
SECTION TWO

ALIGNMENT

3. Front Six Assignment
4. Blitz & Movement
5. Back Five Assignment

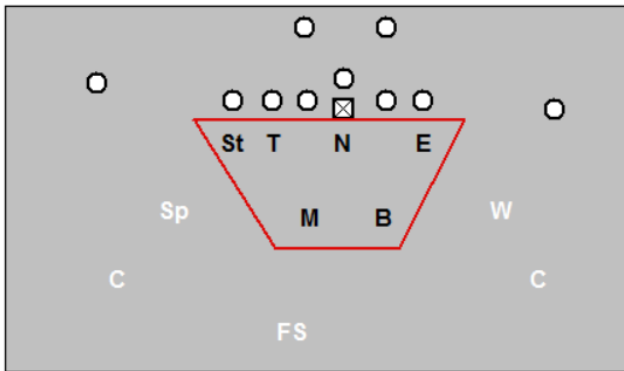


"WINNING IS A HABIT. WATCH YOUR THOUGHTS"

FRONT SIX Assignments

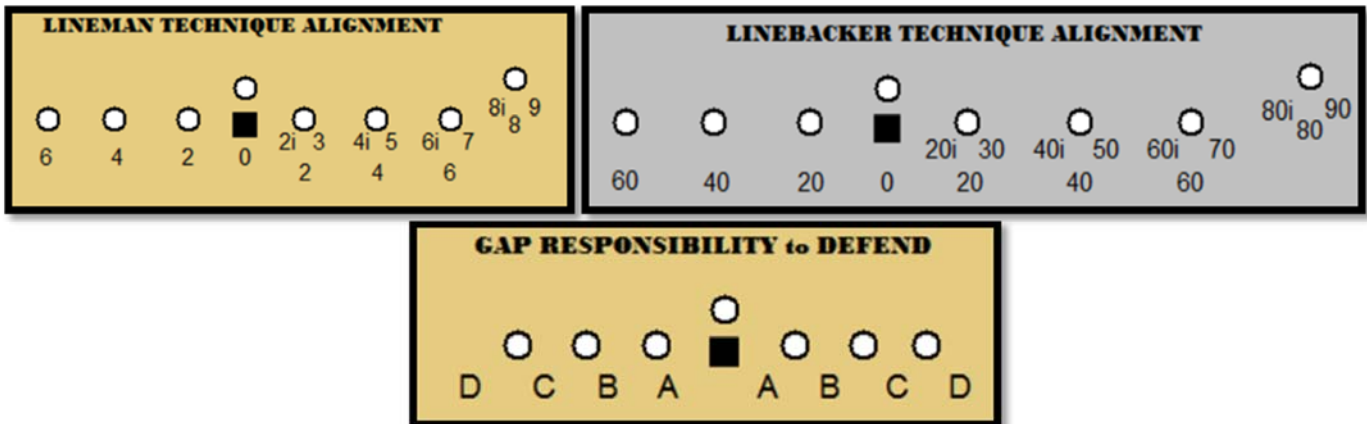
MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

1. Alignment: be in the right place
2. Assignment: Know What to Do
3. Aggressive: Pursue to the ball and tackle with attitude.



ALIGNMENT TERMINOLOGY

Our coaches use the following terminology to describe where we line up and where the ball is being ran. We call this “clinic talk” and we try very hard to not overwhelm our players with all of this. For example, I might tell our defensive line coach to put a player in a “6i” alignment or for him to slant into the “B” gap but we would simply tell the player: “Johnny line up inside shade on the Tight End”.



DIVORCED FRONT & SPLIT FIELD CONCEPTS

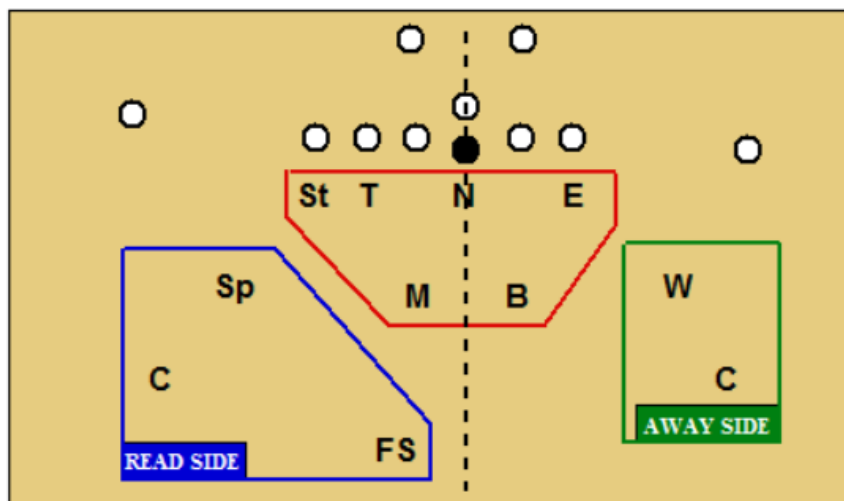
MULTIPLICITY with SIMPLICITY

The FRONT 6 of our defense is completely separate, or "DIVORCED", from the BACK 5

FRONT 6: Run Strength

ALIGNMENT KEY	Usually TE or Multi-WR if no TE. can be based on field or backfield	BULL & WEAK END go opposite the run strength
CALL	MIKE calls "Ringo-Ringo" or "Lucky-Lucky"	
ALIGNMENT	TACKLE & STUD END go with MIKE	

RUN STRENGTH will be opposite PASS STRENGTH when Tight End is opposite the multiple WR (Trips closed for example)

