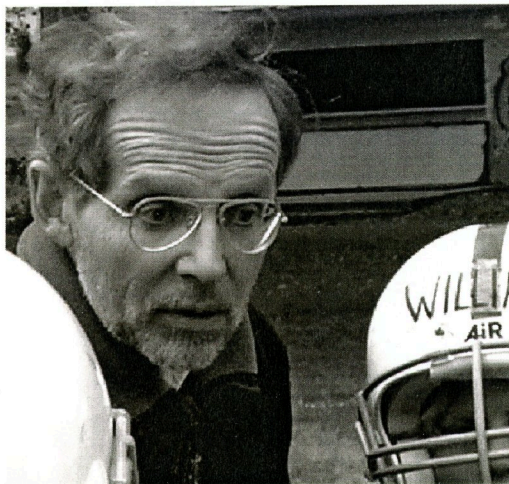


# Buckley Football Varsity Playbook



# BUCKLEY VARSITY FOOTBALL

This playbook is dedicated to all those boys, parents, coaches, teachers, and fans who contributed to Buckley Football, including:



**Bill Trauth**

The following is an excerpt from an article written by Misha Belikov and Jamie Sterne in *The Sheild*, 2003 Spring edition: “We [Misha and Jamie] asked him [Bill Trauth] if there was any way in which he would like to be remembered. Beyond handsome, he says, he would like to be known as a coach who ‘worked hard to bring every athlete to their highest level,’ and who showed just as much interest in the less-gifted athletes as he did in the most-gifted boys. He says there is a distinct element of character-building in what the Buckley sports program does...as he states, ‘We win a lot, but I believe in character. I hope you leave here a better human as well.’ He is a man who has devoted his life to teaching, and as he walks off into the sunshine, there does not seem any way that somewhere, sometime he will not be teaching once again. Buckley’s legend will soon depart, and we can only say, for all the years he has been here: Thank you, Mr. Trauth.” Bill Trauth led Buckley Football to 26 League Championship Titles in his 33 years at Buckley.



**Jiman Duncan**

The following is an excerpt from an article written by Brian Walsh (Headmaster 1982-2001) in the Buckley Newsletter: “Mr. Duncan’s caring intensity was certainly something he carried with him as a coach of both football and baseball...He was particularly impressive in his empathy toward the boys after a tough loss – he convinced them that this was indeed an inevitable aspect of sports and, yes, a unique opportunity to learn from playing the game. Just as with music, he had a depth of knowledge of both football and baseball...With Mr. Duncan the boys always were the focus of his efforts. Since Mr. Duncan moved to Maine in 2001 the summer after I retired as Headmaster, I simply cannot imagine The Buckley School without him. I know I am not alone. Recently when I was making my annual spring visits to prep schools, every Buckley boy I met was mourning his loss. If he could have reached out to them, I am sure Mr. Duncan would have said, “Boys, this is part of the game.”

## The Ideal Sportsman:

*One whose emotions are controlled by a genuine love and respect for his fellow man as well as the game.*

**Play to Learn  
Play to Have Fun  
Play Fair  
Play Hard  
Play Your Best  
Play to Win**

## THE BASIC BASICS

### Offense

- 1) Play 'til the whistle. Keep blocking and keep driving your legs until the whistle blows.
- 2) Stay low when running and blocking ("low man wins").

**To Do Your Best:** Know the snap count, fire off the line, follow your assignment, play 'til the whistle.

### Defense

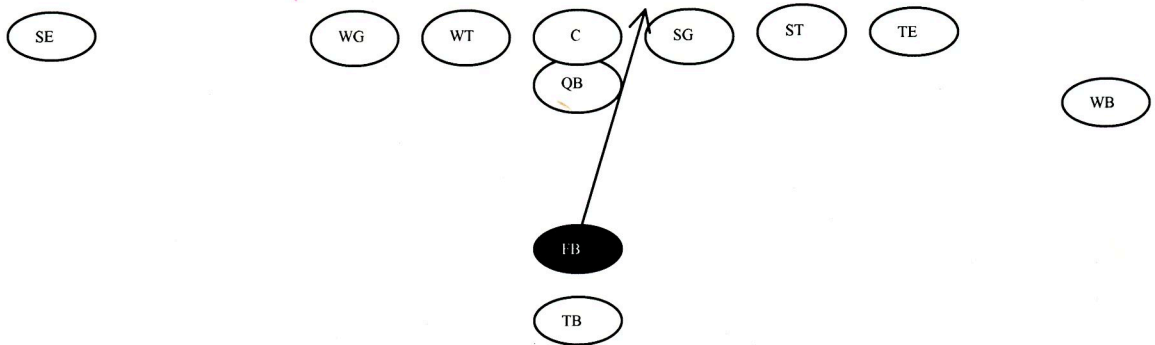
- 1) Play 'til the whistle. Keep pursuing the ball carrier (at the correct angle) until the whistle blows.
- 2) The key to defense is tackling (reminders: Head up, Eyes on lower half of numbers, Athletic position, Fit, Wrap-Up, Drive).

**To Do Your Best:** Line up correctly, follow your assignment, pursue the ball, make the tackle, play 'til the whistle.





**OK, let's start with the basics.** Here is an example of a Buckley running play, using the "I Backfield". The Fullback is 4 ½ yards behind the ball and the Tailback is 6 yards behind the ball. In this play, the Center snaps the ball to the Quarterback, who gives the ball to the Fullback, who runs between the **Center (C)** and the **Strong Guard (SG)**.



Design your own play, using your own formation.



Remember:

- You need to have 7 men on the **Line Of Scrimmage\***: A Center (C), 2 Guards (G), 2 Tackles (T), and 2 other players.
- You can have a total of 6 eligible receivers, usually: Tailback (TB), Fullback (FB), Tight End (TE), Split End (SE), Wingback (WB), and Quarterback (QB).

\***The Line of Scrimmage (LOS)** is the line the ball is on (offense lines up on one side and the defense lines up on the other).



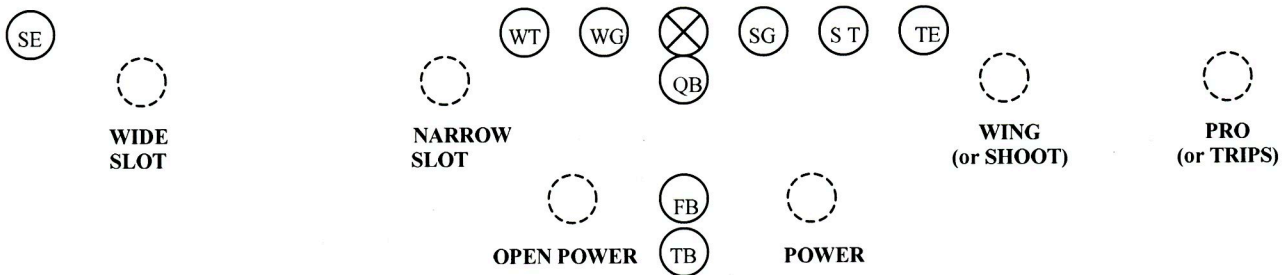


How do the players know where to line up?

1. The coach signals in the formation and the play to the Quarterback (QB).

The **formation** determines how the team lines up.

- A) The TE lines up on the side the QB calls (the “**Closed Side**”), and the SE lines up on the opposite side (the “**Open Side**”). They both are on the LOS.
- B) The Wingback (WB) lines up according to the following descriptions: Pro, Power, Narrow Slot, Shoot, Open Power, Wing, Wide Slot, Trips (diagrammed below).



2. The QB calls the formation, play and snap count (twice) in the huddle.

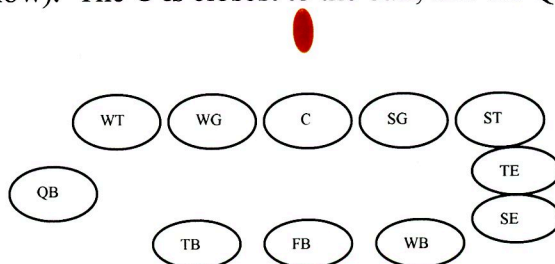
For example, “**Pro Right, Pop Right, on 2, on 2**” (shown on the previous page).

- A) “Pro Right” is the formation that tells:
- the WB to line up on the TE side (see “Pro” in diagram),
  - the TE to line up on the right,
  - and the SE to line up opposite (on the left).
- B) “Pop Right” is a play where the QB gives the ball to the FB, who runs between the C and SG (the SG and the ST usually line up on the side the play is going to).
- C) “On 2, on 2” is the snap count, telling the team when the C will snap the ball.

The QB’s command should be clear and firm. After he calls the play, the QB says, “Ready, break!” The whole team yells, “Break,” with the QB and explodes from the huddle to their positions quickly.

The QB checks to see that all players are in the correct position and that the players are ready. He then yells, “Set...Hut 1...Hut 2!” (our normal snap count is 2).

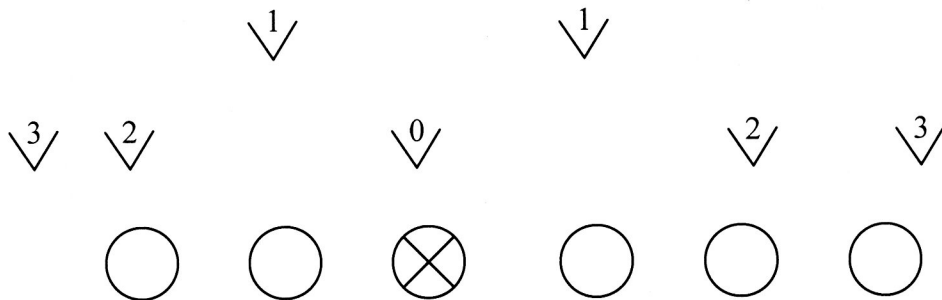
The C starts the huddle 8 yards behind the LOS, and yells “Huddle!” Every player jogs back to the **Offensive Huddle** (pictured below). The C is closest to the ball, and the QB is toward our sideline.



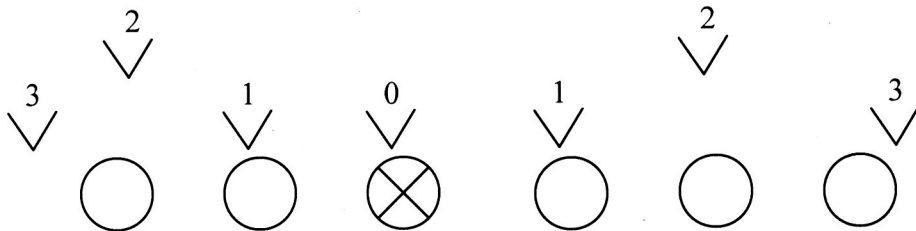
**NUMBERING SYSTEM**

To make it easier to figure out your blocking assignments, we have a numbering system diagrammed below. Both linemen and linebackers are counted to determine blocking assignments. Use this numbering system and the rules on the following pages so you will know which defensive man to block on each play.

