-8's such as "WB Over, 57 Power Screen". If you have your SE step backwards for the pass, even if he drops it, he can legally pick the ball back up and run with it again.

The standard pass plays follow. Keep in mind that the highly successful "buck (waggle)" pass has already been presented.



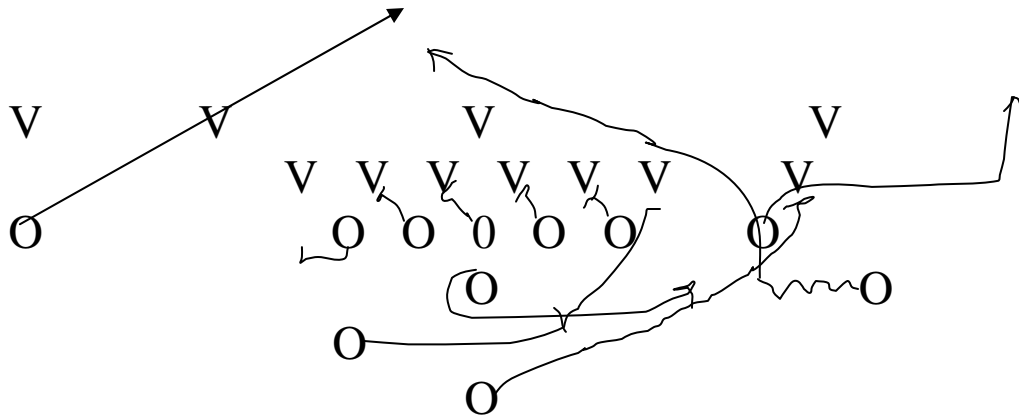
- Center: Block left
- Right Guard: Block left
- Right Tackle: Block left
- Left Guard: Block left
- Left Tackle: Block left
- QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to HB. Roll out to the right. Throw to designated receiver.
- FB: Log block DE.
- HB: Run #6. Block “C” gap defender.
- WB: Run curl route
- SE: Post
- TE: Run out and up

SNAP COUNT: “3”

COACHING POINTS: The receivers are numbered 1-3. #1 is always in the flats, #2 on the curl, and #3 on the post. The #1 receiver (TE) is to be no more than 5 yards up field when/if the pass is thrown to him. He is to run further to the outside than up field in order to stay away from the WB’s pattern. The WB should start on his normal post and then dip his shoulder to curl as sharply as possible. He then comes back to the QB. The #3 receiver (SE) simply posts over the middle. The coach can specify which receiver the QB is to throw to by saying “Pass Right, #1 open” or “Pass Right, #2 open”, etc. The #2 route is normally a clearing route and the one least called but, if we have a good QB we can make this an “out” route. The QB will keep the ball and run if the coach calls, “Pass Right, QB Keep”. The “0” receiver is the above would have been the left HB but he is needed as a pass blocker first and will always pass block until you call “0 Open”.

On the pass blocking, the backside OT may have to step back and “pull” sideways like a guard in order to get his man (The DE). The line should be trained to expect the defense to jump off sides due to the change in snap count. The HB never runs his “0 Open” unless it is called. Otherwise, he pass blocks the #6 hole.

“PASS RIGHT, WB THROWBACK”



Center: Block left

Right Guard: Block left

Right Tackle: Block left

Left Guard: Block left

Left Tackle: Block left

QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to HB. Roll out to the right. Throw back to designated receiver (WB).

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, log block DE.

HB: Run #6. Block “C” gap defender.

WB: Run drag route

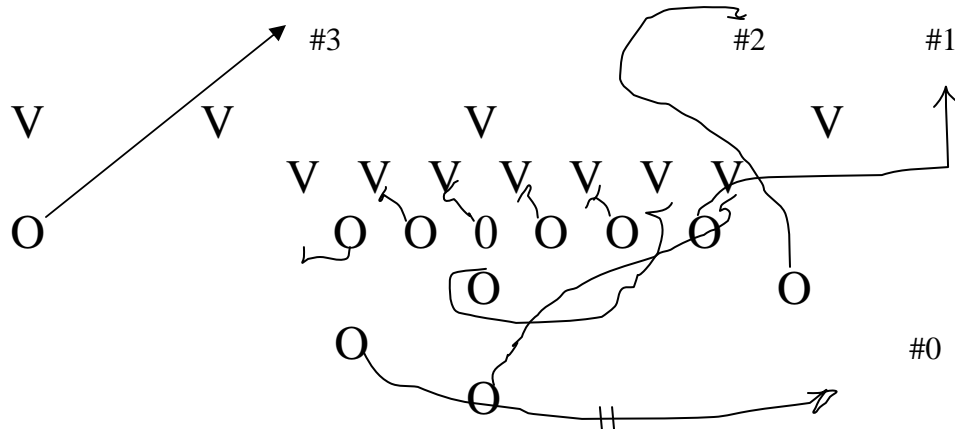
SE: Post (Pick any defender on the WB)

TE: Run out and up.

SNAP COUNT: “3”

COACHING POINTS: The WB is the designated receiver who will slant away from the QB. Of the throwback passes, the “WB Throwback” is one of the best as it simulates his track blocking route. You can also throw a “TE Throwback”.

“PASS RIGHT, HB OPTION”



Center: Block left

Right Guard: Block left

Right Tackle: Block left

Left Guard: Block left

Left Tackle: Block left

HB: Run option pitch route. Take pitch and throw to designated receiver.

FB: Log block DE.

QB: Reverse pivot. Run #6. Pitch to HB option style. Block “6” gap defender.

WB: Run curl route

SE: Post

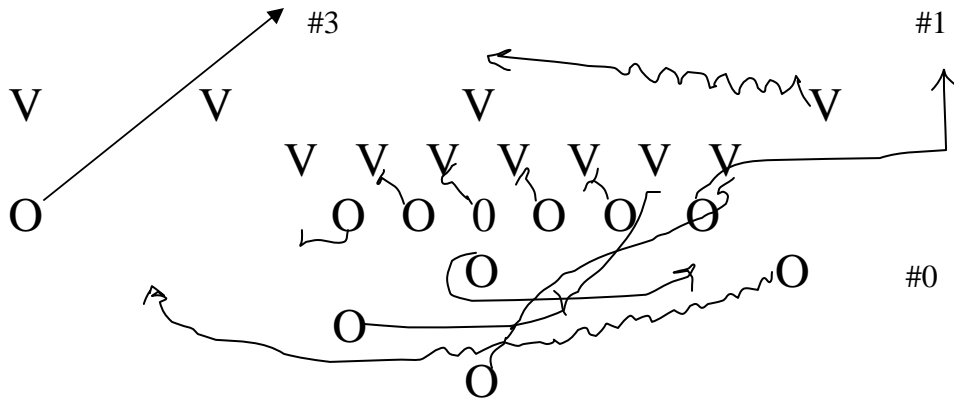
TE: Run out and up

SNAP COUNT: “3”

COACHING POINTS: The receivers are numbered 1-3. #1 is always in the flats, #2 on the curl, and #3 on the post. The #1 receiver (TE) is to be no more than 5 yards up field when/if the pass is thrown to him. He is to run further to the outside than up field in order to stay away from the WB’s pattern. The WB should start on his normal post and then dip his shoulder to curl as sharply as possible. He then comes back to the QB. The #3 receiver (SE) simply posts over the middle. The coach can specify which receiver the HB is to throw to by saying “Pass Right, HB Option, #1 Open” or “#2 Open”, etc. The #2 route is normally a clearing route and the one least called but, if we have a good HB we can make this an “out” route. There is no “0 Open” that goes with this call. If designated receiver is covered, HB keeps and runs.

On the pass blocking, the backside OT may have to step back and “pull” sideways like a guard in order to get his man (The DE). The line should be trained to expect the defense to jump off sides due to the change in snap count.

“PASS RIGHT, WB JET”



Center: Block left

Right Guard: Block left

Right Tackle: Block left

Left Guard: Block left

Left Tackle: Block left

QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to HB. Roll out to the right. Throw back to the WB.

FB: Log block DE.

HB: Run #6. Block "C" gap defender.

WB: Run Jet motion. Turn around for the pass.

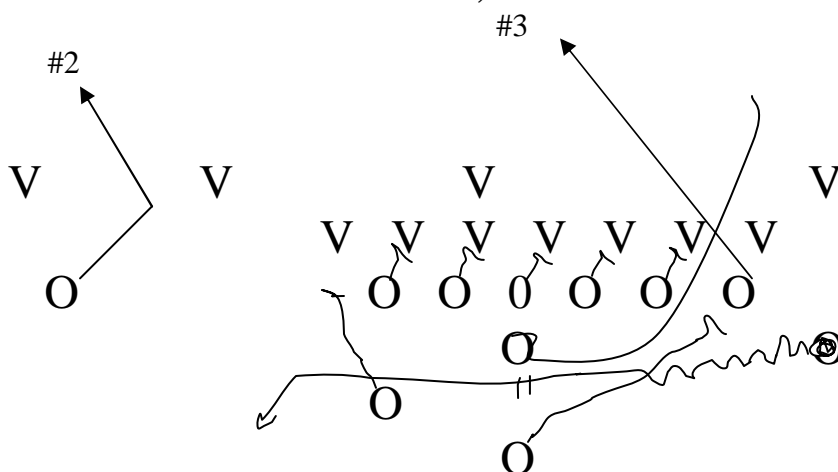
SE: Post

TE: Run out and up

SNAP COUNT: "3"

COACHING POINTS: The #3 receiver (SE) simply posts over the middle and the TE runs to #1. The QB rolls right, after faking to the HB, and throws back to the WB. Useful play if the corner on the SE follows the SE on post.

“PASS LEFT, WB SPEED PASS”



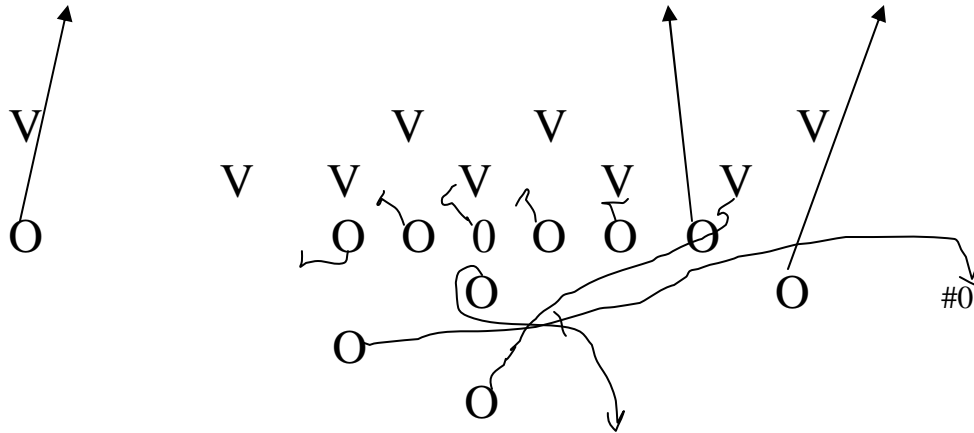
Center: Block right
 Right Guard: Block right
 Right Tackle: Block right
 Left Guard: Block right
 Left Tackle: Block right
 QB: Reverse pivot, hand to WB. Run “speed” pass route.
 FB: Block DE
 WB: Run “47 Speed”. Pull up and throw.
 HB: Block DE
 SE: Rub #2
 TE: Run #3

SNAP COUNT: “3”

COACHING POINTS: The receivers are numbered 2-3 plus “QB”. Youll be missing #1 in the flats, #2 is on the curl, and #3 is on the post and QB is on throwback. The SE should start on his normal post for 3 steps and then dip his shoulder to curl as sharply as possible to get to #2. The #3 receiver (TE) simply posts over the middle. The coach can specify which receiver the WB is to throw to by saying “#2 open” or “#3 open” or “QB Open”. The #2 route is almost always open on a “HB Pass”.

On the pass blocking, the backside OT may have to “pull” sideways like a guard in order to get his man (The DE). The line should be trained to expect the defense to jump off sides due to the change in snap count.

“PASS RIGHT, 0 OPEN”



Center: Block left guard to man over

Right Guard: Block center's man to man over

Right Tackle: Block left guard to man over

Left Guard: Block left tackle's man to man over

Left Tackle: Block left DE

QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to HB. Roll out deep to the right. Throw outside to the HB on the count of "four monkeys".

FB: Log block DE.

HB: HB looks back at QB over right shoulder, heading toward sideline.

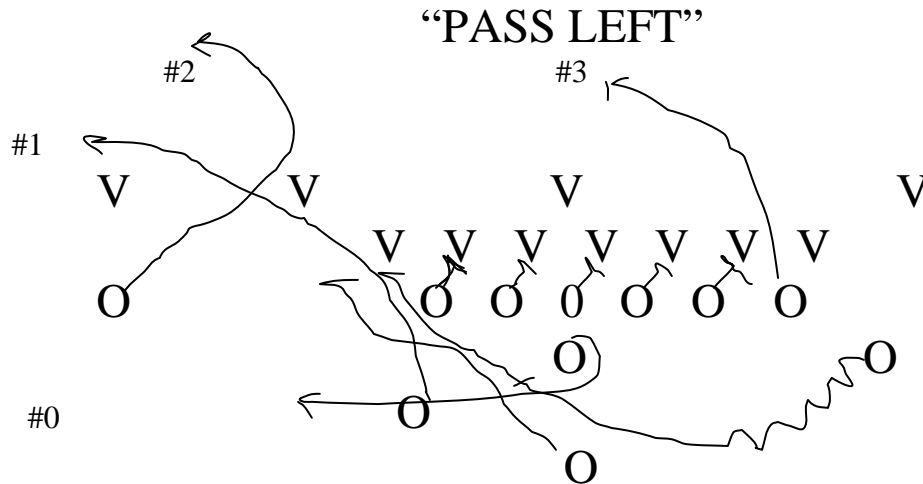
WB: Run "0 Open"

SE: Run "0 Open"

TE: Run "0 Open"

SNAP COUNT: "3"

COACHING POINTS: The three receivers run fly patterns (SE). The QB rolls right, after faking to the HB, and throws outside to the HB. Useful play if the defense is thinking pass.



Center: Block right

Right Guard: Block right

Right Tackle: Block right

Left Guard: Block right

Left Tackle: Block right

QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to WB. Roll out to the left. Throw to designated receiver. If covered, keep and run for first down marker.

FB: Log block DE.

WB: Motion to #6 for fake handoff. Block “C” gap defender.

SE: Run curl route

TE: Post

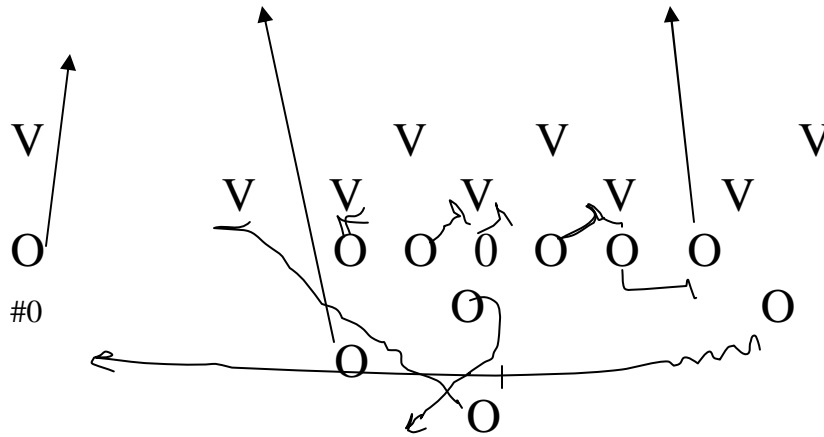
HB: Run down and out

SNAP COUNT: “3”

COACHING POINTS: The receivers are numbered 1-3. #1 is always in the flats, #2 on the curl, and #3 on the post. The #1 receiver (HB) is to be no more than 5 yards up field when/if the pass is thrown to him. He is to run further to the outside than up field in order to stay away from the SE’s pattern. The SE should start on his normal post and then dip his shoulder to curl as sharply as possible. He then comes back to the QB. The #3 receiver (TE) simply posts over the middle. The coach can specify which receiver the QB is to throw to by saying “Pass Left, #1 open” or “Pass Left, #2 open”, etc. The #2 route is normally a clearing route and the one least called (I usually call it on extra point plays). However, if the QB has a good enough arm, we can change this to an out route. The QB will keep the ball and run if the coach calls, “Pass Left, QB Keep”.

On the pass blocking, the backside OT may have to “pull” sideways like a guard in order to get his man (The DE). The line should be trained to expect the defense to jump off sides due to the change in snap count. Unless the WB is a mature, reliable player, DO NOT let him go out for a pass if he finds himself with no one to pass block. He stays in “C” gap and helps out in the blocking.

“PASS LEFT, 0 OPEN”



Center: Block right guard to man over

Right Guard: Block center's man to man over

Right Tackle: Block DE

Left Guard: Block right tackle's man to man over

Left Tackle: Block left guard's man to man over

QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to WB. Roll out and drop to the left. Throw outside to the WB.

FB: Load block DE.

WB: Motion for a fake "45" call. WB is headed upfield, shoulders facing downfield, looking in towards QB. Best to run from Trips.

HB: Run "0 Open"

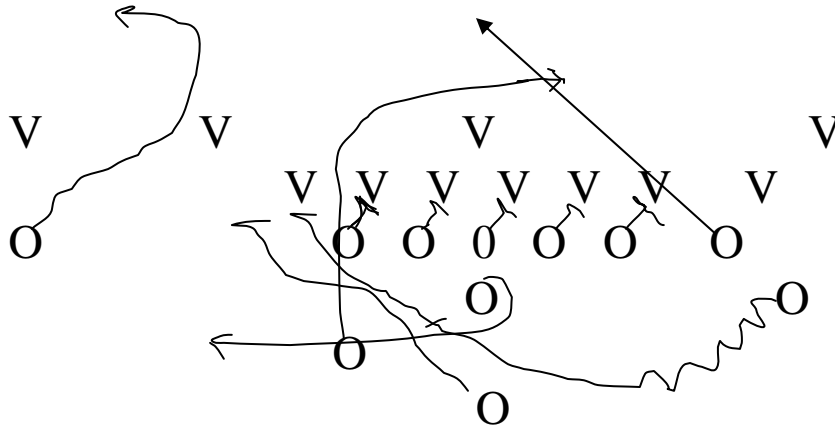
SE: Run "0 Open"

TE: Run "0 Open"

SNAP COUNT: "3"

COACHING POINTS: The three receivers run fly patterns (SE). The QB rolls left, after faking to the WB, and throws outside to the WB. Useful play if the defense is thinking pass.

“PASS LEFT, HB THROWBACK”



Center: Block right

Right Guard: Block right

Right Tackle: Block right

Left Guard: Block right

Left Tackle: Block right

QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to WB. Roll out to the right. Throw back across the field to the designated receiver (HB).

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, log block DE.

WB: Motion to #6 for fake handoff. Block “C” gap defender.

SE: Run curl route

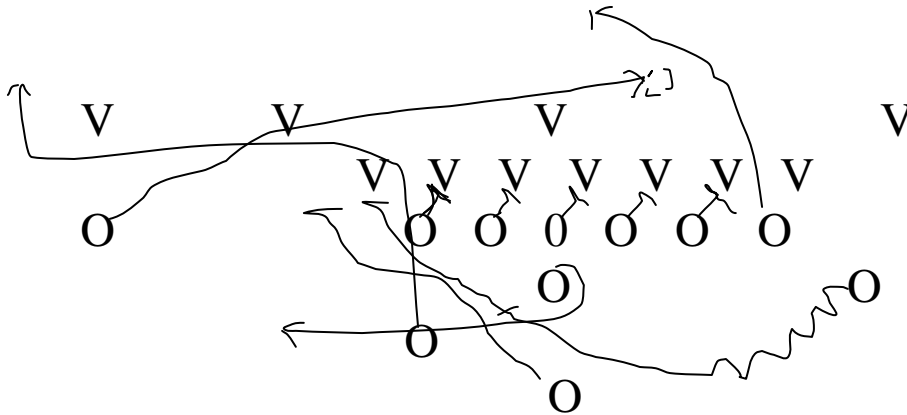
TE: Post (Pick any defender covering the HB)

HB: Run drag

SNAP COUNT: “3”

COACHING POINTS: The HB is the designated receiver. On all throwbacks the receiver is slanting over the middle and away from the QB. Everyone else runs their normal route for “pass left.”

“PASS LEFT, SE THROWBACK”



Center: Block right

Right Guard: Block right

Right Tackle: Block right

Left Guard: Block right

Left Tackle: Block right

QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to WB. Roll out to the right. Throw back across the field to the designated receiver (SE).

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, log block DE.

WB: Motion to #6 for fake handoff. Block “C” gap defender.

SE: Run drag

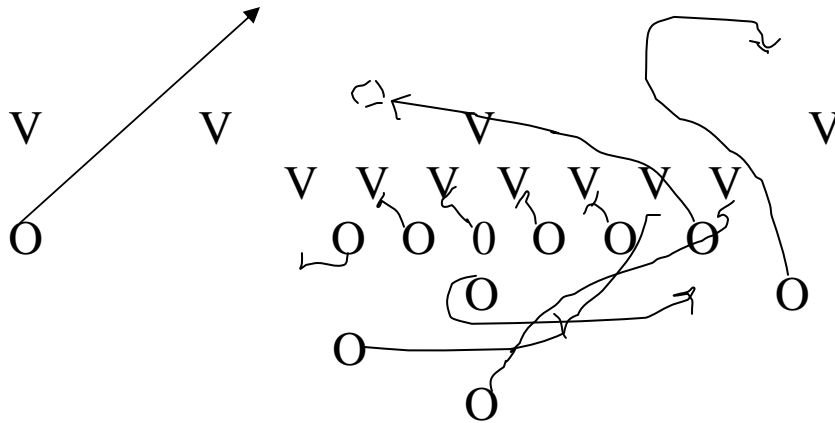
TE: Post (Pick any defender covering the SE)

HB: Run out and up

SNAP COUNT: “3”

COACHING POINTS: The SE is the designated receiver. On all throwbacks the receiver is slanting over the middle and away from the QB. Everyone else runs their normal route for “pass left”.

“PASS RIGHT, TE THROWBACK”



Center: Block left

Right Guard: Block left

Right Tackle: Block left

Left Guard: Block left

Left Tackle: Block left

QB: Reverse pivot, fake handoff to HB. Roll out to the right. Throw back to designated receiver (TE).

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, log block DE.

HB: Run #6. Block “C” gap defender.

WB: Run curl route

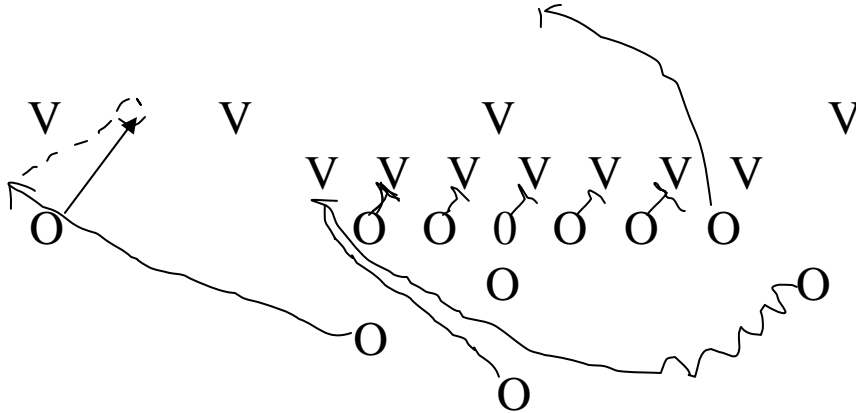
SE: Post (Pick any defender on the TE)

TE: Run drag

SNAP COUNT: “3”

COACHING POINTS: The TE is the designated receiver who will slant away from the QB. Of the throwback passes, the “TE Throwback” is one of the best.

“QUICK PASS LEFT, SE LATERAL”



Center: Block right

Right Guard: Block right

Right Tackle: Block right

Left Guard: Block right

Left Tackle: Block right

QB: Throw quick to the SE.

FB: Head at outside foot of OT for 3 steps, log block DE.

WB: Motion to #6 for fake handoff. Block “C” gap defender.

SE: Run slant, come back to QB for catch. Pitch to HB

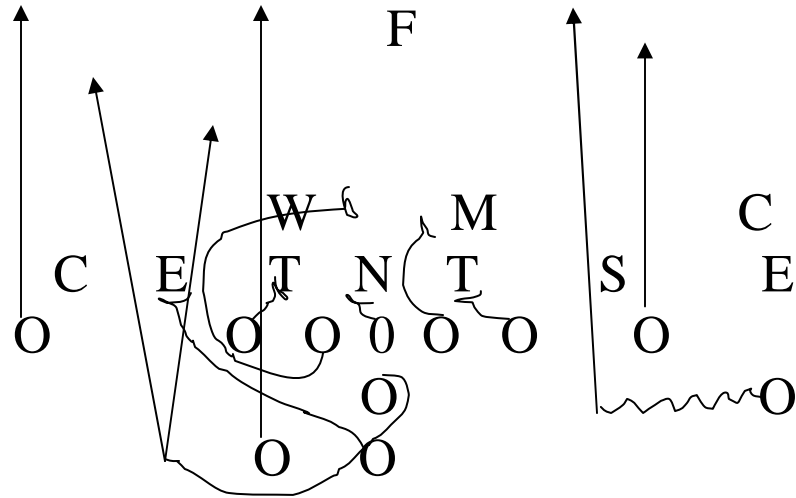
TE: Post

HB: Run at #1 outside receiver’s initial position. Look for pitch from SE.

SNAP COUNT: “3”

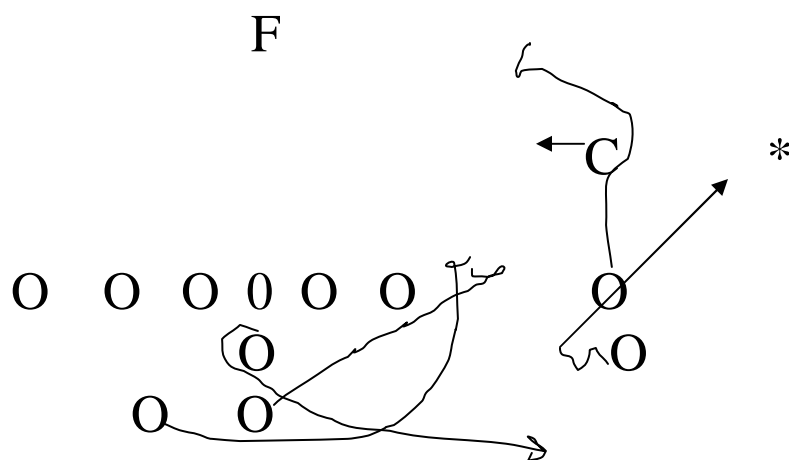
COACHING POINTS: The timing for this play is important. The SE can only go about three steps downfield before he hooks back. He must pitch the moment he catches. The QB must throw right after the fake handoff.

17 FLY



There is no fake handoff because we want the defense to think the play is “pass”. The QB holds the ball high, by his ear, looks downfield as if to throw, executes a pump fake, and then runs off the FB’s block. This differs from “Pass Left, QB Keep” in that we have receivers further downfield. The QB does not come to a complete stop to “set up”, but he can slow down as if he were going to. Works best against a team that lines its DE up opposite our WB.

ANOTHER PICK PASS



“Ends Over, Pass Right, Out”

If a defender is following our WB in motion, or if it is known who is covering him, we can call a “pick pass”. The SE lines up directly in front of the WB. The WB will use very short motion (about two steps) just before the snap, and then cut back. The SE will run into the defender who follows the WB’s motion, hitting him on the outside shoulder, and be releasing for the nearest, deepest safety before the count of “four monkeys”. The QB will throw to the WB as the SE blocks from corner to safety. To be legal, the SE must release from the corner before the pass is thrown. To make sure this happens, we have the SE just use his shoulder pads and not his hands for the first block. Thus, he puts his pads into the defender and goes to the safety.

Do not throw this pass if there is a pass defender playing outside the SE.

Defeating B&R Coverage

The following are effective strategies in defeating bump and run defenders.

Simple release: Keep two feet away from the defender, three point stance, tilt “in” directly at him, drive outside shoulder pad into him while “grabbing grass” with outside hand.

The three basic elements of defeating bump and run coverage using advance techniques are 1) the stance, 2) the release, and 3) knocking away his hands.

Stance: The feet should be staggered front to back and should have a comfortable lateral separation in order to execute an effective start. The stagger should have the feet fairly close together, usually slightly farther than heel-to-toe. The posture should be almost erect and never leaning into the defender. The hands can be brought up to slightly above the belt line with palms together.

Release: Assuming the defender will try to get a jam on the receiver and then ride his inside hip throughout the route, a two step release is most effective; "where you don't want to go, where you want to go." This means that starting with the foot at the side you don't want to release to. For example, let's assume you want to take an outside release. With the foot on the side you don't want to release to, take a jab step in that direction without crossing the line of scrimmage and then release to the side you want to go.

This is an effective move because most youth receivers only use a one-step move and the defender almost always jumps it. This technique takes seconds to develop but once learned will allow the receiver to get off the line of scrimmage.

Using hands and arms to disrupt the defender: On first step, bring the palms of both hands together at the bottom of your numbers, fingers pointed up. Raise the fingers of both hands in the “prayer” position to nose level and then separate the hands outwards. This knocks both of the defender's hands away. The hands are now moving in opposite circles. By keeping the hand to the release side up, you can duck under the defender's arm and rip by him with the other arm circling down. The knocking of the hands up and away occurs on the first misdirection step. The duck and rip occur on the second.

Another technique is a palm strike to the defender to keep him away, planting the release side foot to the side for leverage.

Still another is to strike defender's release side elbow from outside in while swimming “over the top” with the opposite hand. This is a single step release.

Play Charting

This is another useful tool to play calling the wing T. I created a table of twenty- five columns and about fifteen rows. The rows list my offensive play calls planned for that game. I usually list them in order of base runs first, counters second, and passes third. I put four of these pages on a clipboard (One for each quarter). As I call my plays from the sideline, I record the yardage gained in the column next to the play name such that the first play of the game is recorded in the first column, the second play of the game in the second column, and the third in the third column, etc. This provides me with a record of what play I called on what down and the yardage gained.

You can use this during the game three different ways. First, if you reach, say, a third down and four situation, you can look at your chart and see which play(s) has consistently gained four or more yards and then call that play. The advantage to this is that you're calling to the other team's proven weakness. It is also impossible for the other team to scout your play calling tendencies because you're calling what's working best, not what play your team runs best or your personal favorite. Thus, what you call in third and four last Saturday may not be what you call in third and four next Saturday. You'll call whatever has been getting you four yards that day. The previous Saturday is history. Second, you can spot yardage trends. For example, say you notice from the chart that you're getting fewer and fewer yards off the #6 hole. That could indicate the DT to that side is shading towards, or rushing towards, the #6 hole. You can find out by calling a play to the #4 hole and seeing if it doesn't suddenly blast open for big yardage. Or it might be that a linebacker is filling the hole in which case a HB pass should be successful. Or it might be the DE is crashing and you can go around him. Almost always, if you see a play decreasing in effectiveness, another play, somewhere else, is increasing in effectiveness. Third, you can use this chart to tell you when something is wrong. Let's say you didn't make big yards in the #4 hole in the situation above. Achieving limited gains in two adjacent holes tells you that you should roll the QB out to that side AND PASS. You can move down field twenty yards at a pop this way versus trying to grind it out 1-2 yards at a time. I have included a sample play chart on the next page. Notice every 5th column is inked in blue. That's to remind me to pass.

A sample play chart is shown on the next page:

PLAY CHART QUARTER # _____

Play 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

24 (cross)

16

38 Option

23 (cross)

15

47 Option

47 Speed

38 Power

36 Power Toss

33 Quick

Left 32 Trap

Right 41 Trap

Left 22 Trap

Right 21 Trap

Right 67 Screen

Right 45

Left 36 Buck Sweep

Pass Right #1

Pass Right #2

Pass Right #3

Pass Right Throwback

Pass Left #1

Pass Left #2

Pass Left #3

Pass Left Throwback

HB Pass

PUNTING

Many coaches consider punting a defensive weapon – a means of getting out of trouble on your own side of the field. I use punting as an offensive weapon – a means of getting the other guy in trouble on HIS side of the field.

Punting practice also takes time. At the youth level, they never give us enough practices anyway and to have to squeeze in punting practice means you have to take valuable practice time away from some other activity that could be used for scoring – like offense. So I use punting as part of my offense. Here is my philosophy. In most fourth down situations when you line up in punt formation at the youth level the free safety drops back to receive it. With the free safety dropped back, the defense is reduced to ten players which is now to the offense's advantage. I hate to waste an opportunity where I have eleven guys to their ten. So I don't.

We line up in our regular “wedge” formation with foot to foot splits from LT to TE but with FB standing up. QB stands behind center with hands at his side (It is illegal to have hands under center on this play) and calls “Ready! Down! Set! Hut One! Hut Two!” and then smoothly motions left, flat to the line of scrimmage. As soon as the QB clears the LT, the FB says “Hit!” and the center long snaps to the FB. The line, from LT to RT wedges, and the HB picks up the left side DE while the WB cracks anyone in the gap and the TE “sweep” blocks the DE. What the FB does with the ball depends up the defense. If the defense has sent a deep man back for the punt, the FB throws to the QB on slant over the middle (QB runs at the punt return man.). The “wedge” linemen can be legally three yards downfield on pass. If no one is back to return the punt, the FB punts the ball and the QB and SE cover the ball when it stops rolling. This can easily make for some 30 yard punts with no return in just 5 minutes practice time (my longest punt is 44 yards, age 10, with no return.). Also, the defense is likely to jump offsides when the QB says “Hut Two!” and reverse pivots. If the defense is anticipating a snap on “Two” or thinks the QB took the snap and is executing “23”, they'll come offsides and give you a free five yards, which might give you a first down.

Although this play fits within the written rules, *there is no case rule for it*. That means a referee can interpret the movement of the QB to simulate action at the snap and flag you and you can't win the argument even with the rule book. He shouldn't do this because the rules state what “simulating a snap” is (putting hands under center and jerking elbows back). We want the defense to jump offsides in anticipation and not because the QB just put in an “Oscar winning performance” at simulating snap. The line does not jump offsides due to the QB's performance anyway. They're not even looking at the QB – But the referee is. He's the only one seeing the show. So don't put one on. The line jumping off is in reaction to the count and then QB movement – Any movement. Jerking elbows back to simulate snap or “head bobs” or whatever by the QB will not be seen by them but will be seen by the refs.

Now! Having issued the obligatory rule warning, the play works perfect. I've never been flagged for it and I had one QB that executed this so badly that even I would have

flagged him – And still gotten no flags (And I run it with a reverse pivot!). However, one coach who used this play was flagged and so you may want to drop the reverse pivot (It's unnecessary to the play anyway.). To understand whether you are at risk or not, you can simply ask the refs before the game if they'll let your QB call cadence and go in motion. They should ALL say "Yes" as there is no rule against it.