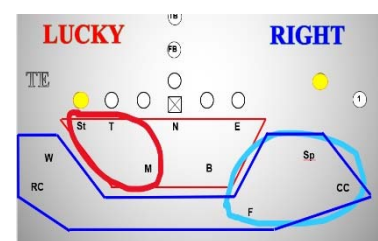
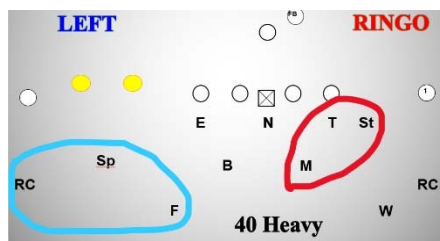
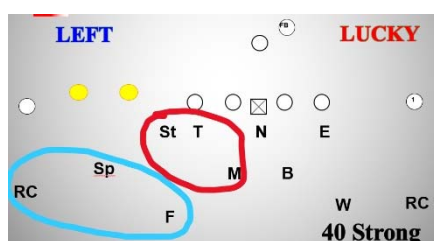


BACK 5: Pass Strength

ALIGNMENT KEY	MULTIPLE RECEIVER side.	WILL & AWAY CORNER go opposite the passing strength
CALL	FALCON calls "Right-Right" or "Left-Left"	
ALIGNMENT	SPUR & READ CORNER go with FALCON	

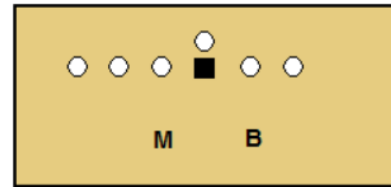
SPLIT FIELD: The left and right side of the formation are separated. The coverage & alignment on the left side are independent of the right side.

We will go into more details later but there are TWO calls when the offense lines up: The MIKE LB is yelling "Lucky" or "Ringo" to set the Front 6 based on the strength call that comes from the sideline. These strength calls are on the next page. The FALCON FS is yelling "Left" or "Right" to set the 5 defensive backs to the multiple receiver side. This never changes. We always line our DBs up to multi-WR side.

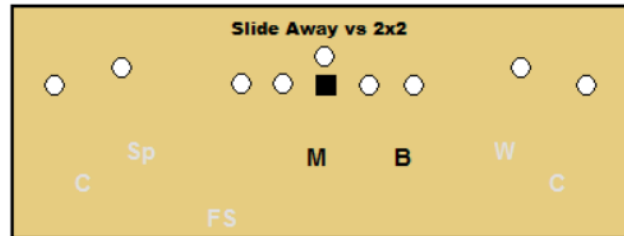
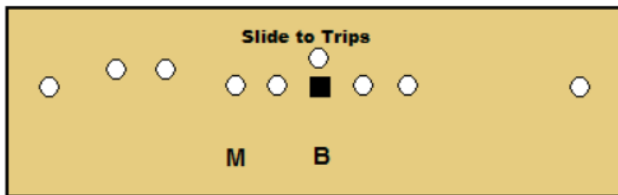


INSIDE LINEBACKERS

Since most of our alignments involve the four down linemen, let's explain the very simple alignment rules for the Inside Linebackers. Except in short yardage and goal line situations, they will start with their heels at 5yds, head up on the Guards, and always take two "read" steps forward: outside and then inside foot.



To maintain our "plus one" rule (explained in Chapter 5), they will slide one man TOWARDS trips and one man AWAY vs 2x2. Our SCOOT call slides the ILB towards unbalanced set, which also triggers the WILL to make a "YOYO" call to the CB, telling him to lock up man to man.



Since the front and secondary are "divorced", let's just look at setting the front 6 defenders. This is where there are almost an infinite number of possibilities, so let's start with a basic front. Regardless of whether you are going to flop or not, every 425 coordinator has to decide what to do with the interior tackles:

Some teams set the front based on the Nose (fig a). The READ & REACT sets the front based on the Tackle (fig b). The other option is to not flop the DT (fig c) and just have the two interior tackles "slide" to the strength call.

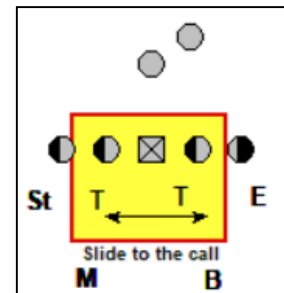
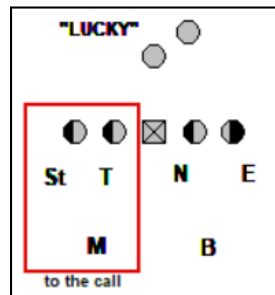
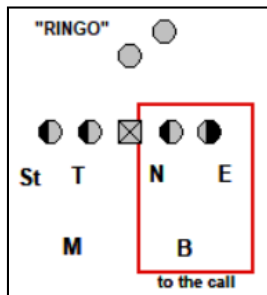


Fig
TRA

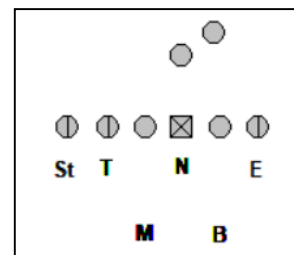
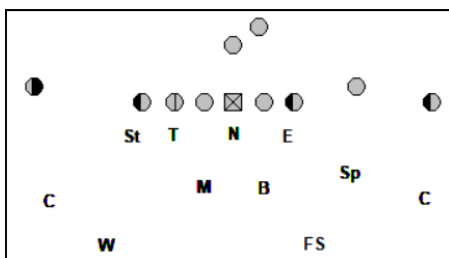
Fig b

Fig c

I think this choice comes down to how the defensive coordinator thinks. If the coordinator thinks about the front based on the 3 tech, it makes sense to set the front based on the 3. If the coordinator visualizes the defense based on the Nose, the front should get set based on the Nose.

The READ & REACT flops the Tackle and STUD End to the strength call.

