

CH 3: TEMPO, BACKFIELDS & FULLBACKS

TEMPO: pace of play

The Tex-Bone executes plays from any tempo. When considering the Tex-Bone it is important to understand that if you really like what you are currently doing with your offense in terms of tempo there is no reason to change from the current pace of play.

Huddle

Huddle pace is the first tempo installed in the Tex-Bone. Our team frequently huddles during the course of a game. Huddling is **not** done to slow the game down. We huddle to make sure the right personnel are on the field and that communication is reliable. Our huddle is done as crisply as possible. There are no prescribed spots in the huddle—there is no diagram telling players where to stand. The idea is to get close enough to the quarterback to hear the call and get lined up quickly. Slot/wing players and split ends learn how far from the offensive line group to stand and still get the call. Players also learn to echo the call to each other.

An efficient huddle is often faster than other alternatives by comparison. Consider a no huddle offense where everyone looks to the sideline to get nonverbal communication from cards or signals for example. It takes time for everyone to get the call, lineup in the formation, and run the play. Our operational speed is generally not slower than a traditional no huddle pace because we change personnel quickly, make the huddle call, and run out of the huddle to get set. When players are familiar with the system the speed increases.

Huddle Check

In some game plans we use particular formations, plays, or personnel groups labeled as “huddle indicators.” Hearing one of these indicators means we huddle prior to executing the next play. Some weeks the huddle check is not used at all and some weeks it is used a lot. This tempo means we huddle for some plays and not huddle for others.

The reason we designate something as a huddle indicator is game specific with the goal of avoiding tendencies that other teams pick up on. We do not huddle just because we're going to run an option play or because we're going to run a play with a long name. The specific aspects of each game plan that indicate a huddle check are unique from game-to-game.

The overarching intent is to create an advantage that is exploited with our pre-play tempo. We huddle when it is advantageous to our offense. We do not huddle when we find the different pace equally advantageous.

No Huddle

The Tex-Bone also runs effectively as a no huddle offense. There is a multitude of ways to signal or send plays to quarterback and offensive personnel. Any no huddle communication system a coach is familiar with and prefers to use is suitable for executing the Tex-Bone as a no huddle offense.

Hurry

The fourth tempo is a hurry tempo. All teams need a hurry-up tempo. Triple option teams are not exempt from this requirement. Teams need to familiarize themselves with all of the strategies associated with increased speed to use hurry up effectively. Homer Smith wrote the definitive philosophy on how to execute the hurry up offense in my opinion. He recommended that split ends, slots, and wings do not flip sides of the field from play-to-play. If a receiver gets caught downfield on our sideline they simply run off and someone substitutes in for the next play. With practice the Tex-Bone is an excellent hurry up offense operating as efficiently as any other system.

BACKFIELD ACTIONS:

12 ways the Tex-Bone is used to run and pass

The following pages detail twelve ways to execute the triple option Tex-Bone offense. Examining how the Tex-Bone runs and passes the ball gives coaches an idea of its versatility. These illustrations do not represent all of our Tex-Bone triple option formations. Twelve were selected because it's a round number and because they represent a strong cross section of possibilities without overburdening the reader. All twelve examples show dive option action to the right. Each formation is calibrated to show this.

The formation in Figure 26 is the Shotgun Flexbone. It is a good starting place because it represents the basic way to run triple option.

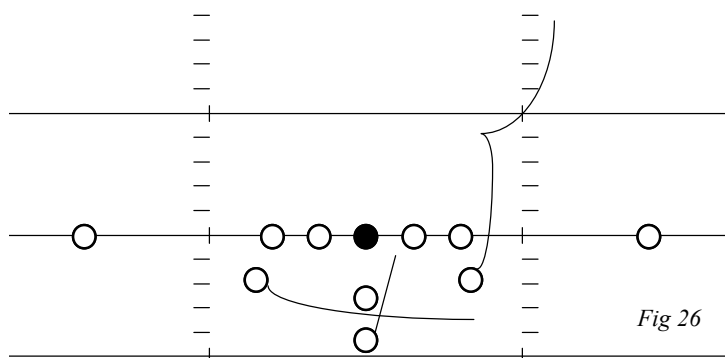


Figure 27 shows the right wing moved out to a slot position. Moving the wing changes the formation from a traditional Flexbone option into a 2x1 Open spread. This changes the defensive philosophy from “how do we cover the Flexbone” to “how do we cover 2x1 Open spread?” Every defense creates a 2x1 Open philosophy. Opponents are likely to defend this formation with a look that is standard to their defense. Figure 27 shows a dive towards the open slot.