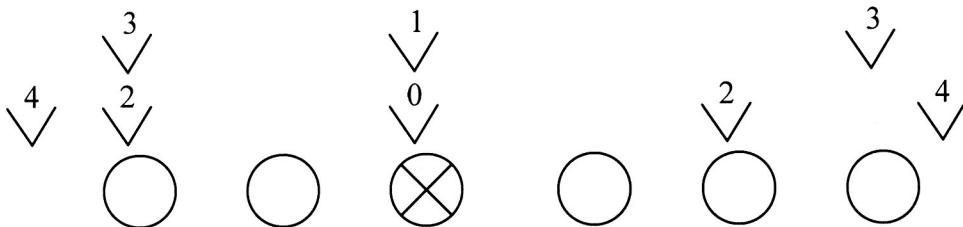
**1. "50"**



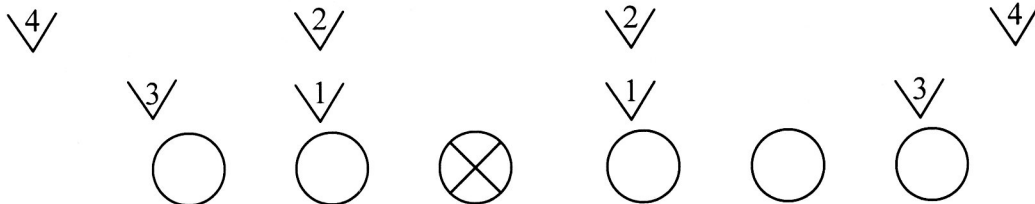
**2. "50 Eagle"**



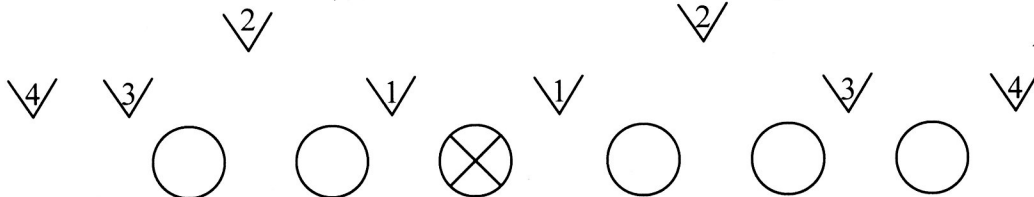
**3. "5-3"**



**4. "4-4 Stack"**



**5. "6-2"**



**Run Blocking Rules**

**CENTER**

Base Block Rule:

*Block the 0 Man. If there is no 0 Man, block the offside 1 Man.*

Exceptions:

*TB Counter: Block to the offside for the pulling guard.*

**GUARD**

Base Block Rule:

*Block the 1 Man.*

Exceptions:

*TB Counter:*

*Onside guard blocks down.  
Offside guard pulls and blocks end man on LOS.*

*Blast:*

*If onside guard is uncovered, double team nearest down lineman.*

*Bootleg and Reverse:*

*Offside guard pulls.*

**TACKLE**

Base Block Rule:

*Block the 2 Man*

Exceptions:

*TB Counter:*

*Onside tackle blocks down.  
Offside tackle pulls and leads through first hole.*

**Pass Blocking Rules**

**SPRINT PASS**

1) *Base block.*

2) *Protect the onside gap.*

3) *If uncovered, step towards the gap while checking for a blitz.*

4) *If no blitz, hinge back to offside.*

**DROP PASS**

1) *Base block.*

2) *Protect the inside gap.*

3) *If uncovered, check for a blitz.*

4) *If no blitz, help towards the inside.*

**ACTION PASS**

1) *Base block aggressively.*

2) *Do not go more than 2 yards downfield. (Dalton did this last year, allowing us to win the Championship)*

**Onside** = refers to the side of the line (right or left of the center) that the ball carrier crosses the LOS.

**Offside** = refers to the side of the line (right of left of the center) that the ball carrier does not cross.

**Uncovered** = an offensive lineman without a defensive lineman over him is called "uncovered". (For example, the guards in a normal 5-2 defense are uncovered.)

What is the "IF" rule for the offside linemen?

*If your base block man is too far to your inside to block, then block the next man to the outside.*

*Example: IF the offside guard can't block the 1 man he blocks the 2 man.*

**TB Counter: "4 guys down, 2 around"**



## Run Blocking Rules

### **TIGHT END**

Base Block Rule:

*Closed side play: Block 3 Man.*

*Open side plays: Block Safety ( your side).*

Exceptions:

*FB Counter: Block 3 Man.*

*TB Counter: Block down.*

### **SPLIT END**

*All inside runs: Block the safety to your side.*

*All other runs to your side: Block the cornerback to your side.*

*All other runs to away from your side: Block the defensive back closest to the play, that you think you can get.*

### **WINGBACK**

*When in Pro formation, use Split End rules.*

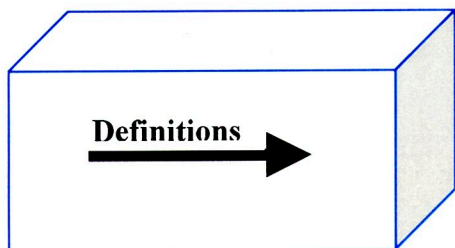
*When in Narrow Slot formation, use Tight End rules.*

*Blocks vary in other formations.*

What is the “**IF**” rule for the offside linemen?

*If your base block man is too far to your inside to block, then block the next man to the outside.*

*Example: IF the offside tackle can't block the 2 man, he blocks the 3 man.*



## **RECEIVERS/BACKS BLOCKING**

### Pass Blocking Rules

#### **SPRINT PASS**

Fullback

*Block the first defender outside our Tackle (usually the 3 Man).*

Tailback

1) *Block the 4 Man.*

2) *If no rush by 4 Man, help on 3 Man.*

3) *If 3 Man is blocked, run a 2 yd Square.*

#### **DROP PASS**

Fullback

*Block the Open Side 3 Man.*

Tailback

3-Step Drop

*Run an Open Side Flare pattern.*

5-Step Drop

*Block the Closed Side 3 Man.*

#### **ACTION PASS**

Fullback

*Block the Open Side 3 Man.*

Tailback

*Fake getting a handoff, then block the Closed Side 3 Man.*

**Onside** = refers to the side of the line (right or left of the center) that the ball carrier crosses the LOS.

**Offside** = refers to the side of the line (right or left of the center) that the ball carrier does not cross.

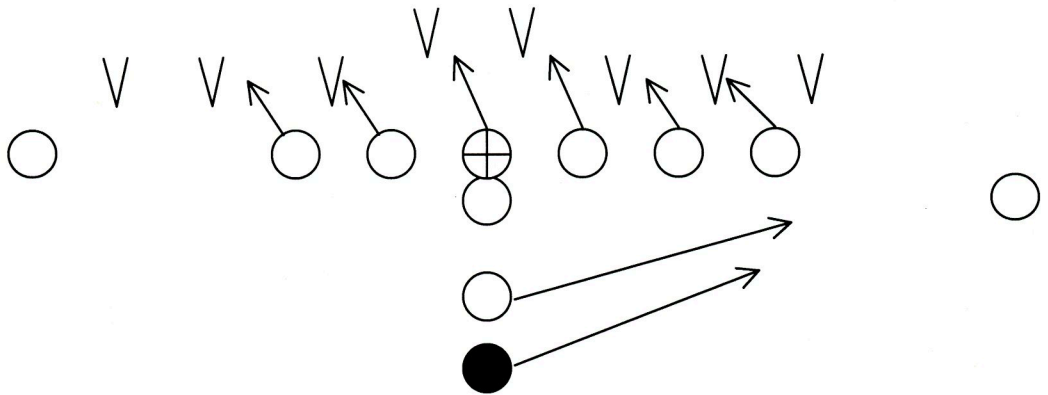
**Uncovered** = an offensive lineman without a defensive lineman over him is called “uncovered”. (For example, the guards in a normal 5-2 defense are uncovered.)

**DOWN & SCOOP BLOCKING**

1) What is the “Down Blocking” Rule?

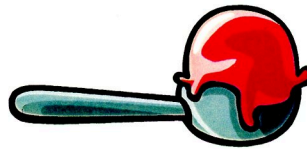
*Block the first man to the offside.*

2) Diagram the “Down Blocking” scheme for a Sweep Right.

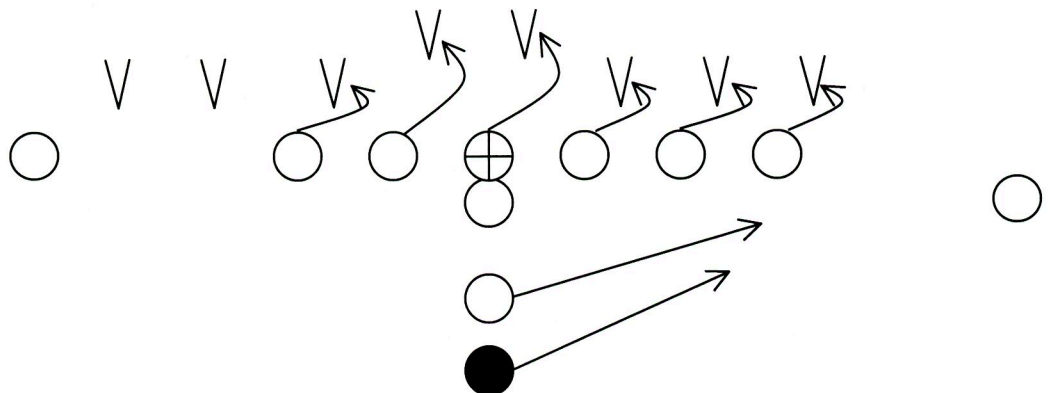


3) What is the “Scoop Blocking” Rule?

*Block the first man to the onside.*



4) Diagram the “Scoop Blocking” scheme for a Sweep Right.



## TECHNIQUE: LINE BLOCKING

**Drive Block**

1. Short control step with onside foot
2. Contact with heels of hands under his pads
3. Lift
4. Turn him away from play (lower your inside hip)
5. Maintain contact until whistle

**Reach Block**

1. Control step with onside foot – gain some ground
2. Drive to his onside knee in crab position
3. Work upfield, keeping head and eyes up
4. Maintain contact

**Down Block**

1. Based on the defensive man and the play, either prevent penetration or prevent him flowing to the play
2. To prevent penetration, drive your head in front
3. To prevent flow, drive your head upfield at his hip

**Pull and Hook Block**

1. Stay low, gain ground with first short step
2. Drive your head across front of defense
3. Keep your eyes up and make contact with full surface
4. Lift
5. Square upfield (lower your inside hip)
6. Maintain contact

**Linebacker Block**

1. Stay low, take correct angle with first short step
2. Drive your head across front of defense
3. Keep your eyes up and make contact with full surface
4. Lift
5. Square upfield (lower your inside hip)
6. Maintain contact
7. If he beats you, clipping and blocking below the waist are legal in the free block zone

**Pull and Lead Block**

1. Stay low, gain ground with first short step
2. Turn upfield (lower your inside hip)
3. Block first defense you see
4. Maintain contact

**Pull and Kick Out Block**

1. Stay low, gain ground with first short step
2. Put your head upfield of defense (between runner and defense)
3. Maintain contact

**Pass Protection**

1. Short control to defense
2. Contact under his pads with heels of your hands
3. Extend your arms and get separation. If defense slants to onside, do not separate, maintain contact and drive him
4. Keep a good hitting position – do not over extend
5. When defense shows a direction, jump on him and take him in the direction he wants to go
6. Keep your eyes up and maintain contact until whistle



**INTRODUCTION TO THE RUNNING GAME**

Our runs attack three places: inside, off tackle and outside.