The READ & REACT philosophy is to stay head up and let the blocker guess which gap the D-Lineman will be going into. We also like out Ends head up so that they can easily mirror step and not give up leverage.



SECTION TWO

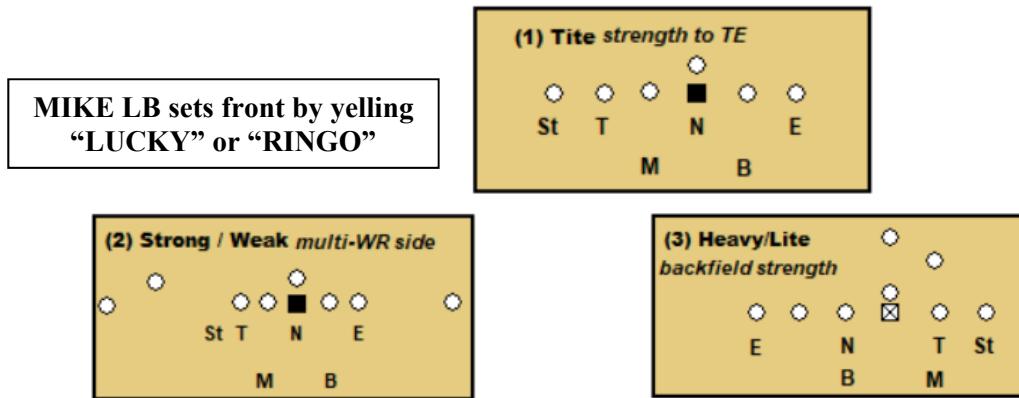
The other decision to make is how to align the defensive ends. When there is a safety/OLB lining up at 4 yards or less, the End could shade inside to make it easier to maintain the gap. When that safety/OLB drops back to quarters depth, the End could be outside shade to make it easier to contain.

The READ & REACT has already talked about why we flop our players. Using a right and left DE instead of them traveling to and away from the call is great for helping the DE's get lined up. The DE's know where they are going without a call. The DE's also get to develop the consistency of stance, vision, and muscle memory from always being on the same side.

The drawback of using right and left is the defense has less control over aligning the DE's where they want them every time. Another consideration of Call/Away DE vs. Right/Left DE is the similarity of the players at those positions. If the DE's on a team have similar profiles, a right/left system may be the way to go. If the DE's have different profiles, the defense may want more control over where they are aligned.

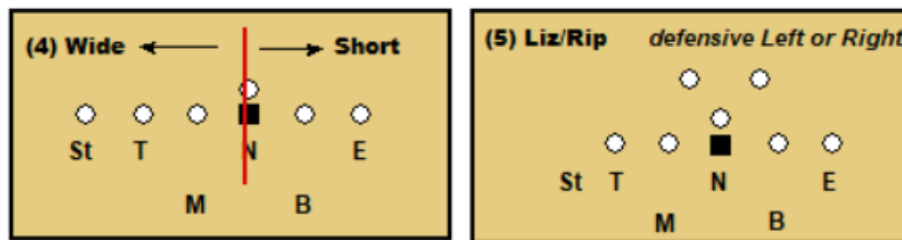
SETTING THE FRONT

Our Linebackers set the front in many ways, but most of the time we set it based on the Tight End. The CONDITIONAL fronts are Tight End, Wide Receivers, and Running Backs.

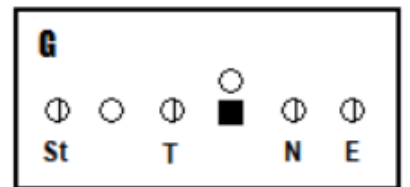


When calling conditional calls the defense must have solutions for dealing with an offense who changes the condition after the defense has set the front. We will discuss that in this chapter.

The other ways that we can set the Front 6 do not depend on the offensive formation, making them UNCONDITIONAL calls. Besides tendency, we use these versus really fast hurry-up teams.

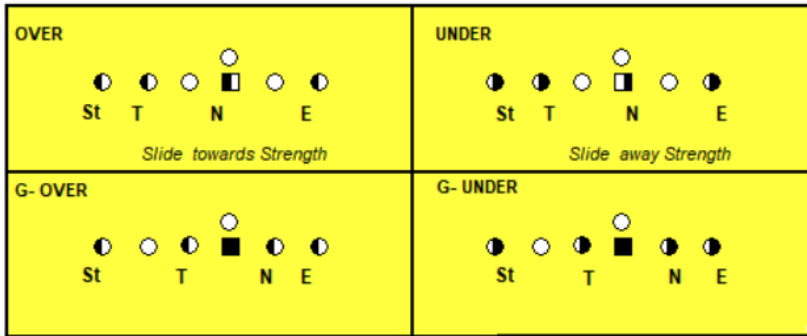


Before we even talk about shading our D-Lineman, this gives us 9 fronts in our arsenal. We also have our "G" call which puts our T & NG over the Guards.

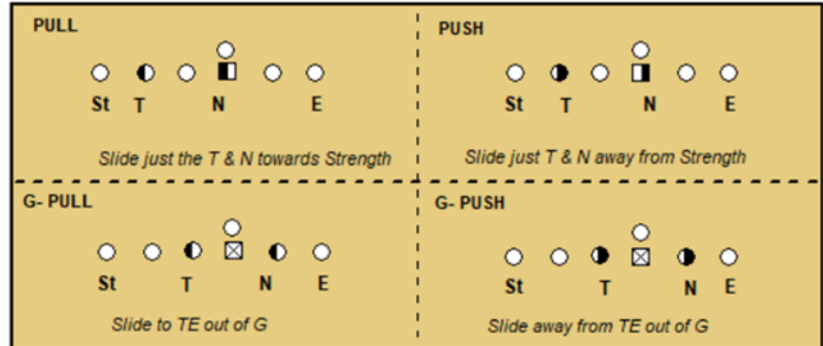


However, we can move all 4 of our D-Linemen around or any of the individual D-Linemen by themselves.