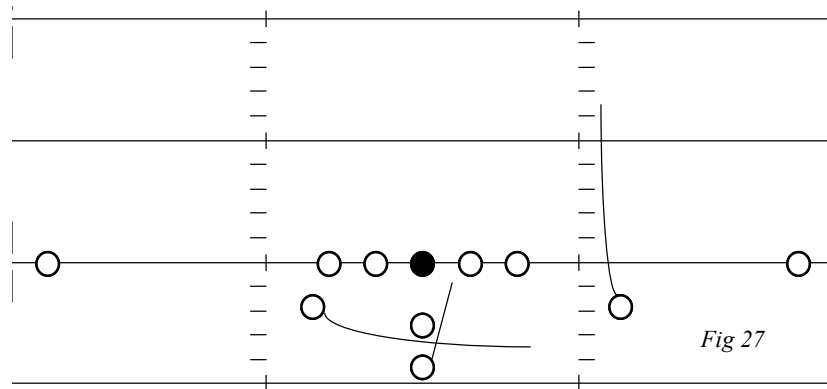
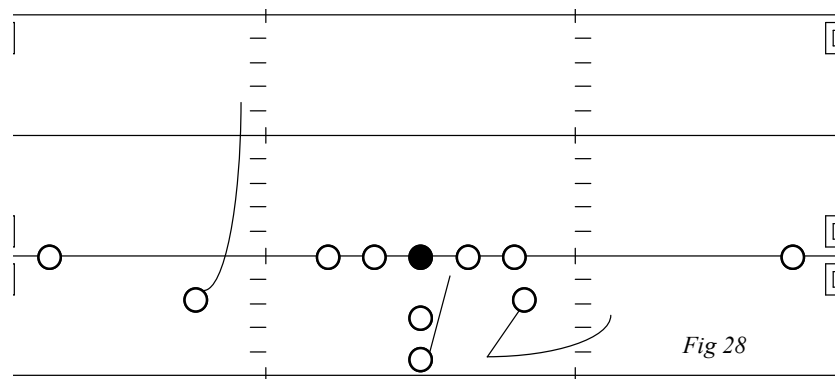


Figure 28 shows the dive option towards the wing from 2x1 Open spread.



The next Figure (29) shows how to move the slot back to a wing position—essentially motioning to a modified Flexbone before running dive option towards the side where the motion originated. At least fifty percent of the time we run dive option away from the direction that the motion originated. Schematically this demonstrates a sort of counter influence.

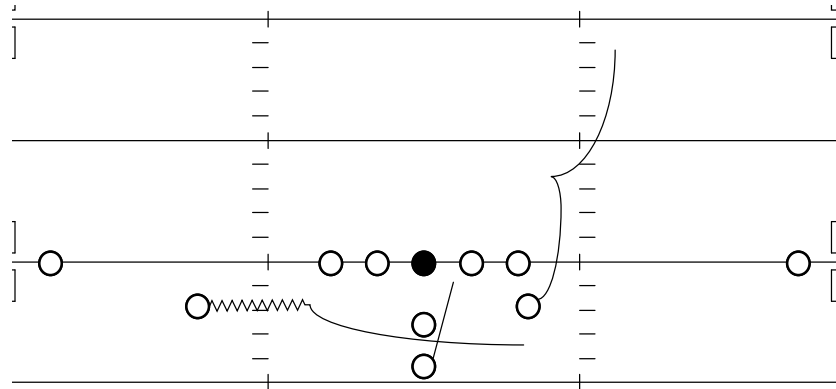


Figure 30 shows motion down to a wing position in a 2x2 Open set. Essentially this creates a modified 2x1 Open formation.

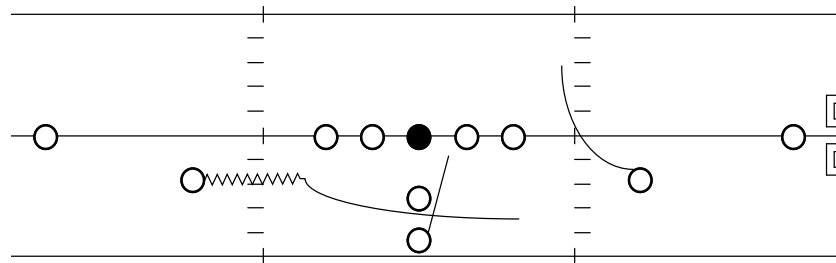


Fig 29

Another way to run dive option out of 2x2 Open is to motion a slot down to a wing and then run option back in the direction the motion player started (see Figure 31). Running option toward the motion is an effective tendency breaker and counter maneuver when defenses shift in response to motion.