I find, initially, that the defense "cancels" their punt return man and brings him back up when they see we're not in punt formation on fourth down. They think we're going for it. So the first punt booms over their heads and we down it W-A-Y back there. The second time they'll drop back and we throw. After that, I often find the defense drops a punt returner back and also assigns coverage to the QB (In one game, double coverage). However, at this point, the defense having seen both a punt and a pass, you now have the option of either throwing to the SE or running a regular play (pass to area vacated by return man or run outside since they're short one defensive back who is now back for the "punt" return. The defense is playing 10 man defense against an 11 man offense.

Notice, whatever the defense does, it's wrong. If it doesn't send a punt returner back, we punt and get the roll with no return. If they do send a return man back, they're short a defender against either the pass or outside run ("47 Speed"/"38 Option").

You can substitute your best punter/passers at the FB position. He boots the ball with just one step and tilts slightly to the left in order to punt to the left of the center of the field where both the SE and QB can cover it. We also aim left because the best punt blockers will be to our right, so we aim away from them.

Practicing this type of "offensive" punting requires very little practice time. The center snap is only 4 yards deep and so is easy to master. However, if the regular center has trouble with the snap you can use this method of snapping the ball provided by Coach Guy:

Here is the way I teach it, and I swear, it takes about 30 seconds to teach, the kids get it right the very first time, and soon, the center will get sloppy with his grip. Once you fix it, you won't have to fix it ever again. I've taught this to 5 year olds in flag football, and even they get it right away.

Briefly, if necessary, the FB gets in a low, shortstop stance, with both hands ready to field a grounder. The snap could be low, anywhere from the ankles to the waist, but it's nice and soft, and really easy to field from that position, even if it bounces.

The center grabs the NEAR point of the ball, and tips it up for the snap - totally opposite the traditional snap.

The grip: if you are going to push the ball into the ground with one hand, the point of the ball will be deep in your palm, close to your wrist, and your fingers would all wrap down the ball. That's the grip we want.

I coached the center to put his thumb down the seam, up to the edge of the lace. This comes in handy if the ball is muddy; the center can dig his thumbnail into the lace for a great bad weather grip that doesn't affect the snap.

The thumb should be aimed down (and back) toward the quarterback, and the snap direction. The fingers are on the top of the ball. The defense should see the center's fingers, not his thumb.

The snap - Tell the center to flip the ball back with his fingers, trying to hit the quarterback softly in the knees. Emphasize "flip." If you let him go, he'll probably get it perfect the very first time. The front tip will scrape the ground as his hand moves back, like striking a match, and when he releases, the ball will continue on a lazy flip, right into the waiting hands of your punter.

We don't want to spend more than five minutes getting the play installed and ready to be repped.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: I saw on a post that you split your SE the same distance that the safeties are off the LOS. What does this do for you? I have never heard of this before.

Answer: We use the SE primarily as a crack blocker on a free safety. As such, we want a blocking angle on the defender combined with a short enough distance to put a block on the safety for a "23" call. For a free safety 9 yards deep, our SE would be 9 yards from the ball, leaving the SE a 45 degree blocking angle and 13 yards to run for his block. I later reduced that to "7-9 steps" from the ball in order to also create a "crack" block angle on a "loose" playing DE as well as to bring the corner in closer for "47 Speed", "Fake Speed, 56 reverse", and make "Quick Hitch and Lateral" even easier to throw. Now against a free safety 9 yards back, our SE is only 11-12 yards away from him so nothing was lost. You can still move the SE out wider if you want but I would not move him out any further from the ball than the FS is deep which is usually 9 steps.

Q: The one question that jumps out at me is why not let the back side of a play base block man inside, man on, or up field to LBers (GOL) instead of reach blocking to the next man inside him?

Answer: There are five reasons for reach blocking on the backside instead of base blocking with GOL.

1) The backside OT is stepping into "B" gap at the same time the OG is stepping into "A" gap. When this happens, it makes it very difficult for the defense to either blitz or stunt a defender through either one of those gaps. The QB can now safely execute his handoff or play without being tackled from behind. You can think of it this way. We've made a decision not to bother blocking the backside DE in order to guarantee we have both the "A" and "B" gaps covered. We're confident the backside DE won't make the play, but we aren't so confident a stunt through "A" or "B" might not hit the QB from behind.

2) If you'll notice, the reach blocking backside of the line is moving TOWARDS the center. Yet if you look at the play side of the line using GOL, two of their three base blocks (Gap and LBer) have them moving TOWARDS the center also. This means the defense has no clue from watching the linemen which direction the play is going to. Both sides of the line are pinching in.

3) Whenever a backside tackle reach blocks he automatically covers for the guard if the guard is pulling ("left" or "right" call). We don't have to make a special call to have the tackle cover the guard's hole when he pulls.

4) On a play where the guard is not pulling, the guard is free to release up field via "A" gap (while the OT takes his man for him). This allows him to "pick off" any defender (LBer or corner) trying to follow the runner.

5) When the tackles reach block, if they're skilled they don't have to use a drive block. They can crab him - And down he goes! This means the defenders have to protect their

feet or eat grass. In order not to be cut, they must STOP CHARGING on the snap - Otherwise, down they go. If they don't charge (In order to protect their feet) then they are easy marks for the play side of the line's drive blocks. It's a simple choice. Charge and eat grass or sit and be knocked on your ass. If you notice how the crab blocks work, the defense goes down like bowling pins on a strike.

So our reach block system allows us to pick up the blitz, give no read to the defense, covers for our pulling guards, pick up defenders downfield trying to follow our running backs, and can also intimidate the defense into playing cautiously.

Q: Why do you have your QB's reverse pivot? Wouldn't it be easier to teach the offense without the pivot?

A: There are seven reasons why our QB's reverse pivot. They involve timing and deception. First, timing:

Without the reverse pivot if we ran a "23" call with the HB lead blocking, the QB might 1) Accidentally hand off to the HB or 2) Have the HB accidentally knock the ball out of his hand as he passed by. By reverse pivoting the QB, the HB is already gone by before the QB is ready to hand off.

The second timing problem involves the "15" and "16" calls. The FB is actually further from the hole than the QB. Yet he must lead block for him. By reverse pivoting the QB, the FB can get to the DE before the QB reaches the hole.

The third timing problem involves the "38 and 47 Options". The pitchback must be running ahead of the QB when the pitch is made (Some coaches want the pitchman to be 7 yards ahead of the QB when he takes the pitch. We settle for 4 yards.). Yet the pitchback is starting behind the QB. In order to get the pitchback out ahead of the QB, we have the QB reverse pivot.

Fourth, a reverse pivot creates a deeper handoff. On a "23" or "24" call the T&G may not be crossing and the "3" or "4" hole may have a defender in it. The FB needs to have enough room to "bounce" the play out further. For that, he needs a deeper handoff. Having the QB reverse pivots gives him a deeper handoff. These deeper handoffs are used for traps and reverses.

Fifth, a QB that doesn't reverse pivot will be in the way of his own pulling guards.

Sixth, a reverse pivot provides the QB with extra depth on a pass play.

This brings us to the seventh reason for the reverse pivot - deception. Two things happen when the QB reverse pivots. First, for a moment the ball disappears to the entire defense in the "box" as the QB turns his back if he keeps the ball close to his stomach. So now when a running back passes behind the QB, the defense can't see whether the ball was handed off to him or not. Second, your play now looks like all the others. Since the QB is reverse pivoting, the first three steps of most of your plays look alike which "freezes" the defense while they wait to see what the play becomes; run, pass, or counter.

I usually don't run too many misdirection plays in the first offensive series. This is because to many youth defenses, seeing a QB reverse pivot IS, ITSELF, MISDIRECTION. They're so used to seeing a QB that turns towards the ball carrier that they automatically step in the direction the QB opens to, which, in our case, is usually the wrong way for the defense to go. It takes about 4-5 plays for them to adjust to this and so your first few plays go really well. Getting your first "first down" is really easy when your QB reverse pivots. After that, you have to work at it like everybody else.

Q: I've been studying your Wing-T playbook over the last couple days. My first observation is that I'm quite impressed by the way your system builds completeness, multiple points of attack and simplicity. That said, I don't think I would've been too successful teaching it to my group this year (only 4 kids had ever played football, mostly 9s and some 8s on offense).

ANSWER: You can start them using the wedge plays combined with "47 Speed". This gives you a starting offense and yet the line only learned two plays. Then expand your playbook to include the "25 and 26 Power" calls and the "quick hits". Add "38 Power Toss" and you have an entire offense. And don't underestimate the "little guys". They can actually learn all the same plays the 12-13's do, they just learn them slower. Here are some ways to speed up their learning. First, reduce your talks. When you talk to the "little guys" you almost always inadvertently use football slang without even knowing it. It's easy to use the words "fumble", "punt", "first and ten", "interception", and "third down" in your talks. But guess what? They don't know what any of those words mean. You might as well be speaking Chinese to them. Further, when kids don't know what you're saying, their minds wander and now you've lost their attention. So now you've wasted your time and their time with your lecture. Tons of youth coaches make this mistake and never even know it. Second, when you talk to them do not hold a football in your hand while addressing them. Many coaches will bounce a ball back and forth in their hands or even spin it while talking. Do not expect little kids to listen to you if you do this. They are kittens and that ball is string. When you hold a football while talking to them, you're dangling string in front of them. You will have lost their attention again which is a waste of your time and theirs – so either put the ball on the ground or hold it behind your back when talking with "little people". Then, once you have made your point, ask the least attentive kid to repeat it back. If he gets it wrong, ask someone else for the answer. This reinforces your lecture.

QUESTION: I believe you when you say you can coach this system and not have tackles for losses, but I'd be very nervous teaching 2' splits with SLOW tackles. What have some of the less experience coaches found using your system? Have any of them had to narrow up the splits, change personnel, or avoid some plays to keep penetration out? We still had penetration at times last year in DW with no splits -- some teams would flood the LOS and crash a stud in a gap and get through -- with a 2' split I fear it would've been like the parting of the Red Sea.

ANSWER: The splits aren't actually 2 feet. The guards are normally split 6 inches and the tackles one foot, measuring the distance between feet. The tackle can usually cover

this because we use an even toed stance versus having a foot back to “speed them up”. Second, my snap count system allows a “slow” tackle to move with everyone else. Third, we line up the offensive line and practice them with no backfield against our own running backs and QB as defenders and test their ability to cover their inside gap. So the level of penetration is about the same as the DW. Twice, I’ve had a blitz get through the “4” hole in seventeen years. That may not seem like much but one cost me the game. So, in 2006 after the second time it happened, I created “variable” splits. If you don’t need the split you can shut it down with a “mini” call or, if you need it, you can increase it with a “maxi” call. I thought that reducing the splits would also improve the “36 Toss” play.

Q: Doesn’t freezing the linebackers for the first three steps of a play hurt your counters?

*ANSWER: Yes. It does. For every advantage you create in football, you create an equal, and opposite, disadvantage. Slowing linebacker pursuit improves your power plays but reduces your counter plays. **In order for your counter plays to work as well, you must move the ball outside the guards before the handoff on the counter takes place.** Once the ball moves outside the guards, the linebackers will follow. Using “23” and “24” action by the QB generally accomplishes this.*

Q: You refer to a load block -- I assume this is same as reach or log block (opposite of kickout) designed to pin defender to inside.

ANSWER: A load block is applied to a DE by a backfield blocker. A log block is applied to a DE by a pulling guard. Both pin the DE inside. I don't try log blocks.

Q. In your discussion of defending by assignment, you reference the alignment of defensive down lineman. I've had a hard time figuring out where defenses are aligning down lineman in the field and on film. We film from high as possible from side (we're not allowed to film from end zone) and it's just very hard to see. Any trick you use to determine whether a DG is on nose, A-gap, or on OG?

ANSWER: I have the same problem. I can’t tell if a noseguard is shading from the sideline or not. This is why I count the number of safeties, number of down linemen, and the number of defenders outside my TE or weak OT (to get the “box”). It doesn’t matter how they are aligning if you use these reads. You’ll outnumber them at the POA.

Q. Do you use crab blocks when pass blocking?

ANSWER: No. We use our run drive block.

Q. Do you always designate a single receiver on each pass route or do you want/allow your QB’s to run through a progression?

ANSWER: I've always designated. We have a pretty good idea who is open by watching the SE run his post on the play before. If the SE comes open, we hit him. If the CB goes with the SE, we hit the TE or WB on Throwback. We tell the QB if his man is not open, to run, aiming for the first down marker. We have gotten several 10 yard gains this way. If the QB is really good, I'd consider letting him pick his man. But when you let a youth QB pick his own man, he will often 1) always pick the same receiver (his favorite) whether he's open or not or 2) Take too long looking for a receiver and get sacked. I've only had one QB throw to the non-designated receiver and it went for a TD. Obviously, I didn't correct him.

Q. I really like the simplicity, yet probable effectiveness of the pass routes you've chosen. But, do your opponents ever catch on to the fact that most of your pass plays are thrown to one of three areas on field?

ANSWER: You'd think they would, wouldn't you? And just stand five guys in each the spots we throw to? But kids can't stay in one place. When the ball moves, they do too. I always run my reverses right at the outside linebacker because I know, when the ball gets there, he won't be. It's the same with "#3 Open". I'm throwing right at where the free safety began the play but, eleven steps later, when my posting end arrives at that spot, the safety's gone. I don't even know where he went but he's not there. This would be true even if the defense were in zone. Also, since we only pass 20% of the time the opposing coach (as well as his players) focuses on stopping our running game. To do anything else is to be wrong 80% of the time. So they won't stand back there. Finally, if they did, it means no one follows our WB in motion if five defenders sit. That means they have to put a sixth defender on our WB, leaving only five left to defend the run and that means we can wedge and run the FB all day.

Q. Do you instruct your receivers to run routes behind LBs and in front of safeties? i.e., do they look for spaces or just run the exact same distance off LOS each time they run route?

ANSWER: We try and get all our receivers behind "someone". All our #3 routes are behind the safety and all our "throwbacks" are behind the linebackers and the #2's are behind the corners. The logic is simple. The receiver runs at the defender he would normally block, showing block, and then sprints past him into the open area behind. See the "turn around" pass release. This catches the defender looking for the run.

Q. Do you run most/all your running plays in split left (as shown) or do you run each play with split right ("Flip") as well? More specifically, you state that you'll typically have 7 running plays installed by first game: Is that 7 in split left, or 7 split left + the mirror of those 7 plays in "flip" formation?

ANSWER: Seven in "Split Left". Since we haven't been scouted for our first game, "Flip" is unnecessary overkill. We teach them all the "Over" calls though. I've gone entire seasons without having to add "flip". It's good for the playoffs though.

Q. What would you recommend as a couple of possible packages for your first running plays to teach?

ANSWER: I find this offense works best if you have two plays for each eligible player and match the plays to that player's particular talent (I count "23" and "24" as one play). Further, except for plays to the FB and "toss", all the plays should be designed to go 10 yards. Any time a runner gains 10 yards, there's about a 50-50 that he'll go "all the way". Further, we don't need "5 yard" plays because our FB already gets them. But let's start with our FB in order to make sure he gains those 5 yards. The obvious two FB plays are "23" (and its mirror "24") and "20 Midline Trap". If he has talent I'll add "Ends Over 25 Power" (and its mirror "Backs Over 26 Power"). The next player to design for is the WB. Our goal here is to get 10 yards. Obviously, "Pass Right #2 Open" or "WB Throwback" are 10 yard passes but we also want two runs good for 10. If he has speed, then we would choose "47 Speed" or "47 Option". If he doesn't have speed, we would look at a "47 reverse". Our second play for him would, again, be talent chosen. If he's fast and strong both, then "Maxi 44 Quick Trap" should go for 8. Again, if he has only average speed, "Right 41 trap" or "Right 45 Kick". In each case, for the slower WB, we're running him counter to the FB to send the defense the "wrong way". Even "slow" looks fast when the defense is running the opposite direction. For the fast WB, we're letting him use his speed to outrun the defense. However, we can also let the fast WB run a reverse, since he'll probably score on it.

Next is the HB. He'll start with "33 Quick" and some form of a "36" or "38" play. If he's good, add "Left 32 trap". But what we really want is a HB that can throw downfield with the HB pass. This is one of the key factors in selecting a HB. It's also important to realize that he's only likely to score once in a game. The reason for that is simple. Somebody else will get it in the endzone before he does. It's hard to design 10 yard plays for a HB's so he lacks the 50-50 chance of scoring on every play the other kids (SE and WB) have. Therefore, we change the odds by letting the HB throw to the WB for the score. The HB now becomes far more threatening to the defense now than as a runner. We can still score with the HB by throwing to the SE and letting him lateral back to the HB. Now he has a 50-50 chance too. Another potential 10 play is "Pass Left #1 Open". The point is that you don't need 5 yard plays to your HB when you already have 5 yard plays to your FB. You want more than 5 yards from the HB.

Next is the SE. To get 10 yards out of the SE, you can throw "Pass Left #2 Open". But we want to run the ball with him for 10. That would be "Left 56 sweep" or "57 Power Screen". And, if "47 Speed" is in our playbook, then "Fake Speed, 56 Reverse Sweep" will score. Again, if we have "47 Speed", we can grab an SE off the bench that can throw, run that same reverse again, only now the SE throws to the QB, TE, or WB. These are all 50-50 touchdown plays. After you've done this a few times, have the WB fake the reverse handoff to the SE and keep going. The defense will chase the SE and the WB scores. Again, we select the play based on the SE's abilities. I had an SE one year that was too small for the position. He was too small to carry the ball, too small to block, and so small the QB always threw the ball over his head (even when he was completely uncovered). But the little guy could throw very well. This little kid, who was totally useless otherwise, was now a big weapon. And I'm not the only DC Wing T coach to have his SE throw. Another coach ran "Pass Left" off of a "23" look. The QB faked to

the FB who took the left DE, the HB took anyone over or outside the LT, and QB tossed or handed off to the SE coming around towards the FB's starting position. The QB continued left. The SE could now pass to the QB, WB, or TE. So it's not necessary to have "47 Speed" to have your SE throw. Meanwhile, some other SE catches the quick slants and, eventually, laterals back to the HB for the score.

Next is the TE. Is he slow? Then run "Right 65 kick". Let the defense run the opposite direction he does and he won't look slow. You can also trap the TE with "Right 61 trap". Is he fast? Run "Fake 33 Quick, 67", "Fake 23, 67", or "Right 67 Screen". Note, the faster he is the wider we run him. We're now letting him use his speed to outrun the defense. For a TE, it's normal to find the one play he runs well and then let him run it all the time. If you have two TE's, this could be two different plays.

Other times, you can add a play through scouting. You might choose to add "20 Midline" versus an odd front or "42 Quick" and/or "30 Quick" versus an even front. This manual tells you how to attack most fronts and, if you know the number in the "box" and the "coverage" you'll know the call it's weak to. You can then add that play.

And, of course, when you're done, you want your plays to look alike.

Q: Do you start by installing just the four base pass plays (pass L, pass R and their throwbacks)?

ANSWER: Yes – but add "cheap" pass plays such as "Pass Right, HB Pass", the "Quick pass to the SE and Lateral", the SE pass off the reverse of "47 Speed", and "Quick to the TE and Lateral". This stuff is always good for a touchdown and very demoralizing to a team that is otherwise playing good defense. We've all seen this stuff score.

Q. Next season we'll probably have a kid joining us who is one of, if not the, fastest kid in league (AAU track guy). His hands are so-so, I doubt he'll be much of a hitter, and I don't know how well he'll run carrying a football with mean guys trying to knock the snot out of him. What position would you start him off in?

ANSWER: Wingback. Let him run the "7" hole. He should score on 47 Buck Reverse, or 47option, 47 Speed, etc. If he can't handle the blocking, let him play some SE and run the reverses. As an SE, you don't have to have him out there every down.

Q: If the DE lines head up on the WB, how do you respond?

ANSWER: I see this all the time. The defense is taking away the "crack" sweep. Run the "6' hole inside him without blocking him. Then watch him and wait for him to go inside and call "power", "toss", or "option" to the "8" hole. "Pass Right" will also be open (He's too far out to get a good rush.).

Q. If you have a small number of players, how do you coach something this complicated and handle substitutions? Let's say I have a team of 17 players.

Answer: Coach, you've got yourself a serious problem. The good news is you're smart enough to see it. You've got 17 kids to fill 11 positions, so you've only got 6 on the bench with which to substitute at all 11 positions. Here are some of the things that can go wrong:

- 1) A starter leaves for the weekend to visit his grandparents.
- 2) A starter goes elk hunting with dad.
- 3) A starter gets the flu
- 4) A starter gets in trouble and his parents punish him by not letting him play.
- 5) A starter get hurts in a skateboard/bicycle accident.
- 6) A starter gets hurt out on the field during the game.

*The challenge becomes, how do you know which starter you'll lose in advance, so that you know what positions to train those six kids for? Trying to teach 6 below average players 11 different positions is tough. But here is how I do it. First, I ask the kids at every practice, "Is anybody here not going to be at next Saturday's game?" Sometimes somebody raises their hand. Train your sub for his spot now - before the game. Many times this question has paid off for me. Of course, some kids don't when they'll be sick or in trouble and not be allowed to play so their hands don't go up. So here's how I handle that. I tell my parents, first day of practice, that if their kid is sick or in trouble, **TO BRING HIM ANYWAY** if he wants to play. In most cases, a sick kid who wants to play is past being contagious. As for kids in trouble, I tell my parents to find some other way to punish their boy. Not bringing him to a game to punish him not only punishes him but me and all his teammates as well. Okay, so now we're down to just injuries. Everything else is covered. How do we cover this? Simple. Centering the ball is easy. It's a no brainer. So put your third or fourth best athlete at center and then let him substitute for a running back that goes down. It's easy for him to learn because he hasn't had to learn anything to play center anyway. Putting a stud at center saves you on bad snaps, gives you good wedges, great downfield blocking against an even front, or can keep out a big NG against an odd front. Yet you can put ANYBODY in off the bench to play center while your starting center moves to RB. This is because most teams will give up trying to get past your stud center early on and either go to an even front or play a woos at NG to get him his minimum plays. You can play a woos center for one game or during an injury and they'll never know. Okay! So now you have a backup center and running back and still have five subs left on the bench. You can train one at guard, one at tackle, one at QB, and one at TE out of this bunch to sub for anybody else that goes down, and still have one kid left over for WB. Nobody's brain explodes from trying to learn two positions and you've always got a good running back out there.*

Q. How do you organize your practices?

Answer: There is a suggested regular practice schedule after this section. It covers most everything but the FB drills. The FB gets 10-30 minutes of one on one coaching time. If we have substitute running backs, we'll send one over to the receiving group for 20 minutes to work with their QB. Then, when he comes back to the running group, the back

he replaces now joins the other QB in receiver group to work with them. In this way you can get our running backs involved in the passing game for 40 minutes a night too. Be sure the TE leaves the offensive line group after 20 minutes to get his 20 minutes time with the receiving group. If you're running option, be sure the QB's get time in at basic running. If they're running "16" they must hit the hole with their shoulders square or, if rolling out for pass and they decide to keep, we train them to go at full sprint for the first down marker and then run the sideline for whatever they can get after that.

If you'll notice, the receiving group gets 40 minutes a night with a live QB, a TE, and a running back. You should also notice that our offensive line works their butts off. We don't want execution mistakes on Saturday. Notice the high emphasis on passing and option time and individual running styles.

Q. I notice you pull guards just like the Double Wing and even use the Double Wing's "Toss" play, yet you don't position your QB as far back as possible like the Double Wing does. What keeps your pulling guard and QB from colliding?

Answer: It is very important, IMO, NOT to do it the way the Double Wing coaches do it. They put their QB as far back from the center as possible with his hands fully extended. This often prevents the center from being able to step forward as he snaps the ball. It is very, very important to have a center that can step as he snaps. This not only helps him make his block on the NG but keeps the NG from driving him back into the QB on snap. But if your center steps as he snaps, your QB's hands must move forward with the center or the snap will come up short. So your QB cannot be positioned as far back from the center as possible as Double Wingers suggest. If your pulling guard collides with your QB it is very easy to solve. Remember how we use a snap count of "Hut one! Hut two!"? We do that so that we can time up our line together. First, check to see if your guard is faster than your center's snap. Watch the center and guard on the play and see who moves first. If it's the guard, and the center is a hair slow, have your center hike on the "hut" before the number. So if the snap count is on "one", have the center snap on "hut" and the guard pull on "one". This should eliminate the collision while allowing your center to snap and step at the same time.

Now you're probably thinking, "Doesn't this mean that the offensive line is getting off late if they wait until the number and the center hikes on the hut?" Not really – the problem lies in the center's delayed reaction time. He's snapping slower than the guard is pulling. By having the center snap a hair early, you've just brought him up to everyone else's speed.

Now! If the center is hiking in time with the guard's pulling and the guard is still colliding with the QB, it means you don't have a center problem at all. Instead, it means you either have a GREAT guard or a slow QB. A guard this fast can cover a wider inside gap, so just move him one full arm's length away from the center. Moved further away from the QB, he shouldn't collide with the QB. Your offense will now work better than ever – especially if you run a trap to his side. You'll get a bigger "A" gap to run to.

Okay! Now say we do this and the guard and QB are still colliding. Now we look at the QB as being the problem. He's doing one of two things wrong. He's either holding the

football out in front of himself (allowing the pulling guard to hit it as he passes) or the QB's too slow to get out of the way. Check to make sure the QB pulls the ball back to his waist when he takes the snap and pivots. If he's already doing this then the problem is that he's too slow for the pulling guard. Improve the QB's pivot time or replace him.

Q: You posted on how to prevent fumbles. Can you repeat that?

Answer: First, and foremost, bring a bucket of water to practice and have your center dunk the ball in the bucket before every snap. I have had zero fumbles in 13 of my last 16 seasons using this simple trick. When I stopped bringing the bucket (My van was getting too full of things to bring to practice) my fumbles went back up. However, if you do this let them learn the plays with a dry ball first. Once they've learned the plays, in comes the wet ball. Next, when you set up your guantlet drill (See "HB Drills"), use a wet ball for that too. Second, make sure your backs carry the ball on the outside of their body after getting handoff (If your runner raises his QB side elbow up for the handoffs, this automatically puts the ball on the outside of his body.). Third, runners should be taught that when they're stopped and there's a tackler around their ankles - to not try and drag him, but to immediately fall forward to the ground. Runners who are stopped, standing up, and trying to drag a tackler will get hit by 10 guys one second later - And probably get speared in the process. If you don't lose the football, you may lose the runner. So coach him to fall forward. When he does fall forward, he tucks the ball in and does not hold it out in front of himself for the extra foot gained. Not only is this a fumble risk but the ball carrier is susceptible to shoulder injury.

Q. I need some basic rules for the Down option and the Belly option plays for 12 year olds. Pitch relationship, correct QB reads, QB technique. I know the x's and o's and which defender we are optioning I just need solid set of rules for this age. Hope you can help.

Answer: I hope by Belly Option and Down Option you mean LEAD option and not LOAD option. On a Lead option the DE is optioned. On a Load option the outside LBer or corner is optioned. The Load Option in my playbook would be "18" or "18 Pitch" but I don't run it. Here's why I don't coach Load Option.

- 1) The QB often fails to run at the inside shoulder of his pitch read and, instead, runs at the outside shoulder. As the defender approaches, the QB veers further and further to the outside and begins to head towards the sideline forcing his pitchman to do the same. By the time he pitches, the pitchman outside him has run out of field and usually ends up running out of bounds – sometimes for a loss of yardage. I coach 10's and they do this ALL the time. Maybe you'll have better luck with 12's.*
- 2) The QB is running around the DE and is moving pretty fast as he turns upfield. Meanwhile, a stud defender is also homing in on him on the fast fly. As the QB pitches he leaves himself momentarily exposed to the hit. QB's are supposed to stop and break down for this pitch but many (especially 10 year olds) forget and*

are still running when they pitch. The result is that the stud defender hammers the exposed QB into next Tuesday and a possible injury.

I solved both of these problems by optioning the DE (lead option). The QB cannot be strung out into the sideline by a DE and the option happens fast, usually after 3-4 steps by the QB and the DE. Neither player has very much speed up in just 3-4 steps so if the QB does get hit, it's only with half the force. Further, the DE is usually not as tough a stud as the linebacker homing in on the QB on the load option at top speed so, again, milder hit. Finally, most DE's play "soft" anyway so there's no real impact even if the dumb QB forgets to break down before he pitches. I've never had a QB get hurt or even get tackled optioning a DE, but I've had two get absolutely smeared running load option, both taken to the hospital. After that, I decided to stop running the load option.

For information on how I coach option, see "WingT Training Drills".

Q: Coach, I was hoping you could help me. I have read your posts in the past and have like how well thought they are. I was wondering if you might be able to give me some tips/drills on how you create an aggressive oline (and fullbacks). I coach at the high school level (small school-200kids) and can use all of the help I can get.

Answer: Creating offensive linemen begins with getting rid of "TV football concepts". It influences us all. We all think the biggest players should be playing tackle, the next biggest player at guard, and the smallest at TE and then, finally, SE. We get this misinformation by watching Monday Night Football. The reason we see NFL tackles bigger than NFL guards is because of SPEED. The fastest guy plays guard because he has to pull and block LBers downfield. The bigger guy ain't as fast because he carries more weight - so he goes to tackle. So when you pick your offensive line, it's not about size, it's about SPEED. Here's an example: We always find that defensive linemen are faster than offensive linemen in college and pros. Defensive linemen must have SPEED. They must be FASTER than the offensive linemen across from them because they must react to what the offensive lineman does. What would happen if the defensive lineman was slower than the offensive lineman? Wouldn't the defensive lineman lose? So let's put that simple thought to our advantage. If our offensive linemen are faster than their defensive linemen, they'll lose, right? So let's do it. Let's use fast offensive linemen. More than likely, you've got some Frito munching, Dorito loving, kid playing at OT who does both his pre and post practice drills at Taco Bell while sitting on the bench beside him is a tall, toothpick of a kid you've been trying to make into an SE but who can't catch. Try a simple experiment. Take the quick split end (SE) that can't catch and put him across from your huge "Taco Bell" tackle with both of them in 3 point stances and let them drive block each other. I'll bet the SE wins or at least has a draw. TRY IT! It's almost guaranteed. Big, slow guys can't play football. The big, slow "Taco Bell" tackle needs to be second string OT to the SE - After all, the SE can't catch so put him to some good use.

But how do you get the "Taco Bell" tackle to beat the SE? Answer - SPEED! Reduce the amount of time your slow OT's and OG's spend in drills and increase their run time. Put them on the goal line and have them run to the 10 yard line, put a hand on the ground, run back to the goal line, put a hand on the ground and run back to the 20 yard line, put

a hand on the ground, run back to the goal line, put a hand on the ground, run to the 30, put a hand on the ground, and cross the goal line for the finish. Run all front five at the same time. The first to come across the goal line is your center. The next two are your guards and the last two are your tackles. This drill is called "Touch the line".

Now! They've only run 120 yards but watch their faces as they finish. How are they doing? What kind of shape are they in? My guess is that they're dying. It's called Nintendo-itis. They have strong thumbs but nothing else.

Okay! Next, put them on the sled. Position the sled on your own 40 yard line, with 60 yards to go to score. Ask the linemen how many plays it will take to score (travel 60 yards) at 5 yards per carry? After much concentration and musings, they will eventually figure out it will take 12 plays. So... tell them that since they get 30 seconds between plays, they should be able to drive that sled across the goal line in 6 minutes. Each time they move the sled 5 yards, give them 30 seconds rest, then block it again and move it another five yards. Repeat until they've driven it across the goal line. Did they do it in six minutes? And now look at their faces. What do you see? If these boys are dead tired and falling on the ground, it tells you the ONLY way you're going to score with them is if you get the ball on your own 40 and AVERAGE FIVE YARDS A CARRY. They can't make it from their own 35 without having a coronary. What you interpret as lack of aggression can quite possibly be a line that's simply out of shape. If you are embarrassed by what you see, you have found your problem - a slow, fat offensive line. This has nothing to do with aggression. Even if they had aggression, they still can't move.

If the kids score fine, then it's an aggression problem. To create aggression, run the "Sumo" drill. Take a length of rope and form a circle with it. Put two linemen in it and have them try and block each other out of the circle. The winner of the Sumo drill is next game's team captain. You can also score your guards and tackles on film after each game with the highest scoring guard getting four carries at HB with the ball on your next practice and your highest scoring tackle getting four carries at FB. For some players, this is a BIG incentive.

Next, is the "tennis ball" drill. The winners of the "Sumo" drill get to tennis ball drill the losers. A lineman has a tennis ball (or football) dropped in front of him. He must fire out of his stance and catch it for five minutes straight. This teaches EXPLOSION. The ball tosser makes him come out as far as possible to catch the ball (Note: This is performed on grass). You can make it into a competition to see who can catch the most in a row without dropping the ball. I had one kid do over fifty (When he first tried the drill, his best was three).

Finally, check your stance. If you're having your linemen line up with one foot back, you might as well nail that foot to the ground. Use an even toed stance, a short first step, and have them block under a chute or pole.

Q: I lost a scrimmage against a bigger, better team. These were last year's champs with a few more studs added and a small roster (16) while I had a lot of first year kids and more of them to play. Any suggestions?

Answer: We coaches exist as substitutes for athletic skill. Absent coaches, the team with the biggest, fastest, strongest players always wins. You just met bigger, stronger, faster. One of the oldest, tried and true methods of countering bigger, stronger faster is with bigger, stronger, faster yourself. How many of us have had the biggest, strongest, fastest team in the league and finished in last place? Not many, I'm guessing. But having the smallest, weakest, slowest team in the league can certainly put you in last place in a hurry and regardless of your coaching ability. Using my speed drills should make you faster but what about bigger and stronger? You create stronger by putting your boys on the goal line and letting them run the "touch the line" drill described in the answer above. When done, your kids will have just ran 120 yards but they'll think they ran a mile. Give 'em 40 seconds rest and do it again. Do this for ten minutes. Now do my speed drills for another 10 minutes. Police frog race and make the short hoppers that stand up straight do it again. Running your kids in 40 yard dashes twenty times or a half mile doesn't make it. Yes - you'll be better off than the other team that doesn't do those dashes but you're only getting 50% of what you could get out of the time spent. Remember! This is football – not track. Having kids touch a line trains them to keep their bodies under control. It teaches them to break down (such as when making a tackle or a cut). It teaches balance. It teaches turning the hips to either make, or follow, a move or simply change direction. It teaches constant acceleration which strengthens power. Your OT's and DT's won't be making too many 40 yard runs on a football field in a game but this drill will give them balance, power, and moves in the small area they work in as well as run some extra pounds off - which will make them lighter and faster. So now you're stronger and faster than your opponent and your boys can run 40 yards as well as the guy who has been sprinting his guys all season. But what about bigger? "Bigger" is all about speed and first step. A little guy who steps off the line with the twice the acceleration of an opposing player with twice his weight has exactly the same hitting power. Therefore, he's just as "big". My tennis ball drills, speed drills, and constant acceleration will get your guys off the line faster than your opponent - And that wins games - because your boys will hit harder. It's the same thing as making them bigger. "Bigger" is also lower. How many of us have heard "Lowest man wins"? My guys practice firing out under PVC pipe to stay low. "Low man wins". That's the same thing as being bigger. Most youth defensive linemen come up out of their stance and stand up on snap due to weak legs. I teach my linemen to aim their nose for the playside armpit of the defender when he's in his three point stance. On snap, the opposing defender will usually stand up and our blocker should hit him right in the numbers.