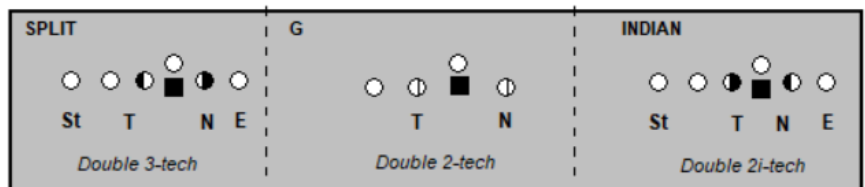
ENDS + TACKLES



JUST THE NG & T



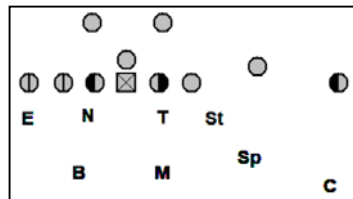
NG & T



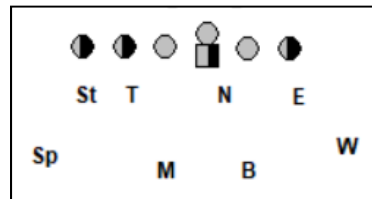
OVER & UNDER slides all 4 of the D-Linemen one shade towards or away from the strength call. PUSH & PULL slides the T & NG towards or away from the strength call without moving the Ends. Strength call does not have to be TE.

PUTTING THEM TOGETHER

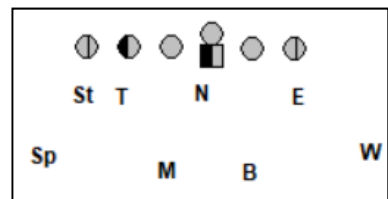
Putting all those SIXTEEN calls together gives the defensive coordinator OVER 200 possible combinations. Here are a couple of examples:



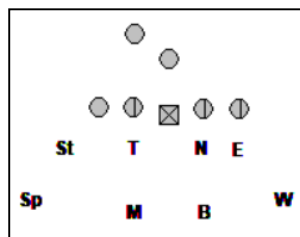
Strong Split Storm



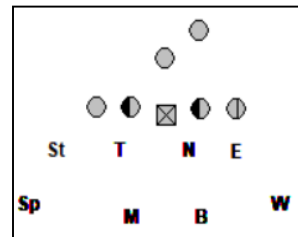
Tite Under



Tite Pull



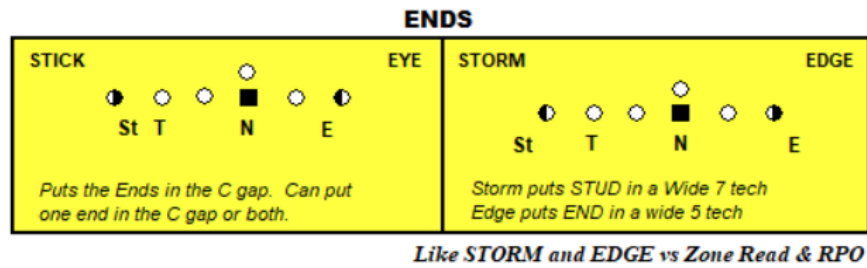
Heavy G



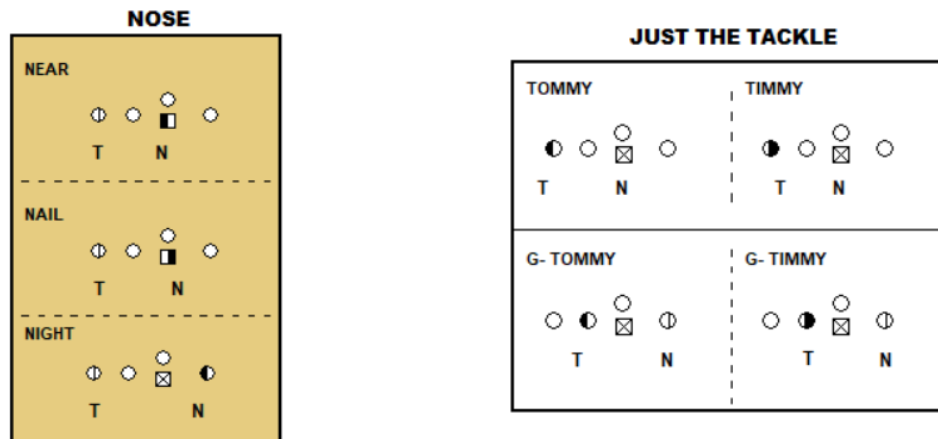
Lite G-Pull

INDIVIDUAL ADJUSTMENTS

Do you notice the STUD end coming off the edge? That is intentional and will be discussed later. We have calls that are specific to JUST the Ends. “Storm” and “Edge” calls dictate whether the QB is going to hand the ball off or keep it. We also use to get in his face and disrupt his RPO reads.



We can also move individual players around based on offensive tendencies or to simply keep the offensive line coach guessing about his blocking schemes. To many defenses can only move all 4 linemen as a unit, which severely limits their flexibility. Notice NG adjustments start with letter “N”. The Tackle adjustments start with letter “T” and the “O” in Tommy simply means line up in an outside shade. The “I” in Timmy means line up in an inside shade.