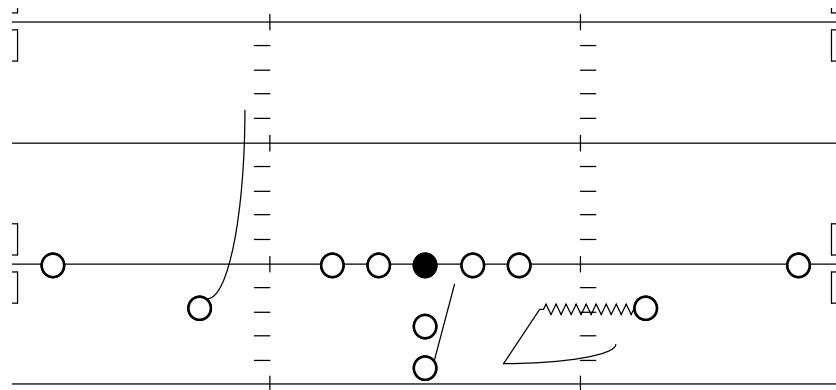
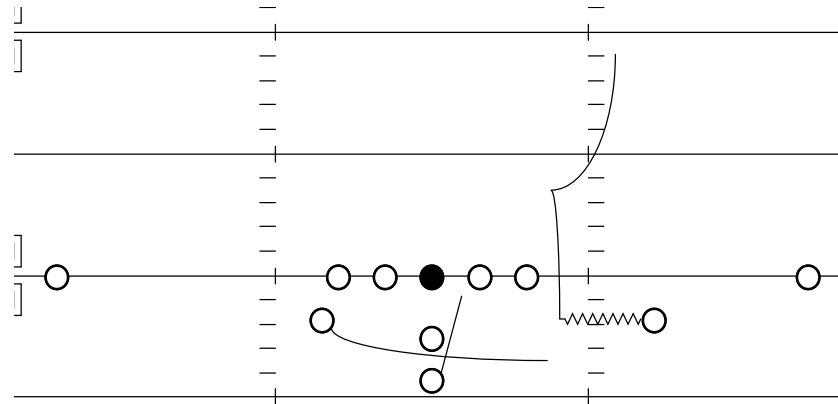


Fig 30

Figure 32 shows open slot motion to a wing with the option running toward the motion side. This motion shifts the play into a modified Flexbone formation. A key component of motioning to Flexbone rather than lining up in Flexbone is it traps the defense into a spread philosophy instead of a Flexbone philosophy.

Fig 31



We are also able to align the wing to the strong side of the formation—the same side of the 2x1 formation where the slot is (see Figure 33). This allows us to run dive option towards the alignment wing.

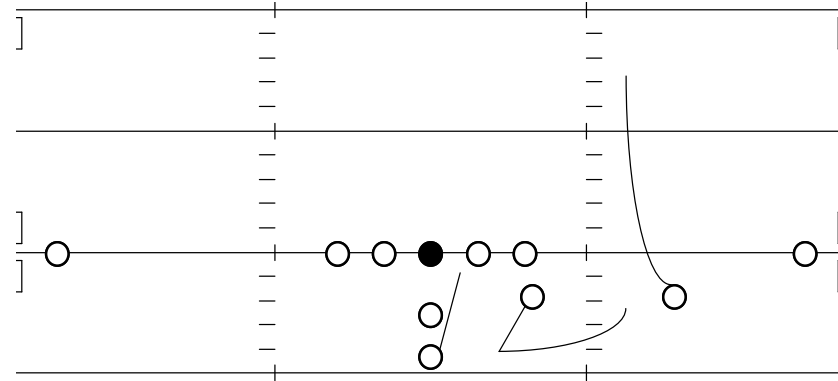


Fig 32

Figure 34 shows motion by the strong side wing to the weak side. The wing moves back toward the open slot at the snap to run option.