But what is this "first step", I mentioned? You cannot have your players with only one foot on the ground when they make contact with an opponent. Try this. Hold one foot off the ground and let a blocker hit you. What's going to happen? You're going to be on your ass, right? Your players are the same way. They can't have a foot in the air, in midstep, when contact is made or it's the same result. So when your player is in the contact zone, we want both feet planted, with one foot forward and one foot back, feet shoulder width apart or slightly wider. Again, we have balance and, with my drills, greater speed and power, and by hitting low, we're "bigger". If our guys are in this position and they hit the other guy who has a foot off the ground in mid-step, what is the result? Did we not just knock that someone on his ass? So now the question becomes, how do we get both our feet on the ground when we are in the contact zone? The answer is simple. Simply take a

short step that barely leaves the ground. We don't lift the foot high, and we keep the step to 6 inches or less. It's very common for the opposing kid to step with a 2 foot stride and to raise his foot 4 inches off the ground. This boy's foot is off the ground four, five, or even six times longer than the correct boy's foot is. The odds are that he'll almost never hit a defender with both of his feet on the ground and he'll lose. To coach the first, short step, tell your line men that the front toe of the foot stepping out should go out no further than the point where they are holding their down hand on the grass. Next, they MUST have their second foot down when they make contact with the defender too or the same problem occurs again. Since the defender is often only two feet away, the second step must also be quick and short in order to be on the ground when contact is made. Last, but not least, is "firing out". You must teach your players to "fire off" on cadence, automatically and without thinking. This is called "muscle memory" or "conditioned reflex". You want your kids to "fire out" instantly into whoever, or whatever, is in front of them (Even if it's "Bobo the Gorilla"). Eliminate hesitation. He who hesitates is lost. Check your line to see if they're all firing off in unison or if "Fat Freddy" is bringing up the rear? If you've got guys firing off all over the place, you've got problems! They should all be firing off at the same time. Your speed and conditioning drills may solve most of this, but seldom all of it. There are some kids who are hopeless cases. Teach those kids to move early, before the snap, in order to come out in unison. No - you won't get flagged. I had one kid (just a butterball) that moves an ENTIRE COUNT ahead of the snap but you don't actually see movement. You just see forward lean and then he comes out of his stance with everyone else. The amount of time required to do this is twenty minutes a night: Ten minutes on conditioning (The sprints) and ten minutes on speed. The cost of a ten foot length of PVC pipe is about a dollar. Have fun and go get 'em. Turn your guys into studs.

Q: I notice you always have the WB in motion but hardly ever the HB. Why is that?

Answer: The WB is always in motion because, if he only went in motion on certain plays, the defense might guess the play that's coming by whether he's in motion or not. So we put him in motion whether the play is going right or left. So seeing the WB go in motion is meaningless to the defense. It has nothing to do with the direction of the play.

Okay! Why doesn't the HB go in motion? This is for two reasons. First, he's already where he needs to be. Second, the WB gets used to going in motion. If you call a motion play for the HB and the WB goes in motion too just out of force of habit – that's illegal procedure and a 5 yard penalty on you! So we try and limit motion to just the WB. However, by adding "Freeze" to your play call, the WB won't move and the HB will.

QUESTION: What are the depths/footwork on passing routes? I want to be precise.

Answer: These vary with 1) your age group 2) QB's arm. However, in EVERY case, your #2 open must be 10 yards downfield on catch. This is the catch you have to be very precise on! Here they are for "pass left"

SE: Set your depth as follows: 3 steps downfield on your blocking route and then turn up and outside. The angle “up” is such that they will be 10 yards downfield when the ball arrives (Count of “Five monkeys”). He can, and should, be even further downfield if his number isn’t called (Which is achieved by simply not looking back.).

HB: This is the tough one. At age 10, he must have 7+ yards of separation between himself and the #2. Add one yard for each year of age thereafter. So maximum depth down field is 3 yards (10 yards for #2 minus 7 yards is 3 yards) for point of cut. By good fortune, this usually happens to be the same depth many youth linebackers play at. The TE and HB have two choices for release – one if their number is called and one if it isn’t. The “draw” release is used if their number isn’t called and either the “block” or “turn around” release is used if their number is called. When his number is called, he’s not limited to just 3 yards downfield. Once he makes the catch, he turns upfield, splitting the distance between the sidelines and the nearest downfield defender. As he runs, he keeps splitting the difference between the defender and the sideline. If he does this properly, he and the defender will reach the sidelines at the same time.

TE: This is a repetitive throw rather than a changing pattern. The route is such that he would pass in front of a weak safety in Cover 2 or behind a FS in Cover 1/Cover 3. The actual point is 9 yards ahead of the center and 2 yards outside. You can mark this spot with a cone so that they can learn where this is. They then stay on this angle and should catch the ball in another five yards.

Pass Right: The WB’s route is identical to the SE’s route in “Pass left” and the TE’s is identical to the HB’s and the SE’s is identical to the TE’s

The “throwback” is a GREAT PASS! You MUST HAVE IT. We average 14-35 yards a pop with it. It is best thrown in 2nd and 4th quarter. Keep in mind that kids catch poorly running right to left versus running left to right, so you really have to rep the TE or WB not to drop the ball on Pass Right and the SE and HB on Pass Left. The “throwback” and your #3 posst are your most heavily repped passes.

Your receiving coach MUST NOT coach receiver's hands during route drills. He does that in his other drills when he has no QB. If he stops the receiving drill to correct a player on ANYTHING but route, your QB and other receivers are just standing there while he yaks. That equals receiving time lost. Never let a receiving coach yak when you send a QB over. He yaks on his time, not your QB’s. You want 30 throws minimum per each QB in 20 minutes. Also, never let a receiving coach change your patterns unless you approve the change. That equals wasted throwing time. Receiving coaches get easily bored so give him a list of 30 passes he is to throw with each QB. That would be 18 Pass Rights and 12 Pass lefts. On Pass Right, throw six throwbacks, 3 to TE and 3 to WB. Then get in four passes to each position on #1, #2, and #3 open. If he has a checklist he can mark the passes off as called. Then repeat same list with second QB. Make sure you give him a pen and a clipboard. Have him turn in the clipboard at end of practice so you can 1) see how many reps he got in and 2) Ask who catches what route the best. Notice how, after both QB's have had a turn, the SE's had 16 passes thrown their way, or about 5 per SE if you have three. But if your receiving coach yaks and wastes time, that number drops FAST. Suddenly, your receivers aren't getting in enough time. If you hold offensive practice twice a week, your SE's are only catching 10 passes each per week -

and that's if you get in 30 reps! Make sure your receiving coach understands this math because, otherwise, they goof around and don't think what they're doing is important.

Q: How do you know which kids have the HEART to play where?

Answer: Serious kids don't say much. Non-serious won't block. To find your best blockers, "Sumo" the whole team and find the top four blockers. You want these four players at the POA of every play. Also try out every kid at every "realistic" position you can. One of my most frequent mistakes is to play a kid at the same position he played last year. I make that mistake because 1) He already knows the spot and 2) He's bigger, stronger, and faster than last year. So I figure I'm "set" at that position. But kids change. Some of them improve much more than you realize. Some grow less. So you have to try them out for everything. Last year I thought I had my best RT ever – And I did. Yet he should have been playing FB. I discovered that on a "Monday Night Fun Night" when I let him run the ball. I watched a freight train go through the defense. He was a kid who didn't say much. Meanwhile, the FB I'd given the starting job to was constantly shooting his mouth off and, while he blocked great, was a horrendous runner. How'd he get the job? He was the starting FB from last year...Same reasoning and same mistake. I figured I was "set" at that position.

Q: What are Coach JB's power plays he runs with your offense?

ANSWER: "Super, Backs Over, 26 Power", and "TE Over, 25 Power". Then use back #2 as the lead blocker on "Super, Backs Over, 16 Power", and "TE Over, 15 Power". Then he has the FAST QB keep on 18 off "26 Power" and run 17 off "25 Power".

Q: What are some of the plays you've run?

ANSWER: I found this selection of plays I once ran with a team of 9 year olds:

- 1) 36 Toss Sweep*
- 2) Right 45 Kick*
- 3) 38 Toss*
- 4) Super 36 Toss*
- 5) 36 Toss*
- 6) 24 Cross*
- 7) TE Over, 33 Quick*
- 8) 47 Toss*
- 9) 47 Speed*
- 10) Left 32 Trap*
- 11) Power Wedge*
- 12) HB Pass Right*

13) Ends Over 25 Power

14) 23 Cross

15) SE Over, 38 Power

16) 38 Power

Q: In the DC Wing-T playbook, it is suggested that 47 Speed not be ran from slot. A slot look could put the HB closer to his block, but the base look could force the WB to maintain depth to avoid defensive charge from the A gap....What is the reasoning for avoiding slot here?

ANSWER: A slot back attracts the attention of the DE. He's looking at him. A good DE will line up outside the slot and go around him, which places him in a position to make the tackle on "47 Speed".

But the base formation is DESIGNED to cause the DE to line up tight. That's the BEAUTY of the wing T formation (It's not the plays that make it work. It's the way it moves the DE's.). When the DE lines up tight, he has brought himself closer to the center which makes the HB's block easier. But, more importantly, the DE does not take an OUTSIDE rush (There's no one for him to go around.).

Against DE's that are used to lining up on TE's, this is a killer. You can tell when it's the first time they've faced a wing T because their helmets start turning left and right. They're looking to see who is going to block them and they don't see ANYONE. When they don't see anyone, they skip their training and charge into the backfield, aiming for a point about one yard behind the QB. The HB will NEVER MISS his block when the DE does this and the DE will "sucker" into this every time.

In virtually every defensive playbook in existence, a DE is instructed to line up 1-2 yards outside a TE or OT (if there's an SE instead of a TE). This instruction is WRONG against a wing T formation. Look at your own instructions to your own DE and see if he isn't moved at least ONE YARD closer to the center and no longer taking an outside rush against the DC Wing T.

But, when you add a slot, the DE will treat him as a TE and move out and take the outside rush. Now he knows what to do.

The "47 Speed" is one of the most powerful plays in modern football but only THE WAY I RUN IT. A well known coach was holding clinics and being invited across the country to speak on the "47 Speed". It lasted two years. He is no longer invited to speak. The "47 Speed" is just another play now. He had six schools send him film of their "47 Speed" and asking him why it wasn't working. He didn't have an answer and the play is now dead and his speaking invitations are gone.

Not to brag, but I saw the problem before the six schools even sent him their film. I worked it out on paper and never had to test it out on a field at all. It was doomed to fail. I never ran it even ONCE their way. I made the following changes:

1) Foot to Foot Splits: Suck the DE in as tight as possible!

2) No slot or TE: Suck the DE in as tight as possible!

3) QB has one foot back: Deepen the handoff!

4) Pull both the OT and OG right behind the DE - NOT IN FRONT! Their pulling bodies interfere with penetration while they avoid interfering with the HB's block.

5) Center has left hand UP! This is the only penetration point you have to worry about. And if the center has his left hand UP, you no longer have to worry about it.

We all know that when a sweep goes for a mile that the DE blew it. What I did was design the "47 Speed" so that the DE would "blow it" every single time.

I tried to explain to this coach his mistake but he wouldn't listen. I'm still coaching and he's watching the rest of us on TV.

That said, the "DC47 Speed" can still fail. It will fail if the runner EVER GIVES UP YARDS TOWARDS HIS OWN GOAL LINE. The "47 Speed" of others was having the runner deepen his route after the handoff. I have mine deepen his route BEFORE the handoff (QB with one foot back). So the runner is already deep. Going DEEPER AFTER THIS WILL NOT HELP! It will ruin the play. If the runner is already "deep" and then gives up another 5 yards to get around the DE, the play will never work. He can't make up the yardage he gave up to get around the DE before the defense arrives. If the runner is faced with a defender forcing him deep, he should cut INSIDE that defender. This will work because the runner has PERFECT blocking for an inside cut (Look at the OT's and OG's block.).

NEVER HESITATE to use a grease board to show your players "47 Speed".

WING T DRILLS

There are several successful wing T coaches that have put together wing T training films. Unfortunately, I've never seen any of them. I am a self taught coach who learned the offense by watching it being played by others and by reading what others have said about it. The final mix in that ingredient is me. I added my own special spin to the offense.

To determine what drills should be run I focused on what the wing T needs to do to be successful. The first thing I looked at was the Ferndale Golden Eagles, Navy, and Air Force. Ferndale was a tiny high school that rose from the depths of obscurity a few years ago to make it to their state playoffs. They featured a star fullback who gained something like 500 yards rushing in the playoffs alone. Two years later, however, Ferndale was back to obscurity. Why? Their star fullback graduated. They could win with a great fullback but not without him.

The importance of the fullback to the wing T is also demonstrated by Navy and Air Force. These two schools run a slotted wing T and their fullbacks average 5 yards per carry – not 4 yards – not 6 – but 5 yards per carry. If your fullback only averages 4 yards per carry in the wing T, YOU WILL LOSE.

Here's why. Let's say your fullback averages 4 yards per carry. We're now going to march down the field with the fullback and, in our first three plays throw either an incomplete pass or get penalized 5 yards. After two runs and the incomplete pass, we find ourselves at fourth and two. After two runs and a five yard penalty, we find ourselves at third and seven and, after that, fourth and three. You can't win games at 4 yards per carry. Now let's see what happens when our fullback averages 5 yards per carry. In the situation where we threw the incompleting pass, we still went 10 yards on the other two plays and got a first down. In the situation where we got penalized 5 yards, we will still get 15 yards and a first down. The math is simple. If you average 5 yards you win. Average 4 yards and you lose.

The oddity that I discovered in researching this was that the fullbacks who averaged 5 yards per carry seldom got 6. Now this was a surprise. They also scored very few touchdowns. Besides Eckel, I have only seen one Navy fullback score a touchdown, have never seen an Air Force fullback score one, and even watching Tom Osborn's Nebraska provided me with only one touchdown run by a fullback on film.

What is happening is that the very characteristics that allow a FB to consistently gain 5 yards also prevent him from gaining more. Fullbacks do not have great speed, they do not have great moves, they have too much forward lean, and so they do not score.

So what do they have? Well, they can run a straight line and do so while carrying a lot of weight. Fullbacks are heavy and have both power and acceleration. They must be heavy in order to create forward momentum. The same muscle mass that makes them heavy gives them power and cushions them against the bruising tackles inside that they will receive. This makes them durable. Next, he must stretch out and dive for whatever extra yardage he can get. This is why fullbacks have no "moves" and have forward lean. Changing direction causes a loss of speed and a loss of speed causes a loss of momentum which means fewer yards gained when the fullback is hit. A good fullback runs hard,

with too much forward lean, aiming between two defenders, and looking for 5 punishing yards. If you're going to win with the wing T, you have to start here.

To get that five yards I noticed good fullbacks did the following. They run straight through the line, with their upper body low, and with plenty of forward lean and both hands over the ball. They do not run upright! They are a full head lower than when standing when they take the handoff and, after the handoff, they may get even lower. When approached by a tackler they do not cut left or right, but continue to equally split the distance between that tackler and the next one over. This avoids "head on" or helmet contact while maximizing yards gained before the hit. Once the hit is certain, they drop their shoulder-pads into the tackler's helmet if he's aiming for his waist. This presents the tackler with only knees and shoulderpads. They do not allow a tackler to get a helmet across their stomach! Their goal is to burst through the tackler, then straighten up, and GO! Or, failing that, to drive for an extra yard and fall forward. A six foot fullback, standing still, who simply falls forward from the "line of scrimmage" can advance the ball nearly two yards without ever having moved his feet. Add in forward speed and a low charge and that two-yard gain can easily become three even if he's hit at the line.

Properly trained, our fullbacks should get two yards every time after they're hit. In order to make a 5 yard gain, our blockers must meet the linebackers 3 yards back off the line before the tackle is made. If we can do this, we win. If we can't, we lose.

THE FULLBACK

Selection: Using three 27 yard run times from a three point stance, throw out the best and worst times of each player on the team. Now divide his weight by his run time. This gives his impact value. The higher this number is, the better the fullback candidate. This value reflects better than average speed and higher than average muscle mass. But what we don't want is a player with "moves". A player with "moves" wants to run high and duck and dodge his way down field. When this happens, they lose momentum, they lose drive, they're not low, and the path they are on is no longer the shortest distance to the goal line. We can't use this kind of athlete at fullback. We're looking for someone who wants to dish out a hit so bruising that he will make other players not want to tackle him.

Fullback Race: We need three assistants for this drill, two footballs, and two 10 foot lengths of PVC pipe. On a line of scrimmage and from a nose guard, an assistant holds a section of PVC pipe in the middle of it and neck high to the FB's. Three yards behind him stands another assistant with the other section of PVC – also neck high. One yard behind the LOS and in the QB position stands a coach holding a football in each hand and held out wide to each side at stomach height. Four steps behind each football are two FB candidates in three point stances.

This is a race. It's only seven yards. The first FB to take his handoff and get under both sections of PVC wins. The QB/coach doesn't move. He just holds the balls out and calls "Hit!" to start the race.

In the event of a tie in the competition between two FB candidates, the one who can't catch goes to FB. The other goes to TE. In the event both can catch, the shortest player goes to FB and the other to TE.

TRAINING

Handoff: The FB starts four steps behind the QB in an even toed stance (either 2 or 3 point). Leading with the playside foot, his first three steps are at the outside foot of the playside tackle. The FB's first step should always be a short step, not a long one. His arm away from the QB is down and his near elbow is up for the handoff. Exaggerate the space between the top and bottom hand. The eyes are up and not looking down. The QB places the ball in his stomach and in the same place every time. The exaggerated spacing of the FB's hands should allow him to correct for either a high or low handoff. To get the correct handoff point, on a "24" call the QB (with the center at 12 o'clock) steps back with his left foot to the 6 o'clock position and then swings his right around to the 4 o'clock position and fully extends the ball. The FB should be about 6 inches short of this position in three steps. Walking backwards from this handoff position in a straight line back from the RT's outside foot to behind the QB (using right foot, left foot, right) should place the FB in his correct starting position. He now counts four steps forward to the QB. This teaches him the proper length of step to use in counting back from the QB.

You can drill the handoff by using two cones, a QB, two coaches, a section of PVC pipe, and two defenders with handshields. Set the two cones in the offensive tackle positions with the QB between them and the FB four steps back. An assistant holes a 10 foot section of PVC pipe across the line of scrimmage (LOS) at neck height to the FB. The other coach takes a knee behind a cone in the RT position to the playside, with one hand extended towards the FB, thumb up. No center is needed. The QB holds a football in the center snap position and calls cadence ("2"), reverse pivots, and hands to the FB on the FB's third step. As the FB takes the handoff the coach on one knee ahead of him the coach quickly points his thumb either left or right and then back up again. The FB is to pass on the side of the coach the thumb points to. The coach signals it fast and does it exactly as the QB hands off. If the FB's eyes are looking down for the handoff, he'll miss the direction pointed and you can correct him. We're teaching him to look at the DT in front of the RT that can tackle him, not the QB or football who can't. We teach the FB to take the handoff with his eyes up and reading whoever is in front of our tackle and to cut left, or right, off that defender. You have to finger drill a FB every offensive practice. Otherwise, they start to look down for the ball. The 10 foot section of PVC pipe forces the FB to get "one head lower" to pass underneath it. This is explained in the next section. The FB takes the handoff and raises his elbows up to his shoulder height to bring the ball higher as he passes under the pole. The FB is now in the proper position for lowering his shoulder pads into a defender. He does not raise himself back up after clearing the pole! He may have to get even lower! Behind the pole and at linebacker depth are two defenders with handshields. One is in an inside linebacker position (i.e. over the QB) and the other is in an outside linebacker position (two yards outside the cone). They will both attack the FB with their shields after he clears the pole. The FB will aim for a point *exactly halfway between the two linebackers* once he clears the pole. Just before contacting the handshields, the FB will lean forward even further by bending

at the waist until both his shoulder pads contact the handshields first. He will drive through them, *head up*, and making shoulder pad contact *only* with the handshields (no elbow or helmet contact). Once he breaks through, he will shift the ball to the outside arm, raise himself up, pump his arms, and accelerate to full speed. He does not return to the coach until he reaches full speed. The coaching points are 1) lead with playside foot 2) outside arm up for handoff 3) eyes up and on the offensive tackle 4) elbows up, body low 5) both hands over the ball 6) aim to pass halfway between two defenders 7) be ready to lower shoulderpads even further into defender (no elbow or helmet contact) with head up and then, only after breaking through, 8) assume proper “speed” running form.

I believe a FB should be informed of why he’s doing what he’s doing. First, we want to be safe and, second, we want to make those 5 yards. **The safety factors are we don’t want our eyes/head down or to lead with our head (neck injury) and we don’t want helmet to helmet contact with a defender or helmet to body contact (head injury).** Here is the danger of helmet to helmet contact. It happened in my state:

School mourns football player, 15

By [JEFFREY M. BARKER](#)
SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER REPORTER

SEATAC -- Even after the hit, DeShawn Smith stomped off the football turf in signature form -- fiercely competitive and still determined to give 110 percent.

"I don't know why I have to come off the field," he said, angry that the referee had ordered him to sit out for one play. DeShawn, 15, a starting running back on the Tyee High School varsity team, lived and breathed football. He wanted to be part of every snap.

*Two minutes before halftime, DeShawn had taken a pass behind the line of scrimmage and headed up field. A Foster High School Bulldog tackled him hard, **helmet to helmet.***

A short time later Saturday night, DeShawn collapsed, fell into critical condition and was taken to Harborview Medical Center. He died late Tuesday.



DeShawn Smith

So our head is up and we don’t run directly at a defender – but between two defenders (This is also known as “running for daylight”) and with shoulderpads directed *at the defender’s handshields*. This is for training only. Against a live defender, the FB only lowers his shoulderpads against the *defender’s helmet* as the tackler breaks down to tackle him at the waist. If the tackler aims above or below the waist, the FB does not use his shoulderpads at all against the defender’s helmet *but stiffarms the helmet instead*. So he either hits the helmet or shoves it away. By aiming at a point halfway between two defenders, we make it harder for the defense to “stand our FB up” and they can’t meet him “head on” him. **Our FB never meets a defender head on.** Also, aiming between defenders maximizes the distance they must go to make the tackle. The further they have

to go for the tackle, the further our FB ran down field before hit. And, if both tacklers hit our FB from each side at the same time, there's a good chance that both tacklers will knock each other off the FB as they come from opposite directions and collide. We smash through between them because it's not only safer but we want to gain 2 more yards by falling forward and, if they can't get in front of our FB, they can't stop him from doing that. We get our elbows down and let the shoulderpads strike the blow to the defender's helmet. Elbows can break. Shoulderpads we don't care about. Notice, the FB runs with both hands over the the ball. This not only protects the ball but allows the FB to raise one arm or the other equally well to stiffarm an opposing helmet (He shifts the ball to the other hand and the FB should practice shifting ball.). Directional changes are done only to avoid a head on collision and to split two defenders. Otherwise, direction changes produce lost speed and lost momentum. We want to use that momentum against the defender's helmet and in the direction of the goaline. So keep the forward momentum up.

The FB's running form is such that he hits the line low (a full head lower than he stands). This places him in the "halfway down" position. From here he can raise up to stiffarm a high tackler or use his speed, or he can lower his pads even further to engage a tackler's helmet. The "halfway position allows him to quickly do both.

Repeat drill to the other side.

If the FB is having trouble not making shoulderpad contact with the handshields, you can have him work backwards by starting in the finish position (shoulderpad against handshield with no elbow contact) and then step backwards one step and, from this position, come forward and hit the shield. He tries to knock it, and the players holding it, out of the way. On contact, to regain his balance, the FB throws his chest out and pumps his knees high as he straightens up and bursts through.

Once we break the linebacker level, the FB goes fullspeed and only the safety(s) remain. If there are two, the FB repeats the above technique, aiming halfway between them both and then lowering his shoulderpads at the last moment to strike the defender's helmet. If there is only one, he aims for a point halfway between the safety and the "out of bounds line" (the 12th defender) and keeps moving towards the sideline to keep the safety halfway between him and the sideline as he runs. Just before contact he will stiff arm the opposing safety to stay inbounds.

Against a single tackler, sometimes it's not possible for our FB to get his shoulder pad as low as his opponent's helmet. This occurs when the defender makes a diving tackle. The FB reacts to a defender's helmet he can't get below by putting his near hand on top of the defender's helmet, shoving down and sliding away with a "thumb's down" stiffarm. *He is not pushing the defender away from himself. He is pushing himself away from the defender.* We often have a defender sit on his knees about one yard outside the FB's track and try and tackle the FB who stiff arms his helmet for practice.

We also stiff-arm a high helmet. If the tackler is coming in high (not bent at the waist or not in break down position), the FB stiffarms the top of the top of the tackler's helmet, thumb down, to push himself away from the defender. He must be careful not to "facemask" the defender. ***The FB is always attacking his tackler's helmet.***

These are the basics of FB play and can be taught to most ages 9 and up provided the FB doesn't forget and start to lead with his helmet – At which point he must be removed from the game as a safety hazard to himself. If the FB shows exceptional ability, you can have him hit a tackling dummy so hard he falls down (hitting it with his shoulderpad only and with head off to the side) and teach him to get his contact side hand to the ground in order to catch himself and to get back up and keep going.

Properly coached, here is what happens. The FB passes under the PVC pipe running one full head lower than he would run if upright. This positions the shoulder pads in a ready to strike position. As the tackler breaks down to put his helmet across the FB's stomach, the FB turns aside enough to aim his shoulderpad at the defender's helmet, then drops his shoulders enough to guarantee contact. The tackler will take an enormous blow to the side of the head which knocks him off the tackle. The FB is safe because, if his shoulderpad is striking the defender's helmet, the FB's helmet is striking *nothing*, which is exactly what we want.

Now! If you really want to make a great FB, simply fill a tire with cement, tie a rope from it to an innertube, put the innertube around the FB's waist, and let him drag that tire while running the drill I described. Now I've never actually done this because I have no desire to lug that tire to and from practise but I have no problem at all envisioning the results of adding this to the drill. I did think of ankle weights though.

FINE TUNING THE FULLBACK

The FB's first three steps are at the outside foot of the offensive tackle to the side he is running. His third step becomes what we call his "plant" step and is always his outside foot. If he's getting the football, this gives him a good, sharp cut back inside to hit either the playside "B" gap playside ("3 or "4" hole) or even the "A" gap ("1" or "2" hole on "trap"). Or, if he doesn't have to cut back, he's right on track for "C" gap (The "5" or "6" holes). If he is not getting the ball, the chances are that he is blocking the DE. When blocking a DE, we do not want him to have a sharp cut. We want him to take a "banana" shaped route to the DE which is a curved line, or path, to his man. To get this curved path, he would still turn towards the DE on his third step but now he can't plant to turn hard and so he gets the desired "banana" turn. We have now successfully combined simplicity (the FB always taking the same first three steps) with effectiveness (the proper path on his assignment). To get him to run a straight line for his first three steps, we lay a plastic PVC pipe between the FB's position and the outside foot of the OT.

Notice, that if we do this properly, the inside LBer assigned to the FB will have no useful read. He will see the FB take three steps in a straight line and form a pocket but not know if the FB will get the ball or not or, if he does, on which side of the OT he will run. The inside LBer must stand and wait for the FB to finish his first three steps before a useful read develops. If he does this, then he becomes an easy target for a blocker during those three steps. The coach should assume the inside LBer position himself and check the FB so that he gives no read on any play but pass (The FB's first three steps will be at the DE on pass – a very subtle difference and one not likely to be noticed).

One thing we must do is “time the QB up” to the FB. If we don’t time the QB up to the FB, the FB will time himself up to the QB and this is bad because here’s how he’ll do it. The FB knows he’s getting the football and so he doesn’t want to overrun the handoff point. In his mind, if he gets there too soon, he’ll miss the handoff. So he’ll decide it’s better to slow down and arrive too late, rather than to speed up and arrive too early. WRONG! We want the FB at top speed – not slowing down to take a handoff. So we tell the FB to run full speed and we’ll coach the QB to match his speed. The handoff point on the “23” and “24” calls is the third step. It’s the responsibility of the QB to see that he gets there on time. If the QB can’t get there in time have the FB either take bigger steps back (He aligns four steps behind the QB) or lengthen his first take-off step. If the QB gets there ahead of the FB and is waiting, don’t worry about it. Do not move the FB up. If you do, you’ll interfere with his cut angle to run trap. Instead, look at the FB’s first step. The odds are his first step is too long and needs to be shortened.

Amongst first year players it’s very common for the FB to run to the QB for the handoff. You will know if this is occurring because the FB will run into, and collide with, the QB to get the handoff. He’ll also be off the PVC pipe laid down for him to follow to the outside foot of the OT. If this occurs, simply have a coach stand halfway between the QB and the FB and take one step playside. The FB must now run around the coach to get the handoff. The collision stops and the FB learns to run his proper route. This also prevents the FB from watching the QB as he runs down the pipe. He needs to be looking ahead and never at the QB. Another means of preventing this is to put a second player one yard behind the FB (called a “rabbit”) who is allowed to tackle the FB from behind on snap. The FB learns he can’t waste time in getting to the hole or this player will tackle him (Hint: He’ll need help in learning this lesson from you.).

Here is a description of the running style of Navy’s FB, Kyle Eckel, the first Navy running back to ever rush for over 1,000 yards in a season (He averaged 5.3 yards per carry in 2003 and 5.6 in 2004):

"A lot of times, I get leverage over an opponent," Eckel said. "When I'm running the ball, I don't get as low as I should get. I wait until [the defensive player] picks a spot, and I read where he's going to tackle me, and then I'll get an inch lower than him. That'll help me either break the tackle or fall forward a couple of yards. If he gets down, you just dip on him and explode through."

What does this description mean? When he says “I don’t get as low as I should get,” he means that he could be lower after taking the handoff and getting through the line than he is, but he stays a little higher than he should before taking on the linebacker. By not getting as low as he should, **this prevents him leading with his helmet** – a dangerous thing to do. As he runs for “daylight” (Running to the area exactly halfway between two linebackers) he waits until the linebacker(s) is about to make contact, then reads the height of the tackler’s helmet and adjusts his pads lower to match. *Shoulder pad to helmet wins*. If the FB can’t get his shoulder pad lower than the tackler’s helmet, he puts his hand on the top of the tackler’s helmet and moves away (dips) as he stiffarms. This is what Eckle meant when he said:

"If he gets down, you just dip on him and explode through."

By this, Eckle meant, if the tackler's helmet is too low (if he gets down), push down on his helmet, dip away, and keep going. The tackler is too low to give chase.

Shown below is a photo of Kyle Eckle stiffarming a low helmet. This is a technique applied to any defender whose helmet is below our FB's shoulder pads.



DRILLING THE FULLBACK'S TOSS BLOCK

The FB has the DE on his own with no help. At the youth level this is not a very difficult block once the FB learns his route because the DE will usually line up outside the TE so he has already positioned himself to be kicked out even before the snap. Since the DE has "contain" and is not being blocked at the LOS, he gains depth quickly. Most DE's will be two yards behind the LOS before they're even blocked by the FB. The FB counters this by letting the DE get deeper than he is before blocking him on the DE's inside shoulder. This is called a "banana" route since the FB will run a curved line to reach the DE. It only takes about 5 minutes to teach a FB this, 2 minutes to point out his target and 3 minutes to correct his route. After that, he'll go an entire season and never miss his block.

This is how I drill my FB for this block. Place a tackling dummy on the ground in front of the DE and parallel to his route. A couple of handshields are tossed on the ground behind the bag. The DE is given a handshield and, on snap, shuffles across the LOS sideways. After he gets 2 yards across the LOS, he reverses direction and heads back towards the LOS. The FB makes his approach on the DE, lets him get too deep, and then picks him up as he reverses direction and knocks him, ass-end over teakettle, over the tackling dummy - Great fun for both the FB and the DE. You never have to worry about

the DE not reversing direction because, if he doesn't, he won't make the tackle anyway on an inside run since he's moving away from the ballcarrier. So the FB always plays him for the direction change. I haven't had a FB miss a block on a DE yet.

During that same drill we'll set up a second tackling dummy on the ground in the inside LBer's position at about a 45 degree angle to the LOS. We stand another kid here with a handshield and let the WB practice tea-kettling him. Two more defenders with handshields are set in the FS and CB positions playside for the G and QB to block, respectively. There is no tackling dummy behind them and they are allowed to be moving targets. On the playside of the center we lay a tackling dummy parrallel to the LOS and which represents the G and T to that side (We never use real blockers playside for this drill). We do put the backside linemen in though. The QB takes the snap, turns and runs "36 Toss" and pitches to the HB option style. The QB follows the FB to find the hole and cuts upfield off the FB's block to find the CB. The pulling backside G follows the QB to find the hole. As we repeat the drill, we vary the outside depth/width of the DE. This practices the FB at dealing with various outside DE alignments and forces the QB to follow the FB rather than just run to the end of the tackling dummy and turning upfield.

FULLBACK CONDITIONING DRILLS

Calf raises: Have the FB place one hand on a goal post for balance and then, on one foot, very S-L-O-W-L-Y raise himself up to a full calf extension. The toe of the free foot is placed to the heel of the foot doing the lifting. Do eight to ten reps on each leg. Repeat.

Knee Bends: Have FB place his back to the goal post with heels of his feet about a foot and a half away from the post. He now bends his knees and slides his back down the pole to where his knees achieve a nearly 90 degree bend. He holds this position for 4 seconds and the S-L-O-W-L-Y comes back. He should be able to do 50-60 eventually.

Fireman's Carry: The FB jogs towards the goal line with a football. At the ten yard line another player jumps on his back and squeezes his thighs around the FB's hips. The FB carries the player the 10 yards into the endzone.

Also recommended: Tennis ball drill (See Offensive line drills).

TRAINING THE SPLIT ENDS

The next most important player in the offense is the SE. Although he's probably going to be an inferior player and far from a stud, we must make him into a threat – either blocking, receiving, passing, or running. By giving him a blocking angle on an inside defender we make him a blocking threat and, by using the same route for his pass plays, we make him into a receiving threat. By speed training him, he can run the reverse. But, if he can't do any of these, he becomes a wasted player. So we must teach him to do one or, preferably, all.