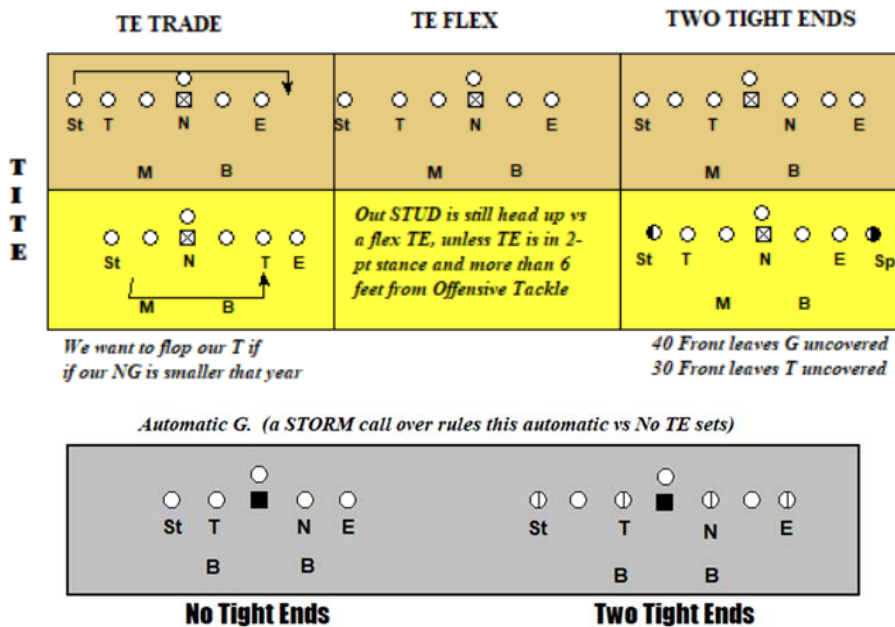
ANSWERS

To many coaches simply have a stack of plays or drawings, which is not a defense since those plays do not support each other and are not intertwined. And coaches do NOT have a SYSTEM if they do not have answers for problems that the offense presents.

TIGHT END STRENGTH: We do not call this strength like TCU does and we do not set our strength opposite the TE (TCU split call). We simply call “Base” (40 front) or “Odd” (34 front) and our MIKE LB knows the strength is to the TE.

When setting the strength to the TE, if a team has NO TE or two TE’s, then we balance up in our G set. I used to call this “STACK” but I changed it as I try to keep all words starting with the letter “S” for the STUD and SPUR.

If a team flexes their TE, we will move our End out there but we will not re-flop our defense if a team flops, or moves, their TE from one side to the other. We will try to move our Tackle over to the new strength, but often times we just “slide” everyone down. If we slide everyone towards the new strength, this puts our NG on their tackle, using techniques he is not familiar with.



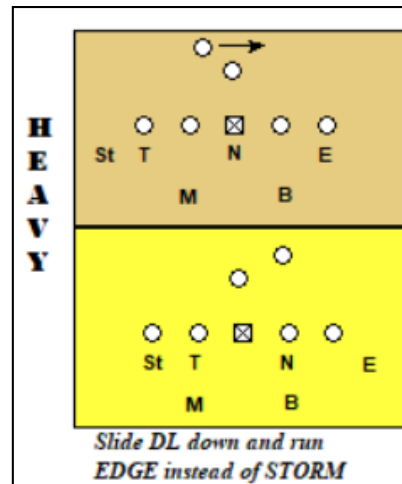
NO STRENGTH: When the offense is in a 2x2 set and the running back is directly behind the QB, our default RUN strength call is to the wide side of the field. If they are in the middle of the field we will call the strength to their biggest tendency (run right 80% of time or LT is best blocker). Our default PASS strength call is to their best receiver.

RUNNING BACK STRENGTH: This is used versus Zone Read Option teams when we want to dictate the QB handoff. We call it Heavy and Lite but there are many names for this concept. This could be an offset back in shotgun or an offset fullback in Power-I.

When the team shifts the RB after we line up, we will just slide the DL and move the strength. Our Linebackers will not move.

If there is no offset back (pistol or under center), we default to wide side of field. Balanced sets in middle of field, our default is their tendency.

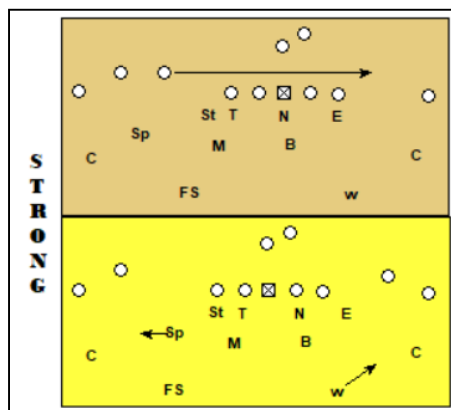
RB motion will affect the back five since the RB is now a new #3 WR.



WIDE RECEIVER STRENGTH: This is used versus RPO teams so we can get our End off the edge versus air and get in the QB face. This is also effective vs teams that throw a lot of quick bubble screens to their slot receivers.

Our Coverages are sent in as a 2-digit number and a word. The 1st digit is the coverage on the READ side. The 2nd digit is coverage on the AWAY side. The word is the Trips Coverage. When they motion, our 5-spoke secondary will rotate into the call that has already been made.

- In the picture the call was “35 SOLO”.
- The brown top box we are in our Trips SOLO call.
- On motion (yellow bottom box), we run Cover 3 on the FS side and Cover 5 on WILL’s side.



FRONT 6

BASIC GUIDELINES

The FRONT 6 calls are independent of the BACK 5 SECONDARY calls

NG & TACKLE

They are NOT 2-gap players.
 NG steps weak A and stings 1/2 a man.
 DT steps B-gap and stings inside 1/2 of tackle.