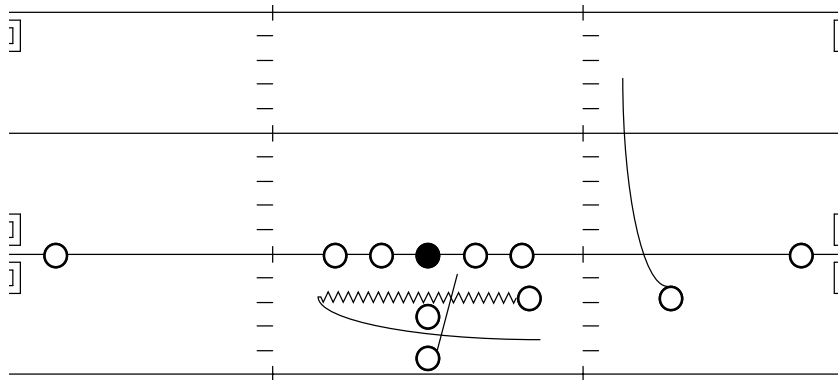
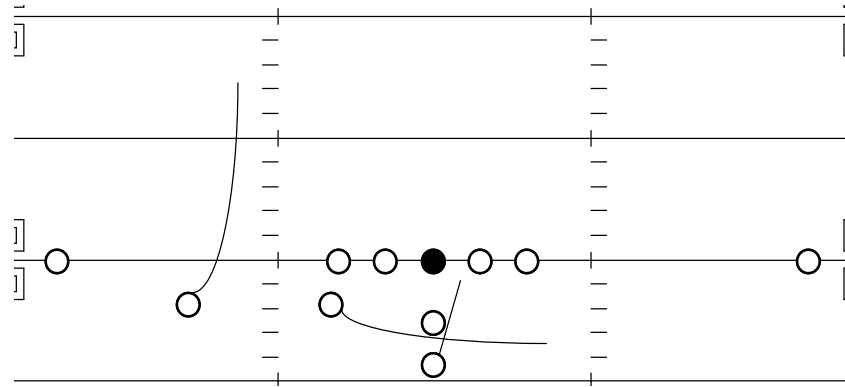


Fig 33

Another variation is running option away from the strong side wing. The option is away from the wing's initial alignment in Figure 35.

Fig 34



A 2x2 Open bunch formation is shown in Figure 36. The advantage of the bunch formation is that a slot receiver doesn't need a large head start to get into proper pitch relationship.

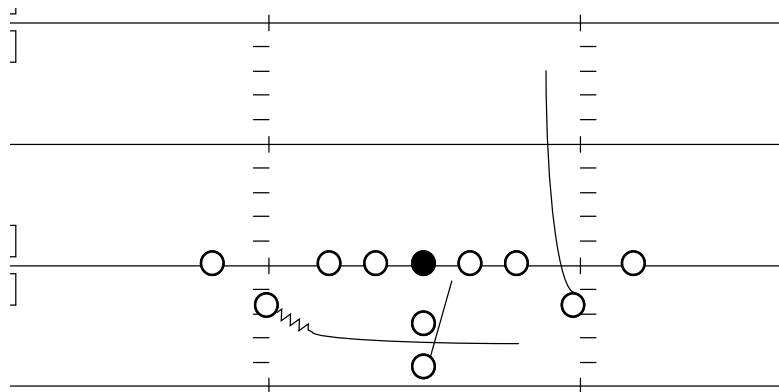


Fig 35

The 3x1 Open in Figure 37 motions a slot receiver down into a wing position. Generally the slot is moved over the top of the quarterback to run option toward the split end when we run this play. This is not our only choice for running the play however. An additional choice is bringing the motion player back in the direction he started from.