To teach your SE's to become good blockers, put your candidate on the LOS with a safety aligned 7 yards inside him and 9 yards deep. This gives our SE a good blocking angle. The safety begins with his back to the SE. A coach stands behind the SE holding a football and calls "Ball!" The SE takes off from a two-point stance directly at the safety and the safety turns around. The coach now laterals the football forward on the ground a short distance for the safety to try and get. The SE must block him, not knowing where the ball (runner) is behind him. He does this by SLOWING DOWN just as he reaches the safety so as not to be "juke'd". He then strikes both hands first to the defender's bottom jersey numbers, driving upwards with hips to stop the safety. He then shifts his hands up to the defender's shoulder-pads (one hand on each side and **with fingers pointed up**) and then pushes the defender in whatever direction the defender is trying to go in order to reach the ball. The defender's own momentum combined with the push always carries him past the ball. This is called a "stalk block". I have found all sized players can stalk block. We count off how long they can keep the defender from the ball with "One monkey, two monkeys, three monkeys..." etc. A time of eight monkeys is not unusual in just their third or fourth try. That's about 6 seconds!

Make sure you drill the SE from both the "base" and "SE Over" formation. The WB is also taught this same drill but he practices against a linebacker (He may have to use a shoulder block.).

Another version of this drill is to place two cones on the ground 5 yards apart on a line. On one side of the line is a safety two yards deep. On the other is the SE. Five yards behind the SE is a football on the ground. The safety shuffles back and forth along the line and tries to get past the SE to get to the ball. The safety has until the count of four "monkeys" to get across the line. The SE intercepts him and pushes him in the direction he wants to go.

RECEIVING DRILLS:

We introduce our receivers to catching in two phases. Through our "no pads" drills we identify the kids we feel are basically SE material, versus being linemen and running backs. These kids are grouped into one group under our receiving coach. Because I don't trust this coach to say it as well as I can, I am with them for their first few minutes of their first day in this group to give a talk. I explain to them that it normally takes a long time to learn how to catch a pass and that some people never do learn how to catch yet they go on to become famous football players anyway. I point out that there is no shame in either not learning to catch or in being the last one to learn to catch. Someone has to be the last one in the group to learn to catch. It could be any one of the kids I'm talking to. I point out that when you do learn to catch, it happens suddenly. One day you're dropping everything and the next you're not. You just don't know when that day will come. I tell them this because there will probably be at least one kid in the group who never learns to catch and I don't want him to feel bad because he can still learn to block, run, or throw. Now I turn them over to their coach who will give a demonstration on how to properly catch a ball (i.e. thumbs together for high passes, little pinkies together for low passes - and to always catch the ball away from the body, keep the fingers soft, and to catch the pass at its highest point). He now circles them up in a circle about 7 yards in diameter and

lets them pitch a football back and forth to each other, pitching high, low, and outside. Kids who are dropping the ball are corrected by the receiving coach (I will only let him correct the same kid three times total in one night. A kid who is having trouble catching should have his thumbs duct taped together.). This drill lasts 10 minutes. For the next ten minutes the receivers catch passes while on their knees and the ball is thrown to the outside of them. They must catch the ball, tuck it in, and fall on the ground on their side. This trains them to automatically "put the ball away" even while being tackled. The next phase is to spend time with those kids who show mastery of the first phase (If no one shows mastery of the first two drills, they are repeated). The kids who aren't yet able to catch now become "distracters" for the kids who have learned. In the first distraction drill, a defender with a handshield stands behind the receiver who has a pass thrown inside or outside him. When the ball is in the air, the distracter yells at the receiver ("Drop it!" "Butter fingers!" "Watch out for that tree!" or says nothing at all) to try and get him to drop the ball. Once the ball hits the receiver's hands, the distracter hits him with his shield (whether he catches it or not) but only AFTER the ball hits his hands. The receiving coach watches to make sure the receiver remembers to tuck the ball after the catch. This lasts 10 minutes. The next 10 minutes is spent with a defender in front of the receiver. Now the defender waves his arms and tries to distract the receiver without actually touching the ball. After this we bring over one of our two QB's (We use a two QB system. While one works with the receivers the other works with the running backs). The QB now throws to the receivers who run their patterns for 20 minutes. The QB now throws to the receivers who run their patterns for 20 minutes. The coach usually serves as his center and calls out "One monkey! Two monkeys! Three monkeys! Four!" The QB must throw by "Four!" We then change QB's and repeat for another 20 minutes. This gives my receivers forty minutes of practice per day of actual pass catching on the routes they'll run on game day with the QB who will actually be throwing to them. **We never let a coach assume the QB position and then have him throw to the receivers on their routes.** We would be working the wrong people together that way. When the receivers don't have a QB to work with, their coach has them run hand drills or do their stalk blocking drills. The next 20 minutes are spent on stalk blocking (and sometimes "release blocking") for a total of 100 minutes a night on training our receivers.

HB DRILLS

The primary consideration in a HB is his size and speed. As in the FB, we're looking for a back with high impact value but, in a HB's case, he's usually slightly lighter, and faster, than a FB – which accounts for his impact value. In simple terms, he's a stud. I find that about one out of every twelve players on a team qualifies as a stud. This is the player who, if the other teams could grab a player off your squad of their choice, they'd pick him first over everyone else. He is one of your star players.

Hopefully, you have two star players. If they are otherwise of equal size and abilities, the fastest one goes to wingback (WB) and the other goes to HB.

The HB's job is to run to what we call the "short" side of the field (i.e. the near hash mark) and get all the yards he can, just as the FB runs the middle for all the yards he can.

However, a halfback (HB) in the wing T does not run like a fullback. He can run upright, cut, deliver a stiff-arm, and spin. His goal, after hitting the hole called, is to break the play to the wide side of the field. This means, if he's running into the near sideline, he's looking to cut back. We let him run upright, cut, and stiff-arm because we are willing to take the risk of him only getting a small gain in exchange for the possibility of a big gainer. This is why our FB must gain 5 yards a carry so that we can keep getting first downs when the HB and WB don't. The more first downs we get, the more opportunities we get to give the HB or WB the ball and the more likely one is to eventually bust open a big run. However, there are some challenges to running the short side of the field. The HB will reach the out-of-bounds line very quickly, which means the defense will also catch up very quickly. The chances of the HB running out of field are high. Hence, he looks to cut back. There are two ways to cut back. A HB can always cut back if there's a defender running even with him in front of him towards the sideline. The second way to cut back is to use your blockers. To use your blockers, run straight at the *outside shoulder* of nearest defender. This "freezes" the defender and allows his assigned blocker to engage a non-moving target. Because the HB is headed at the outside shoulder of the defender, the defender will try and go around his blocker. That's when the HB cuts back the other way.

He may not be able to cut back and reach the near sideline. This means that the defense can try to use the sideline as a "twelfth" defender and just knock our HB out of bounds. The first defenders that will probably catch up with our HB and try and knock him out of bounds, besides the other team's studs/stars, will be their smaller, faster players. Our HB must be big enough, and strong enough, for these little guys not to be able to knock him out of bounds but stay in. Instead, we want these little guys to "bounce" off him while he keeps on going. **We want a kid at HB who is too fast for our opponent's big defenders to catch and bring down, but too big for our opponent's small defenders, who can catch him, to bring him down. The only players that should be able to catch him and tackle him are the other team's studs.**

Because the HB has size as well as speed, he can be used to run the "off-tackle" play (between the strong side OT and TE). We discussed earlier how the wing T attacks the strong side DE by going either inside, or outside, of him. In most cases, it will be inside the DE as most strong side DE's will line up "head up" on our wingback (WB), which leaves a big running hole inside them. The bigger the hole they give us, the greater the opportunity we'll score. Since this is a scoring opportunity we want to give the ball to our best runner – our "star" HB. This maximizes our chance of getting the biggest gain off our best play. Still, with him running upright and making cuts, there's no guarantee he'll make five yards like our FB, even though he has more talent. Therefore, we must first establish a "minimum gain" for our HB running off tackle. That minimum gain is four yards and we establish it by running the "36 Power Toss".

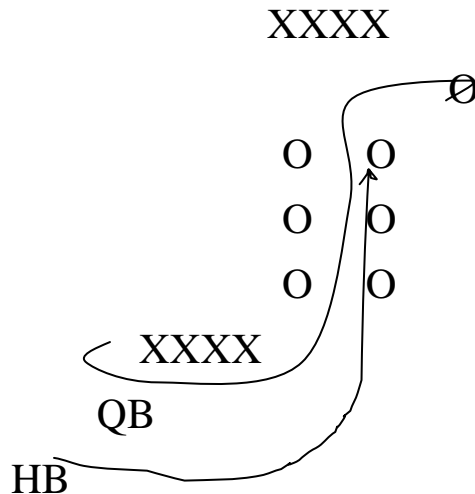
"Train" Toss Drill: This drill was previously described in teaching the FB how to block a DE. We had the FB "tea kettling" the DE while the backside guard (G) and QB led up inside his (the FB's) block with the pulling LG having his centerside hand on the QB's near shoulder and the other on his armpit. The SE/LT behind him does the same thing to the LG. The HB is the ball carrier. He flows sideways at the snap and takes an option style pitch or soft lateral from the QB. As soon as he has the ball, he cuts upfield and

puts his inside (left) hand on the QB's outside (right) shoulder. The QB is now leading through the hole with two or three players running right on his butt, the pulling LG, the LT/SE, and the HB. The LG and LT/SE will always be to the inside of the HB where his body shields the HB from a tackler coming from the inside, the most likely source of penetration. Both will push on the man in front him, identical to wedge. The QB will head at the inside (near) shoulder of the cornerback to "freeze" him, then collision the corner's outside shoulder, left palm to middle of numbers and right hand to outside shoulder. This collision is enormous if the two man "wall" is pushing the QB into the defender. This three man "wedge" of the QB and LG will usually protect the HB long enough to get four yards. This can also be run with the HB leading and the QB carrying. I call this a "train" because the QB is the "engine", the LG the "boxcar", and the SE/LT the "caboose". But, actually, all three are "engines". The runner separates just before the "train wreck".

Normal Toss: The other choice is for the LG and LT/SE to divide as soon as they have followed the QB into the hole and then turn back inside looking to block first wrong colored jersey. They should be passing to the TE's left. By then the QB will have turned outside looking for his defender to block (the corner), placing him to the TE's right. The HB (with no hand on the QB's back) runs the alley straight up the TE's block, aiming for the outside shoulder of the linebacker the TE is blocking. He then cuts back inside at the last moment. By running right at the LBer, he helps the TE make his block.

Test your team at both methods. Since the LBer may be able to shed our TE, the TE can delay coming out to block him until the mental count of "Hut three! Hut four!"

HB Gauntlet Drill: This drill teaches the HB to run hard on the "Toss" play. It requires one football, eight handshields, one tackling dummy, and ten players (including the HB and QB). The players are lined up as shown below:



The "X's" represent tackling bags on the ground. The "O's" are the defenders, each holding handshields and standing in two rows one yard apart. The QB is approximately 2-3 yards to the one side of the players (called the "Gauntlet"), facing straight ahead with a football in his hands in the center-snap position. He calls the proper snap count for the "Toss" ("2") and reverse pivots, giving a quick toss/pitch to the HB on about his second step. The QB then leads up through the Gauntlet. The HB follows (without hand on the

QB's back.). The other players can now beat on him with their handshields. The Gauntlet defenders, however, **MAY NOT STEP FORWARD TO STRIKE HIM**. Their feet cannot move (If you allowed them to move their feet, they'd all pile onto the HB). When the HB reaches the end of the line, he must jump over the tackling dummy. No one strikes the QB (Who will finish running through the Gauntlet well ahead of the HB). The QB is taught to deliver the same "stalk" block the split ends use, taking on a defender without a handshield waiting at the outside end of the "gauntlet" to tackle the HB.

The purpose of this drill is for the HB to learn to run hard, not to fumble, and keep his eyes focused ahead to see what's in front of him (The tackling dummy) the moment the QB separates from him and turns to the outside to simulate his going after the CB to block (The QB does not jump over the bag).

HB Option Drill: I have selected the simplest of all option plays for this playbook, the Lead Option. None-the-less, there are things that can go wrong on even the simplest of option plays. Run properly, the Lead Option is a thing of beauty. Run improperly, it's a complete disaster. Therefore, we want to remove the disaster so that all that is left is the complete beauty.

There are five mistakes a HB can make while running the option. They are 1) Maintaining an improper distance from the QB 2) Maintaining an improper pitch relationship on the QB (too far ahead, too far behind) 3) Dropping the pitch 4) Cutting upfield after taking the pitch and 5) Letting himself be knocked out of bounds.

Maintaining a proper pitch distance: Explain to your HB that he must be far enough away from the QB that the DE cannot tackle both him and the QB. Usually this is a distance of about 3 yards at the youth level. If this is not explained, a typical youth HB will run alongside a QB at a distance of about 6 inches. Running through the FB's starting backfield position will put him at the right depth.

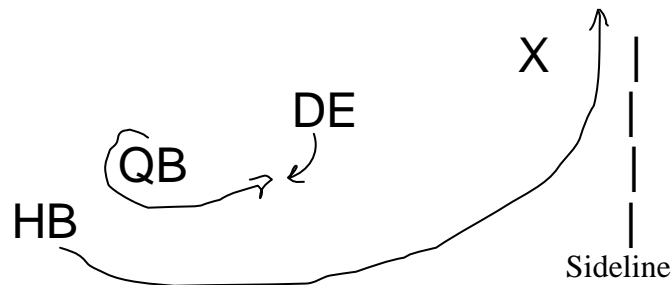
Maintaining a proper pitch relationship on the QB: Have the QB reverse pivot without a ball and run the option route, all the while pointing with his pitch hand straight out from his side. If the HB is in his proper position, the QB's hand will always point right at the HB. The HB maintains this relationship position to the QB until the QB "breaks down" (slows down) to pitch. Then the HB continues on ahead without waiting for the QB and watches for the pitch.

Dropping the pitch: It is not uncommon for a youth HB to drop a pitch that hits him right in the hands. This happens because the HB, at the last moment, takes his eyes off the ball to see "what's ahead". To teach a HB to look the ball all the way into his hands, have a coach stand along the HB's pitch route and wave his arms and yell at the HB as the QB pitches to him to distract him. The HB will soon learn to ignore the coach and focus on the pitch. You can also have him practice catching a wet ball on pitch.

Cutting upfield: Some youth HB's, particularly scatter brained ones who react without thinking, will take the pitch and cut back into the middle. We never cut back to the middle of the field on a pitch. All options are to the outside. The HB must be told that

under no circumstances does he cut back into the middle of the field. He runs the sideline. He can cut back on a “Toss” play but not on an option. That’s not to say that he must run sideways. Tell your HB’s to aim for the “stickman” holding the first down marker. Tell him that if he were to go out of bounds, this is where he would run out of bounds at. At least this way, we get a first down out of the play. We don’t when he cuts back.

Don’t get knocked out of bounds: Once the HB reaches the sidelines he stays about one yard away from it and heads straight along it for the endzone at full sprint. If someone arrives to try and knock him out of bounds, he applies a “stiff-arm”, thumbs down, to the top of the defender’s helmet (Never to the facemask!) to stay on the field. This lets our big, strong, fast HB keep the fast, little guys off him.



HB Option Drill

The QB options a DE (Usually a coach) and the HB takes the pitch (Usually with another coach distracting him). The HB then runs all the way to the near sideline where a small player (representing the near safety) with a handshield (X) tries to knock him out of bounds. The HB must stay on the field. You can add a person holding a first down marker on the sideline as an aiming point for the HB once he takes the pitch. You can also add the FB and a CB to this drill and let the FB practice blocking him.

COACHING THE HB BLOCK

Because our HB is a “star” player, he becomes the logical choice for us to use to block the other team’s “star” player on defense. This is the “Will” (weak) inside LBer on defense. Our three step handoff to the FB “freezes” this LBer for our HB’s first three steps so he should hit the LBer hard. His aiming point is the *outside* shoulder of the LBer. He can use his shoulderpad to the LBer’s stomach to delect him or have him strike with both hands, palms up, to the jersey “numbers”. His hands then go to the shoulder-pads and he pushes the linebacker whichever way he wants to go.

The HB Pass Release: The HB’s pass release (cut) can be made on his third step while the LBer is still watching the FB.

The HB “Draw” release: On a “draw” the HB is trying to “draw” the LBer into covering him downfield. He should make his cut after the third step and directly in front of the LBer in an attempt to look like an obvious pass release. Most HB “draw” calls are best run from the slot formation.

TRAINING THE WINGBACK

The wingback is trained similarly to the HB except he's always running to the sideline (seldom trying to cut back) and then trying to stay in bounds. He, too, can run directly at a defender to freeze him for his blocker. But he aims at the inside shoulder and then cuts outside. In addition, to stiff arming to stay inbounds, he's taught to "spin" when tackled in the open field to break out of it, the spin always being towards the tackler.

When blocking, he puts his inside shoulderpad into a LBer's stomach. If he's small, he dives both hands across the backer's far hip, cross body blocks him, and then slides down the defender.

When "track blocking" through a down lineman to get to a linebacker, he can block the linemen's near hip. The WB never stays on a "double team". He helps the RT and goes to next man up.

Always check your WB's motion to make sure he doesn't start forward before the snap. You can save yourself a 5 yard penalty in a game that way.

SPEED SWEEP: The WB must take the "47 Speed" hand off at full speed. Without proper training, the WB will do exactly the same thing our FB would do – slow down for the handoff! We prevent him from looking down for the handoff by "finger" drilling him (Just as we drilled the FB). A coach stands behind the SE position and holds up fingers for the WB to count as the QB turns to hand the ball off. The WB can't look down and count fingers at the same time. Next, he must be perfectly timed to the snap. As mentioned before, running backs deliberately run slow in order to make they don't run past the QB and miss the handoff. To prevent this from happening, while running "47 Gut Speed" have a second runner (called a "rabbit") standing behind the WB on the play. He allows the WB a three step head start and then chases and catches the WB from behind. Your WB will no longer run slow. If he overshoots the handoff, have him add one more step to his distance from the QB. If he undershoots, have him subtract one step. *The WB should carry the ball on his outside arm.* Make sure your WB finds the #1 outside defender and, after clearing the HB's block on the DE, always runs straight at him while reading the LT for which side of him to pass on. This causes the #1 defender to stop and wait to see which way the WB cuts. By standing and waiting, the #1 defender becomes a "sitting duck" for our pulling tackle to block and for the WB to cut off of. The tackle needs to DRIVE that #1 defender outside – but not clip or hold. **If the tackle has not yet blocked #1 then the WB must cut inside.** There's no way the tackle can clip the defender in these conditions. **If the tackle has blocked #1 then a clip is not in progress and the WB will go outside.** A "clip" occurs when the WB goes outside the #1 before the tackle blocks #1. Now # 1 can now turn his back to the tackle to chase and you have a clipping situation. That situation would not happen if the WB made his proper read. A "holding" call can still occur when the tackle makes contact with #1 and the WB, reading this, goes outside. To the tackle it seems like he's blocking #1 right into his own man, so he eases up on his block, which allows the defender to turn and give chase to our WB. Now our tackle must hold or clip #1 from behind to prevent that and the yellow flag flies. The tackle needs to understand that, **as long as he can see #1's eyes, # 1 WILL NOT MAKE THE TACKLE even though he's blocking #1 towards the WB.** This is because #1 has his back to the WB. You can't tackle someone if you have your back to

them even if you're backing up and – as long as the tackle can see #1's eyes, #1 has his back to the WB – so just keep right on driving him backwards HARD and you'll never have to hold.

TRACK BLOCKING: On a run to the “6” hole, the wingback must be taught to know when to recognize when the right offensive tackle needs help, and when he doesn't. He does this by simply by looking to see if there is a defender's helmet head up on, or outside, the RT's helmet. If so, the RT needs help and the further outside the RT the defender's helmet is the more likely the WB will have to take him by himself. If the defender's helmet is head up on the RT, a quick, hard shove with hip to hip contact should be all that's necessary. To make this simple, the WB aims for the hip of anyone head up on or outside the RT. If he makes no contact (the defender slanted away from him), the WB just keeps going to his linebacker. Otherwise, there will be a collision. If the defender slants at him, there will be a collision with the defender's shoulderpads and the WB will stay on him. In that case, the RT will either help the WB drive backwards (The ideal blocking situation) or take the backer himself. But, if the WB makes hip contact, he won't stay on the block. He should knock him down and keep going.

TRAINING THE QB

Snap: I normally teach a right handed QB to have his right hand up under the center and the center must be able to feel his hand. The thumb of the left hand goes over the top of the thumb of the right hand. The remaining fingers of the left hand are all pointed straight ahead (handshake position). This places the left hand perpendicular to the right. The QB's upper hand moves forward with the center's step on snap or the ball will come up short of the QB's fingertips on snap. If you have bad snaps, check for this first.

Pivot: It is easier for the QB to get depth into the backfield when he reverses out. Reverse pivots are used for handoffs to the FB, traps, and pass plays. Open pivots are used for quick handoffs. Each pivot has its own footwork. When teaching the footwork, do not use a center, football, or a back. Initially, the QB can grasp the ball as if he already has received it from the center. Because physical techniques and skills are learned much better when the drill focuses on only one technique, the QB should not concern himself with taking the snap or actually handing the ball to the running back when he is concentrating on his footwork. The coach stands at the running back position and assumes the starting position of the running back. Yet he does not move. He simply monitors if the QB is holding the ball out at the proper spot and looking at him.

Quick Handoff: On snap, the QB should take a short six inch lead step with his play side foot in order to point the toes in point parallel to the LOS (the direction in which he is moving). The next, longer step, with the backside foot should be down the line of scrimmage, bringing the QB to a point at which he can extend his arms and his hands, plus the ball, away from his body in preparation for the handoff at the appropriate hole.

While he takes the second step, the QB should be certain he has turned his head and located the position of the coach (in the back position). After simulating the handoff, the QB can take three steps away from the line of scrimmage then continue to the outside.

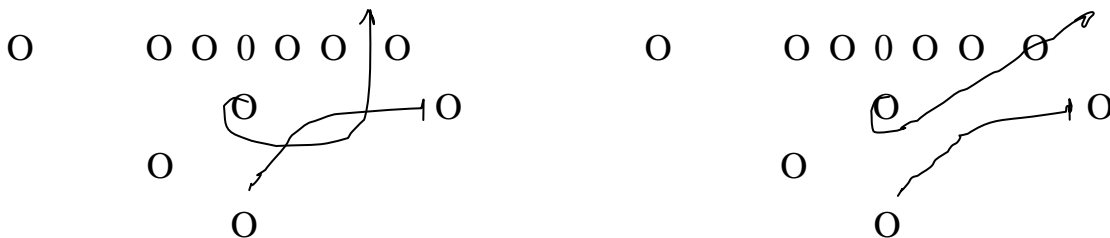
He should never watch the play. **Note: The most common mistake by a youth QB on a quick handoff is to not extend the ball directly out in front of the handoff hole.**

Reverse Pivot: Reverse pivot: Because the QB is pivoting and not opening up directly to the side of the ball carrier, it becomes more important than ever that the QB turns his head around as quickly as possible. The QB must focus on the coach as soon as he can. If we imagine the QB is in the middle of a clock and the center is in the 12 o'clock position, his first step is to step with his backside foot to the 6 o'clock position, his toes pointed towards his own goal posts. The playside foot swings around in nearly a $\frac{3}{4}$ circle (4 o'clock on the clock if play is to the right, 8 o'clock if play is to the left.). We want to avoid having him place his foot down at the 3 or 9 o'clock positions or he will be running parallel to the LOS after he pulls the ball back. **Note: The most common mistake of a DC Wing T coach is to skip teaching the reverse pivot.**

Handoff: The QB puts two hands on the ball for the handoff. One hand goes on the fat part of the ball. This hand is away from the runner's stomach. The other hand is on the tail of the ball facing the runner's stomach. By handing the ball off this way, the QB's hand does not get caught between the football and the runner's stomach. After handing off, the QB continues to run outside, and behind the runner, showing pass or run at least as far as the opposing defensive end.

Running: Our QB is a running quarterback. Therefore, he must be trained to run. Yet he is also normally of a slender build; fast, light, and tall. If he is an option QB, we want to place him in a rib protector of at least one half inch thick, hard padding. We also carefully select plays that will not expose him to injury and then run him sparingly. The "load option" ("18 Pitch" play) with the QB optioning the cornerback or linebacker outside the DE is, to me, a dangerous play for a QB to run. This is because the QB is running fast upfield and is being approached by defenders also running fast. The QB must expose himself to a hit in order to pitch to his HB. With the two players colliding at full speed, the QB can easily be the loser. Therefore, I prefer to run the "lead option" where the QB options the DE. Both the QB and the DE are usually moving much slower as the play happens quickly, and there is often no impact between the QB and DE at all as many DE's will simply "sit" and wait for the QB, expecting him to run "15" or "16" and the QB breaks down instead.

We still must train the QB on the "15" and "16" plays to get maximum yards. We do this by controlling the angle at which he approaches the sideline once he hits the hole. To get this angle, the QB must enter the hole at the same angle he intends to exit it at. Shown below is a QB running "16" two different ways:



In the example on the left, the QB has stepped around to the outside of the FB's lead block. By placing himself deeper than the FB lead blocking for him, he steepens his angle

for hitting the hole. You should train your QB to pivot around behind the FB when running “15” or “16”. In the example on the right, the QB has hit the hole at a shallow angle. He can run a long ways outside and yet gain very few yards this way.

The QB uses this same footwork on “Right 41 Trap” (inside handoff) or “Right 45 Kick” (outside handoff).

Coaching Option Pitch: When running option, the QB duplicates these same steps as on the “16” call only, as he heads upfield, he aims at the inside shoulder of the DE (Many coaches will have a QB head at the outside shoulder on option but, if the DE moves towards the pitchman, the QB will end up on the wrong path.). At this point, one of three things will happen:

- 1) The DE comes towards the QB (Pitch read)
- 2) The DE sits and waits (“feathering”)
- 3) The DE moves to cover the pitchman (Keep read).

A DE that “feathers” can be a challenge to option. What he may be doing is waiting for the QB to pitch with the intention of actually chasing the pitchman the moment the QB pitches. This is very rare and has never happened to me in a game but it has happened in practice when one of my own DE’s began “feathering” my QB. One solution to a “feathering” DE is for the QB to fake the pitch, keep, and run. The DE will fall for the fake and chase the pitchman. If you don’t want your QB to keep, have him head for the outside shoulder of the DE. However, do not train your QB to deal with a feathering DE until he has MASTERED the first and third reads (keep/pitch).

We first train our QB with a coach standing in the DE position. The QB reverse pivots and approaches the coach who simply takes two steps across the LOS and lets the QB pitch off him. The coach checks to make sure the QB stops (breaks down) before pitching and, after pitching, that the QB puts up both hands in front of himself to protect himself against a hit by the DE (A very fragile QB can be simply taught to fall down after pitching). Once the QB demonstrates proper safety in the pitch, the coach repeats the drill only now he holds up fingers for the QB to count. The QB aims for the inside shoulder of the coach and pitches off him to the pitchman and then calls out how many fingers the coach was showing. The coach puts his fingers up the moment the QB is on target for his outside shoulder and pulls them down the moment the QB pitches. This trains the QB to find and locate the DE. Most 9 year old QB’s learn this very S-L-O-W-L-Y as they will want to look at their pitchman “all the way”. They won’t count fingers at all. This takes time and can be very frustrating for both the QB and the coach training him.

Once the QB has learned to “break down” and count fingers, he’s ready to option an actual defender. The best way to do this is by letting the QB practice on the slowest player on the entire team. This defender is simply told to “stop the play” from the DE position. He can go for the QB or the pitchman. The choice is his. Gradually, the QB is introduced to faster defenders as he develops and shows mastery. If such a player is not available, then the coach must play the role of the DE. He should start out walking against the QB and then trotting to play the defender’s role, gradually increasing speed. He should not “feather” or try and trick the QB into making a bad decision. He should commit to either the QB or the pitchman as soon as he crosses the LOS.

When training a 9 year old QB's option pitch who won't watch the DE, you may have to teach him to pitch at the point where he would turn upfield to hit the "6" hole on "16". Just lay a tackling dummy down in the path of the QB at this point and let the QB practice his pitch. If he doesn't pitch soon enough, or break down, he'll fall over the bag. This helps him establish the timing of the pitch point. This QB is pitching "blind". He doesn't know where the DE is. But, if you've been watching the DE, you do. You become the QB's eyes. The QB has no read and the pitch is automatic.

We do a similar thing with "16 Pitch". We let our QB's pace off four steps into the #6 hole and then we lay a bag across the #6 hole at this point. Now the QB must come to a stop at three steps into the hole and pitch or trip over the bag. Our QB's must be able to make 8 out of 10 pitches against a bag to run the play in a game.

COACHING THE PITCH: There are three ways for a youth QB to pitch the ball to a back; they are 1) the "thumbs down" method 2) the two handed pitch and 3) the overhand pass.

In the "thumbs down" pitch the football is held in both hands as the QB completes his pivot. The QB then brings the ball up in front of his chest, holding the ball level (nose and tail even) with his thumb under the ball and fingers over the top. He holds the ball with the hand closest to the pitchman. The elbow is raised and the arm bent. He then straightens his arm as he pitches with it, turning his thumb down as he releases to give the ball an "end over end" spin. This pitch has both power and accuracy but is difficult for the pitchman to catch (It's rather like trying to catch an "end over end" punt.).

In the two handed pitch the ball is held with both hands at chest height, nose up and tail down. The QB now "pushes" the ball with both hands to the pitchman. It lacks power and accuracy, but it's an easy catch.

The overhand pass is just that – a pass. The QB throws a spiral to the pitchman.

QUARTERBACK PITCH DRILL:

At the beginning of practice we take two QB's and line them up on a 100 meter hurdle track on our practice field. We place one QB in one running lane and another four lanes over, which makes them about 4 yards apart. They have one football between them. On coach's signal they both take off, running even with each other. The QB with the ball then slows down while the other shoots ahead, and pitches to him. The second QB that catches the pitch now slows down as the first QB speeds up to catch up with him, as soon as the first QB is even with the second, the second QB breaks down, lets the first QB shoot on ahead, and pitches to him. They continue to do this all the way down the track, for the full 100 meters. Then they turn around, stay in the same lanes, and come back – repeating the drill. This allows them to practice pitching with their opposite hands. The coach watching looks for 1) failure to break down before pitching and 2) dropped pitches. If the two QB's are sloppy, he makes them do it again. Four dropped pitches is unacceptable and ranks as total failure. One dropped pitch is okay. Failure to break down four times by one QB is unacceptable. Once is okay.

COACHING THE BUCK:

The "buck" series is a very powerful series of plays which requires hand and footwork. We use the same footwork as in "belly", using the reverse pivot already described. For

simplicity, we always have the QB pivot to his right. Initially, we practice him without a football in order to get his hand movements down. As he comes out of his pivot, his left hand goes to the HB's stomach as they pass each other. The right hand then is placed in the FB's stomach as the FB runs trap in front of him. The QB then tucks the imaginary ball in his left hand, puts his right over "it" and then bootlegs on "17 Buck".

Once the QB can go through all three motions smoothly and in time with the backs, we add a ball. If the call is to the #3 back, QB will hand to him with his left hand, then place his empty right hand in the FB's stomach, and then bootleg "17" with a ball fake. If the call is to the FB, the QB skips the fake to the HB (Who carries out the fake himself), hands to the FB with his right, and bootlegs with his fake.

If the Call is "17 Buck", the QB puts the ball on his outside hip as he pivots and holds it there with his left hand (Again, the HB is responsible for the fake). He then places his empty right hand in the FB's stomach, and bootlegs, bringing the ball up into the ball carrying position as he does so.

If the QB is tackled while carrying out a fake bootleg, we give him a helmet star.

The QB and "47 SPEED": The WB must have depth when he takes the handoff in order to get past the DE. All "speed sweep" teams know this and have the WB gain extra depth after taking the handoff. WE DON'T! Instead, our QB places his right foot about one foot back before the snap. He then turns right at the snap, facing his own goal post and keeping his elbows against his ribs. This places the handoff point one foot deeper than it normally would be. This extra foot, combined with the left guard following the left tackle from tight line splits, makes it unnecessary for the WB to gain extra depth as he takes the handoff. This allows our play to hit outside faster. The WB does need to know the QB will do this.

COACHING THE PASS: On a pass play, a fake handoff is made at the same point it would be made on a "23" or "24" call. It is, however, to the HB or the WB and not the FB. The QB then sprints to behind or outside the FB's block, find his man, stops, and throws. If his man is covered, he does not stop but keeps and runs for the first down marker. From snap to throw or keep, 3 seconds passes. After the snap, the coach training the QB on his rollout and release calls out "One monkey! Two Monkeys! Three Monkeys! Four!" The QB must throw by "Four!"

COACHING THE PASS RELEASE

Overthrow: Releasing behind top of arc; possible overstride. Add an extra, or deeper, outside drop step.

Underthrow: Releasing in front of top of the arc; possible understride.

Tail of Ball Wobbles: Jerky motion. Palm not rotated down. Elbow is too wide. Grip either too far forward or back on ball.

Ball Floats: Points too high. Loosen grip. A floating pass will be intercepted.

Point too high: Point up on grip

Point too low: Point down on grip

Ball wobbles: Wrist is turning

Inability to throw with velocity: 1) Weight not transferred to front foot (which is angled very slightly from the receiver) 2) Poor hip and shoulder rotation. 3) Not pulling down on the ball. 4) No hand acceleration. 5) No follow through. 6) Throwing across the body.

Inaccuracy: 1) Initial step not at target. 2) Throwing across body. 3) Not pointing fingertips at target. 4) Poor concept of receiver routes.

No spin: His index finger should be the last thing to leave the ball. It is the rotation of the hand and the index finger going downward that create the spin on the ball. If his grip is not correct as the ball leaves he will not create the needed spin to keep the ball straight and the nose up. To teach the spin, throw the ball underhanded like a softball pitcher. Have him get the ball to spin doing that. It will roll off the same finger just like overhand. This will get him to feel the spin in his hand. Next have him throw overhand, different motions with the wrist but it might help him feel the spin underhand.

QB COACHING POINTS: 1) Make sure your QB carries the football on the outside of his body on “15” and “16” calls 2) when making handoffs, his elbows should be tucked in next to his body 3) To coach a QB to run “draw”, have him execute a three step cross over step straight back and then come forward and run the hole called 4) Once the QB has mastered the basic pitch, have him run option with a wet ball and 5) make sure after handing off on “23” and “24” that the QB carries out a fake “15” or “16” run or sets and throws an imaginary pass.

COACHING THE OFFENSIVE LINE

First, we put all the kids on a LOS facing the coach. The coach demonstrates getting feet shoulder width apart (or slightly wider), toes of both feet on the line and pointed forward. If a boy has trouble with the width of his stance, simply have him jump straight up in the air. His feet will land in the proper position. Then we bend knees and get into proper three point, head up, back flat, shoulders even. To help them get in the stance have them push out their chest and push their shoulders back. Then bend at the knees first, squatting down then when they are at the proper level, bend at the waist keeping the chest out and shoulders back. Then reach out in front to put the hand on the ground. Some times you might have to physically move their feet to get them straight in this position as well as moving the but up or down to the desired position. I usually grasp the tail pad to do that. If his head is still down, usually he's not keeping his chest out and he's slumping the back. If you put your palm on the top of his face mask and your other palm on the middle of this back you can raise the face mask while gently pushing down on his back to get the desired arch, not slump in the back. With both feet even, the player should be able to raise his “down” hand without falling. Next:

- 1) Have them take a short step with right foot from this stance. The front toes of the foot should come down about even with where he's touching his down hand to the grass. Correct kids taking big, giant steps. This step should only be about 6 inches (Note: For advanced players, this step is made at a 45 degree outward angle.).