Strength Call for Front 6

TE	<i>Title</i>
FIELD	<i>Wide or Short</i>
BACKS	<i>Heavy or Light</i>
WR	<i>Strong or Weak</i>
DIRECTION	<i>Rip or Liz</i>

D-LINE FLEXIBILITY

<p style="text-align: center;">Can Shade weak or strong</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">the STUD End can rush off the edge or play off as an OLB</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Can stack or shade the guards. Gives an even front</p>
---	---	---

LINEBACKERS

Inside Pressure
"BULLETS"

Outside Pressure
"SMOKE"

Overload Pressure
"MIKE-DOG" "BULL-DOG"

DEFENSIVE LINE

Alignment	Movement	Exchanges
<i>"G": NG & T headup on G</i>	<i>"JET", "CRASH": End slants</i>	
<i>"OVER" Shade Strong "PULL"</i>	<i>"FURY" All 4 slant weak "AIM" Only T&N slant weak</i>	<i>St & T: Twist & Storm</i>
<i>"UNDER" Shade Weak "PUSH"</i>	<i>"FIST" All 4 slant inside "PINCH" Only T&N slant inside</i>	<i>T & NG: Not & Tin</i>
<i>"SPLIT" Shade Weak "INDIAN"</i>	<i>"FLAME" All 4 slant strong "SLANT" Only T&N slant strong</i>	<i>NG & E: Knee & EX</i>
<i>"NEAR, NAIL, NIGHT" NG only "TOMMY" "TIMMY" T only "STICK" "STORM" STUD "EYE" "EDGE" END</i>	<i>"ANGLE", "ARROW": NG only "TAG", "TIN" "TOE": T only "STABLE", "SLICE": STUD slants "ENDO", "EAGLE": End slants</i>	

If we do not make a call then the Mike Backer knows to set the Front 6 to the Tight End. If the offense lines up without a TE, then the we call the strength according to following priority:

1. Wide side of the field.
2. Multi-WR side if middle of field (MOF).
3. 2x2 sets in MOF, we set strength opposite the side the RB is on (Lite Call)

Run
Strength

TITE

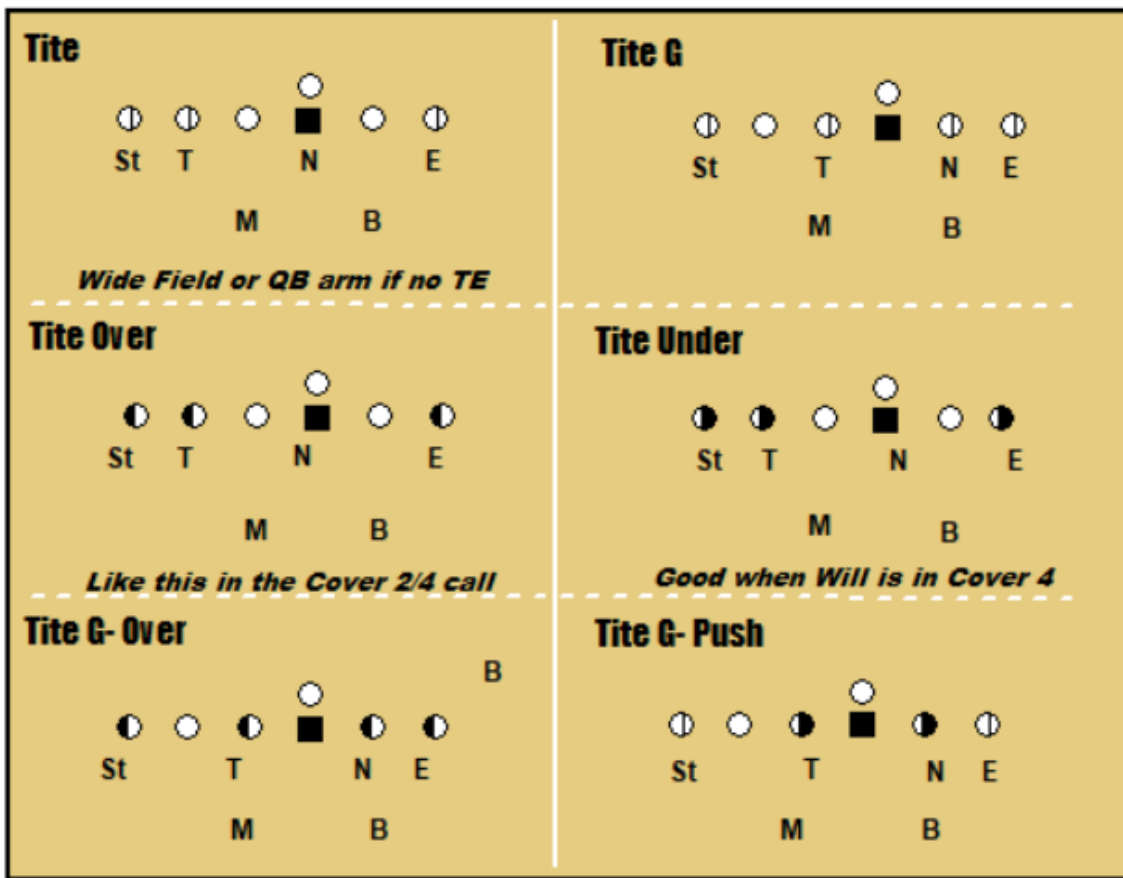
Sets D-Line to the Tight End

40

If no TE: Set strength in following priority: Field, WR, Opposite RB

We do not actually call "TIGHT"....we call "40-BASE" from sideline

All of our automatic alignments & rules happen in our BASE defense



Automatic G. (a STORM call over rules this automatic vs No TE sets)



No Tight Ends

Two Tight Ends

The purpose of the HEAVY/LITE call is to get the STUD End rushing off the edge. If the RB is their best player, then we call LITE, which leaves the edge that the QB is reading empty. Our WILL and END are prepared for the QB keeping the ball and we will cancel all the RB gaps with the other 6 players. If we do not want a talented QB keeping the ball, then we call HEAVY and force the handoff, which we will slant/blitz into.