**INSIDE RUNS:** sneak, pop, blast, FB counter.

**OFF TACKLE RUNS:** off tackle, counter

**OUTSIDE RUNS:** sweep, reverse, bootleg

Plays are shown from a “closed right” alignment (TE on the right side).  
They will also be run from a “closed left” alignment. (TE on the left side).

Play run **ONLY** to the closed side: Bootleg.

Play run **ONLY** to the open side: FB counter.

The defense shown is a 5-2

Learn the blocking rules, so you can block ANY defense.

The WB’s block depends on the formation.

**GOLDEN RULES-Running:**

Run Low

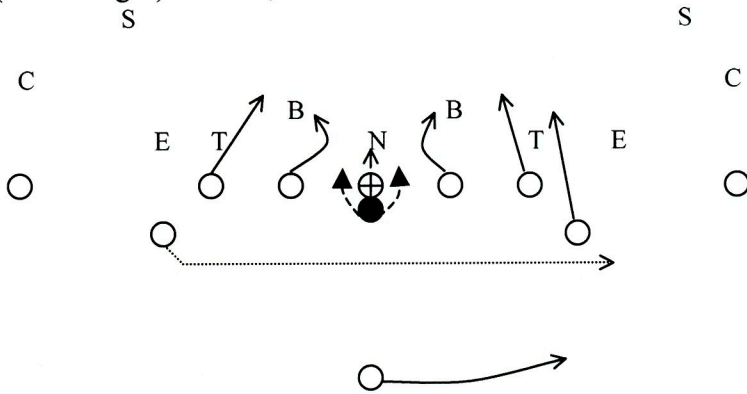
Use Blockers

Deliver the Blow



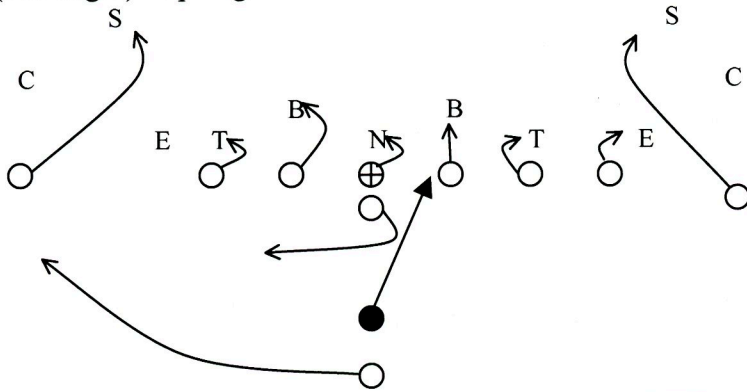
**RUNNING PLAYS (p.1)**

**1. (Shoot Right) Motion, Sneak**



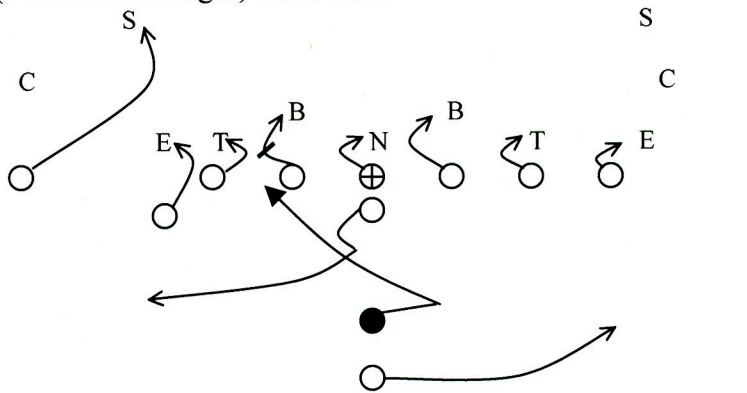
**Blocking:** Base  
**QB:** Motion WB, wait until after he passes, Secure the ball, read Center's block  
**FB:** Fake sweep  
**WB:** Motion

**2. (Pro Right) Pop Right**



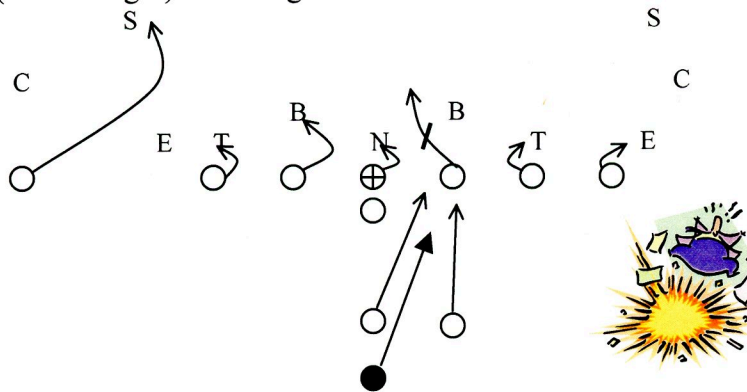
**Blocking:** Base  
**QB:** Open pivot, give to FB, fake Bootleg  
**FB:** Take handoff, read block on 1 Man  
**TB:** Fake sweep

**3. (Narrow Slot Right) FB Counter Left**



**Blocking:** Base  
 Onside Guard: If uncovered, push #2 first  
 Onside Tackle: Block like a drop pass, protect to the inside  
**QB:** Fake pitch to TB, give to FB on inside handoff, then continue to fake sweep  
**FB:** Fake sweep, Cross step, plant, take inside handoff as you cut back towards uncovered line an  
**TB:** Fake sweep

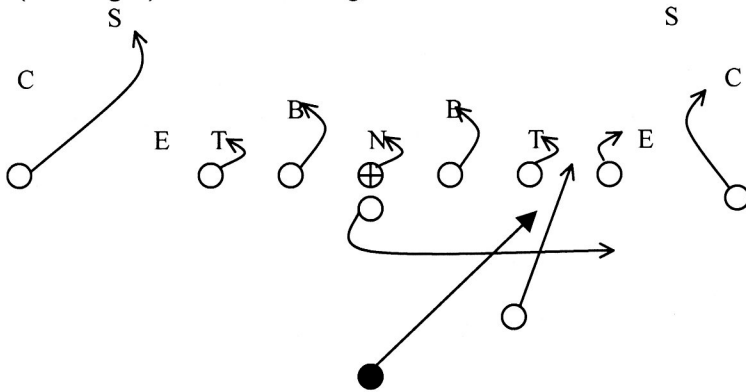
**4. (Power Right) Blast Right**



**Blocking:** Base  
 If Onside G is uncovered, he double teams nearest down lineman  
**QB:** Reverse pivot, give to TB, fake Bootleg  
**FB:** Lead block w/ WB  
**TB:** Take handoff, read block on 1 Man  
**WB:** Lead block w/ FB

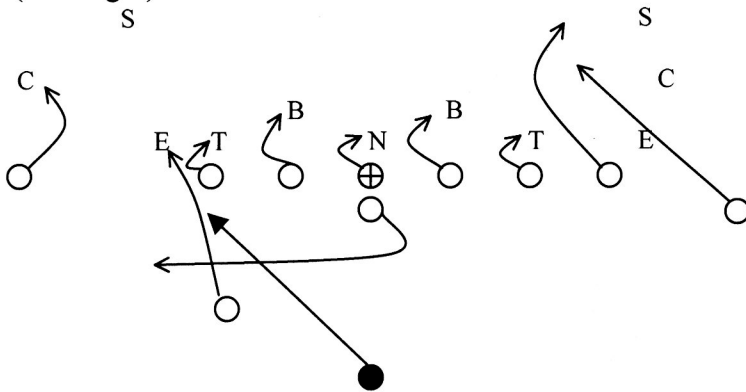
**RUNNING PLAYS (p.2)**

**5A. (Pro Right) Off-Tackle Right**



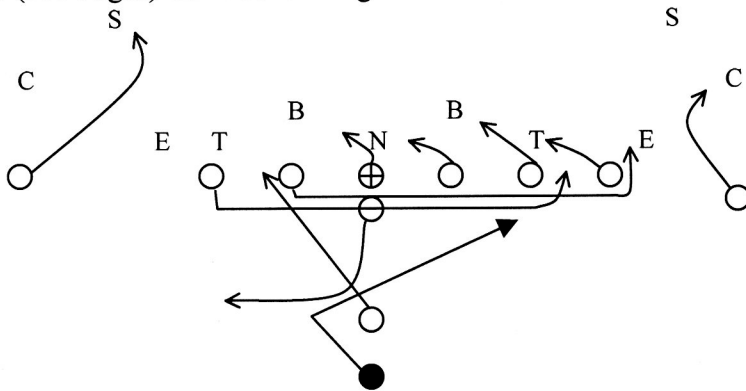
- Blocking:** Base for interior linemen
- QB:** Reverse pivot, give to TB, fake Bootleg Run (or Pass)
- FB:** Offset, Lead through hole, block first man
- TB:** Take handoff, read blocking at hole
- TE:** Block 3 Man, 2-yard Nasty Split

**5B. (Pro Right) Off Tackle Left**



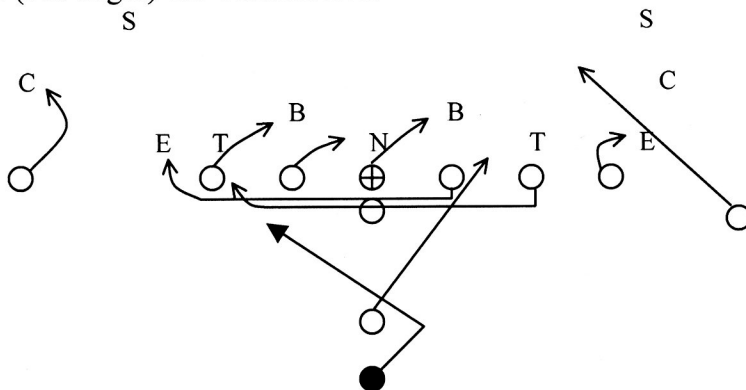
- Blocking:** Base
- QB:** Reverse pivot, give to TB, fake Bootleg Run (or Pass)
- FB:** Offset, Run directly at 3 Man, Search & Destroy, block him in any direction
- TB:** Run directly at 3 Man, take handoff, read blocking

**6A. (Pro Right) TB Counter Right**



- Blocking: 4 Guys Down, 2 Around**
- Onside G & T & C: Block down
- C: Watch Nose for slant to offside
- Offside G: Pull & block end man
- Offside T: Pull & lead thru 1<sup>st</sup> hole
- QB:** Open pivot, give to TB, fake Bootleg
- FB:** Block 2 Man to offside.
- TB:** Crossover, plant, pivot & get ball
- TE:** Block down