- 2) Repeat, only this time as they take that short step they put both hands on their hips. We call this “Going for our guns”
- 3) Once #2 is mastered they are allowed to take a second step with their left foot of about one foot. This puts their second foot 6 inches ahead of their first. Note: The length of this step can be varied but this foot must be on the ground when contact is made with the defender.
- 4) Next, repeat #3 but now they “draw their guns” from their hips as they take that second step. They should have their hands out in front of them in fists, elbows bent at 90 degrees and “ready to shoot”.
- 5) We now have a “Quick draw” contest where each kid steps out of his stance on his right foot, places hands on guns (hips), draws on second step and tries to beat the coach to the draw.
- 6) Repeat steps 1-5 only now teach them to step off with the left foot first.

Next: Set a tackling dummy about one foot ahead of the blocker. On cadence the blocker steps off on called foot and puts hands on hips (step 2) above. Check for proper form. Repeat and, on second step, have him punch the bag with both hands (“Drawing their guns” (Step 4)). Check to make sure both feet are on the ground on “punch”. Repeat again, holding a length of PVC pipe against the bag and just above the top of his helmet. He should keep his head below the pipe as he fires into the bag. Note: This is not always possible. Boys with weak legs will rise up and hit the pipe with their helmets. You can raise the pipe as much as 6 inches higher for these players but note that they are weak and using bad form. Now replace the blocking bag with a player holding a handshield. Again, place the PVC pipe against the shield level with the top of the blocker’s helmet and hold it there. Now on “punch” the blocker is allowed to continue to drive the defender back (take more than just two steps) until the whistle blows. I have read where many high school coaches will make the blocker drive the defender back 10 or even 20 yards before blowing the whistle. You can have your blocker punch with fists or palms (Palms creates more control but a greater chance of a holding penalty.). After a kid blocks the bag, he becomes the next bag holder and the kid holding the shield goes to the end of the line.

To help the blocker get his first step right on this drill the coach stands next to the blocking player being drilled and tells him which foot to step off on and the cadence. If the coach tells the kid to lead off on his right foot, the coach stands to the player’s left with his right hand about 2 inches from the player’s left shoulder. On cadence as the player fires out, the coach shoves the player away from him. About one third of the kids will fall down. Half will miss the bag. The coach explains that they’re taking too big of a first step and that they must get that right foot down in a hurry. Continue drilling the kids until they can step off on their right foot, survive the shove (short step!), and hit the bag. Now repeat, having the coach change sides on the player and having him lead step with his left foot this time. This time the coach will shove with his left hand to the player’s right shoulder. Continue until all players can survive the shove and hit the bag. Now, randomly not shove players and let them come off and hit the bag without being shoved. These players should get a good, solid hit.

What is happening is a law of physics. Taking a short first step maintains speed and balance. It also means when he steps normally with his next step and makes contact, he still has his back foot UNDER him for both balance and power. Further, if he’s staying

low, his back knee will be bent. A bent knee has 100% MORE POWER than a straightened back leg. Because of our short first step, we should get our second step down before our opponent gets his second step down. This means we will make contact with him while he still has a foot in the air *and we have both feet down.*

Use of hands: There is always debate on what constitutes holding. But, if your blocker has his hands in front of him, elbows bent, and hands in fists he shouldn't ever get called. The blocker gets his knuckles on each side of the front of his opponent's chest pads, the blow traveling from "outside to inside". He then pushes both fists towards one another, trapping the opponent's chest pads between them, and lifts up on them, placing the opponent's gear up around his neck.

When our linemen block a linebacker downfield, they can raise thumbs to opposite nipples of the chest and hit the linebacker with crossed arms.

WEDGE RACING:

A "wedge" block is when an offensive player assists our center on his drive. To assist our center, on snap the the blocker offering the assistance steps with his near foot at an angle towards the center or blocker he's assisting in order to close up the distance between them. He then places his near hand against the back ribs of this blocker and his other hand on the actual blocker's near shoulder. He now puts his shoulder into the blocker too and pushes as hard as he can, trying to push the blocker as the blocker engages the defender.

We train our players to wedge with what we call a "wedge race". Have your two biggest, strongest backs holding hand shields with a foot back in order to brace themselves against the hurricane that's coming. Now find two linemen who can't move them back by themselves. Now add a single wedge blocker to the kid that couldn't move the defender back and try again. The running back should go back 5 yards in 3 seconds with just two blockers on him. Remember! Only one boy is blocking the defender with the handshield. The wedger is simply pushing on the back of the first. If the defender doesn't move back, it's because the "wedge" blocker is not pushing.

We now match up two teams of two man blockers versus your two defender and have a contest to see which two man team can drive their defender back five yards first. Make the kids change partners.

The kids will quickly get excited and want to go back to taking a BIG first step, so the coach must continue to watch their foot. You should be able to maintain a 5 yard drive in 3 seconds every time against even a giant who is braced for the hit.

Remember to coach the wedger to use his own short, first step to be with his nearest foot to the designated blocker, stepping at a 45 degree angle towards him to close up the distance.

Once two players can wedge one, add yet a third wedger to the offense. We now race two teams of three offensive linemen against a defender with a shield. For extra fun, have a tackling dummy behind the handshield holder with extra handshields on the ground behind it, and let the wedgers drive the defender right over it. Make sure the defenders

resist (Some like getting knocked backwards and so don't challenge the line by trying to penetrate the wedge.).

OTHER WEDGE DRILLS:

Once the players know how to wedge as a group of three, we let the entire offensive line wedge together. The lead blocker on our wedge is always the center. If the center has no nose in front of him to block, he waits until he feels the line push on him before takes off.

To train the entire line to wedge block, have one defender with the shield align in different shades on the center and guards and let them all practice wedging him with the center leading while the others slide, lock, and wedge. Work in everyone on the wedge, including the SE and TE and QB (he pushes too). Next, add two tackling dummies on the ground, one on each side of the TE's outside foot. The front of the bag should angle inwards in front of the TE's to funnel them inwards as they wedge. The TE's and the entire offensive line should be forced to compress about two feet inwards in order to clear the bag.

“Eyes wide shut”: After the front seven learn to work as a unit have them run it with their eyes closed against air (no defender). They must go 10 yards downfield, staying together, and not falling. This drill is a MUST!

Guards: We can pull our youth guards because guards with their toes even can pull MUCH faster than guards with a foot back. Have the guard pull his playside elbow back as he pulls. On most plays, such as when he has his hand on the QB or is using a “Kick” cue, he can just pull straight down the LOS. But, if “lead blocking” downfield (such as “47 Speed”) they should run with their stomachs (“gut”) turned towards the defense so he can find the defender he is to block. You can have them practice pulling while the defender on the other side they're assigned to holds up fingers and the pulling guard has to count them.

Coaching the GOL blocking rules: One drill I use (called “5 on 4” in the practice schedule) for teaching blocking rules is to set up the offensive line with a coach at the QB position. I then set up 4 defenders on the LOS in front of them (preferably the starting backfield). None of the defenders play the DE position. They can line up on or inside the TE's but not outside them. Otherwise, they can line up anywhere they want. I then stand behind the defense and signal the offensive line if 1) the play is pass or run 2) The direction of the play 3) the count and (advanced levels only) 4) point to any guard I want to pull on the play and where I want him to go. The signal for a run is the "illegal procedure" sign used by refs (I use it to indicate running legs). The signal for a pass is a throwing motion. I simply point the play direction and hold up fingers for snap count. I will hold up one finger for a pulling guard, or three if it's a pass. Otherwise, I hold up two fingers (Later, no fingers at all should be necessary). On cadence, the center snaps the ball with me standing in the middle LBer position. The QB coach reverse pivots (toss) and lays the ball on the ground about 2 yards deep behind playside "B" gap and gets away from it. The defense tries to get to the ball (They don't get to tackle the coach. They tackle the ball). I then count off "One monkey, two monkeys, three monkeys, four!" If I can reach "four" without anyone touching or getting the ball, the offense wins. If a defender gets to the ball, the defense lines up as they were and shows me how they got in.

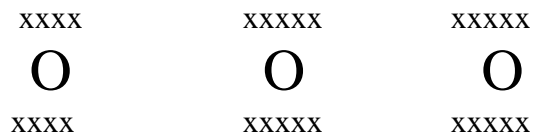
We correct the lineman's mistake and call the play once again using the same defense. On each succeeding play the defense gets to line up anywhere they want, on either side of the center (They can all be to one side if they want) but they must line up in a different spot each play (head up or in gap).

This is not a "fair" drill. Your head hunters from the backfield have twice the speed and talent of the linemen blocking them. But after a winner gets through (Which can be as early the ball being snapped) you blow the whistle, unstack the pile, find the winner, and have him show you how he got through. Then find the kid that missed the block on him and have him go at it again. Often times you will instantly spot the blocker's error - which often involves "telegraphing" to the defender what he's going to do (And the defender sidesteps) or simply fails to fire out or fails to pay attention to his line splits or the call. Do not run the drill very long. It isn't reps that keep the studs out. It's the line's self confidence. It's the one's who try too hard or not at all that blow it - and that's a confidence thing. You want to create confidence and not destroy it. As soon as you've corrected the same blocker twice, move on to something else. To continue only builds the confidence of the defender. Remember! This is a mismatch. It's only going to end one way. If a kid goes from holding his block from 0 seconds to 1, praise him for the accomplishment and start over again tomorrow on getting him to 2 seconds. Although it starts out horrendous, eventually your line will go from holding a block from 0-1 seconds to holding the stud out for 3. That's all you need.

You can add to this drill by running "5 on 5", where the defense gets a 5th player who aligns as a linebacker and blitzes. The line must pick him up (Warning: This will be ugly at first.). Begin with teaching "Wham".

WHAM: "WHAM!" occurs when a blocking lineman steps playside and unexpectedly runs into a defender. The blocker who is whammed stays on that defender. If there is a double team on the whammed defender, the defender is wedged backwards into the path of the backside LBer or the outside blocker comes off.

Sumo Drill: Buy yourself a chunk of rope and cut into three lengths of about (21 feet). Now lay the ropes on on the grass to form three circles like this:



Put two blockers inside each circle against each other. Behind each blocker lies a tackling dummy. On signal, they will try and block each other out of the circle. The first kid to step on or outside the rope, or fall down, is the loser. A blocker who takes his opponent out of the circle by pushing/pulling him over the bag behind him also loses. The circles should be big enough that they have to drive their man at least 3 feet to get him out of the circle or until the whistle blows. The bigger your circle, the harder the players have to work and the longer they have to block. The circle should be small enough to produce a winner in 5 seconds. Winners move to the circle to the right, losers move left. **The two ultimate winners become your offensive team captains for next week's game.** The

more players you have, the more circles you add. No reason for anyone to stand around unless you have an odd number of players (In which case you always tennis ball drill him plus any kid that moves out of the left circle as a loser). This is fun. It's like playing "King of the Mountain" only the winner is "King of the Line". The whole team will want to do it and I've discovered some very small blockers who could take out some very big players using this drill. For added pa-zazz, have the top two go one more time but now with the rest of the players surrounding the circle. They chant "Go! Go! Go!" softly until the actions starts and then they yell your team name until the winner emerges. It's sort of cheering them on but without picking favorites. The top 50% of the winners then get to "tennis ball drill" the bottom 50% of the losers.

Tennis Ball Drill: The negative to the above drill is that you end up with a last place loser over in the left circle. We have to improve this player so that he can move up the circle too. After all, your time best spent is the time you spend with your worst players. You tennis ball drill the losers (You can tennis ball drill them all if you want - and if you have players left out in the Sumo drill, they are tennis ball drilled). The equipment needed for this drill is a tennis ball or a football. Simply stand out in front of a player in a 3 point blocking stance and either toss up, or drop down, the ball. If you toss it up, you must hold the ball low for a youth player, and you cannot throw it up very high, as they often have a hard time raising their heads with their helmets on enough to follow the ball upwards. He must then come out of his three point stance in proper blocking form/footwork and catch the ball before it hits the ground. I progressively move further away from him making it harder and harder for him to catch the ball. Ideally, he staggers forward off balance after catching it. We want his weight forward. This drill develops quickness, explosion, low hit, and forward lean. The boys who use this drill become my OT's and use GOL blocking. To allow them to see the effects of what they're learning, once they're doing sumo, stand behind one of the blockers and toss/drop the tennis ball. The blocker facing you goes right "through" the man in front of him just as he would to catch that ball. This is a helluva hit. John Carbon once talked about seeing kids make this type of block where they land on their chest after fire out. You gain a three fold advantage over the defender. First, you train a quicker, more explosive start. Second, you produce a lower drive (lowest man wins). Third, you create forward lean. Without the defender to catch him, the blocker would fall down. That extra momentum is all transferred directly into the defender. By transferring his forward momentum to the defender, the blocker regains his center of balance, while defender develops backwards momentum and loses his center of balance. We can usually go an entire season without an opposing defensive lineman ever making a tackle. And if you're center is doing this drill, make him snap a ball as he does it. Extremely slow or weak players should also do this drill as part of their warmup.

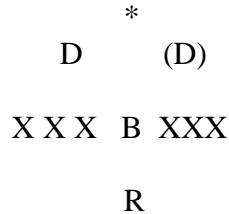
The two purposes of these drills is to promote competition with pride and reward (team captain), execute proper form, stay on your block, and develop the means for the losers to catch up, which is why I usually only tennis ball drill the bottom 50% of the linemen. That way they keep getting better and pressure the other 50% to fight harder to keep in their circle. When one of the top 50% gets knocked off, I then tennis ball him. The guy who starts the season as team captain has a really hard time holding onto the position as the season progresses.

"12 Perfect Blocks Drill" - Blockers line up on a line, 2 feet apart, in 3 points and facing each other. Put as many blockers on the line as you can. Hold a 10 foot section of 220 pound 3/4 PVC pipe over the line and 6 inches above their helmets (You can make the pipe longer by gluing a connector fitting to one end and then add another section of pipe to it (but don't glue the second section in or you won't be able to take it apart to get it home). One coach holds one end and another holds the other. On cadence they block each other without anyone touching the pipe with their helmets. They must perform twelve perfect blocks under the pole for the drill to end. If anyone's helmet touches the pole, the block doesn't count towards the 12. The competition factor is for the kids to finish the drill as fast as possible (i.e. w/o mistakes) because it is HARD work. Specify the shoulderpad they are aiming for before each block to prevent helmet collisions. It combines conditioning with staying low. Twelve blocks is based upon playing on an 80 yard field. If you play on a 100 yard field, it becomes "16 Perfect Blocks" for extra conditioning.

COACHING DOWN FIELD BLOCKING

We set up a down field defender (D) behind two tackling dummies (xxx) and 3-4 yards behind them in a two point stance. Between the bags is a lineman (B) in a two or three point stance (his choice), about four steps behind him is an actual running back (R). On hit, the runner must run between the bags, about a one yard opening, reading the lineman's block. The defender must not go around the cone (*).

It looks like this:



The defender "D" is **never** over the gap because our linemen never block linebackers over them. So our linemen always have blocking angles and we want them to practice using them. *They should to aim to head where the linebacker will be and not where he is.* They will get in front of him and keep their feet much in short, choppy steps in order to quickly go right or left with the linebacker. To teach these two points, begin with both the defender and blocker (B) not being able to use their hands. The blocker must block the linebacker (D) with his belly. Match up blocker and defender by equal size and weight. Not being able to use his hands teaches the blocker to calculate the proper intercept point (usually one third the distance between himself and the the defender), to get in front, and move his feet. Once this is mastered, you can progress to hands and the blocker can make the block with his shoulder pad, crossed arms, stalk block, or crab block, whichever works best for them. When it is the WB's turn, have him motion through the hole.

However, when the TE is up to practice his block, the defender is put between both bags and right over him (Bit still 3-4 yards back). Let the TE start practicing on a poor defender and then working his way up to a stud defender.

The DC Wing T will allow you to occasionally get a double team on a gapped lineman where each of two linemen get one hand (“gun”) on the defender’s numbers. They then go foot to foot and drive him back into the linebackers by getting near hand to defender’s numbers and outside hand to his shoulder.

You can deliberately force this block on a ”head up” (on) defender by calling “Tight Right” which places the SE between, and foot to foot with, the RG and RT. The SE taps the guard or tackle, whichever he wants to double team with, and both will drive the elected defender back. “Wing On” will also do this to any defender over the RT. Both blocks must be practiced. “Tight Right” is a very good way to run “36” (If they bring another defender over from the weak side to counter him, call “Tight Right 47 Speed”).

COACHING TRAPS

Coaching a successful trap is nowhere near as easy as the diagrams make it look. The running backs have a tendency to take the play outside the hole. There are two reasons for this. First, the hole isn’t very big, so we need to make it bigger, and, second, the running back doesn’t know where the hole is, so we have to help him find it. We make the hole bigger two different ways. First, the playside guard can take a wider than normal split (such as an extra foot). Second, the pulling guard actually enters the hole called to find his assigned man to block. This assures the pulling guard will always hit him on his upfield shoulder which keeps the defender out of the hole. The pulling guard is told to keep driving his man until the whistle blows which keeps the guard from standing in the hole himself. We now have a bigger hole. Now the runner must find it.

To help the WB find it, we deepen up his path. He runs at the “HB Over” position, then runs “downhill” to the hole. He may have to align 7 steps from the ball (versus 10) in order to arrive right after the HB/FB clears.

Whether the runner is the FB, HB, or WB, the runner is “finger” drilled to not look down for the handoff. If the runner looks down, he’ll lose sight of the hole and run past it. Instead of looking down for the handoff, he keeps his eyes on the back of the pulling guard and follows him. Since the pulling guard will automatically turn into the hole to find his man, the runner will now turn into the hole also. **The first few times you run a trap in practice, simply run it without a ball** so that the runner gets used to following the guard to find the hole (Adding a football only adds distraction). Set up a coach behind a tackling dummy in front of, or near, the playside guard with the coach facing the playside guard. On snap, the coach lets the bag fall forward, like a tree falling, across the LOS and gets out of the way. The pulling guard hammers the falling bag with his head on the upfield side of it and gets out of the way. The back follows him and cuts up field off the guard’s block.

When a HB runs a trap his outside foot first steps away and his head turns away (Both at same time) but with his eyes on the LG. This creates misdirection and allows the FB time to clear. The HB then comes back for the handoff and following the pulling guard. Always explain to the HB that the misdirection by his foot and head are important aids to the play.

Last, but not least, **the QB must move the ball outside the guards** (even with the #3 or #4 hole) before handing it off, or the trap won't work. The defense will not move the wrong way unless the ball moves the wrong way. Taking the handoff outside the guards also gives the runner a little extra time to put the ball away and find the hole.

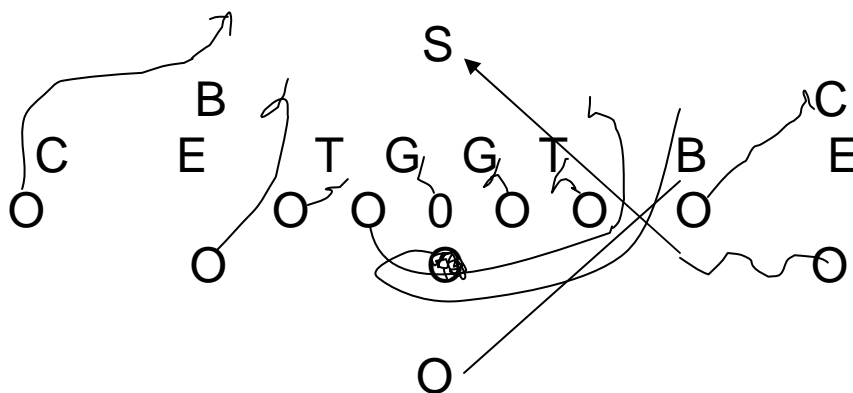
COACHING THE CENTER/QB EXCHANGE

Center: Feet slightly wider than shoulders, knees bent, hand on middle of ball with nose up. For a right hand center the laces of the ball are to the left of the thumb. Rules require his head not be over the ball so it must be extended forward. On snap he simultaneously steps with playside foot (short step) and rotates the ball sideways and brings the ball up to his own crotch. He should not bring the ball back so far he loses control of it. A good center can hike the ball to his crotch and then rapidly return it again to its starting position on the field. When snapped, the laces of the ball should strike the QB's throwing fingers. If the laces strike the QB's palm, the center needs to hold the laces closer to his thumb. If the ball strikes beyond the QB's fingertips, the laces need to be moved further from the center's thumb.

Slow Snap: To test your center's reactions. Have him hike the ball on "One". Stand in front of him and call "Hut One!" and observe how fast he responds to "One". Now have him hike on the "Hut" before the "One" and repeat, calling "Hut One!" If the ball seems to be moving on "One" instead of the "Hut", have him hike the ball on the "Hut" preceding the number. Otherwise, have him hike on the number.

ATTACKING SPECIFIC DEFENSES

The GAM



SLOT, MINI 26 LEAD TOSS

The GAM is usually identified by its four gapped down linemen (often “bearcrawling”) and wide DE’s. Because it has six down linemen, our QB is uncovered both as a receiver and a runner. The first play shown above demonstrates this. We will use the “Slot” formation to spread the remaining five DB’s all over the field. Since this is a “Cover 1” defense, we would also want to go unbalanced. In this case we have chosen to pull the guard to unbalance the line. The “Cover 1” coverage also tells us to use the HB and WB as our primary ball carriers and the FB on “powers”.

The GAM defense places an outside LBer head up on (or sometimes backed off) our TE. However, our TE will not block a defender directly on him. He’ll block the corner (nearest LBer) while the wingback track blocks the safety. If the LBer does his job on this play, he’ll chase our TE which will leave a HUGE hole for our QB to run through. If the LBer won’t cover the TE, the FB blocks him (“Lead”) and we know we can next call “Pass Right, HB Pass, #1 Open” and the TE will be uncovered.

You can run the same play to the left as “Slot, Mini 25 Lead Toss Power”.

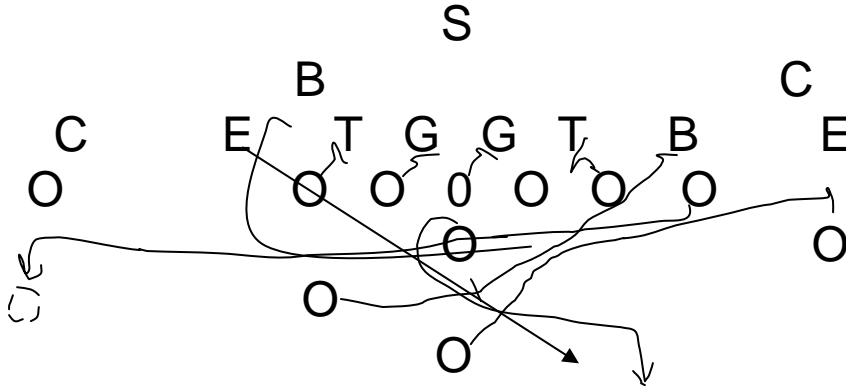
Note: In most cases, you shouldn’t have to say “mini” as all “toss” calls are run from “mini” splits.

If the DE’s begin the crash, call “Slot 25 Power”.

By gradually increasing your TE and Slot splits, you can run “23 and “24”. To increase their splits, just say “Nasty”.

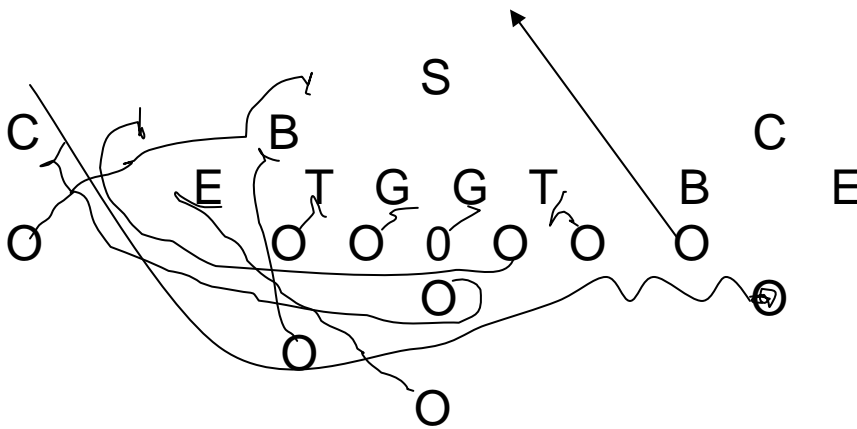
You can also increase the offensive tackle splits (“Maxi”) and send the tackle at S (“Trap”) and run “24 Power”, letting the WB crack the DT in the “4” hole. The call is “Slot, Maxi, 24 Power Trap”. The same play to the left is “Slot, Maxi, 23 Power Trap”.

The counters are “Slot, Left 32 Trap” and “Slot Right 41 Trap”



RIGHT 67 SCREEN

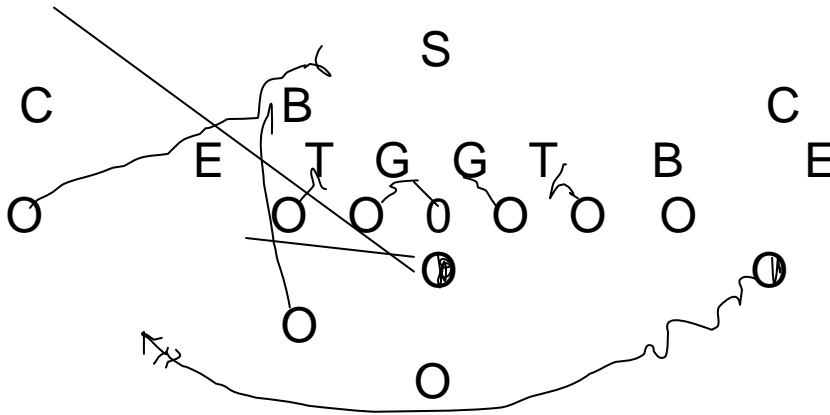
Here we are going unbalanced again by pulling the right guard. Notice, the left side DE is unblocked. You should have the WB pick him up. The TE and gurd must pull deep to get around the traffic.



47 Toss

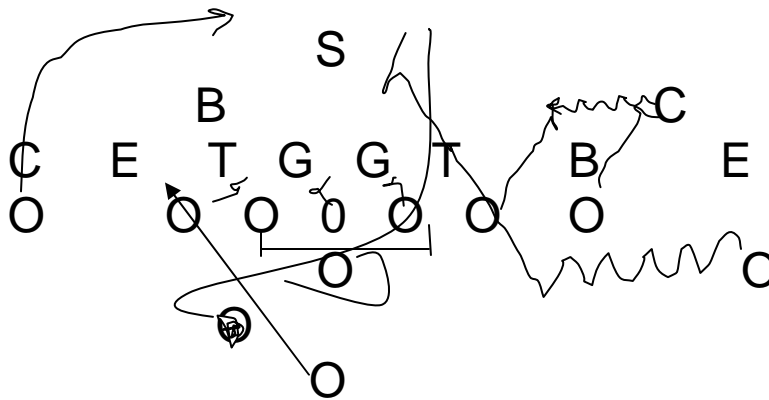
Notice this play is not run from "Slot". We don't want to widen the DE out but suck him in. "47 Speed" would also be run from this formation as well as "36 Toss Sweep". If the linebacker over the TE is backed off the line, you can run "36 Toss" from "Swap Out". This will give the TE an angle on the LBer. "47 Speed" can also be run from "Swap In".

We can also run "option" and "trap" plays from this formation. This is shown on the next page.



47 QUICK OPTION

The six down linemen leave the QB uncovered for option. Here we run option to the other side for the same reason. . The LG and center have the job of driving their DG back into the path of the corner following the WB in motion. If the DG is on all fours (“bear crawling”) the center would go straight up field to get the corner on snap.

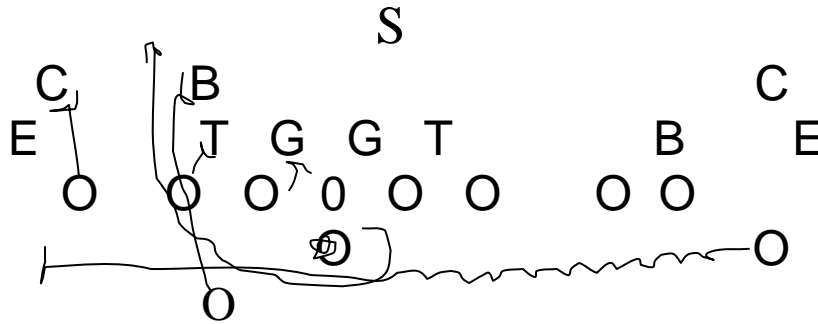


LEFT 32 TRAP

Another way for us to go unbalanced is with “Over” calls. Here are some examples:

- “TE Over, 33 Quick”.
- “HB Over, 34 Quick”
- “WB Over, 57 Screen”
- “SE Over, 36 Toss” (Can be run with “Swap Out”)
- “FB On, 36 Toss Sweep”

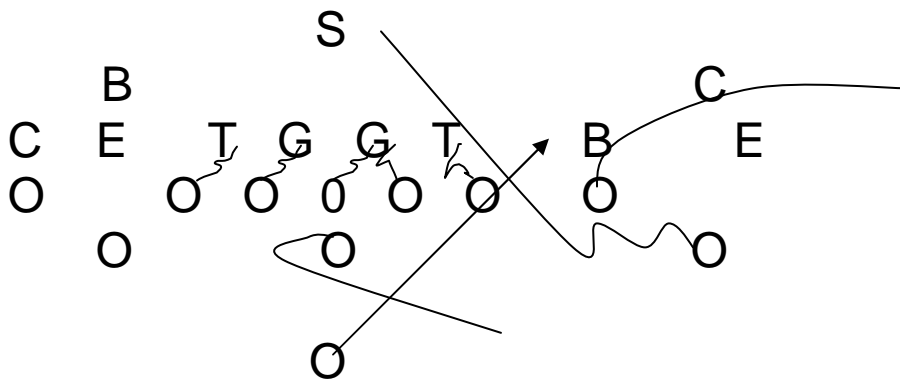
If we run “Jet, FB On, 36 Toss”, we can also run “47 Speed, FB On” and “Super, FB On, 15 Power”, shown below.



SUPER, FB ON, 15 POWER *

* You would have to tell the SE to block the corner.

Draw Plays

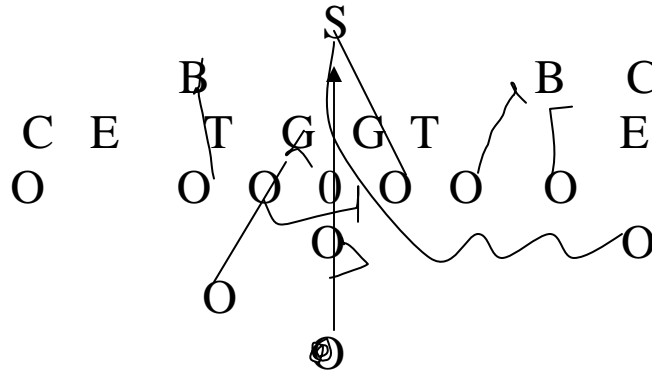


24 Draw

Because the LBer’s are in man coverage, we can “run them off” with “Draw” plays. The TE will run the OLBer off on “Slot 24 Draw” and the HB will run him off on “Slot 23 Draw”. If the OLBer won’t follow, throw to the TE or Slot.

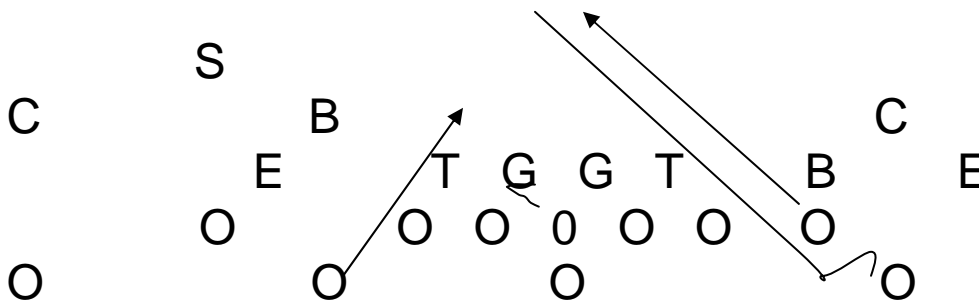
If the other team follows the motion, call “FB On, Jet, 36 Toss Sweep” and “Fake Speed, 56 Reverse” (Which can also be run as “Fake Speed, 56 Wedge Reverse”).

The man coverage is also good for counters such as “Super, Right 45 Kick” and “Slot, Left 36 Kick”.



LEFT 20 MIDLINE TRAP

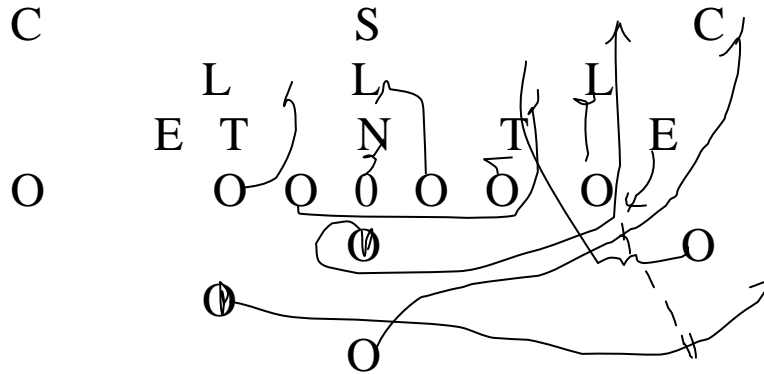
TRIPS



Wedge Passing

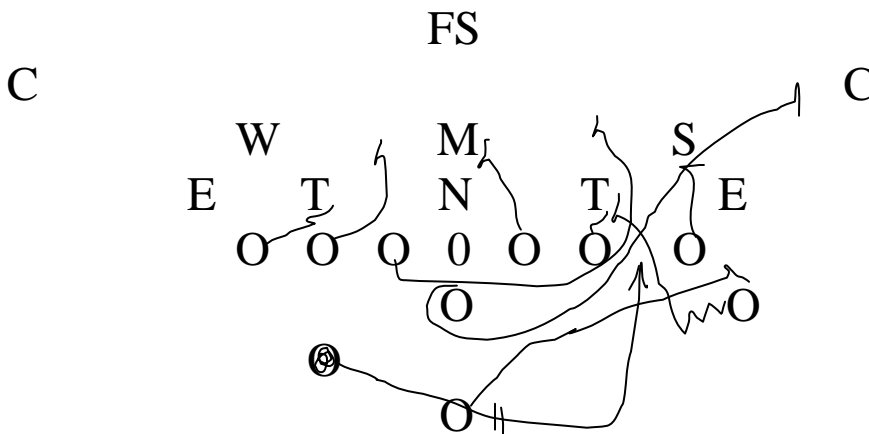
Don't forget to throw "quick slant" (wedge) pass from this set. Slants to the FB, TE, and WB in motion against this front are open if the S moves. It's a straight run to the endzone. Also, the "quick" passes, combined with the laterals, are good calls from "trips".