This call is also good vs 2 and 3 RB backfields because it puts our larger DT on the side that they want to run Power Iso type plays.

Run
Strength

Heavy / Lite

Sets D-Line to the Backs

Allows our STUD end to rush off the edge instead of auto check to G

40

Heavy

E N T St

B M

Lite

St T N E

M B

One of the purposes of calling the strength to the RB is to dictate the handoff vs ZONE READ teams.
Can also be used vs RPOs since RB is usually on the side of the RPO receivers

Heavy

E N T St

B M

Lite

St T N E

M B

if the call sets the STUD opposite the TIGHT END, auto-check to G
NO Storm vs 2-TE.

Heavy

St T N E

M B

Heavy

E N T St

B M

Puts larger TACKLE on side they want to run to
NO Storm vs 2-RB.

Heavy

E N T St

B M

Lite

St T N E

M B

No reason to call LITE if expecting 2 or 3-RB backfield
NO Storm vs 2-RB.

We like the STRONG/WEAK call vs teams that want to run RPOs and also teams with a good perimeter screen game (bubbles, swings, quicks to the SE). The idea is to get the STUD end off the edge and in the QB face so he doesn't have a clear line of sight.

Same as the HEAVY/LITE call, we cannot run an automatic Storm vs 2-RB sets and if the STUD End lines up opposite the TE, we have to slide the other 3 D-Linemen over into a "G" call.

Run
Strength

Strong / Weak

Sets D-Line to the Multiple WR side

Allows our STUD end to rush off the edge instead of auto check to G

40

Strong *Wide Field vs balanced*

Weak *RPO to single WR side*

One of the purposes of calling the strength to the WR is to disrupt RPO reads.

Strong

Strong or Weak *Wide Field vs balanced*

If the call sets the STUD opposite the TIGHT END, auto-check to G
NO Storm vs 2-TE.

Weak

Strong *Auto G*

Strong/Weak is not good for power run teams
NO Storm vs 2-RB.

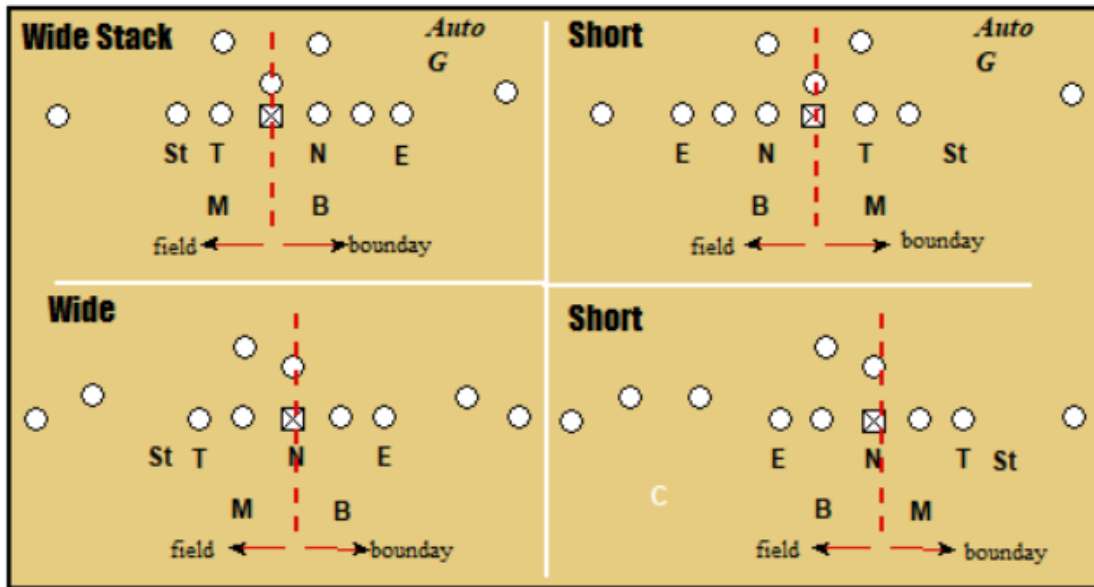
Strong

Weak *RPO to single WR side*

Strong call is good vs Perimeter Screens to Trips side

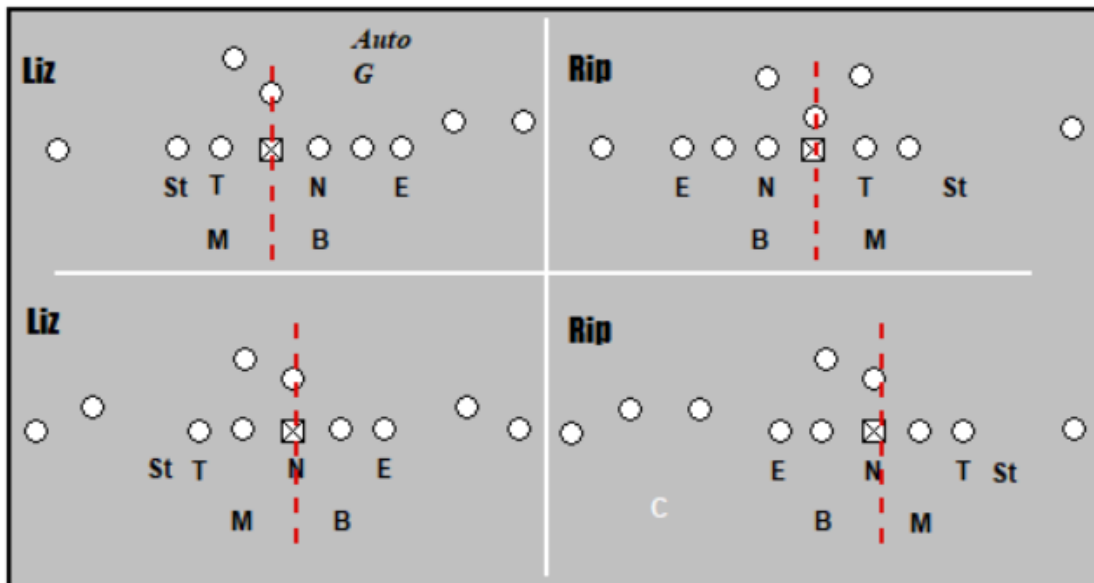
These are our UNCONDITIONAL calls that do not depend on the offensive formation.