**6B. (Pro Right) TB Counter Left**

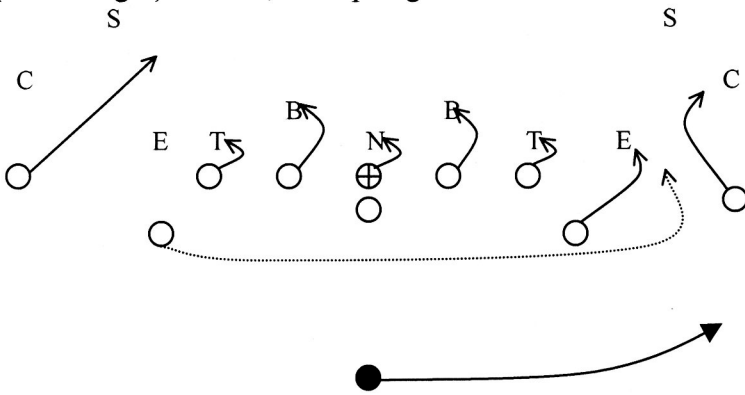


- Blocking: 4 Guys Down, 2 Around**
- Onside G & T & C: Block down
- C: Watch Nose for slant to offside
- Offside G: Pull & block end man
- Offside T: Pull & lead thru 1<sup>st</sup> hole
- QB:** Open pivot, give to TB, fake Bootleg
- FB:** Block 2 Man to offside. Check both defenders
- TB:** Crossover, plant, pivot & get ball
- TE:** Block down



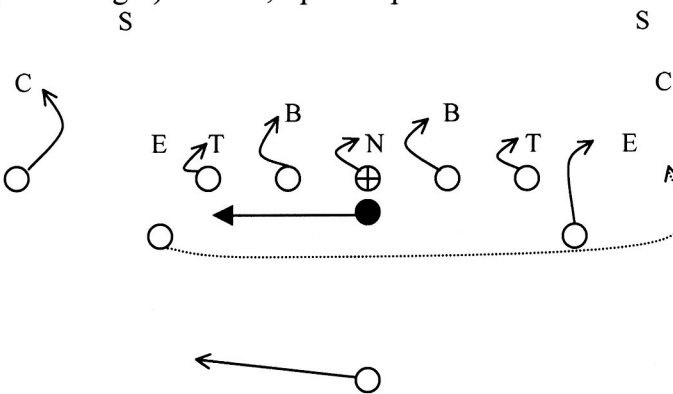
RUNNING PLAYS (p.3)

7. (Shoot Right) Motion, Sweep Right



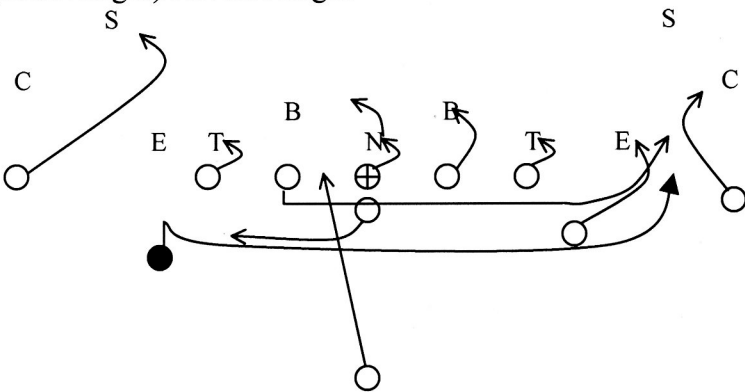
**Blocking:** Base  
**Outside WB:** Block 3 Man  
**Motion WB:** Block first defender outside of the 3 Man. Help on 3 Man if needed.

8. (Shoot Right) Motion, Speed Option Left



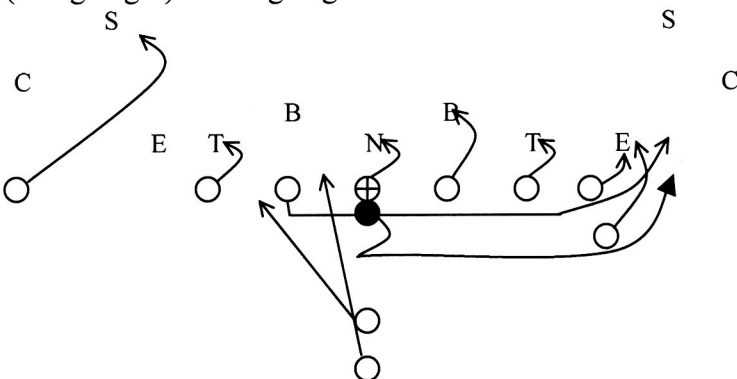
**Blocking:** Base  
**QB:** Drop step with outside foot, balance up with 2<sup>nd</sup> step, then run at inside shoulder of #3 defender. Pitch to FB if attacked, keep if #3 follows FB  
**FB:** Run parallel to LOS until pitch, then 45\* to sideline and set up SE stalk block.

9. (Shoot Right) Reverse Right



**Blocking:** Base, but Offside G pull  
**QB:** Open pivot, (step back to give G room), fake to FB, give to WB, run into 1 man  
**FB:** Run towards outside leg of our G, fake getting the ball, run into WB  
**WB:** Line up 1 yard deeper than normal. Take one step forward with outside foot, plant & run deeper than QB. Look at the ball, & take it from QB. Never run deeper to go around a defender-turn upfield instead

10. (Wing Right) Bootleg Right



**Blocking:** Base, but Offside G pull  
**QB:** Reverse pivot, fake to TB, Bootleg  
**FB:** Block 3 Man  
**TB:** Fake getting the ball, run into 1 Man  
**WB:** Be positive 3 Man is blocked. If he is, lead downfield

PASSING PLAYS

We use four types of passing plays: **Action**, **Drop**, **Run&Shoot**, and **Sprint**.

- 1) **Sprint**: QB sprints out, reading receivers on the run. If no one is open, he runs the ball.
- 2) **Run & Shoot**: QB does mini-sprint to behind tackle, on a deeper angle than sprint. He can set up, or throw on the run.
- 3) **Action**: QB fakes a running play first.
- 4) **Drop**: QB drops back 5 steps (3 steps on 3-step drop pass), sets up and passes.

PASS ROUTE DEFENITIONS

Hook: fake fly, stop quickly, turn inside to QB

Square: forward 5 yards and then to outside at 90\*

Slant: forward 5 yards and then to outside at 45\*

Post: forward 5 yards and then to inside at 20\*

Quick Post: to the inside at 20\*

Post out: forward 3 steps, inside 3 steps at 30\*, then outside at 45\*

Arrow: toward the sideline, at an angle usually no deeper than 10 yards

Fly: run directly at defender, go around him (best way is opposite his turn), then get back on track. QB shouldn't need to know which side you went around him.

Flare: (run by the TB) to outside, parallel to LOS. Then belly back and turn up field.

Seam: between two zone defenders. Often along the hash marks.

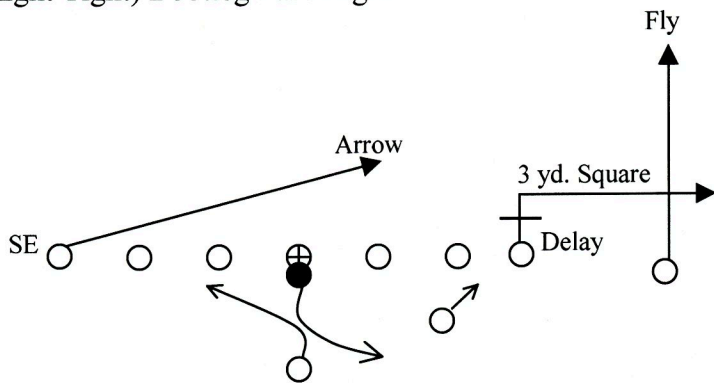


GOLDEN RULES-Receiving:  
 Run Precise Patterns  
 Catch Away From Your Body  
 Look Ball In



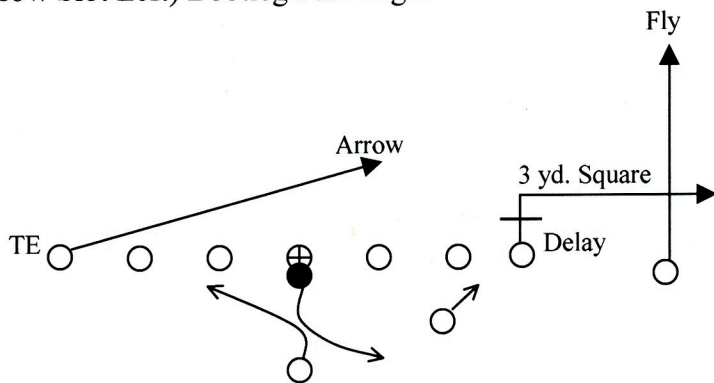
PASSING PLAYS (p.1)

1. (Pro Right Tight) Bootleg Pass Right



**Formation:** Pro Tight, Narrow Slot  
**Type:** Action  
**QB:** Execute Bootleg (fake to TB), look Deep, Crossing, Delay  
**FB:** Block 3 Man after receiver releases him  
**TB:** Fake handoff, block 3 Man  
**Crossing Receiver:** Run hard, run Arrow in front of Safety, but behind MLB  
**Delay Rec:** Block for 2 counts, run 3-yard square

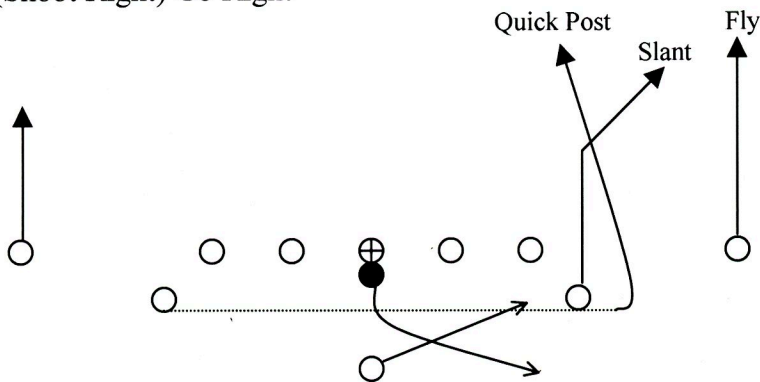
1B. (Narrow Slot Left) Bootleg Pass Right



**Same play, different Formation**  
 Notice the TE now runs the Arrow, and the WB now runs the Delay.

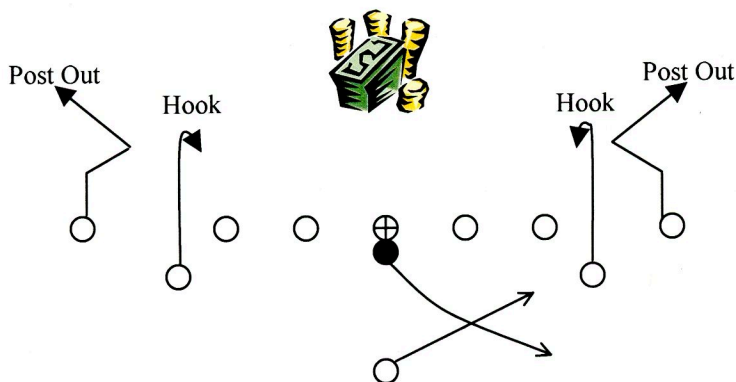
*When we run the Bootleg Pass on the goal line, Outside Receiver takes a narrow split and runs a Post-out to the back corner of the Endzone.*