Attacking the 5-3



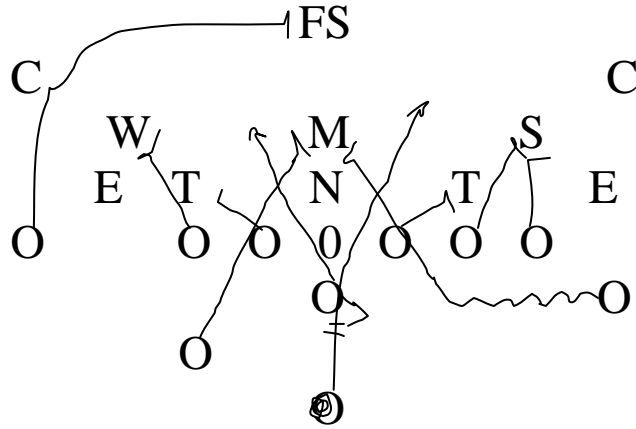
Strong Left, 38 Toss Option

If QB keeps up field off DE, he can still use the HB as pitchman off corner.

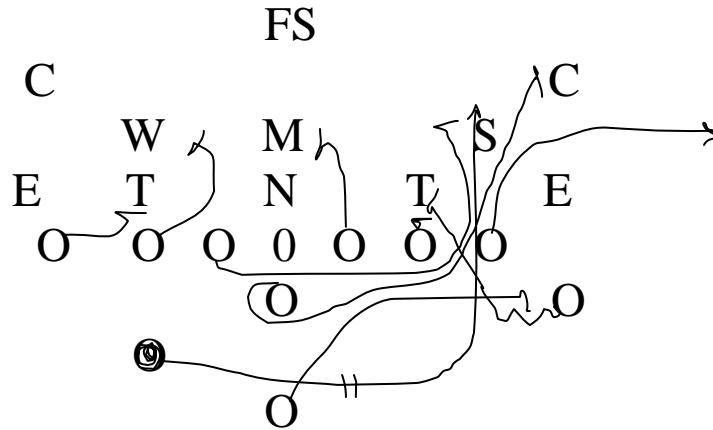


Tight Left, 36 Power Toss

The #3 back must cut left or right off the TE's block.

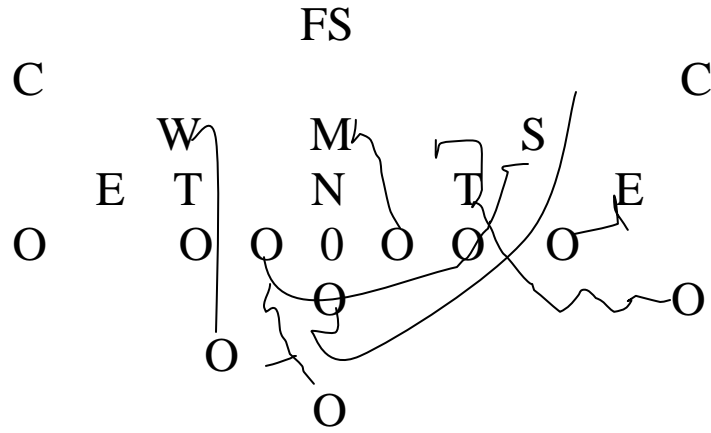


20 MIDLINE TRAP

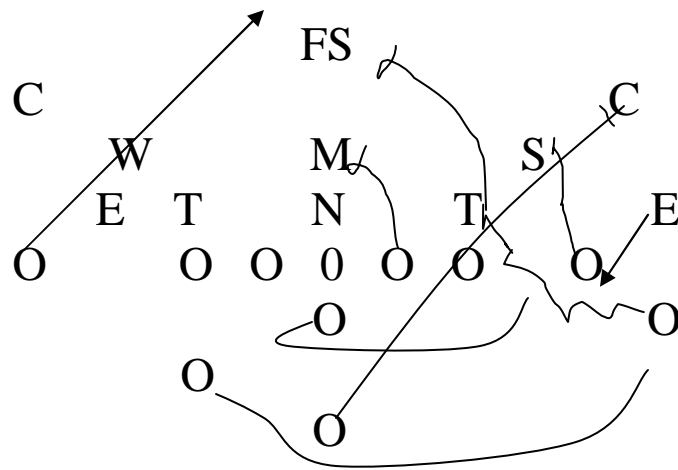


Tight Left, 36 Power Toss with Chase (DRAW)

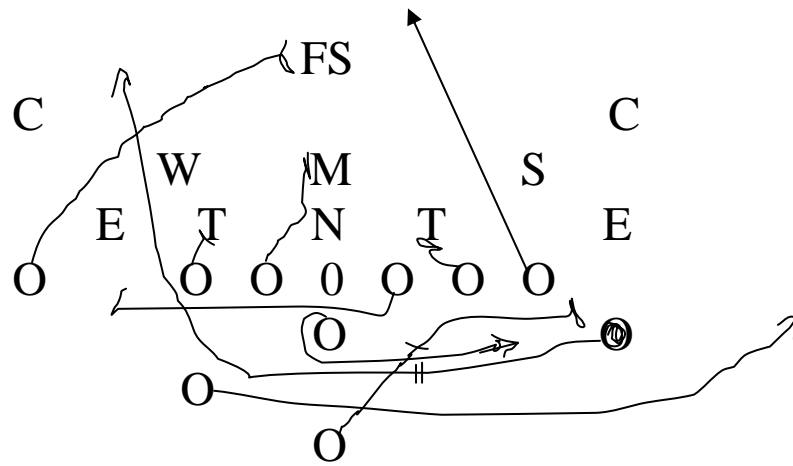
In this play, the TE releases outside as if on pass. If the “Sam” (S) linebacker follows him in man coverage, we’ll get a big hole. If he refuses to cover the TE, we call “Pass Right, #1 Open” and hit the incoved TE.



Left 16 Counter Sweep

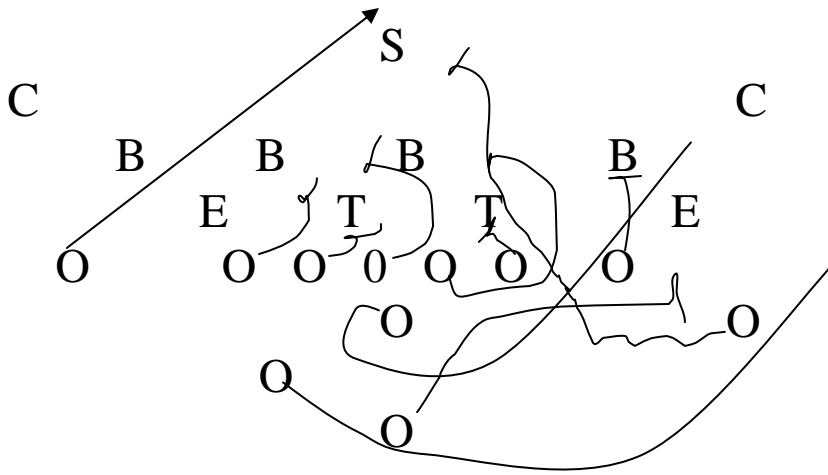


38 Option

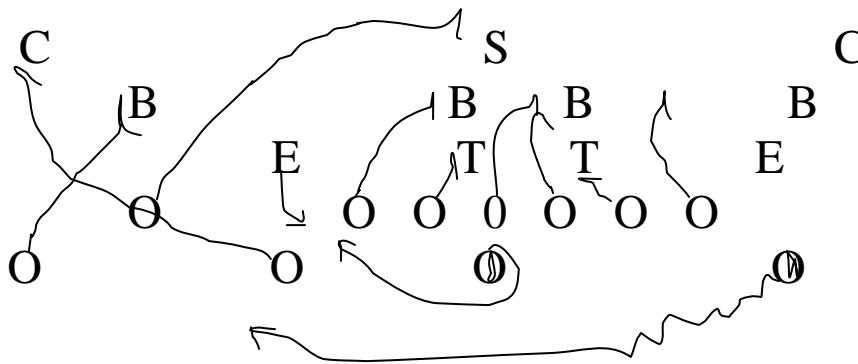


RIGHT 45 KICK

ATTACKING 4-4

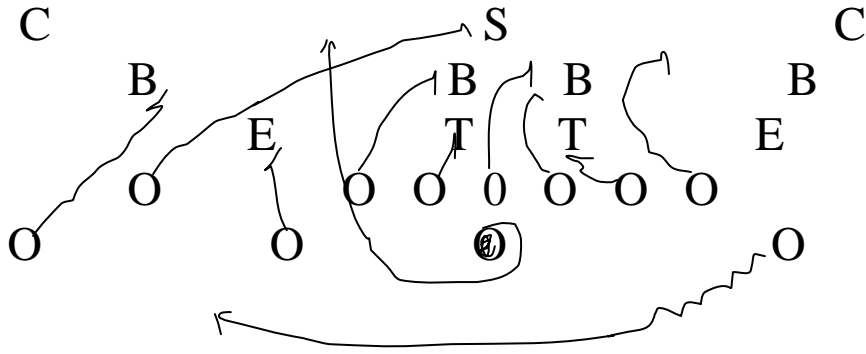


16



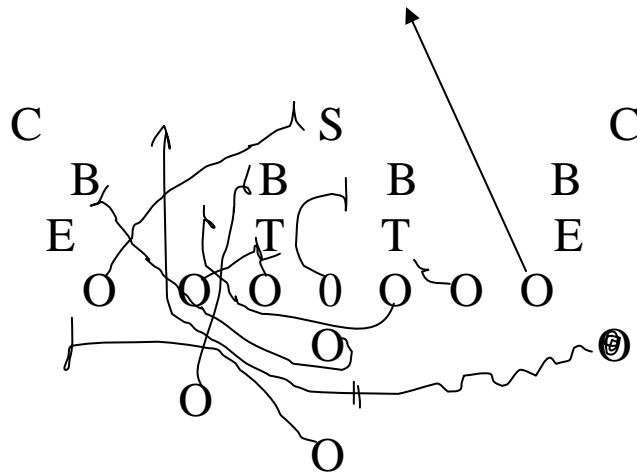
Trips Left, 47 Option

The HB has moved to the #1 outside flanker position and the FB has moved to a slotback outside the left offensive tackle. Their blocking assignments have not changed. They keep their same running back numbers (i.e. FB is still #2 back, etc.).



Trips Left, 15

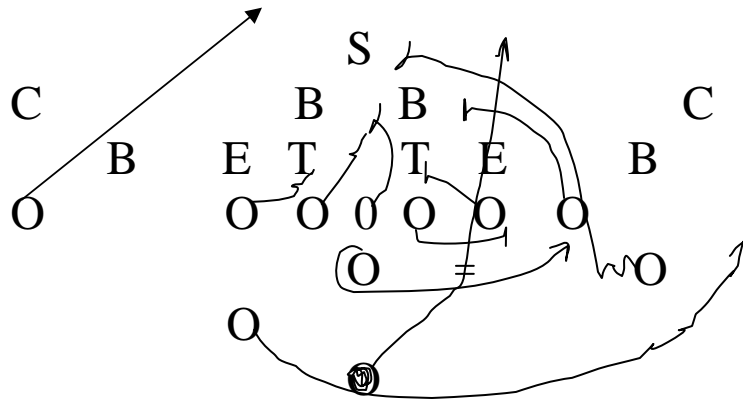
Other plays that can be run from Trips Left include “16 Sweep”, “Left 12 Trap”, “11 Right Trap”, “38 Option HB Jet”, “23 Quick”, “44 Quick”, “Left, 26 Sweep”. Using two TE’s (Tight Left or Tight Right) is also effective against the 4-4, especially with traps and the “Quick Hit” to the HB.



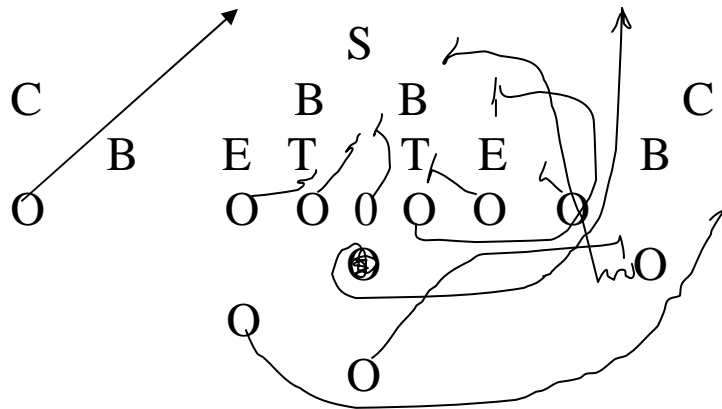
SUPER 45 Toss

You can assign the HB to the OLBer and let QB take the corner.

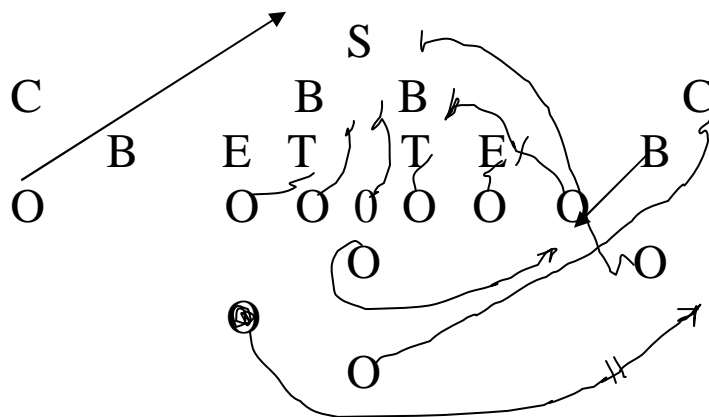
ATTACKING 6-2 STACK



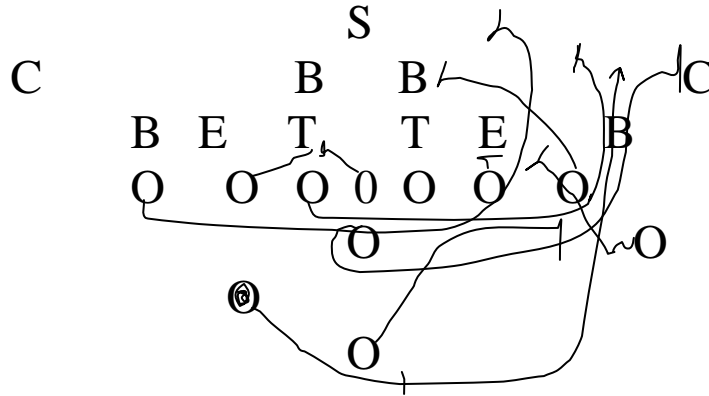
24 Cross



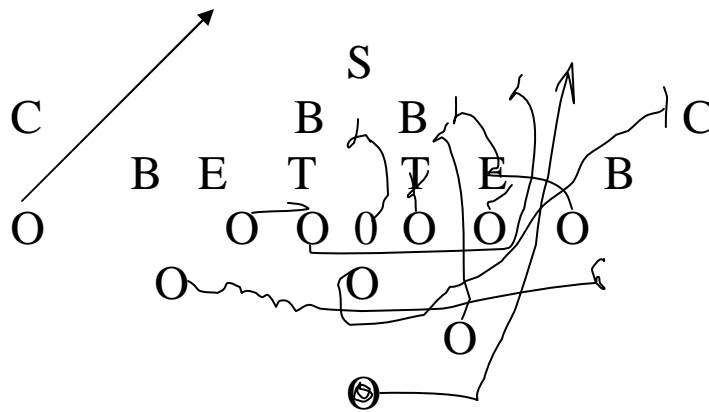
16 Sweep (Can also be run with Pitch)



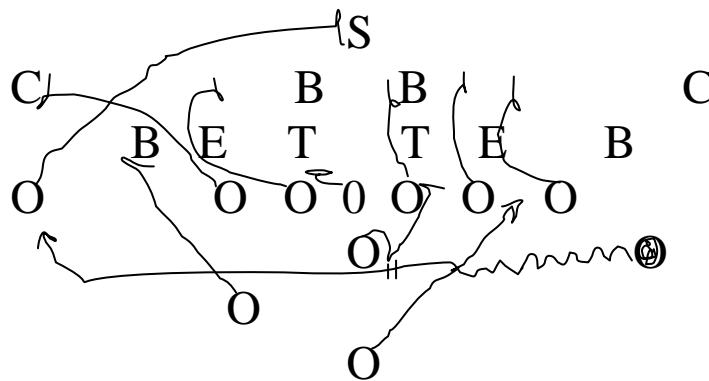
38 Option



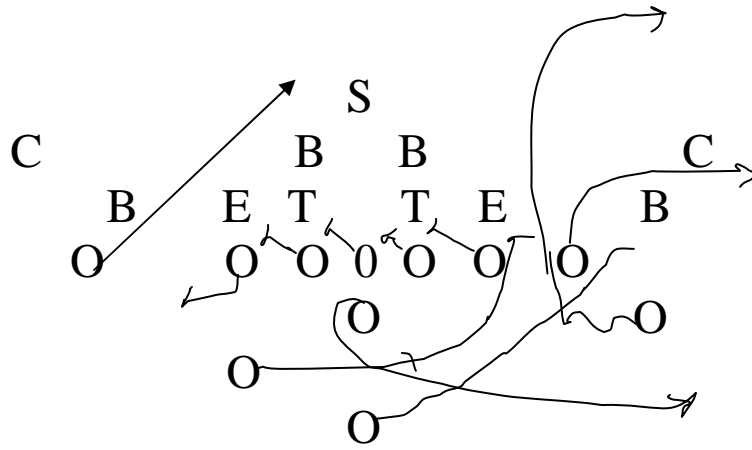
36 Super Power Toss



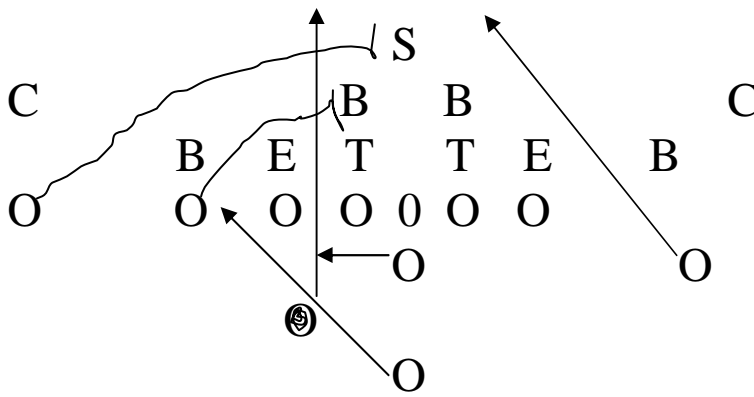
Backs Over, 26 Power Toss



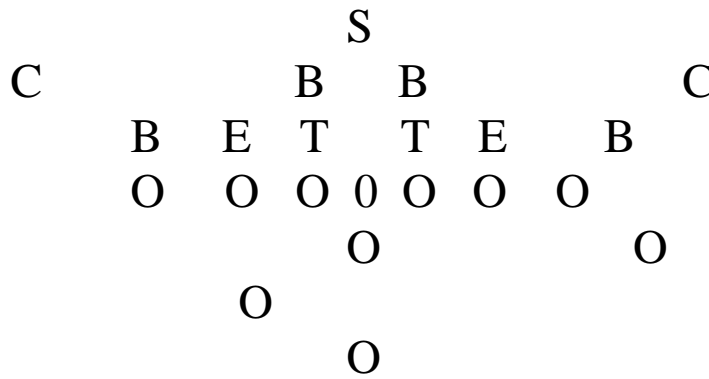
47 Speed



Pass Right

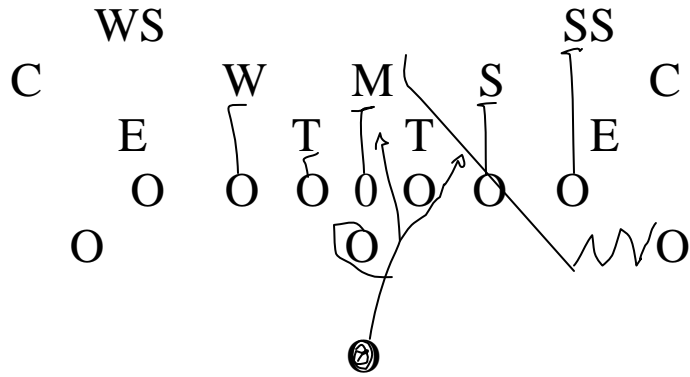


TE Over, 33 Quick

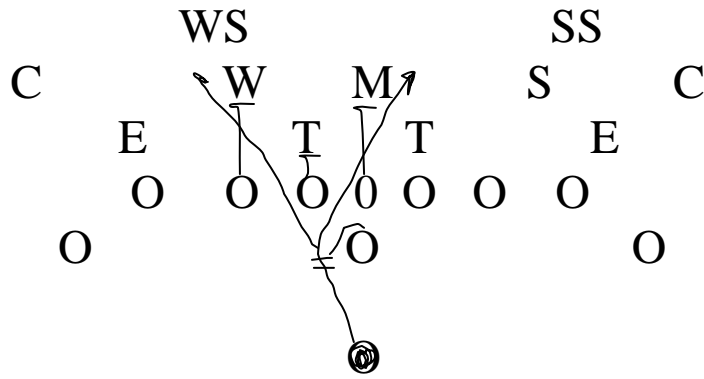


Super, 45 Toss

ATTACKING A 4-3

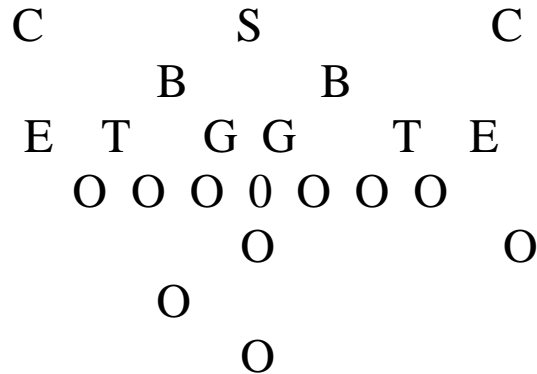


Super Slot 24 On



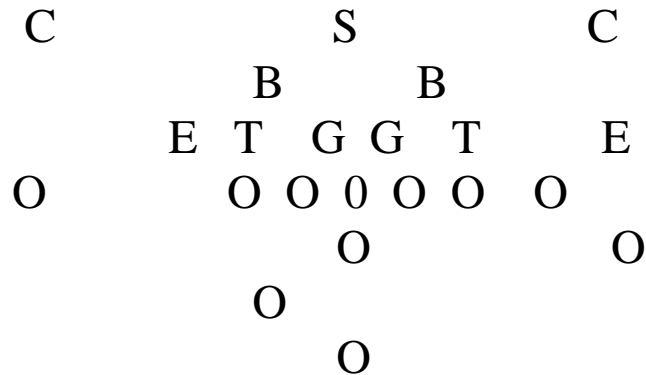
Super Slot 23 On

ATTACKING THE WIDE TACKLE SIX



For starters, except for "47" speed, you can switch your guards with your OT's. Here's why. The big, slow OT's will crunch those DG's all day and you have your fast OG's on those Lbers. More importantly, watch what happens when you trap. The OG will pull from the OT position and kick out the DT on the far side while the center and the backside OT (in the guard position) double the backside DG. Playside blocks down by GOL blocking rules so there's no need to even call "trap". Just say "Right" or "Left" to pull the OG in the OT position and the "1" or "2" hole and you'll get an automatic perfect trap. On paper it will look like you're running the "3" and "4" holes but you're not. The block down on the DG makes the play closer to the "1" and "2" holes than the "3" and "4" and you can bet the playside DT will slant into "3" or "4" when he's unblocked. OK. Here are some plays. Well start with a balanced loo. Here is "Slot On, 23 Power": Play is to the left. WB motions to "B" gap and kicks the DT out. "Slot on" (HB) and LT double team playside Lber. Center has backside Lber along with RT (If RT gets no shot at the Lber, he continues up to FS). Hand off to FB and watch him ramble. From same formation or "Super" (Double TE's), run "Right 43". The same blocking will occur only this time the RG (in the RT position) kicks out the DT and center has backside DG along with OT in the OG position. You won't get DG penetration backside as QB fakes "24" and hands to WB. FB has backside DT along with TE. From "Super" you can run "Left 32" or from "Slot on" "Left 22". Again, from "Super" you can run "33 Quick" with SE doubling the Lber. Again, from "Super" run "36 Toss" with the LG pulling from the LT position. TE blocks down on DT and WB heads up into "6" and blocks from Lber to FS. That gives you a double team on the Lber and the blood will flow. If those DG's aren't bear crawling, run wedge. From normal formation, run "16" or "38 Option". If you don't have option, run "16" from "SE Over" and QB should get 6. Make sure QB runs outside TE's down block of DT. Then run "15" from "TE Over" and get another 6. Run these last two plays enough and "16 Pitch" will come open for another 6. From "TE Over" run "45 Toss" if you want to beat them to death. On the "non-toss", non "Left/Right" calls, make sure center knows he has backside Lber. Passing game is unchanged but make sure the HB knows has has the DT on "Pass Right" and WB has DT on "Pass Left" (which you may have to throw from two TE's). On Pass right TE will be open on #1 but not for very many yards. Big yards will be on the "Throwbacks", either to the TE or the WB. On "Pass Left", #1 should be open to, probably for a first down. Check your #3's both ways for a cheap TD. This should be enough to get you started.

ATTACKING WIDE TACKLE SIX VARIATIONS



Occasionally, defenses will align a defender on each side of the center. This is to prevent you from pulling both guards (Wing T waggle and bucksweep). However, the DC Wing T does not have any plays where both guards pull.

If this defense comes as a surprise, you're better off to stay as you are and just not call any "sweep" calls. Simply replace the cue "sweep" with the cue "cross".

Base Formation calls:

- "Left 22 Buck Trap"
- "33 Quick Trap"
- "24" and "23"
- "44 Quick Trap"
- "Right 41 Trap"
- "36 Toss" or "36 Power Toss"
- "36 Power Trap Toss"
- "46 Quick"
- "Slot, 23 Power"
- "47 Gut Speed"
- "38 Option" (or "47 Option")

Over calls:

- "Split End Over, Left 36 Buck Cross"
- "TE Over, 33 Quick"
- "HB Over, 34 Quick Trap"
- "SE Over, 36 Power Trap"
- "HB over 26 cross"
- "HB Over, 26 power"
- "HB Over, 24"
- "Backs Over, 26 Power Toss"
- "HB Over, 23 Power Trap"

If the defense follows the WB's motion:

"Jet 24"
"HB Over, Jet 26 Cross"
"Jet, 36 Toss"
"Backs Over, Jet 23"
"Jet, Left 32 Trap"
"Fake Speed, 56 Cross"
"Fake Speed, SE wedge pass to TE"
"Trips, 47 Gut Speed"
"Trips, Jet, 16 Cross toss"
"Trips, 41 Trap"
"Jet 23"

Passing:

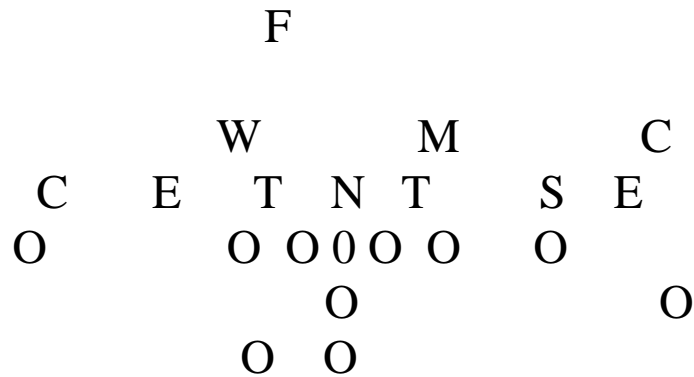
"HB Pass, #2 Open" (or #1)
"Pass Right (or Left) QB Keep"
"Pass Right (or Left) #1 Open"
"Pass Right (or Left) #2 Open"
"Trips, Pass Left, Zero Open". Even though they have 6 on the line, they're easy to pass block.

If the FS comes over to cover #2 either throw #3 or use a "throwback".

ATTACKING A “46”

At one time, there was only one youth “46” defense, the DC-46. However, another “46” defense, called the “Gambler” is now available to anyone with \$ 50. By comparison, the DC-46 is available by approval only as it is “not for sale”. Although the designer of the “Gambler”, Steve Calande used part of the DC-46, he opted to favor far more aggressive free safety play which is synonymous with the name “Gambler” since the user of the defense is “gambling” that the opposing offensive coach does not know this.

Since you are far more likely to face a 46 “Gambler” than a “DC-46” and since the “Gambler” shows design features specifically intended to counter wing T teams, we will focus on that defense (Most of the plays that follow will not work against the DC-46 anyway.). Not all 46’s line up this way. Some may move M behind the noseguard and move F strong over the TE and keep both C’s off the line (Note: The DC-46 does none of these.). Against our base formation the “Gambler” lines up like this:



Notice, *there are seven men on the line*. Only five of them are linemen. The other two are defensive backs (“C” and “S”) in “bump and run” coverage on the line to prevent an inside release by their receiver. Countering bump and run is shown on page 200. Of the five linemen, the two DT’s (“T”s”) will hit the guards to keep them from blocking their linebackers. Our DC Wing T automatically counters this with a “fold block” (See page 38). The Gambler’s designer notes this weakness below:

“THE FOLD BLOCK IS THE BEST CHOICE AGAINST THE 46...” (Steve Calande 6/02/06)

Our basic alignment of the SE also causes a “46” a problem as noted by this “Gambler” coach:

“What did you do versus short splits of a WR? For example, the split from T is 4 to 6 yards or thereabouts? “

This is a description of our 4 yard SE split. The coach who posted the question had a very clear understanding of the purpose of this split. Here is Steve Calande’s response:

“...if they take a split like you describe not only do they allow our de to be closer to the qb, they also bring the corner... in as well. The corner need only tie up the rec for a

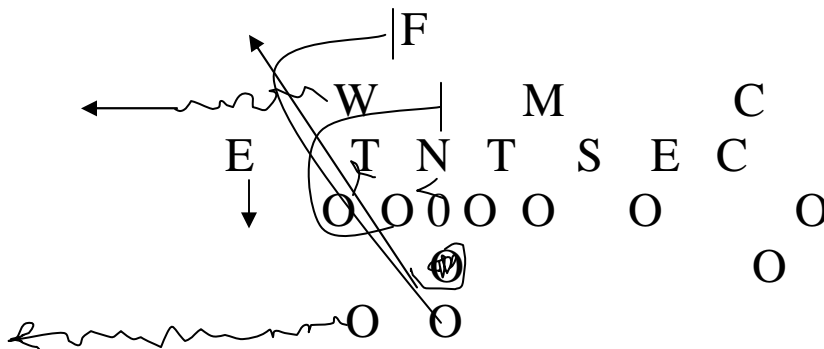
second before that lber is running to the alley along with Fred. Now, I'm not saying that there isn't conflict for the DE, there is, but absolutely no different then say a double slot formation. The de must make a decision...will he be outflanked or won't he?"

Thus, the "Gambler" does not escape the "conflict" of where to align the DE. If you play your SE at 7 steps from the ball, he can "power" block ("crack") the DE for a run to the "7" hole. By assignment, the DE's ("E") will try and turn the runner in and, in desperation, crash ("Claw" call) making the left side DE susceptible to the cue "Right Kick" or "Cross" under either scenario. The free safety ("F") will align only 6-7 yards deep and chase anyone who has the ball or participate in stunts making the defense reliant upon the corners for pass coverage. The weakest players are in the "C" positions and the fastest at "F" and "W".

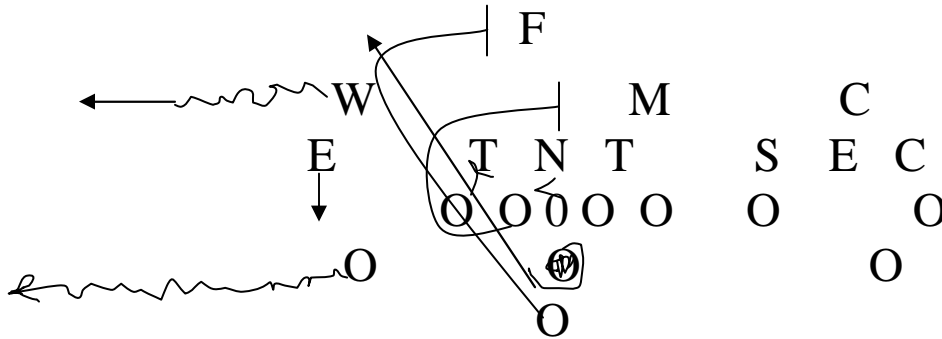
By its very alignment, the "Gambler" (and most other 46's, except for the DC-46) is at a disadvantage to the DC Wing T. There are five run defenders to the right of the center but only four and one half to the left. It is, therefore, to our advantage to run left.

The "Gambler" concedes this "half man" advantage because it wants M to look through our guard to our FB. The idea is that he's supposed to see the guard pulling as well as cover the FB (He shouts "Pull!" to warn W if the guard pulls.). This double read is beyond most youth defenses to perform but, if you believe they can do it, simply move the FB ("FB Over", "FB On", or "Trips") to prevent M from looking at the FB through the guard or just have the offense line scream their team name on snap, thereby drowning out the "Pull!" warning. You can nullify hours and hours of their defensive practice in mere seconds this way.