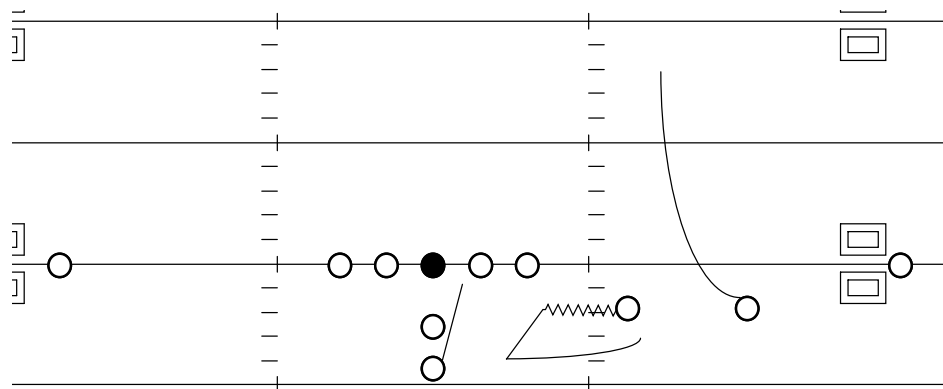
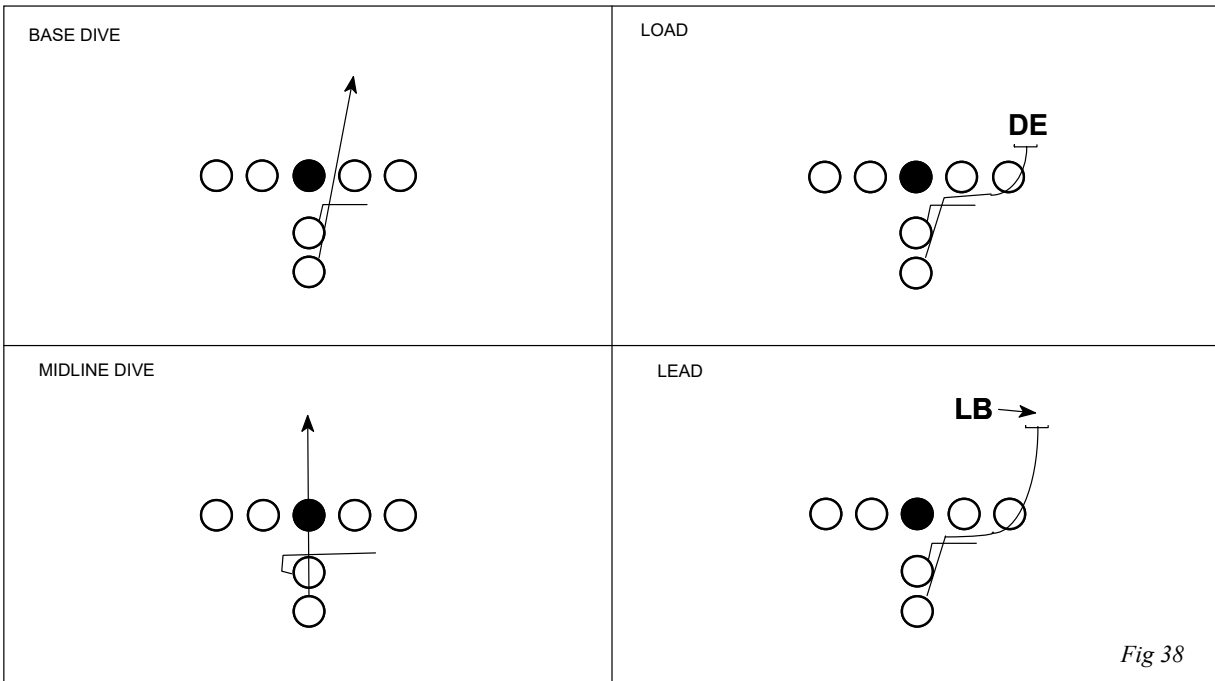


Fig 36

FULLBACK PATHS



Base Dive

Fullback paths are the same for run and pass plays. The base fullback path is shown in the upper left of Figure 38. The fullback is aiming at the A-gap. The quarterback's footwork matches the path of the fullback as they both step toward the line of scrimmage. Additional details about the fullback/quarterback mesh are outlined later.

Fullback Load

The term “load” by definition is assigning the fullback to block the defensive end (top right of Figure 38). The load path begins the same as the dive path. All four of our dive paths look identical through the mesh. After meshing with the quarterback the fullback veers his path to the edge and blocks the defensive end.

Fullback Lead

The bottom right of Figure 38 shows fullback lead. “Lead” is defined as assigning the fullback to the play side linebacker. Fullbacks take the same A-Gap aiming point on all dives. After meshing the fullback works to the outside and blocks the linebacker.

Midline Dive

The bottom left of Figure 38 shows the midline dive. This is one of our back pocket choices used in specific option situations when needed. We also use this choice for one-back spread runs. The advantage of the midline dive is it accounts for defensive ends that are difficult for the quarterback to read.

Some defensive ends try to slow play the dive mesh. What this means is the defensive end gives the quarterback a look that entices the dive handoff before collapsing on the fullback after the exchange. Another slow play tactic is to sit at the line of scrimmage and wait to see where the ball is going before reacting. Moving the dive line inside and diving down the midline forces the defensive end to commit faster.