2. (Shoot Right) Go Right



**Formation:** Shoot  
**Type:** Sprint  
**QB:** #1 Rec = Outside WB  
 #2 Rec = Motion WB  
 If Blitz, throw Hot to Motion WB  
**Motion WB:** Cut behind Outside WB  
**FB:** Block 3 Man on the Strong Side

3. (Shoot Right) Money Right

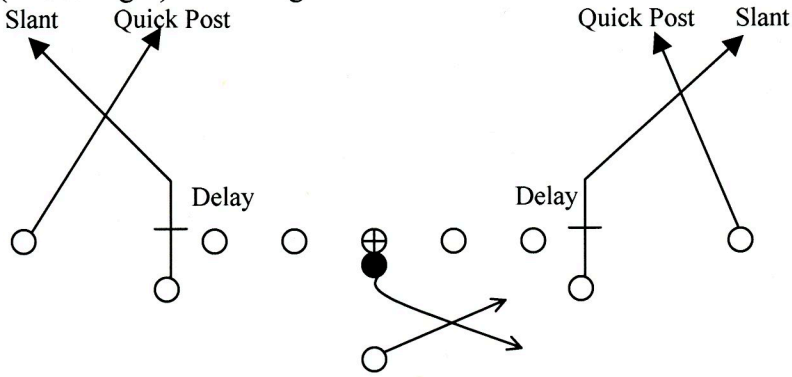


*This is great for short yardage and 2-Point conversions.*  
**Formation:** Shoot  
**Type:** Sprint  
**QB:** Look Hook, then Post-out. Also, are the defenders out of position to cover the Post-out?  
**FB:** Block 3 Man on the Strong Side  
**WB's:** 2-5 yard Hook, whatever yardage is needed  
**Wide Receivers:** Post-out (remember to line-up closer in so you have room)



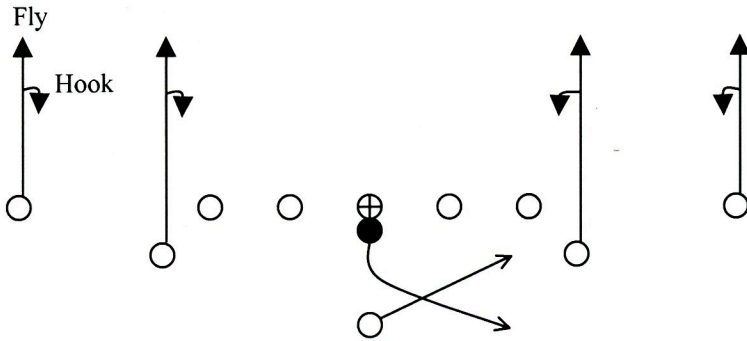
PASSING PLAYS (p.2)

4. (Shoot Right) Cross Right



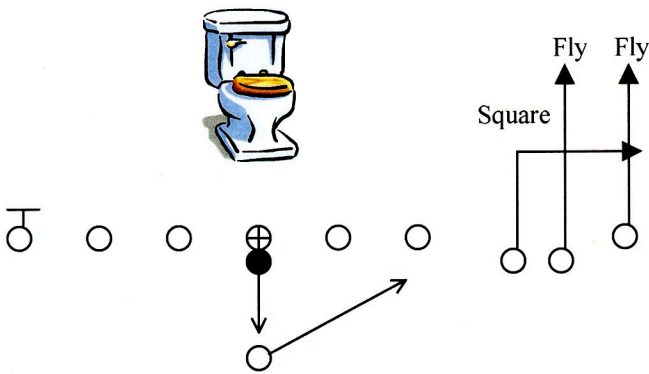
**Formation:** Shoot  
**Type:** Sprint  
**QB:** #1 Rec = Wide Rec  
 #2 Rec = Inside Rec  
**FB:** Block 3 Man on the Strong Side  
**Wide Rec:** Take a narrow split  
**Inside Rec:** Delay 1 count, let Wide Rec cross in front of you, run Slant, look quickly.

5. (Shoot Right) Hook (or Fly) Right



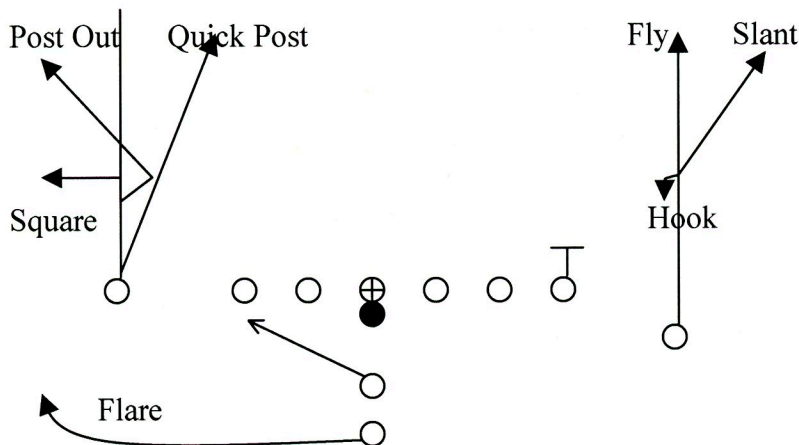
**Formation:** Shoot  
**Type:** Sprint  
**QB:** Look right to left  
**FB:** Block 3 Man on the Strong Side  
**Receivers:** If Hook, it is 5 yards, or it is 1 yard past the 1<sup>st</sup> Down Marker or Endzone.  
 If Fly, don't drift to the side, because there are 4 receivers going deep.

6. (Trips Right) Flush Right



**Formation:** Closed Trips, Open Trips  
**Type:** Sprint, Drop, or Action  
**QB:** Look Fly, then Square  
**FB:** Block 3 Man on the Open Side  
**Wide Rec:** Take a narrow split  
**Inside Rec:** Delay 1 count, let Wide Rec cross in front of you, run Slant, look quickly.

7. (Pro Right) 3-Step Drop (or 5-Step Drop)



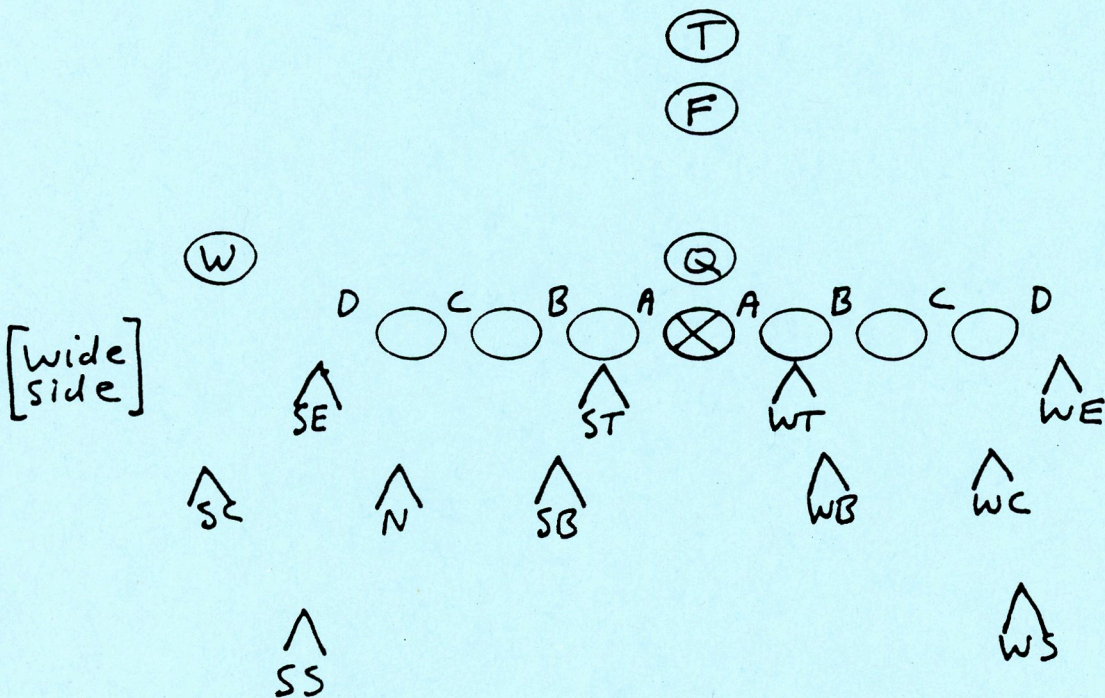
**Formation:** Pro  
**Type:** 3-Step or 5-Step  
**FB:** Block 3 Man on Open Side  
**TB:** Run Flare (or 3-yard Square) to Open Side  
**TE:** Block  
**Patterns:**  
 Square (Sam)  
 Hook (Henry)  
 Post (Paul)  
 Quick Post (Quick)  
 Post-out (Otto)  
 Fly (Frank)

## DEFENSE

We use a NICKEL defense, composed of two ends, two tackles, three linebackers (strong, weak and nickel), two cornerbacks and two safeties.

Our strongside players usually play to the wider side of the field.

Our basic nickel defense is shown against a pro formation to our left, with I backs. Each defensive player is designated. SE = strong end, WE = weak end, etc. Each gap between offensive linemen is given a letter.





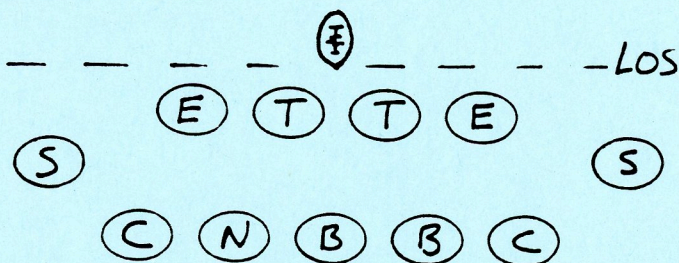
## Defensive Terminology

Just as our defense has a strong and weak side, so does the offense. The strong side of the offense is the side with the extra man (in the pro formation above, their wingback is to our left, so their strong side is left). Their weak side is the other side.

A balanced formation has an even number of players on both sides (example is a wishbone formation). If a balanced formation has one split end, we call the tight end side the strong side. If the formation is completely balanced, we call the wide side of the field their strong side.

Most teams run and pass more often to their strong side. Also, they often run a particular play from a certain formation. Defenders should be aware of these tendencies.

## Defensive Huddle and Calls



We have important information to exchange, before the next play starts. The first three items take place in our huddle, which is formed quickly, opposite the ball and near the LOS. The last three happen after the offense lines up in their formation.

1. A defensive captain will call the down and distance, and the wide side (usually, this is where our "strong" players align).
2. Another defensive captain, having gotten the coaches signal, will call the defensive play (more about our different defenses will come later in the playbook).
3. Share information about the offense - perhaps one of their linemen gives away whether it is a run or pass, by his stance. Or, warn your teammates about a receiver with outstanding speed. The huddle then breaks, and our defense watches the offensive huddle break, aligning correctly to the formation.
4. A defensive captain calls the offensive formation and their strong side (example: pro left, I backs).
5. Our five man-to-man defenders call the jersey number of the man they are covering.
6. Our safeties check that all five eligible receivers are covered correctly.