The coverage is "man" and will allow us to move defenders away from the play by either motion (As Steve Calande once said, "You run with the man, period") or by alignment, such as gradually increasing our "nasty split" TE (As Calande also said, "If sam gets aligned really wide often on the TE, who cares?"). On the call "SE Over", the corner on the left side covering our SE would move over on the right with him. This makes it very easy to move the defense and it is to our advantage to move as many of the defenders away from the play as possible (by formation and motion). For example, we could call "SE Over, Freeze Screen, 23 Lead". The corner on the left will vacate, following our SE to the other side of the field. The "Freeze Screen" call freezes our WB and puts our HB in motion left which causes the defense's W to have to "run with his man, period". We now have to block only two run defenders on a run to the "3" hole. With "M" misaligned on the wrong side of the field, the advantage is ours. This is shown below:

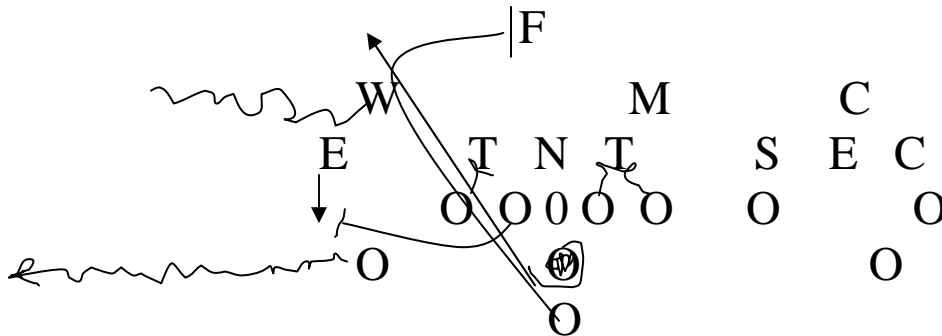


The QB simply watches to see if anyone follows the motion man or not. If any follows (and W should), he keeps and runs “13” behind the FB. If no one follows, the QB simply throws to the wide open HB. Either play is a touchdown. Note that, since the pass is behind the LOS, linemen can be legally downfield for blocking “23”. The DE should take himself out of the play. If he doesn’t, we can move him further out. Here is the same play with a “slot” call:



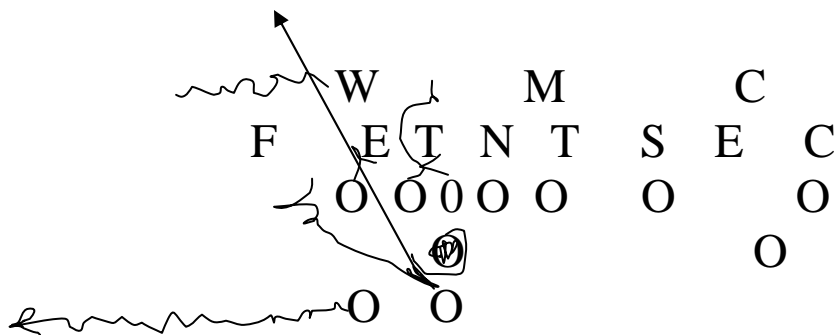
The “slot” call has moved two defenders, the DE and the W, and both have been moved further away from the play. This brings us to our third weapon. If we can move defenders by alignment and motion, we should move them all to one side of the field (preferably the short side) and then run the other. If we ran the plays on the previous page from the right hashmark, we increase our chances of scoring even more.

Our fourth weapon is a QB that can run. This is because the “46” was an NFL defense and million dollar QB’s don’t run. So the defense was not designed to stop a running QB which is why our QB ran for a touchdown on the previous plays. If your QB is faster than M, you can run this play:



We’ve now assigned a blocker (the LG) to kick the DE out by calling “SE Over, Slot, 23 Cross Lead”. In this situation, the QB outruns M for the score (As one Gambler coach noted when faced with a similar play but couldn’t stop it, it’s “simple but effective”).

One of the “Gambler’s” favorite calls against a Wing T team is the “Freak” call shown below. It involves bringing F up on the weak side and bumping the rest of the line down. Some “Gambler” coaches will be in this call as much as 60% of the time. But, if we look, nothing has changed when they go it.



Shown above is the “Freak” call versus “SE Over, Freeze Screen, 13”. The FB blocks F just as he normally would and the QB is still in a footrace with M, and our LG and center are trying to drive the DT into the path of M.

If we go back to our third principal, it tells us to motion our HB away from the play call. This is accomplished by “SE Over, Freeze Rocket”. The HB will go in motion towards the TE, once again taking W with him but now the other way. The FB blocks the crashing DE/F and the QB runs “17” around him and the footrace with M begins again.

We can run the “3” hole as a counter with “Right 43 Cross”. The LG will kick out the DE, the LT will block down on the DT, and our RG will pull up through the hole looking for M or whoever shows. The F will chase the play to the right as will W. In theory, the defense is supposed to be watching our RG for the pull but it is very rare for youth players to be able to read guards. Even if M does read him and follows, the RG is assigned to block him – And touchdown again. It can also be run as “Right 45 Kick”.

Here is the comment of a “Gambler” coach faced with a crossing back:

“We ran a scout split back counter offense for our defense. Our linebackers were tripping all over themselves.”

The reason for the problem is that F overpursues (not so in the DC-46). If you send the backs right, that’s where F is going – period. And so are W and M by man coverage assignment. The defense is dependent upon the corner (C) over our WB to follow him on the counter. But the Gambler does not place speed at the corner position whereas the DC Wing T does place speed at the WB position. Against two teams of equal talent, the WB will outrun the corner for the score. You can also use the FB on the counter with “SE Over, Right Kick, 23 Counter”.

We can also call “47 Speed” from “SE Over”. With no corner to block, the LT will take W to F and the LG will take W. Once again, it’s up to their backside corner following our WB in motion to run down the play and we should have the faster player. But, if we don’t, we’ll show you that solution later.

Since F is shallow and chasing the ball, the corners, as previously described, are the primary pass defense. Oddly enough, you can simply put your SE in a three point stance, put his shoulder pad into the corner’s stomach, and knock him down and run out for the pass. Sound too easy? Actually, it’s pretty easy to do. Here is how a “Gambler” corner is instructed to cover an SE (Note: a DC46 corner will not do this):

“Split the crouch to the inside and eyes on the waist. Stay heavy on your inside foot. Receiver starts to move get hands up. If he moves out, punch with outside hand but if he

moves inside punch with inside. Blow should be under the breast plate. You must wait for the receiver to come to you. Dont attack because he will use you to get an easy release.”

Thus, the corner will stand and wait to be hit. He won't attack. He's a sitting duck. So, when our SE goes to a three point, the corner will wait for the SE to put his shoulderpad into the corner's stomach. We do and then pass release afterwards.

But why leave anything to chance? Maybe their corner is better than our SE? We solve this with a "Swap ends" call. The SE and the TE switch places. This puts our big TE on the corner and our small SE on their S. This was done to a "Gambler" coach who complained about the resulting mismatch.

“Again, our 175lb. C was now on the 245 lb. TE... and our 210 lb S was... with their 6'2" 185 lb WR.

Calande, I can't say who cares. We are out manned.”

Clearly, this coach found this to be a serious problem. You can do this to a "46" with no response. This is because, unlike the DC-46, in the "Gambler", the "S" player constantly looks for a TE to line up on (No matter what formation we call). So he'll always line up on our SE in a "Swap ends" call. We always get the matchup we want.

You can use this advantage to both sides of our formation in our passing game. In the "Gambler" the "S" is not a skilled pass defender. Instead, he's a "gorilla" trying to hold the receiver at the line by grabbing his armpits and pushing him back. By putting our small, fast SE in the TE position in a two point, he can knock the S's hands away as described on page 200, and release downfield. If he can't do that, he can back up 2 feet and "spin" away on his outside release. If the S tries to grab cloth at the armpits, it's a 10 yard defensive holding call. If the S doesn't grab and tries to run with him, he's in a terrible position to do so from "heads up" and "crowding" stance against a smaller, faster player. The result is "big and slow" trying to cover "small and fast". That is a physical mismatch. Here, another "Gambler" coach complains about what happens to S when a receiver (our SE) gets off the line:

“I found my Sam need some help... because TE was not getting pushed back and was getting off the line.”

Being two feet off the LOS prevents the S from being able to get close enough, pre-snap, to push our SE (playing TE) back. Now, unless S holds, our SE is getting off the line against a slower defender. That's not a good defensive matchup. It forces the S to chase our SE *even if the play is a run*. So use your SE at TE to run S off. If S won't cover him, throw to the SE playing TE.

The defense will eventually resort to blitzing S. Our SE playing TE can tell when this is coming because F will move over to his side of the field. If our SE sees the F over him, he cuts S who, on blitz, goes down every time. Thus, S is *always wrong*.

The same mismatch occurs with our TE (now an SE) matched up on a corner. The bigger TE can simply knock the smaller corner down and then either block F if the play is run, or pass release if the play is a pass. Either way, he's no longer covered. With your split TE in a three point, the corner cannot get a hand blow under the breast plate. Just run him over and use him for target practice. Just make certain the TE realizes that his goal

is to put the corner *on the ground first* and release second. If he can, all “Pass Right, #3 Open” plays will score and all “Pass Left #2’s” will get first downs.

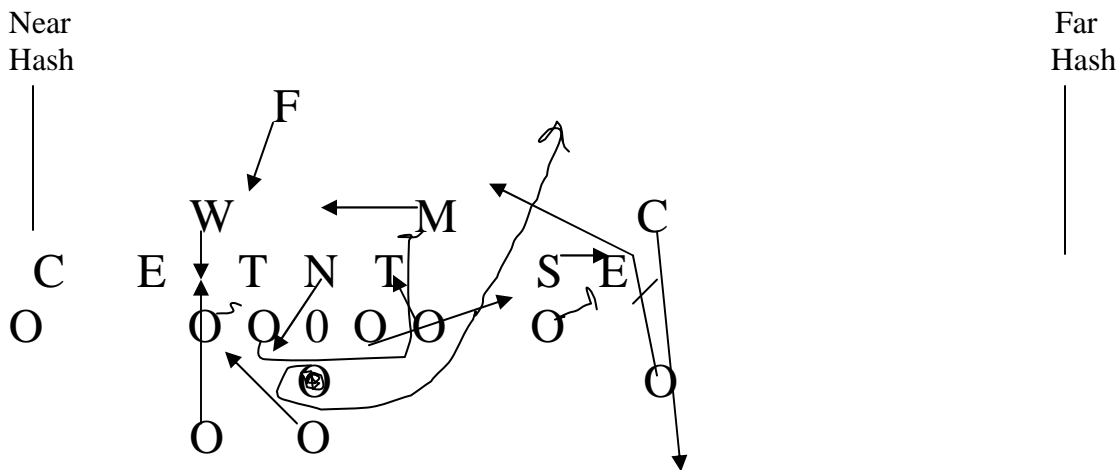
No matter who is playing TE, the TE or the SE, we can also run the “delay” pass release where the TE rides the DE out for a few steps and then pass releases. This places S in conflict. Does he stand and watch the DE get blocked or chase the play? Most will opt to chase the play, allowing our TE a clean release. The “Gambler” admits you can do this to it:

“... YOU CAN INFLUENCE SAM OUTSIDE AND KICK HIM OUT....OR RUN HIM OFF.” (Steve Calande 6/02/06)

“Running him off” is what our two point SE does. The “Kick him out” Steve is referring to is when another player blocks S (“24 Cross”) when S steps outside with our “sweep” block (“influencing Sam outside”) or “TE delay”. Thus, we can place S in conflict three different ways. We can force him to chase a receiver running him off (“draw” or “Fly” call) and take advantage of his *“You run with the man, period”* instruction (This is so effective the “Gambler’s” bench is told to yell “Run! Run! Run!” to warn Sam he’s being run off. But, if you see this happening and Sam drops his coverage in mid chase, throw a HB pass to the TE while the bench is yelling “Run!”) Second, we can just plain outrun him for the pass with “Swap ends” or fool him with a “delay”. As mentioned, the opposing Gambler coach’s only solution is to blitz Sam every down. Yet Sam’s “head up” position and our “nasty split” TE place him in a position too far out to blitz from. He becomes a useless player just as the corner becomes a useless player when we knock him down (The DC-46 is not so easy to do this to.).

So far, to the left we can either throw a “freeze screen” to the HB or run the QB to score or throw to the TE with a “Swap ends” call or run any kind of “Right” call. To run plays to the right, we need to understand a simple fact:

A “46” DOES NOT FIT THE FIELD



The defense on the previous page is taken from “Gambler Slide 3” in the 2004 power point presentation. It shows the DC Wing T with its split end on the left hash mark. In this particular case, the call is “Left, 14 Cross Power Sweep” and the QB is running again. The backfield is running the “weak side belly” play (“Left” call) with the wing back showing a “power” block on the strong side defensive end and then releasing as either a blocker/receiver. The tight end is blocking out (“sweep”). The “Gambler” response is as follows:

DT’s: Attack outside shoulder of guard.

NG: Jam the center and slide weak with the backfield movement.

W: Engage halfback.

M: Pursue fullback.

F: Run support SE side

Strong corner: Fill for strong side DE being “cracked” by coming up on contain.

S: Step outside to cover the TE or blitz if “Sam” call.

The offense:

After we’ve pounded on the defense to the left with our screen and QB run, we’re going to fake the play to the left and run to the right. The QB will fake the handoff weak and either run strong side “C” gap or pass to the wingback or the TE. Note that six things are happening:

- 1) Every single “Gambler” defender is headed away from “C” gap
- 2) The QB is running into “empty space” (the wide side of the field)
- 3) No one is covering the WB and the TE can delay release after riding the DE out.
- 4) No ineligible receivers are downfield (a pass to the TE or WB is legal)
- 5) If Fred (F) does not fall for the fake (and he will), the WB will simply block him and the QB will keep and run the “6” hole.
- 6) If Mike does not fall for the fake, the LG has him.

How did this happen?

The following “built in” features of the “Gambler” are engaging:

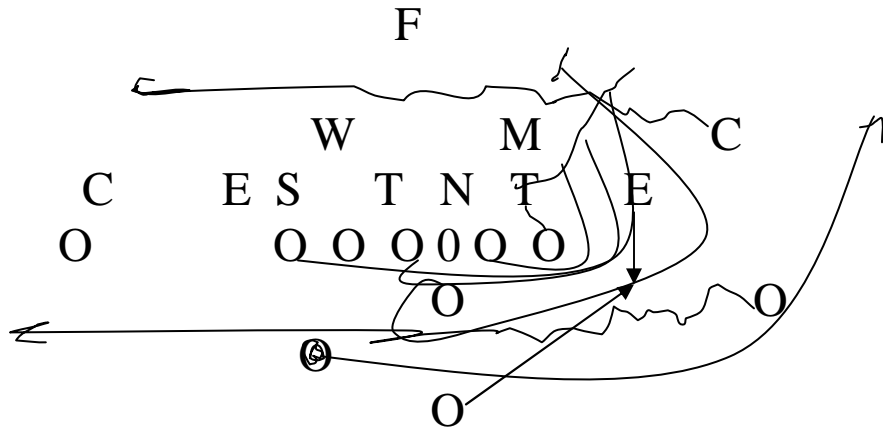
- 1) The FS is committing (chasing the ball)
- 2) The NG is committing
- 3) The corner is replacing the DE on contain when he sees “crack” (“power”)
- 4) The DE’s are moving with the line splits and S is moving with the TE

Once we realize the “Gambler” does not fit the field (i.e. fails to defend open space) we can start deliberately creating open space by using the “Gambler’s” own alignment rules

against it and then running into that “open space”. This is the principal of lining them out on the short side of the field and running to the wide.

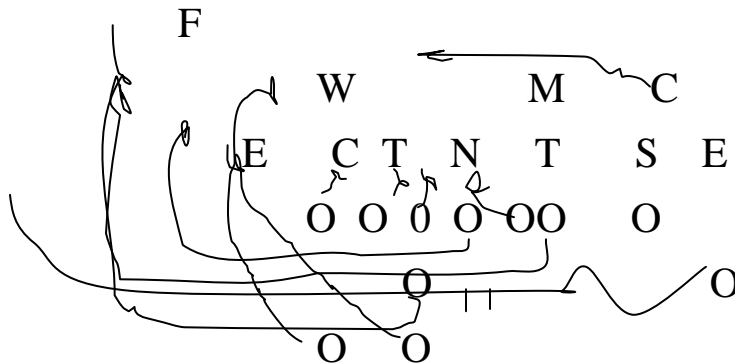
To do this, once again, simply make your formation calls to reduce the number of defenders on the wide side of the field by sending them over to the short side of the field. The result is the “Gambler” is left to defend the largest area on the field with its fewest players.

When the wide side of the field is to the offense’s right, call “TE Over, Jet, 38 Toss” (You may have to block the DE “On”). “S” will line up on the wrong side of the field by alignment on our TE and the playside C will move to the wrong side of the field by following the WB in motion. Without a TE, the DE on the playside will move inside, making him easier for the FB to load block. As the TE pulls back to the playside, S is unable to follow. The lead blockers can all pull up through the “6” hole while the HB beats the DE outside. It is shown below:



If our HB beats the DE (and he should), it’s a touchdown as M will fill the “6” hole, leaving W and F against a sheer “wall” of blockers.

We can also use these two “Over” calls to move the nose guard (N). With the “SE Over” and “TE Over” calls, the nose will not move off our center. Yet, with “Tight Right”, below, he does move off:



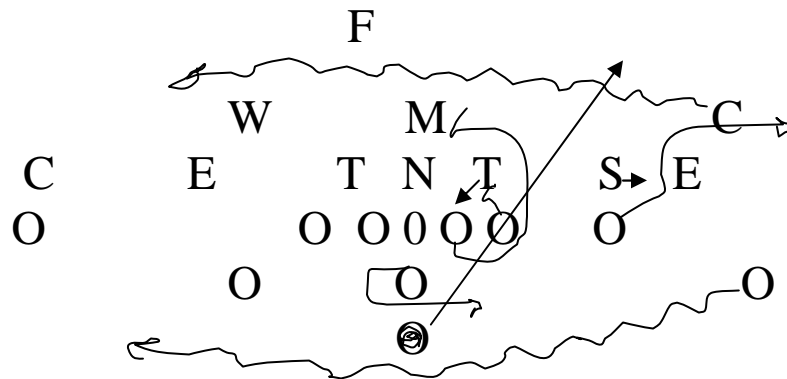
We have deliberately “bumped” the defense down the wrong way and still kept M on the wrong side of the field. We have aligned the SE in the gap between the RT and TE (Tight Right). This allows us to pull him on a “47 Toss” and come back playside with no one following him, allowing us to use him to take out the corner following our WB. If

you use “mini” line splits, you’ll pull the DE in even closer for an easy block by the FB. You can even double team the DE with the HB and the FB, then combo the HB to W as shown. Notice the defense now has five defenders on the wrong side of the ball while we only have two.

From the same formation you can run “Freeze, HB Jet, Right 43”. If W chases the HB in motion, it prevents him from following our pulling RG.

The reason N bumped down away from the play is because he lines up on “fourth man down” from S. Thus, “Tight Right” moves N away from the play and we can still pull our SE playside from his new position without his being followed.

We can also move M. On any “slot” call, he’ll align over our center:



Notice, that we have moved three defenders *left* by just moving the HB. The weakside DE moves out, as does W, and M slides over the center. We can now run to the right with “Jet 24 Sweep” as shown above (or “Jet 24 Draw”). Notice, there’s not a single defender moving in the direction of the play and three defenders moved away from it, pre-snap. Our increased “nasty split” has taken S out of the play and he is occupied trying to cover a faster player. The only defender with a chance to make the tackle is F and, by his own alignment rules, he’s on the wrong side of the field.

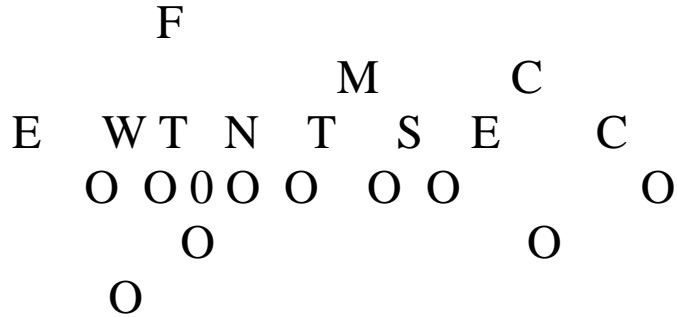
Now run “Freeze 23 lead” from the same formation. As W chases the HB outside, look at the size of the hole that opens up for the QB.

Anytime we go to “slot”, M becomes a useless player who can now be fold blocked by either guard all day long.

We can also run “Jet, 24 Lead Sweep” (or “Jet 24 Lead Draw”) which will cause the QB to keep the ball and follow the FB as his lead blocker who takes out F for the touchdown.

The only counter to this is for S to blitz. Our TE will know when S is blitzing because F will move to his side and over him. When our TE sees this, he automatically cuts S. To throw to the TE if S won’t cover him, call “Pass Left, TE Delay”. This will pull F and C away from the wide open TE.

From “FB On, SE Over”, we get a massive change in the defense as the line bumps down and the weakside corner will move strong, resulting in the following:



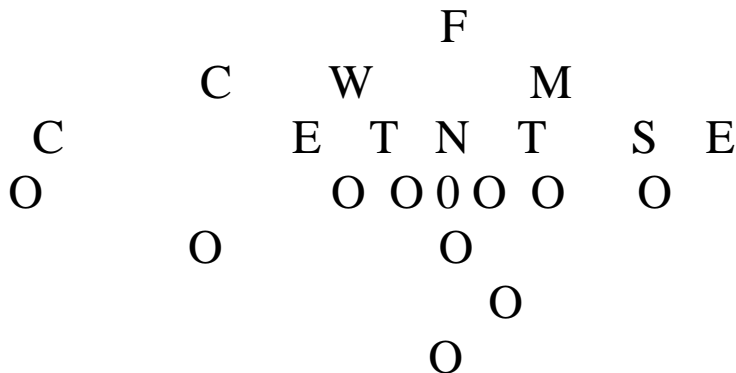
Notice the “Gambler” is still covering our TE even though he is ineligible. This causes a “coverage problem” on the left. “W” cannot cover both the “tackle eligible” and the HB both. In fact, the W may not align on the “tackle eligible” at all as shown but back off and cover the HB. If he backs up, we run “33 Quick Trap”. If he stays on the line, we run “33 Quick” or put the HB in motion with “Freeze 13” and then either throw to the HB or run the QB. Because our HB can now safely “break it outside” on “33” he should always gain 4 yards on “quick”.

We can also run “47 Speed” from this formation with HB loading E (Who wants to come inside against the “33 Quick”). The LT takes F and LG takes whoever follows our WB in motion. Again, almost the entire defense is on the wrong side of the ball (See “the Gambler does not fit the field”). This is because we can move them anywhere we want.

In the “Gambler”, the principal defender against the wedge is “N”. Since he is now “bumped down” off our center, we can run “Power Wedge” or “QB Wedge”.

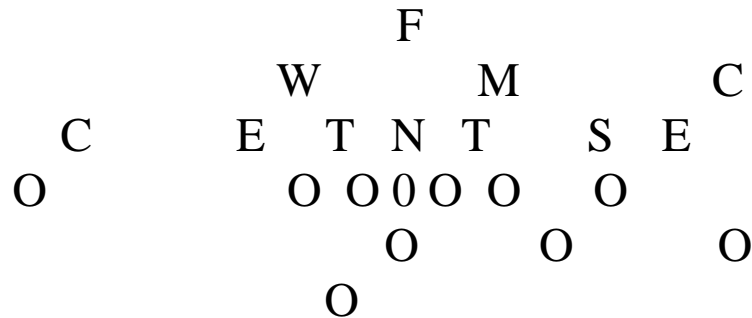
We can also overload the defense without bumping “N” down. The “Gambler” allows us to move “N” whenever we want. Versus “SE Over” or “Slot On”, the N will not move off the center (Because he’ll stay fourth man from S.). Therefore, from “SE Over” we can, again, run “47 Speed”, using the same blocking as above. But now, from “SE Over”, you can run the same two plays over and over again; “33 Quick” and “Fake 33, 47 Option” with the FB taking the F and the HB taking the defender following our WB in motion on the “47 Option”. **The “Gambler” only has three defenders playside** (See “The Gambler does not fit the field”).

“Bucks Over” can cause the defense to overload the left hand side of our formation when we run right. The corner on the strong side will move over to our weakside **and no one will move with our HB at all**. This is shown below:



Note, there are only four defenders playside against “46 Toss Sweep” and that we have a double team on M (RG and HB). Add “Super” to the call and we’ll add yet another blocker to the playside. We can also run “34 Quick Draw” from this formation.

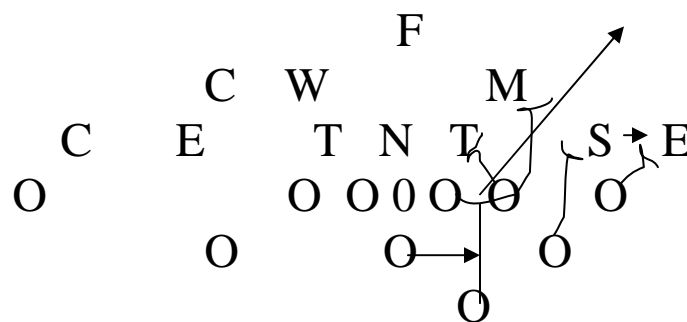
Another formation that allows us to overload the right without a “bump down” is “FB Over”:



The N is still “four men over” from S. The defense has not moved. Our FB has a great block on S on any “sweep” call to the right and the TE, as he rides the DE outside and then pass releases will, again, sooner or later, be “wide open”. Run it as “Toss” with “Super” added and you have three more blockers playside while the defense adds none.

Again, from “FB Over”, we can run “16 Jet Pitch Sweep”. As the corner follows our WB across the formation, the FB and TE take out S and E. As F and M home in on the QB in the “6” hole, he pitches outside on his third step into the hole to the HB (“38”). In theory, it should be good for another 6 because the DE will not take the HB as he runs his pitch route but has “slow play” on the QB. Remember! This is a called pitch. The QB does not have a read. Even if you don’t normally run option, if you can teach the pitch, you can run this play. Just make sure the QB’s lateral is not forward.

We can also call “Backs Over, FB Over, 34 Quick Sweep” as shown:

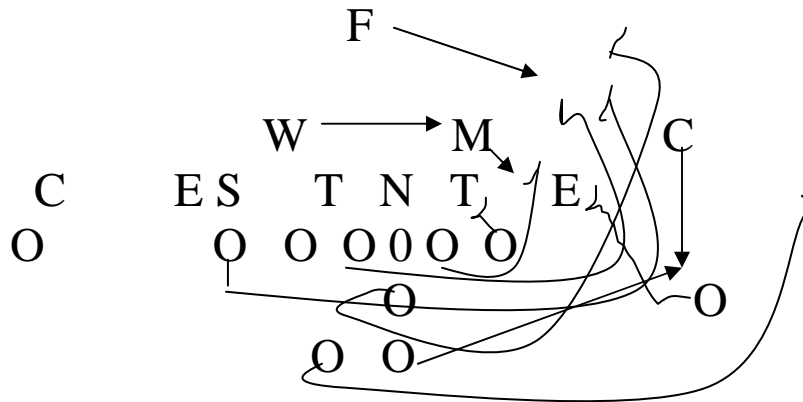


Again, the defense has failed to “bump down” (N is still on “fourth man down” from S) even though we’ve added two extra blockers to the strong side. You can also run it “34 Lead Sweep” or “34 Lead Fly”. If S chases our TE and the FB doesn’t need to block him, tell him to keep going up-field for F. As Steve Calande, himself, once posted:

“NO DOUBT THAT SHIFTING AND FORMATIONING IS A POPULAR CHOICE AGAINST 46ERS.”

As mentioned before, we can get our TE open by lining him up as the SE and letting him knock the corner down from his three point (In the example above, he would use his right shoulderpad to the corner's stomach.). The "Gambler" is aware that its corners can be knocked back and has a call to let the DE and corner change assignments if this happens. It's unlikely this call will actually be in place (The "Gambler" suffers from having way too many calls) but, if it does, all the "Gambler" has done is change the mismatch. Instead of being mismatched against our TE playing SE, the corner will now be mismatched against our FB when he plays DE.

Here we can deliberately match our big FB up against a small corner. The call is "TE Over, 38 Power Toss Option":



Again, we are using the "Gambler's" contain rule against itself. On seeing our WB power block the DE, the Gambler's play side corner is to come up and play contain against our sweep. He's supposed to turn the runner back inside into M. Only in a physical mismatch, that may not happen. Our "option" call has matched our big FB on the little corner. The corner will try to stay on the outside shoulder of our FB. This matches up our FB's outside shoulder pad against the corner's stomach with the HB right behind the FB to "freeze" the corner into making a "sitting duck" of himself. By having the FB lower his shoulder pad, he should knock the corner down to let the runner go outside. It also allows our FB to keep going after knocking the corner down and continue up to F. This gives us four blockers against W and F as M takes himself out of the play.

Notice that we called the last play from "TE Over". This moves S to the wrong side of the formation and moves the playside DE in closer to make it easier to get around him.

The last play sets up another play we can use that takes advantage of the corner filling. When the WB power blocks the DE and the corner fills upfield for the DE, the WB will be instantly left uncovered. After hitting the DE, he can run a "throwback" route and no defender will take him. The call would be "Power Pass Right, WB Throwback" and the receiver will be wide open (Even more so from "SE Over"). Again, it should be good for at least one TD. You can then run it again as a HB pass with the QB blocking, and get yet another TD.

The "Gambler" is heavily reliant upon F to make the "play". He is involved in more stunts than any other player and comes up quickly to follow the ball. He is the easiest player on the field to "suck up" out of position (Many times, the defense, through its

calls, will move him out of position for us. Here's a message board poster commenting on his "Gambler" safety (F) play:

"One point, DE's must do their jobs, they broke a 45 yd on me with a reverse. DE missed the guy coming right back in front of him (it was an inside handoff and DE was following the play through the back but was outside the handoff). Safety was over aggressive and was following the play with the wing and when the reverse hit he was way out of position (Any idea's how to fix???)

Notice the poster doesn't know how to fix the problem? That's because the safety (F) is trained to follow the ball. He should always be "over aggressive" and suck for every trick play imaginable. Thus, there was no defender to stop the "Right 45 Kick" or "Right 43 Cross" (The play described by this poster. Note he described it being run with an inside handoff to the WB, just as we run it.).

Anytime the QB hands off against the "Gambler", the free safety (F) will go with the handoff, leaving the QB uncovered. The "Buck Pass to the QB" should be good for a TD also. You can run "Jet, HB Pass, Pass Right to QB" and have the QB run #2. The safety will fly up for the run and the QB will be wide open for another TD. You can also add "Fly" to the call. Other pass plays you can throw to the QB against the Gambler include "Wedge Pass to the QB" and "Wedge Screen, Zero Open". The DC Wing T "punt" play is perfect to use against the "Gambler".

The "20 Midline" should produce a gain of 7 yards against the "Gambler" and the play should be installed because the "Gambler" could start playing N to the outside to the wide side of the field once they figure out what you're doing. As soon as they do that, call "Slot, 20 Midline". With no N, it can be run with "Freeze", allowing the center to take M while the HB motions W away. This should produce solid gains up the middle.

The "unstoppable play" (36 toss sweep) is also not defended by the "Gambler" - nor is the TE delay HB pass off this.

"SE Over, Right 67 Screen" should produce yet another TD as F is basically a "sucker" for anything. The "S" who is supposed to follow the TE can't because he's on the LOS. You can run it like "pass right", where the HB blocks S and the FB blocks the right side DE. The QB rolls out right and then throws back the other way (WB blocks backside DE). You'll have the RG pulling and the LG folding playside against only one defender - the DT, whom our LT is down blocking.

The QB can also be audible away from "F". As mentioned before, the "Gambler" defense will often move him to participate in stunts. Whichever side "F" moves to, that's the side of the stunt. The moment "F" moves from centerfield, the QB is uncovered as a runner. Whenever he sees "F" move, he should immediately be audible a "23 Lead" as, no matter where F has been moved, this play is now open to go "all the way".

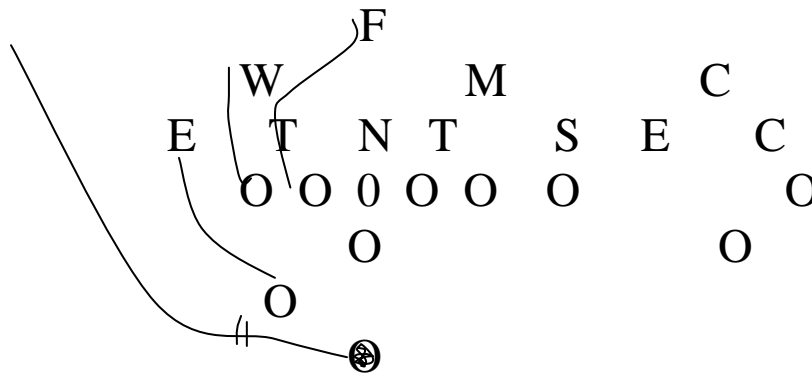
Keep running S off with your three rested SE's playing TE. You can run S into exhaustion, especially on a hot day. Helping to exhaust S, he's usually on the wrong side of the field from where the play is going, causing him to have to chase the end first and then the play second. On a hot day, he won't last long and most 46 teams do not have a replacement for S. You can now throw deep to the SE playing TE.

Observe the distance M is playing back. If he's within 3 yards of the line of scrimmage your folding guard can cut him. If in doubt, ask the referee if you can cut him. Most youth LBers are not trained to protect their feet.

The "Gambler" tries to counter the fold by telling the DT that he must be prepared to defend "3 yards outside of himself". Our tackle can make this impossible by blocking down helmet to helmet with a "drive block" and then going "hip to hip" with a crab block as the DT tries to "club over".

Although the "Gambler" will "suck in" its DE on the weak side, making him an easier block for the HB on any play to the "7" hole – he will fight to the outside. If the DE is the superior player, just call "45 Speed HB On" and let the WB cut inside the DE instead of outside. It is not necessary to make many yards against the "Gambler" with "47 Speed" since the big yards are off the reverse from this play. In fact, you don't have to run "47 Speed" at all to run "ReverseWedge Pass to the QB" or "Fake Speed, 56 Reverse Sweep". Those plays can both be run with no need to actually run "47 Speed" itself.

You can, however, run "47 Speed" against the "Gambler" by using the "Swap Backs" call. This switches the FB with the WB. Now run "SE Over, 47/27 Speed Quick Pitch". Your fast WB at FB will lead sideways for the pitch and be covered by the slower M *who is on the wrong side of the field*. The HB loads the DE, the LT takes W, and LG takes F. It's a footrace to the outside between WB and M. Win it and score. It's shown below:



Another way to attack the "Gambler" is with option. This is because the "Gambler" gives its DE two conflicting assignments. Against a normal sweep he's supposed to "contain" but, against an option QB, he's supposed to "slow play" ("feather") the QB. A DE cannot "slow play" a QB and "contain" both. "Slow playing" the QB means the DE will try and delay the QB from pitching. This is exactly what an option "guru" wants. All you have to do is call "18 Pitch" and the FB will hammer the DE with a "load" block as the DE makes a target out of himself slow playing the QB. As soon as the QB rolls around the block on the DE, contain is lost and you have a QB with a pitchman running downfield. It's the worst of all possible worlds as S chases our "arc" releasing SE at TE, allowing the SE to block F while WB takes W while C chases WB. Even if S or C does turn around to tackle the QB, he just pitches to the HB who now has no one assigned to cover him. It's another race to the endzone. Here is a "Gambler" coach describing the problem this play presents:

“...they're are teams who will attack the strong side by arc releasing the TE. This takes our 7 tech. out of the picture. Obviously we can make calls but if we are in our base it's trouble vs. speed option and load option. Any thoughts? Tough gig for the 7.” (2/5/06)

The suggested solution to this coach was that S (the “7”) and DE both “squeeze the TE” and “deny either release, inside or arc” which drew this response:

“Easier said then done. If the 9 squeezes, he will be vulnerable to load option or totally outflanked vs. a good speed option team. If he widens he cannot stop the arc.