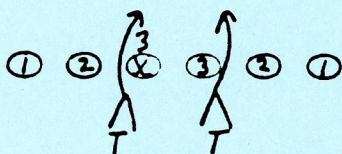


## Basic Alignment

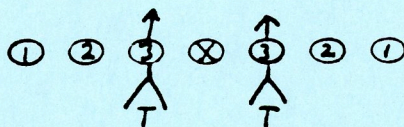
ENDS - Align on the LOS, outside the end man on the LOS. Never allow the end man to hook you to the inside. If the TE splits three yards or more, you can move to outside the tackle. If motion brings a back into a position to hook you, you must adjust wider.

TACKLES - Align on the LOS.

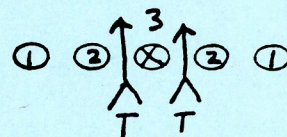
1. If there are two tight ends, align head on the third man in (usually the guard).
2. If there is one split end, align on the outside shoulder of the third man in (tackle toward the SE, outside shoulder of the center. Tackle toward the TE, outside shoulder of the guard).
3. If there are two split ends, align in the A gaps.



one TE, one SE



two TE's, no SE's



no TE's two SE's

Align outside shoulder  
Rush outside gaps

Ex. 2

Align and rush over guards

Ex. 1

Align and rush  
A gaps

Ex. 3

LINEBACKERS AND CORNERBACKS - The offense has five eligible receivers, two ends and three backs. Our five man-to-man pass defenders (three LBs and two CBs) cover them. The corners cover the widest ones and the backers cover the three inside ones. Your depth off the LOS will vary, according to the defense called: TIGHT (crowd the LOS), NORMAL (3 or 4 yards deep), LOOSE (5 yards deep).

If your man is in the backfield, and we are in a TIGHT defense, you are at NORMAL depth.

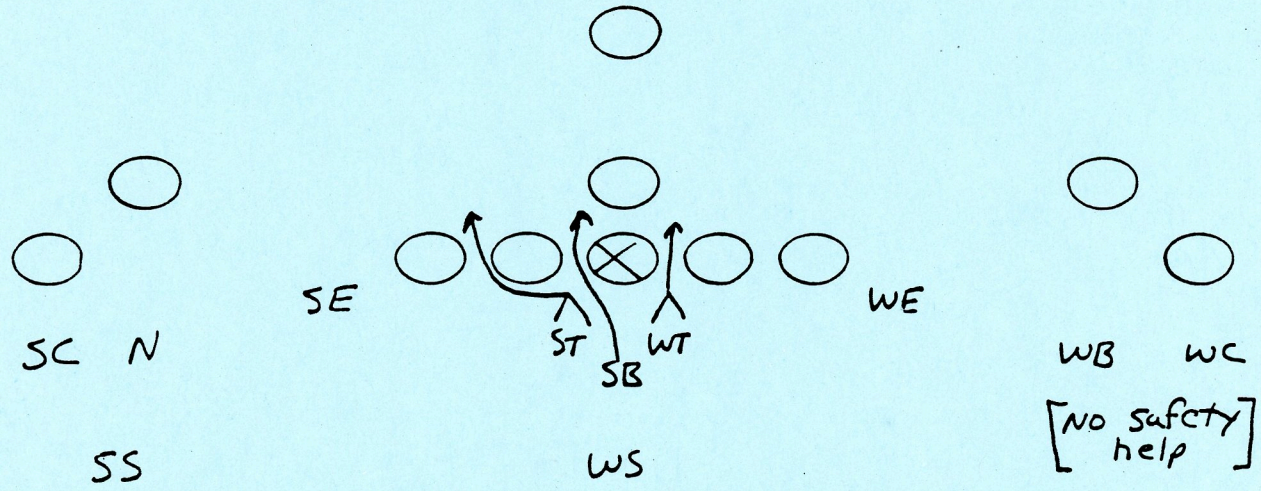
In a TIGHT defense, take away the inside pass route by aligning to the inside of the receiver.

SAFETIES - Start 12 yards deep. If the ball is in the middle of the field, align on the hash marks. Since you must cover all the receivers in your half of the field, you will adjust your basic position to the receivers in your half of the field.

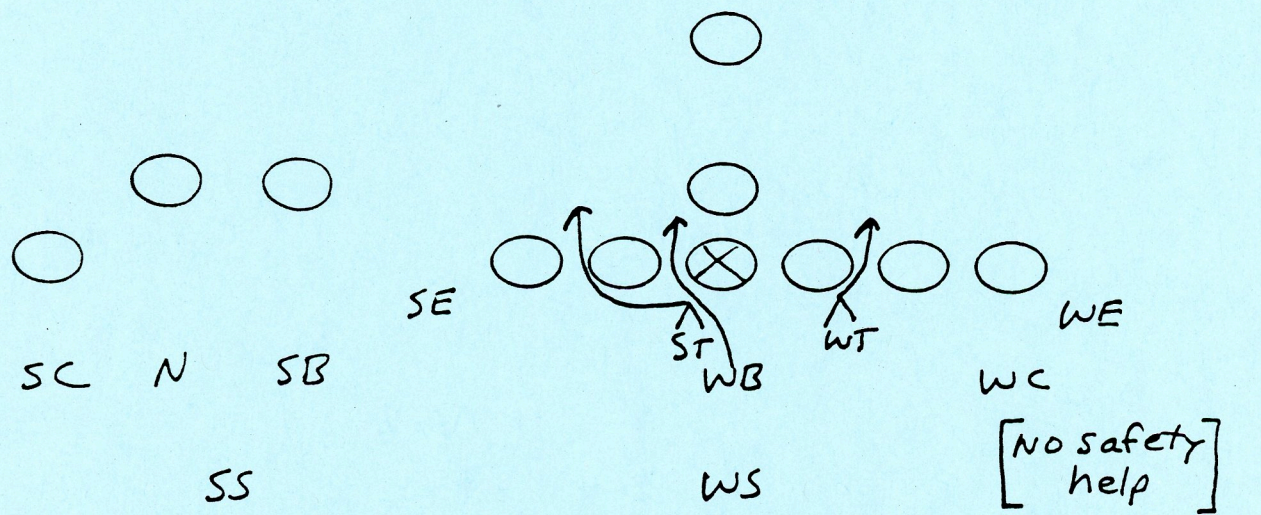


EXAMPLES OF BLITZ vs. 1-BACK OFFENSES

Blitz vs. 4 wides (twins)



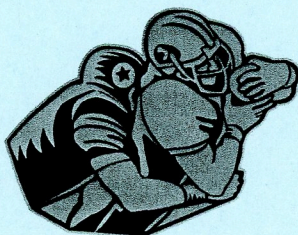
Blitz vs. trips





### Nickel Defenses

1. NORMAL – Our five man defenders align at 3 to 4 yard depth, head on their man. If against a wide receiver, align inside your man.
2. LOOSE – Our five man defenders align at 5 yard depth, head on their man. If against a wide receiver, align inside your man.
3. TIGHT – Our five man defenders crowd the LOS, aligning to the inside of their man. Take away the inside pass route. If your man is in the backfield, align at normal depth, head on him.
4. HEAD-ON TIGHT – Same as tight, but defenders are head on their man, watching the play as they jam their man. If your man is in the backfield, align at normal depth, head on him.
5. 1 or 2 SAFETIES UP – Called when necessary to strengthen our run defense. The safeties will NOT help defend a wide receiver. The cornerback is on his own. The safeties align over the second eligible receiver, and move up to eight yards depth.  
NOTE: if there is no wide receiver to your side, the only change is that the safety aligns at eight yards from the LOS.
6. DOUBLE TEAM – called when necessary to strengthen our pass defense against a certain receiver. The safety to his side only covers the one receiver, always staying behind him. Other defenders to the double team side have no safety help.
7. STRONG SAFETY COVER – called when necessary to strengthen our run defense to the strong side. We free a man defender to the strong side from his pass coverage, so he only has run responsibility. The strong safety takes over his pass responsibility. Other defenders to the strong side have no safety help. The strong safety moves up to five yards from the LOS, since he is defending one man.
  - A. If there is no wide receiver, the strong cornerback is run only.
  - B. If there is a wide receiver, the nickel is run only.
8. BLITZ
  - A. If the offense has two backs in the backfield: the two defenders covering them will blitz the A gaps, as the tackles shoot the B gaps. The safeties cover the backs on a pass, if they release. This means that other man defenders have no safety help.
  - B. If the offense has one back in the backfield: the defender covering him blitzes the strong A gap, and our strong tackle shoots the B gap. Our weak safety aligns over the back, and covers him if he releases. This means that weak pass defenders have no safety help. This is shown in the diagrams below.





## Defensive Techniques

ENDS - Contain rush, forcing everything to the inside. On an outside run to you, meet the lead blocker with outside leverage, forcing the runner to cut towards the LOS. On flow away from you, stay at the depth of the ball, closing towards the play. Always expect a reverse or counter, and stay under control. It is important to "stay at home", expecting a reverse, until the ball crosses the LOS.

TACKLES - Stop the QB sneak first. Never get driven back off the LOS.

1. If aligned over the guard (there are two TE's), hit and control him as you read the play. If he tries to cut you off, fight the pressure and fight through his head. If double teamed, get low and fight through the gap.
2. If aligned on the blocker's outside shoulder (one split end), or in the A gap (two split ends), fight through the outside gap as you read the play. Use a sprinter's stance and a technique (like the club and swim). Be aware of the inside run first. If double teamed, get low and fight through the gap.

## LINEBACKERS AND CORNERBACKS

Align at correct depth (tight, normal or loose), and either head on or inside (if TIGHT) your receiver or back. Play PASS first! Until proven otherwise, every play is a pass. Jam your man if he pass releases, and cover him. Hit and shed your man if it is a run.

Our five defenders are locked on their five eligibles. If your man goes in motion or shifts before the snap, you must go with him.

The two defenders defending the fullback and tailback in an I formation, follow these rules:

1. Cover the first back going to your side.
2. If both backs flow to your side, cover the tailback.
3. If both backs flow opposite you, cover the fullback.

## TIPS

1. The order of our five "man" defenders is always the same: wide side to our left; SC,N,SB,WB,WC. Wide side to our right; WC,WB,SB,N,SC.
2. Defenders on tight ends should never get beat to the inside.
3. Offside LB's must stay behind the ball, expecting the runner to cut back. Shuffle until the runner's lead on you forces you to alley.
4. If you are defending a back who pass blocks, back pedal until the QB sets up to pass. Then stop and react to his throwing



## SAFETIES

Play pass first. Never let a receiver get behind you. Expect every play to be a play-action pass, and every sweep to be a sweep pass, until proven otherwise. Warn the other safety if one of your receivers crosses over the middle (yell "crossing") Cover the receivers, don't just cover the "grass" on your side of the field.

Since all of our other defenders are pursuing from the inside, you must force the runner back into our pursuit, by attacking from the outside. A back should never get around you to the outside.

## DEFENSIVE CALLS DURING THE PLAY

To help your teammates know what's going on, we YELL:

RUN - when the ball is carried across the line of scrimmage.

PASS - when the offensive line pass blocks

BALL - when a pass is thrown.

BINGO - when a fumble is loose.

FIRE - we intercept a pass.



## NICKEL PASS DEFENSE

### Man to man defenders ( cornerbacks and linebackers)

#### Major principals:

- A) Do not allow receiver to release to the inside.
- B) Close ground if he releases to the outside.  
( CATCH HIM )
- C) Do not watch the QB - play the ball when it arrives.

#### Technique:

- 1) If TIGHT, crowd the LOS, align to inside of receiver.
- 2) Feet are close together, so you're agile.
- 3) Read his release, don't lunge at him.
- 4) Hit him under his shoulder pad with your opposite hand, to knock him off balance ( but, do NOT be over-aggressive).
- 5) Catch him, or get stride for stride.
- 6) Man to man defense means " look at the man". Watch his hips for change of direction, watch his hands for receiving key.
- 7) Play the ball with your hand that's nearest the ball. Get your hand inside his hand, and if the ball is there pull his hand away.
- 8) Tackle the receiver with your other arm. "Tackle the ball" - make a high or low tackle, depending on the height of the ball.
- 9) If he releases inside successfully, fight to get back inside, which means in the line from QB to receiver.
- 10) If the receiver splits wide, over emphasize your inside position.
- 11) If your man has more speed than you do, start deeper and farther inside, and shuffle backward, rather than hit the receiver.

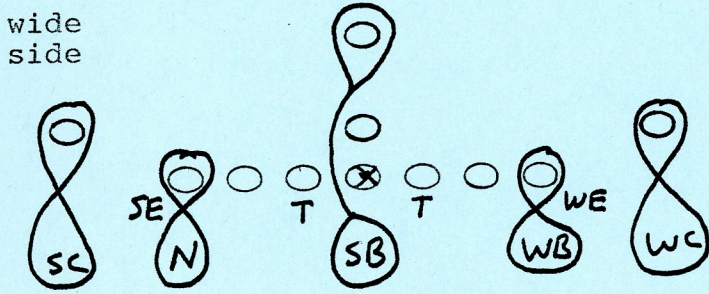
#### Safeties:

- 1) Begin by back pedaling, as you read the receivers.
- 2) When threatened, turn your hips and run.
- 3) Generally, you're looking inside at the QB, when you turn and run.
- 4) After you've turned and are running, if you have to turn the other way, do so like an outfielder.
- 5) If two receivers threaten you deep, play the mid-point, but favor the inside receiver, as he's nearer the QB.

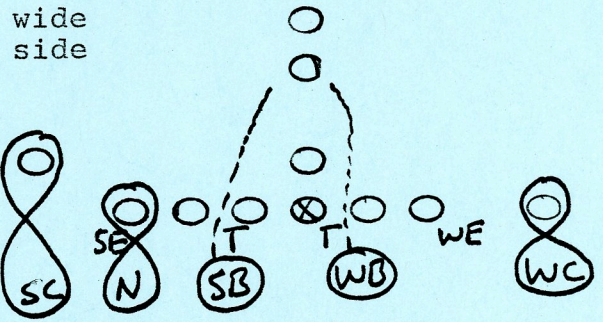


PASS COVERAGE ASSIGNMENTS

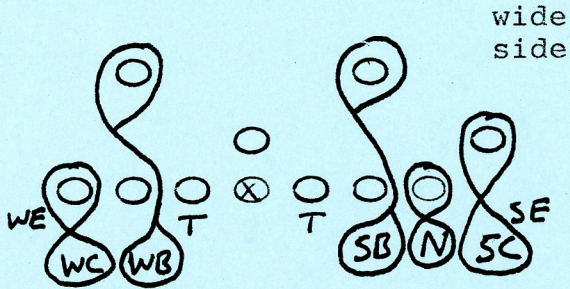
4 Wides - 2 TE's



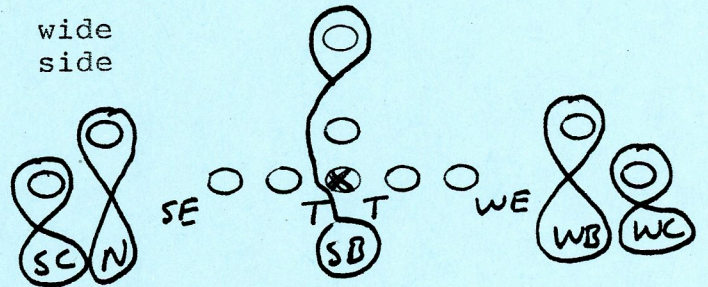
Pro



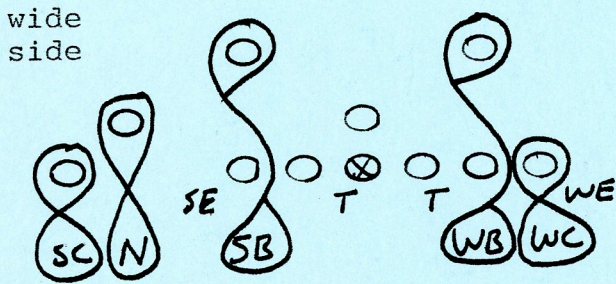
Wing



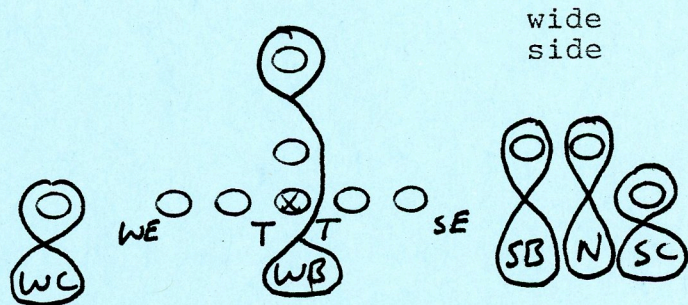
4 Wides



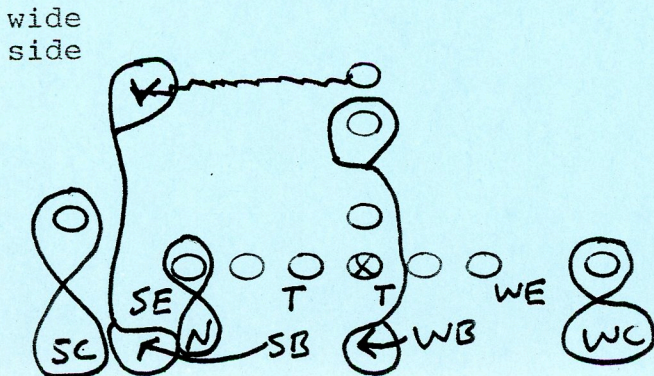
Slot



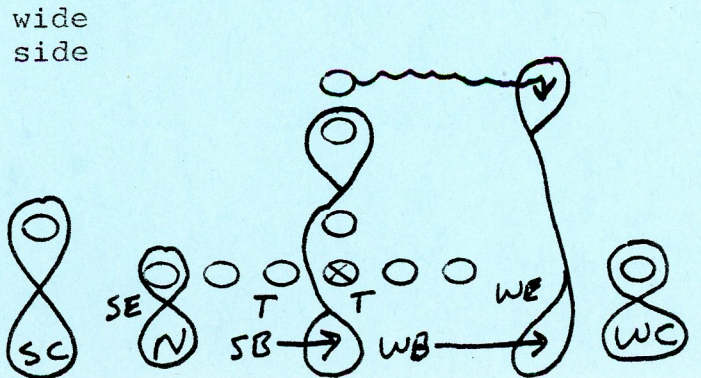
Trips



MOTION  
Pro to Trips



MOTION  
Pro to 4 wide





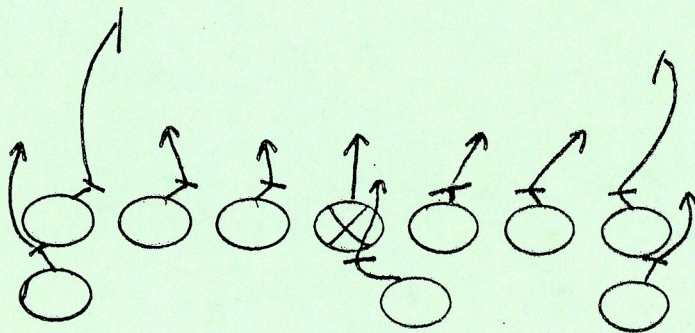
## PURSUIT

1. PURSUIT IS PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF OUR DEFENSIVE FOOTBALL TEAM.
2. WHAT PURSUIT DOES
  - A. ELIMINATES LONG TD'S (THE BIG PLAY).
  - B. DISCOURAGES YOUR OPPONENTS (ESPECIALLY THE BALL CARRIER).
  - C. HELPS TO COVER ANY POSSIBLE MISTAKES IN OUR DEFENSE (HELP YOUR TEAMMATE).
3. WHAT IT TAKES TO PURSUE
  - A. PURSUIT IS FIRST A MENTAL PROCESS (IF YOU WANT TO, YOU CAN).
  - B. VISUALIZE PURSUING AND MAKING GREAT PLAYS (BE A BIG PLAY GUY).
  - C. PHYSICAL CONDITIONING IS NECESSARY SO YOU CAN HAVE GREAT PURSUIT EACH PLAY. (MUST GET TO EVERY PLAY, NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE.)
  - D. SPEED (THINK FAST AND QUICKLY), WE CAN ALL IMPROVE OUR SPEED AND QUICKNESS.
  - E. GET OFF BLOCKS --- GET TO BALL.
  - F. STAY ON YOUR FEET (NEVER GET KNOCKED DOWN).
4. HOW TO PURSUE
  - A. PLAY YOUR RESPONSIBILITY FIRST.
  - B. TAKE CORRECT COURSE TO BALL.
  - C. WANTING TO GET THERE (MENTAL).



## Punt

Alignment:



○ (12 yards)

**Blocking:** Line and ends - protect the inside gap.  
Inside back - align behind the center after the snap.  
Block the first man through the A gaps.  
Outside backs - block the first man to the outside of our end.

**Punter:** If near our own end zone, know if you should take a safety on a bad snap.  
Get in front of a bad snap (like an infielder).  
After the kick, call the direction: left, middle, right or short.

**Coverage:** After the ball is kicked, the line and ends fan out, as they sprint downfield, surround the returner and tackle him.

The center runs directly at the ball, and the guards and tackles angle wider.

The ends must contain the returner, and not let him reach the sideline.

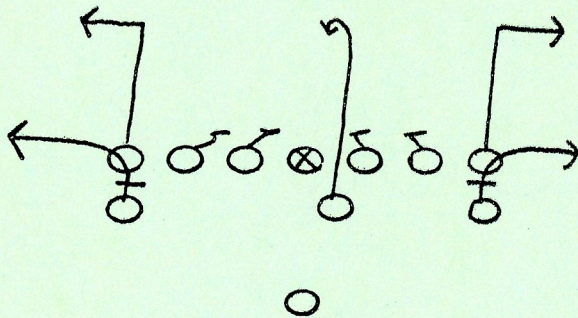
The three backs are the 2's, and go downfield five yards behind the linemen. They surround the returner and tackle him.