To me this is the most difficult look to decipher. If the 7 takes 1 step with the arc then the FB will load the DE and you have your free staring at a qb and a hb. The arc also makes it difficult for I/O support from your ILBers.

Don't know if you see any true read option at the youth level but probably not. This is a pain in the ass.”

The “Gambler” is an ongoing, developing defense and may not play exactly as described here. It is a good defense. However, it's easier for me to keep up with it than it is for its users to change it. If you lose to it, just let me know how. One simple solution that will work against any “46” (except the DC-46) no matter how it's coached, should all else fail, is to simply angle (tilt) both your OT's in at the DT's and just *hammer* them with a blocking angle. You can still run all the previous plays described except “20 Midline”. In the DC-46, this is referred to as a “truck” call. It allows both guards to triple team N and drive him back into W and M's way (Jack Gregory refers to it as “snow plowing” the DT.). The “fold” block is dispensed with and you just run your plays outside the tackles.

TROUBLE SHOOTING THE DC WING T

After having run the offense long enough, I began to notice that, from year to year, the same mistakes were being repeated by position. In other words, there may be a new kid playing a spot but he's making the same mistakes as the kid who played it before him. This demonstrates common tendencies amongst youth players and allows you to benefit from my experience by addressing these likely mistakes *before* your games instead of *after*.

There are two types of errors. There are general mistakes made by the whole team and mistakes by individual position. We'll start with general mistakes.

General Mistakes:

Pass Blocking: The most common mistake made on pass plays is the snap count. Our snap count is on "3" for pass plays (Except screens which are on "2"). Most kids will learn this very quickly but some kids will move on "2" and get you a five yard penalty. If you find a kid who moves on "2" during a game the chances are that he will move on "2" the next time you try and pass as well. If a kid makes this mistake, GET HIM OFF THE FIELD before your next passing play and tell him why. Kids who make mistakes tend to repeat them. In your next practice give him special attention on getting the snap count right.

Another common pass blocking error occurs when the defense comes offsides. It is very common for the DC Wing T to draw the defense offsides on pass. The defense expects a snap count of "1" or "2" and comes across on "2". Normally, it is a five yard penalty against the defense but it is a five yard penalty against us if one of our linemen "pops" him as the defender comes offsides. I found this happens a lot. To prevent this from happening, deliberately send defenders offsides against your offense in practice in order for your linemen to learn not to react. Now the five yard penalty works in your favor. The other team should jump offsides about twice a game on pass plays.

Run Blocking: The same problem mentioned above can happen on run plays as well. Usually, on our very first play of a game the defense will jump offsides even though the play is a run. This is because they're not used to seeing a wingback go in motion and, when he moves, somebody jumps. Again, we don't want to have a lineman "pop" this defender or the penalty is on us.

Stiff Arming: Stiff arming is rapidly becoming a lost art. The reason it has been disappearing is because defensive players are getting bigger and stronger (many lift weights) and the runner doesn't have enough strength in one arm to hold off the tackler (It's the equivalent of doing a one armed pushup). I shared this problem with a black belt karate instructor while describing to him how I wanted my fullback to run with his inside hand down at knee level to keep his body low. I wanted him to use this same "down hand" to catch himself from hitting the ground or to stiff arm an approaching tackler. He immediately showed me that the standard football "stiffarm" pose used by your Heissman Trophy winners is incorrect and that it does, indeed, offer insufficient strength. Instead of stiff arming your opponent with the fingers of the hands pointed up, the fingers should be pointed sideways, and in the direction the runner wants to go. As the elbow comes up

from the “hand down” position, the palm of the hand snaps sideways. This increases POWER!

Example: I’m the fullback (Halfback/wingback/whatever – they can all use it) running “24”. My left hand is down, palm down, at knee level to keep me low. The inside linebacker has defeated his block and is coming in low to get me from my left. I raise my elbow, turn my palm sideways so that my fingers point to my right (The direction I want to go), and stiff arm the top of his helmet. I will achieve maximum power by doing so.

47 Speed: The most common error is for the LG to forget to pass in front of a DT and, instead, pass behind him. This lets the DT in for the tackle.

ERRORS BY POSITION

Split End: The most common error of a split end is to block whoever is in front of him instead of looking for the nearest, deepest defender (the safety). Go over this with your ends. Each one of them should be able to tell you what his most likely mistake will be. If they know they’re biggest, most likely mistake is to block the defender in front of them and can repeat it, you’re halfway there. Then let them know that the best way to catch a pass is to run their pass route every time so that we can see if they’re open or not. If they want to catch a pass, they’ll do it now. Their most common mistake is not to get near the sideline on “Pass Left, #2 Open”. This brings them nearer to the safety and increases your chances of an opponent’s interception.

Guards: The most common error by a guard is to either 1) Forget to pull or 2) Pass block the wrong person. The most common reason for a guard not to pull is because he’s not listening in the huddle. Guards that aren’t listening do so because they’re unhappy with the position they’ve been given. Guards are kids that almost made running back, who think they’re good enough to get the ball, yet now find themselves on the line. That can be a big disappointment. That creates carelessness. I find the “better” a kid thinks he is, the worse he plays at guard. To solve this problem, I use one of two methods, or both.

First, I hand out helmetstars to linemen who have 1) perfect games (no mistakes) and 2) pancake blocks (knocking a defender down either with a drive or crab block). This usually works to improve most player, but it does not always work with our guards. I have found, instead, that what usually works best with improving a guard’s play is to offer to let the guard who makes the fewest mistakes on game day to be given four carries with the ball in the next practice. Since the number one reason for failure of a guard to perform to the best of his abilities is due to his failure to make running back, this solution works well. It only takes a few minutes in practice to give him four carries and it improves their game by 100%. I play my guards at the HB position. Once they actually learn the position, I tell them that if we are 14 or more points ahead at halftime, I’ll let them carry the ball in the second half if they want (Usually only one does and, if this is the case, I make it a point to run to his side.). This causes that guard to block hard in the first half in order to get that 14 point lead.

Tackles: The most common mistake by an offensive tackle is to fail to reach block on a play to the other side. Sometimes they forget. Sometimes they choose not to remember. I

have my TE (And SE when he aligns as a TE) get on the offensive tackle for not reaching. If the TE gets him to reach, we give that TE a helmet star.

The second most common mistake by an offensive tackle is to fail to block the DE on a pass play. This requires a back (“bucket”) step by the OT before going outside. It’s actually very simple but few remember to do it. I feel this is because the DE is outside his peripheral vision and he fails to see him in order to “pick him up”. Again, I use helmet stars to encourage my OT’s to play perfect. However, I usually have at least one OT who thinks he is a fullback and so I also offer four running plays to the OT who has the best game on Saturday, letting him play the FB position in the next practice. If I find an OT actually learns the position this way, I can also let him play the FB position in a game in which we are 14 or more points ahead at halftime.

Another problem that can occur happens between a guard and tackle on a “sweep” or “cross” call. Here the tackle must block down on the guard’s/center’s man. Since tackles aren’t that fast, they must aim for the center’s front toes in order to intercept their defender. Since the guard is in that path, the tackle can collide with the pulling guard. To prevent this, the guard takes his pulling foot and steps back, putting his front toes where his heels were. He now pulls. This is the equivalent of a “bucket step”.

Center: Generally speaking, centers make very few mistakes. When they do, it usually involves not getting downfield to pick up a backside LBer. If the center remembers to step with his playside foot first, he’ll be okay on most plays.

Quarterback: The most frequent QB problems are in 1) fumbled snaps and 2) getting sacked on pass. Fumbled snaps are usually the result of the QB not having his passing hand up against the center’s “privates” with the other hand held with the thumb over the top of the thumb of the passing hand. Getting “sacked” is the result of a QB that either executes a poor fake or fails to “roll out” and drops “straight back” instead. The QB cannot see a defender approaching behind him on a straight drop back and so can be hit from behind. By “rolling out” he puts distance between himself and the “tackler from behind”.

Tightend: Again, TE’s seldom make mistakes of consequence. Still, there are areas of improvement. If a TE says he got the OT inside him to make his crab block, and the OT says, “Yeah! He did.” – That deserves a helmet star for the TE. Another area of improvement for a TE is in their pass route. We want to make sure the TE lowers his shoulder as if to block the inside LBer before running his pass route. He must turn SHARPLY behind the LBer and head to the outside. A TE’s route is generally “down, out, and up”. If your TE runs past the LBer without turning him around (passing by the TE’s inside shoulder before turning out) and proceeds DEEP downfield, then he better be pretty fast and your QB have a strong arm, because he WILL BE COVERED. Also, TE’s do not always catch equally in all directions. A right-handed TE will often catch better running from the lefthand side of the field towards the right than he does from the righthand side of the field and running to the left. In karate and boxing, this is referred to as “Can’t go left” and is why boxers frequently circle to the right of their opponent. If you find your TE “can’t go left” and catch a pass, the first thing to do is run him a hundred times to the left and throw to him and see if he can’t learn it. Most can. If he can’t, skip TE “Throwback”.

Wingback: The most common mistake of a wingback is to block the DE in front of him. This is similar to when an SE wants to block the defender in front of him. To solve this problem, when you select your base package of plays, do not include any “Power” plays to the #8 hole from “Split Left” or to the #7 hole from “Split Right”. Absent these plays, you can start out by telling him he NEVER blocks the DE in front of him. Once he learns not to block the DE, you can add a play in which he does. When you do call a “power” block on the DE, have the WB line up further to the outside than normal. If the DE lines up inside him, he can go in motion before the snap towards the DE and get a GREAT block on the DE (Called a “crack back”).

Although a wingback is not responsible for blocking a DE he is responsible for moving him. If a DE has been instructed by his coach to line “head up” on the wingback, the wing should deliberately line up further out when we run “15”, “16”, “36”, etc. inside him. This is called “Taking the DE for a walk”. It takes the DE right out of the play while improving the blocking angle for the wing on the near safety.

The wingback can often be called on to make a double team block (power). When making a double team block, his inside hip should touch the near hip of the blocker he’s assisting. They should be “joined at the hip”. If you don’t teach this, a double team block can become unsuccessful.

Halfback: Halfbacks can make a lot of mistakes in their running technique. This is addressed in our drills. When he doesn’t have the ball, the HB is either a blocker, potential pitchman, or executing a fake handoff. We deliberately do not offer helmet stars to our HB’s for how they run with the ball. We do not give them awards for TD’s or first downs. They’re expected to do this. That’s why they got the running back position in the first place. We know they can run. Instead, they have to earn their helmet stars the same way the offensive line does – By either turning in a perfect game, making a pancake block, or executing a perfect fake. We define a “perfect fake” as being when our HB is tackled by a defender when he does not have the ball. In the “Buck” series the HB is often faked to as well as in our pass plays. I once had a HB who executed his “buck” fake so well that he was tackled every single time he ran it – Sometimes by 2-3 defenders.

Fullback: The most common FB error is to not take his three steps at the outside foot of the OT and, instead, to just run wherever the play is. If he just runs to wherever the play is, the inside LBer covering him will also run to wherever the play is. The FB must take his three steps to freeze the LBer long enough for our blockers to get to him. I once had a FB with great talent who would take his three steps on plays in which he wasn’t the ball carrier but not take them on plays he was the ballcarrier. He would almost run into the QB in his desire to get the ball. Inside LBer’s quickly learned he was getting the ball when he ran towards the QB, but not getting it when he ran towards the OT.

The second most common mistake by a FB is not to count his four steps back from the QB or take too big of a step in doing so. You’ll start see him lining up deep, usually 5 yards, and, when that happens, he’ll go nowhere.

Coaching Mistakes:

I have seen coaches make mistakes with my offense. The most common coaching mistakes are formation and play calling. The most frequent formation mistakes are to put the TE at a one foot split or the WB at a one yard split – or both. The TE’s split varies but, when possible it should be at four feet, and when he is at four feet the WB’s split is two yards outside him. This correction should move your opponent’s DE’s out an extra two yards. Otherwise, they’re two yards closer in. Other formation mistakes include calling “33” Quick but without calling “TE Over” against a “mob” defense. Play calling mistakes occur, for example, when a coach installs the “16” play but not the “38 Option” play. The “16” play by itself will not work for very long if you do not have “38 Option” to go with it. Other play calling mistakes include “scripting” plays in advance. The wing T is not an offense for scripting plays. You read the defense and that dictates your next play call. Another coaching mistake in play calling is trying to “set up the defense” for a specific play. One coach I watched kept running plays to the right in order to set up the “Right 41 Trap”. The defense was a 5-3 and he kept calling a “cross” block on his “24” calls, which you don’t do so against a single safety defense. His other call was “16” but he never called “38 Option” so both calls were not very successful. He wasn’t getting first downs running to the right. He had to go back to “Right 41 Trap”, which was what he wanted to do, but the defense came to expect it. They could stop the “24 cross” and the “16” and then wait on third and long for “Right 41 Trap”. You need to call plays that get yards every down – not that just set up your favorite calls.

TROUBLE SHOOTING SPECIFIC PLAYS

“20 Midline”: This is a very successful play against teams that use a NG. If you find you’re making fewer and fewer yards with this play in a game, it’s usually a sign that the FB is not reading the NG but, instead, constantly cutting to the same side of the center every time (usually away from the QB). The NG has simply learned to shade to that side. Point out the FB’s error and run it again.

Coaching Record for a Season

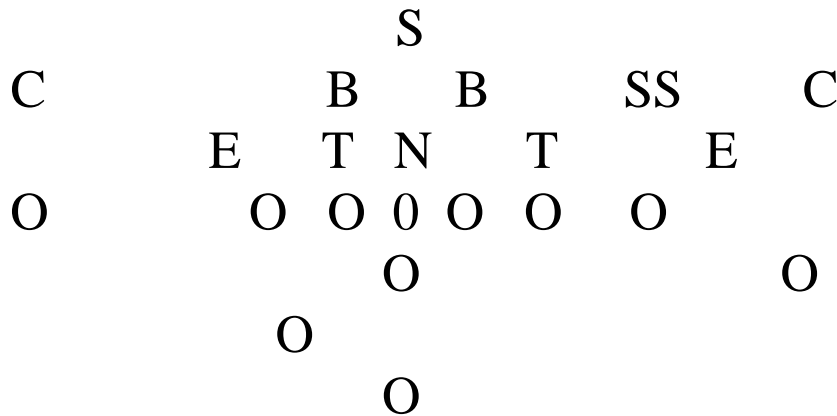
One thing that I thought might be helpful is to show how I coached the DC Wing T for a season. Now it would be nice to report that I took a last place team to first place using my principals but that didn't happen. First of all, this was a team of nine year olds and I designed this playbook for age ten. This was also my first experience teaching it to this age group. Still, the kids finished in a regular season tie for second place and were barely eliminated in the playoffs by the undefeated, first place team that was admirably coached and very fast and talented.

We have a seven game regular season schedule with three weeks of practice. We play our first game "blind". That is, we have no idea what offense, or defense, our initial opponent will be running. Myself, I am aware of at least twenty-five different defenses that I could possibly face in that first game, and there could be more, and so preparing for them all is impossible. We will usually face a 5-2, a 5-3, and 6-2 defense at some point in the season. That's about all we know.

The nine year old mind functions best when given a single assignment such as "block that guy". Unfortunately, the wing T does not work on that principal. A player can find himself with as many as four different assignments to learn. Our play selection had to be chosen to minimize the assignments as well as skills. Although we practised both our QB's at option, we did that just to familiarize them with that skill in order to let them feel comfortable playing it next year at age ten. We want our QB's to experience success right away, not failure, and trying to teach a nine year old option can lead to failure. Therefore, we eliminated the "38" and "47" options. Without these plays, there is not much sense in running the "15" and "16" calls either since the pitchman becomes a useless decoy. Still, we wanted to have our QB's involved with the play, as they would be in option, so we selected the "45 Toss" and "36 Toss" plays. To get outside to the weak side we chose the "47 Speed" play. I had never run this before and, while it turned out to be a great play, it proved to be a longer, more difficult teach than I had expected. In order to get our plays to look alike we began a search of the playbook and added "QB Wedge", which comes off of the speed play, and "20 midline" which also comes off of speed. I should have had "Fake Speed 56 Reverse" in. If I had, I would have won the league championship. Another play that used "speed" we installed was "57 Screen". To go along with the "toss" series we added "38 Toss" and "47 Toss", "23", and "24" and with "Right 45" as the counter. To complete the package we added the "33 Quick". This gave us twelve run plays and one screen. For our passing game we installed both "Pass Left" and "Pass Right". We were unable to install any passes due to an erratic QB and a forgetful line. The QB's problem was that he would hit a receiver "dead on" one play and miss him completely the next. We tried four kids at QB and they all had this exact same problem. We had actually drafted a QB with a great arm but he had decided not to play football and this left us scrambling to replace him. The other problem we had was the left offensive tackle who, for being a good athlete, was a lazy blocker. He would either forget what defender he had or miss him entirely. We kept him in thinking that, since he was a good athlete, he'd get better but it never happened.

Other plays later installed included “56 Reverse Toss”, “47 Toss”, “38 Toss”, “33 Quick”, and “Right 45 Counter”.

Our first game was against last year’s “Super Bowl” champions of the eight year old division, now age nine this year. The team they beat in that championship game was my eight year olds, now my nine’s. So the parents and the kids viewed it as a grudge match whereas I viewed it as a teaching tool. I did not expect my kids to win and they did not, losing 6-0. Shown below is the defense the other team came out in. This team eventually played in the Super Bowl and lost there.



When I first read this defense, the single safety told me run wide to the weak side, to avoid the “23” and “24” calls, and to run “20 midline”. In spite of the position of the left DT, “20 midline” went for good yards. The “47 Speed” call just wasn’t working - the kid running it insisting on slowing down for the handoff. We ran it three times, made thirteen yards total on two carries and lost yardage on another. However, had I had this play properly installed, it would have won us the game but it was my first ever try at it. The “45 Toss” made some yards but the DE played in very tight making him hard to kick out. “47 Toss would have worked well but it wasn’t in. We got hammered on “36 Toss” owing to the position of the strong safety. Because of the position of the DT on my right OT I ran it as “36 Power Toss” and let the TE take the inside linebacker. The pulling left guard didn’t block anyone and the SS made the tackle.

The above defense is actually a 5-2 with the strong safety rotated up on the TE and the weakside DT aligned on the guard (At the time, I thought it was a 5-3). This is called a “Monster” defense and is a Cover 2 disguised as a Cover 1. The disguise worked and I called my plays wrong as a result. After this game, I modified my reads to include “counting the box” so that I could spot such a disguised defense in the future. Had I known this was a 5-2, I could have called “23 and 24 Cross” but the midline achieved the same thing.

At this point my player status was as follows:

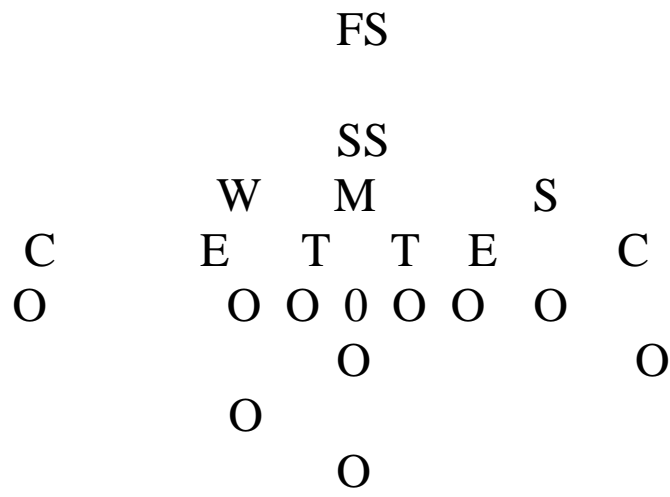
Center: 91 pounds, veteran. Above average in skill and intelligence. Average speed.

Right Guard: 79 pounds, veteran. Above average except average speed.

Left Guard: 76 pounds, rookie. Above average except average speed.

Right Tackle: 111 pounds, rookie. Severely below average skill and speed.
 Right Tackle (alternate): 90 pounds, rookie. Fast, skilled, but no brains.
 Left Tackle: 92 pounds, veteran, above average talent but an unskilled blocker.
 Split End: 64 pounds. Rookie. Average talent, drops a few passes.
 Split End (alternate): 69 pounds. Rookie. Average talent. Can catch.
 Split End (alternate): 59 pounds. Rookie. Very fast. Can catch but a small target to hit.
 Tight End: 86 pounds, rookie. Strong, good blocker, can catch. No brains.
 Wingback: 72 pounds, veteran. Fast, good runner, can catch. Doesn't speak English.
 Wingback (alternate): 64 pounds, rookie. Fast, good hitter, can catch. Smart.
 Halfback: 88 pounds, veteran. Fast, tough, blocks and runs well. No brains.
 Fullback: 117 pounds, veteran. Average speed. Bright. Tough to tackle. Has difficulty blocking small, fast players but creams everyone else.
 Quarterback: 76 pounds, veteran. Good athlete. On again, off again, arm. No option
 QB (Alternate): 86 pounds, veteran. Average speed. Good arm. Option trained.

The second game was against the eventual league champions. This was a big, strong team with talented running backs and a good coach. He observed me scouting his team and so changed everything he did that week. Meanwhile, I prepared my kids for what I had scouted and ended up preparing for the wrong thing. He not only gave me a defense I had never seen before but disguised it two different ways. He ran a Cover 2 but tried to disguise it as a Cover 1. This time I was prepared for this from my previous week's outing and, even though he had given me an entirely different defense, I spotted it by counting the "box". The defense he ran is shown below.



The "disguise" factor I didn't spot were the cornerbacks up on the line. They were fairly big and did not play bump and run coverage. I misread them as DE's. In fact, every team that played them misread these players as DE's. It would get them to the Super Bowl and a championship win. Here is how it affected my offense. If we ran "36 Power toss", WB

blocked DE, TE and QB blocked Sam, center blocked backside DT, left tackle blocked Will, and pulling left guard blocked Mike. FB blocked CB thinking he was DE. Nobody blocked SS. He would make the tackle.

The same thing happened on “47 Speed”. The left tackle took the corner, the left guard took Will, HB took DE, center took playside DT, and SE went from Will to FS. Nobody blocked SS. He would make the tackle.

The four down linemen were huge and were hard to move. They didn’t make tackles but they didn’t let us open up holes or wedge either. They held their ground. Again, on all plays up the middle, the SS was unblocked. This kid covered the whole field.

Obviously, the pass to the flats looked to be open so I called “Pass Right, #2 Open” and the receiver dropped the ball on what would have been a 10 yard gain. I called it again later and this time the QB missed him by a mile and the rush (left tackle missed his man) was ferocious. Seeing this, and knowing we weren’t a passing team, I went to the “56 Reverse” off the “47 Speed”. This play looked like it was going to score but their FS recovered from the fake and made the tackle, holding us to a 10 yard gain. After that, they were looking for the play.

Where they were getting me was with their disguised corners (They even lined up in 3 points). When I counted the number of down linemen, I got six when I counted the corners as DE’s – but there were actually only four. Had I known I was playing against only four down linemen I would have gone to a two TE look and called either “Tight” or “Slot”. From “Tight” I could have run “47 Speed” and the pulling guard, with no corner to block, would have, presumably, blocked the SS.

Again, we lost. In fact, we were now 0-2. Now you may not want to learn football from a coach who went 0-2 his first two games but these two teams finished in first and second place, were well coached, and were disguising their defenses. Our next five opponents did not disguise their defense and, using the principals in the playbook, we beat all five to finish the season in a tie for second place.

SUGGESTED PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Offensive Practice

Coaches Required: 3 plus assistants

Three Groups:

Receivers, Backs, Linemen

Each coach gets 80 minutes with his group

Receivers

<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Drill</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	Circle passes	Pitch in a circle, high/low and off to side
8	Catching on knees	Catch passes off to side, tuck, and fall.
6	Rear Distraction	Yelling from behind and then hitting receiver with pad after catch
8	Front Distraction	Defender waves arms in front of receiver
10	Stalk Blocking	Keep a safety away from a ball.
20	Run patterns	One of the QB comes over and works with the group throwing routes
20	Run patterns	The other QB comes over and works with the group throwing routes
<u>20</u>	scrimmage	All three groups come together to run plays.
20	Speed drills	

Running Backs

<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Drill</u>	<u>Description</u>
20	Option	Execute option plays for with QB #1 – FB drilled aside for 30 minutes
20	Option	QB #2 holds handshield for sideline run Execute option plays for with the other QB – FB joins for last 10 minutes QB #1 holds hand shield for sideline run
20	Backfield Skills	<u>QB# 1 works with backs, QB#2 works with receivers</u>
20	“ “	QB #2 works with backs, QB #1 works with receivers
20	scrimmage	
20	Speed drills	

Offensive Line

<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Drill</u>	<u>Description</u>
10	Perfect Block	12 perfect blocks under a pole
10	Reach	5 on 4
40	Plays w/o backs	Run through offensive plays without running backs TE's change every 20 minutes with the receiver group allowing each TE
20		20 minutes of pass catching
20	scrimmage	Whole team
20	Speed drills	

Coach's Comments

Hey DC

My season is over I coached 7-9 yr old. We ran your plays for the age group. I had eight different kids score TD's. They really liked it. I also had some good talent. I could have coached it better but all my coach would take the time to learn all the little detail in the big play book. We went 7-2 and won our Bowl game. The two games we lost were to very good team with lot of experience. I only had two player who played before, everyone else first year players but recruited a lot of baseball players so knew how to handle the pressure. Also, I'll be moving up to the next level next year, if you have any update to the play book please forward to me.

will_prince

Using your offense, we are 6-2 and playing for the Class B Championship in 9-10 yr olds. We lost our first game 2-0 on a fluke ref non-call. The team loved the offense because we have had 7 running backs score at least 2 td's each. Great for TEAM morale. I would love any updates to the offense and would like to be considered for the DC-46 defense for next year. Thanks DC.

Coach K

I used your jet system and many ideas from an older version of your play book this year. I've been using the speed kills drills for 3 years now and I've gleaned a great deal of information from your posts.

We started the season stong with the Jet averaging 40 points/game the first 3 games. Injuries devastated the backfield and we literally limped into the playoffs at 4-4. We lost 1st round today and are now done for the year.

I want to thank you for all your help this year. I really appreciate your willingness to help and your insights.

Thanks Again

G6

DC~

We made it into the playoffs today by beating the scrappy 62 team. They were really "pesky"--that's the only way to describe them. We had excellent refs this week (only 1 penalty called against us)--made a big difference in getting our rythm going. However, we again had problems with our tiptoe-through-the-tulips FB. So we ran the HB all day long. Nothing but 36 Toss and 33/35 Quick. And..well...a 45 mixed in every now and then to keep them honest--lol.

Coach JB

DC,

We finished 7-0 this season. Our league does not have playoffs but by coincidence we played the only other undefeated team in our league in the last game of the season & won 16-8.

I had 10-11 yr. olds this past season & used your 8/9 yr. old playbook with them because I didn't want to use any option. Using the jet sweep as our base play we averaged 30 ppg. Half of our games were "mercy rule" games by halftime or we could have averaged 50.

The plays are great but the best parts of your playbook are the chapters on formations & play calling. Anybody can draw up plays on paper but knowing the when & why of playcalling is the key factor in a successful offense. (& having speed helps too:)

Coach Falco

DC:

Last year I was HC of 7-8 yr olds. I learned of your system late in the season and I introduced a couple of plays from your Offensive playbook that helped the team secure the county championship. This year my AC of the 7-8 yr olds took over as the HC for the 7-8 yr olds and he is using your system. After mid season of nothing but a running game I convinced him to develop a passing game with your system. Along with the running game he is using five different pass plays. So far for this season his team is at 9-0 with an average score of 40-50 per game. I'm sure his team will secure the county championship for the second consecutive season. DC I know that good execution and discipline is paramount for your system. I am completely convinced and sold on your system. I'm hoping that with another winning season secured that this will be an eye opener for coaches of other teams in this league. Sure it's fun to win but at the same time I'd like to see a more competetive game throughout the league. Your playbook, advice and the

advice of many other coaches on this website have contributed immeasurably to the success our teams are now experiencing. Thanks!

Coach JS.

(Note: Below JS tells how he did in his third season.)

To let you know how good your offense system is, I have been overseas for the last year and I allowed my assistant coach from the previous year to use your offense this past season. He HC'd the team this past season. First time in history the team went to state championships. Got their pants whooped but at least they got that far. He and I are true believers of your system. We have been preparing for this season since the day after last season closed. Thanks for everything.

Coach JS

Clark,

First thanks for sharing your play book we finished the season 11-0 won the last game against a loaded team in overtime. As the game went on we became better, I think because of your speed drills (The kids hated those frog hops) we were just a better conditioned team.

I used your offense all year check the results... We played 8 games. We ran a 44 defense... FYI this team went 2-6 last year under a different set of coaches.

Bernie Wurts

(Note: The Olathe Northwest Ravens went 8-0-0, scoring 232 points and giving up 20)

DC,

...Last year I ran your DC-Wing T to an undefeated season. Offensively we scored almost every time we had the ball. Averaged 33 pts a game and the kids just had a blast. This year I am coaching up and age group 7th and 8th grade, and can run your full blown offense and defense. Can't wait to turn the kids loose!

Thanks Again,

Steve Landon

(Note: Below Landon gives us his next season report)

... my teams haven't lost in the two years since using your systems.

Thanks for making me look smarter than I am :)

Steve Landon

DC

Just a quick note. I have been running the DC 46 for 2 years with fantastic results. I started the DC wing T last year. By the end of the year we were really getting the hang of it. My only problem is at QB making it virtually impossible to throw as much as we would like. He runs the Offense great but gets to panicky when he throws. The bad news is I built a team out of what I was given and this year the other coaches see our success as talent and not coaching and a great Defense and offense. Therefore, I will lose my starting line but was able to keep the back field in tact.

Thanks again for all your help.

Mark Stowers

Coach:

I want to thank you for sharing your playbook. I've studied it over the the last couple of weeks and can truly say that I learned more about offensive football from your playbook than I have from any of the published books I have read on the subject. For example, many books and articles state that the objective of the Wing T is to place defensive players in conflict. Your Philosophy chapter is the only source I have found that describes **how** to place defensive players in conflict.

The Wing T for 8-9s chapter is of particular interest to me since I will be coaching an under 10yr / 80# team next year. I am very intrigued by your DC Split Wing T formation and its associated plays. No one runs anything like it in our league. I assume that to run it, one has to find a wingback that is real sharp in addition to being strong runner and blocker.

Over the next couple of months I will be rereading your playbook and working on my offense. Without your help I wouldn't know where to start.

Thanks Again,

Dave Horton

DC:

We run midline, 23/24, 25/26, and 27/28 quick pitch as our primary FB plays and 33/34 quick, 35/36 toss, 38 speed out of slot and slot loose, 47 speed, 41 trap as our WB plays. We also throw more than you have us do in your playbook. 1 out of every 3 or 4 plays. We run pass right, pass right switch (WB and TE trade patterns), pass left, and then a series of passes that I got from a coach from a high school that is similar to your bunch passes, just a little different. Our QB is above average but we complete 70%. We have won our games by an ave. of 4 TD's better than our opponents... I have really had a blast with your playbook. But when you have a full load of talent it just becomes an unbelievable offense. Almost unstoppable. Over the 3 years I have run it, understanding that the first 2 years I did not have the talent that we have this year our record has been 7-2-1 (played in the championship game), 4-4, 9-0 (playing in the championship this next week). I really think that the real meat of your play book is not in the plays themselves but in the theory of the offense. As JB and the others that run it can attest I am sure, it is how you run the offense that really makes it work, what you can see on the field and what adjustments you make in your play calling that lets this offense roll. There is just so much you can do with it. Even with 2 great backs we have had 10 different boys score touchdowns. And no boy has scored more than 1 a game except for once. Same has been each year we have run your off. At least 7 or more have scored. Makes it fun for the boys and the parents (which seems to be more important to them than the boys).

Texas Coach

Coach:

...your philosophy and drills in the wing-t are like gold to me.

Coach Martins

Clark,

I just wanted to write and thank you for sharing your offense. I have been successfully coaching using the "old" (not Delaware) Wing T for years. What intrigued me about your offense was the ability to get so many players involved. We outscored our opponents 248 to 61. We had 12 different players score TD's and about 18 catch or carry the ball. I have never come close to being able to spread the ball around that much. We finished 8-2 and won the league championship... Winning a Championship is great but I am most proud of the fact that so many players were able to touch the ball. I had a fullback this year who had halfback speed. With your player cues we were able to adjust to most situations on the fly. I called HB over SE over 28 toss sweep and our FB took it about seventy yards in our Championship game (maybe he should have been a HB?).

Coach Morrison

DC:

First of all thanks for the wingt O and DC46. This is some great stuff and I love it. Very flexible offense and I'm able to spread the ball around to several different kids. I have one kid who's been practicing 57 jet power screen all year and he finally caught one in last weeks game. I've had kids catch a right 67 screen and pass right TE open, these are kids that have never caught a pass before in their life, thanks to this offense it happened. I always told the kids that the offense was designed by a coach in Washington, and it worked for him and its up to you to make it work here, but it works!

Secondly, man you have to put out video on this O & D!

Donald Bland
"dfwcanes"
11/12 yr
Irving, Texas

Clark,

Thanks very much for your DC-Wing T playbook. This playbook gave us some great direction for our eight year olds.

We finished our season at 6-2 and lead all eight year olds (over 30 teams) in scoring (averaging over 30 points a game).

We had a number of obstacles that many teams do not have. I for one, missed most of the practices for the year since I traveled during the week. My assistants conducted the practices but did not know the system (as well) nor have my experience.

- 1) Only five of our 18 kids had played football before this year.
- 2) Our entire team was undersized compared to our competition.

We lost first round of the playoffs against a team that rushed seven in the gaps. Our kids just couldn't block them and we lost 14-0.

Despite our success, the items we did not construct per the DC system was 1) consistent Oline blocking & 2) a killer fullback.

Thanks!

Ron Fines,
Head Coach Bear Creek Football
Division 2 Eight Year Olds

Clark

Just wanted to tell you thank you for all the help the last two years. Using your Wing T and DC46 has really helped a bunch of boys have a lot of fun. Two yr record 18-1 before we took the team over previous season 2-6. Thanks again Clark for your generosity you have put smiles on quite a few young men's faces

Bernie Wurts, CFP

DC,

Could I get your dc4-3 manual? I used your wing-t plays this season, and turned a 2-8 team into a superbowl champion team.

Thanks in advance,

Bantam Coach

DC-

I am ready for your "new" version playbook whenever you are ready to send it out. BTW, your "outdated" version was good enough to help win the championship in our league, with the same kids who didn't win a single game the year before. We finished 7-1 (the lone loss happened when I was out of town)

spokanecrow

My name is Mike Finch, football coach from Waterdown, Ontario, Canada. We talked last year about how I can adapt your DC wingt to 12 man football. We went undefeated using it and the FB and HB got 1000 yards each and WB 600. It was an awesome season for all concerned.

I love the Offense, I was the highest Scoring team in my division (10-11 year olds with 23 TEAMS!!!) - Coach Albert