The kicker is the safety. He goes downfield ten yards behind the 2's and prevents a touchdown.

**Fair catch rule:** The signal is one arm extended upward, waving side to side. When the signal is given, neither team can advance the ball. The kicking team can not bump or tackle the fair catcher. If he muffs the ball, either team can recover it, but it can't be advanced.



Fake punt and pass



Line - protect the inside gap

Ends - square out, three yards past the first down marker.

Outside backs - Block the rusher. If there is no rush, or your man gets by you, slant to the flat.

Middle back - Hook, three yards past the first down marker.



## Punt return

We use our nickel defense, with the safeties deeper than usual. The ends cage rush. Pass defenders: hold up your man as long as possible to allow for a return. The returner will head for the nearest sideline. Stay away from a short kick. Yell POISON.

Defensive linemen should try to block the punt. The ends cage rush, as they try to block the punt.

### TIPS

WATCH THE BALL, and go on the snap. Aim for a spot four yards in front of the kicker, and be going toward the sideline as you reach it. If you miss the ball, you can't touch the kicker.

### DON'T

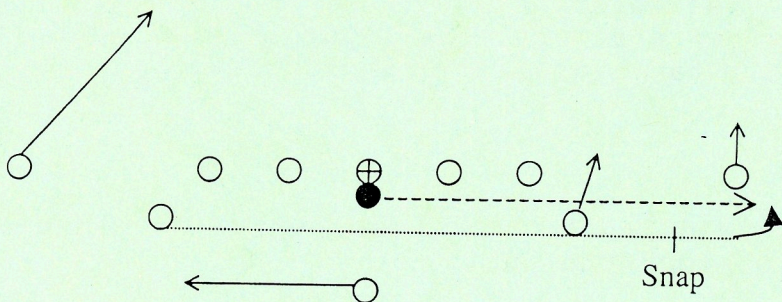
Don't be offside.  
Don't rough the kicker. If the kicker begins to run, there is NO roughing the kicker penalty.  
Don't fall on a blocked kick - pick it up and score!  
Don't clip or block below the waist on the return.

Note: A partially blocked punt that crosses the line of scrimmage is the same as an unblocked punt - stay away from it.



# TRICK PLAYS

## 1. (Shoot Right) Bubble Screen



**Formation:** Shoot

**Type:** Sprint

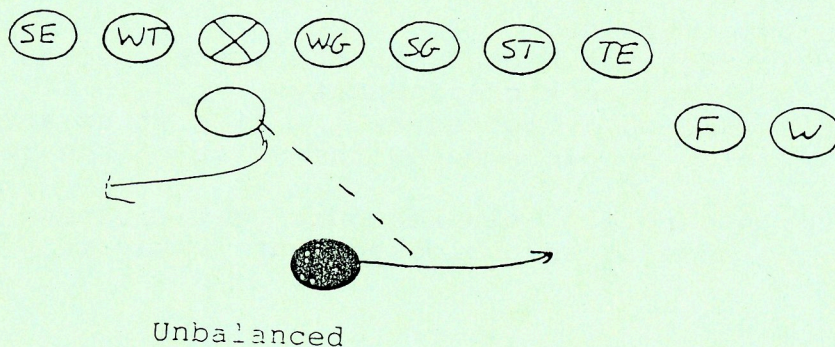
**QB:** 1-step drop, but continue to drop after the throw to avoid a possible lateral. Get ball thrown as soon as possible. Aim at receiver's hands, at "number" height.

**Motion WB:** Run full speed straight away from QB. Do not lose any ground to LOS. Look over inside shoulder. Catch should be made 8 yards outside original alignment.

**FB:** Fake Sweep to opposite side.

**ONSIDE WB:** Block D.End low, get his hands down so he can't deflect the pass.

## 2. (Unbalanced) Sweep



NOTE: we don't know how the defense will adjust

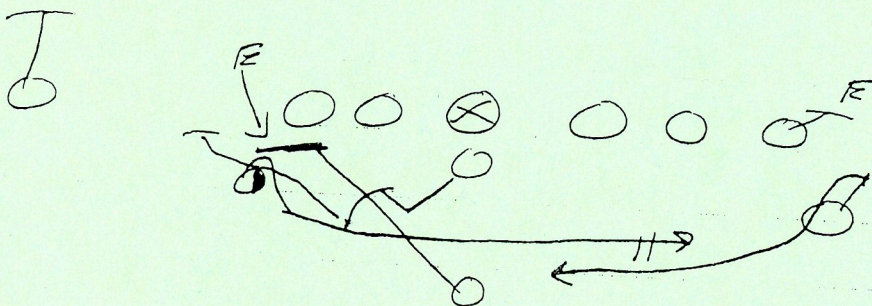
Line - Block man on you. If no one on you, scoop to onside.

FB - Block first defender outside TE's man.

WB - block second defender outside TE's man.

SE - align tight

## 3. (Shoot) Double Reverse



TB - fake OT, get end (Action Pass)

QB - Give to WB, Lead Block



## THE CLOCK

63

I. TIME Time generally becomes a factor late in the half and late in the game. The importance of time is directly related to the score. When you are ahead, play to consume time and prevent a score. Know how many time outs your opponent has left. When behind, conserve time and try to get the ball as quickly as possible. Know how many time outs you have left.

II. TIME OUTS Each team is allowed 3 time outs during each half.

III. THE CLOCK STOPS IN THESE SITUATIONS:

- A. A touchdown, touchback or safety is scored.
- B. A time out is called, starts on snap
- C. A live ball goes out of bounds, starts on snap
- D. A forward pass is incomplete, starts on snap.
- E. A period ends, starts on snap.
- F. A fair catch is made, starts on snap
- G. The ball changes possession, starts on signal.
- H. A team is awarded a first down, starts on signal.
- I. A measurement is called for, starts on signal.
- J. There is an injury, starts on signal.
- K. When a penalty is called, it starts according to how the play ended.

IV. CLOCK DEFENSE AHEAD

Defensively, we have the clock in our favor, and want it to run.

A. Things we want to do:

1. Keep the clock running.
  - a. Keep ball carrier in bounds.
  - b. no penalties
  - c. Stay in bounds after a turn over.
2. Get up off the pile slowly.

B. Things we want to look for:

1. No huddle offense
2. Passes thrown close to the sideline.

3. Trick plays and unusual formations (trips to the narrow side).

4. offense going on quick count.

5. Desperation play, last play of the half or end of the game (hail mary)

### CLOCK (no huddle) OFFENSE

Our no-huddle offense is designed to run plays quickly when time is important (usually at the end of a half).

At the end of each play, if the clock is running, the team sprints to the LOS and gets set as quickly as possible. The QB calls the formation and play as the team approaches the LOS.

The snap count is always "SET". The play is called by a code word.

### WINGBACK SHIFT

The coach determines whether this is used.

The WB lines up anywhere he wants as he breaks the huddle.

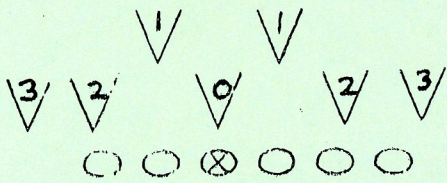
When the QB begins his cadence, the WB sprints to his correct position. He must be set for one full second before the ball is snapped, or be in motion parallel or away from the LOS.



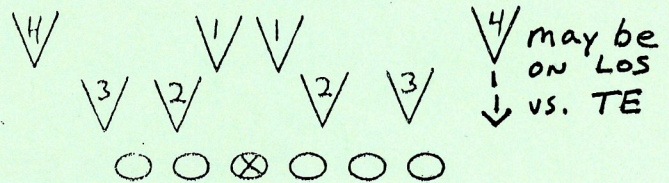




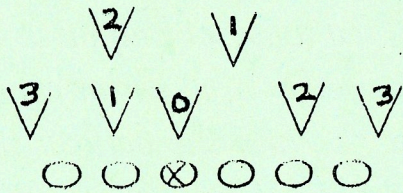
BASE BLOCKING RULES, ILLUSTRATED AGAINST TYPICAL DEFENSES



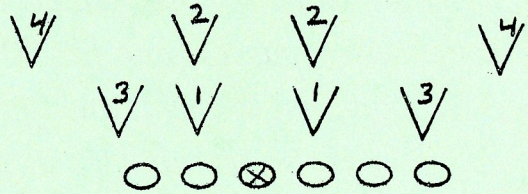
50



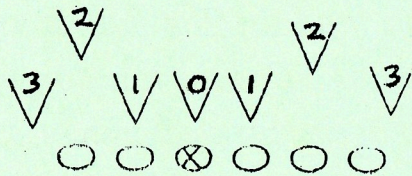
4-4



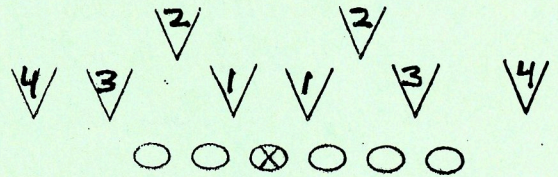
50 - close down to open side



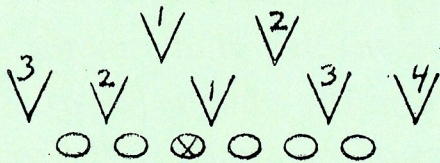
4-4 Stack



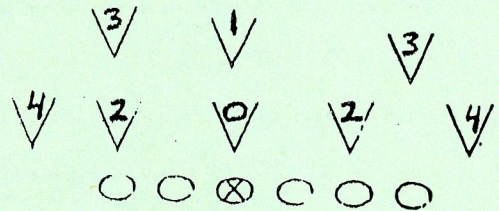
50 - Eagle



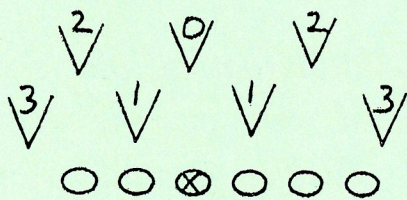
Wide Tackle 6-2



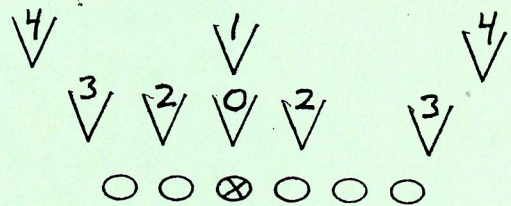
50 - Overshifted to tight end



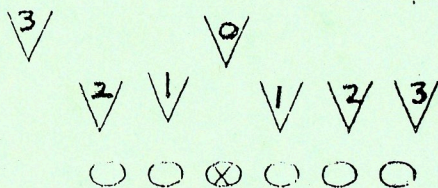
5-3



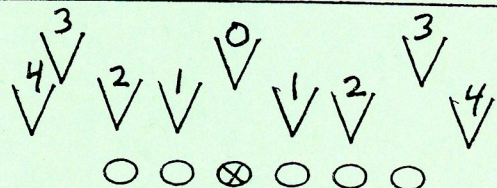
College 4-3



5-3 - Linebackers wide



pro 4-3



6-3