Run Strength **Wide / Short** **40**
FIELD / BOUNDARY



If the call sets the STUD opposite the TIGHT END, auto-check to G

Left / Right
SET DEFENSE REGARDLESS OF FORMATION



The

LIZ/RIP calls help vs NO HUDDLE teams, but we really use it when the ball is on the hash and we want to make sure we get a blitz from either the strong or weak side. For example, if we want a weak side blitz coming from the boundary, with the ball on the hash to our right, we will declare the strength call will be LEFT no matter what with a LIZ call.

If there is a TE on the weak side now, we just make a "GEE" Check.

Since we like to get in our 30 front versus no Tight End sets, our default strength call is to the multi-WR side. If they surprise us by coming out in a Tight End formation, then our STUD end lines up on the TE and we are basically back in our 4-man front. Remember, we are a 4-2-5 team by philosophy, so we do not mind that the offense got us back into our base front.

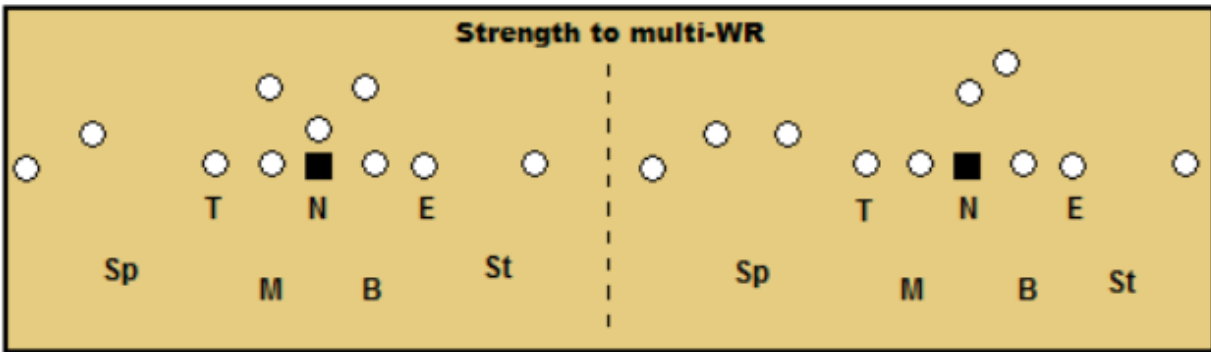
Run Strength

30 Front

"THIRTY" call puts the STUD at OLB and the WILL at Safety. STUD goes opposite FALCON call unless there is a Tight End.

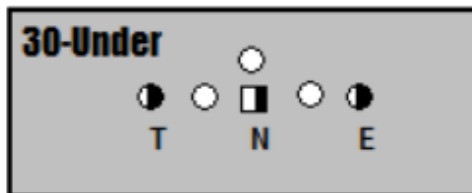
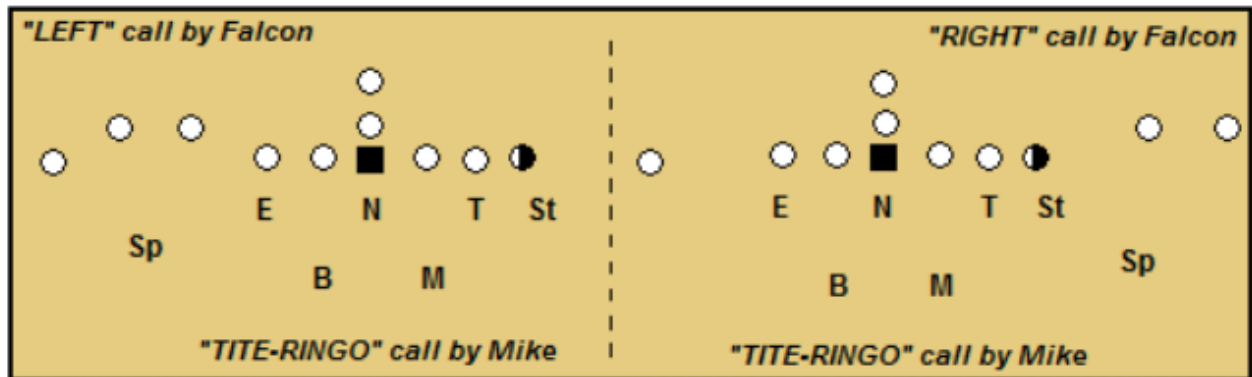
STRENGTH CALLS

We set the strength to multi-WR side in 30 Front



Defaults to 40-TITE vs Tight End sets

MIKE yells "Tite-Lucky" or "Tite-Ringo" if there is a Tight End, alerting the STUD to lineup on TE



D-LINE are NOT 2-gap players

DL will step into their assigned gap & sting 1/2 a man; On blitz calls they will slant into a gap.

We do not want our CALLS, ALIGNMENTS, or ASSIGNMENTS to change when we line up in our 3-4 look. So the strength calls to field (wide/short), running backs (heavy/lite), or direction (liz/rip) are the same as in our 4-2-5 fronts. Remember, if they line up with a tight end, our STUD END will come up on the line (LOS) and jam him.

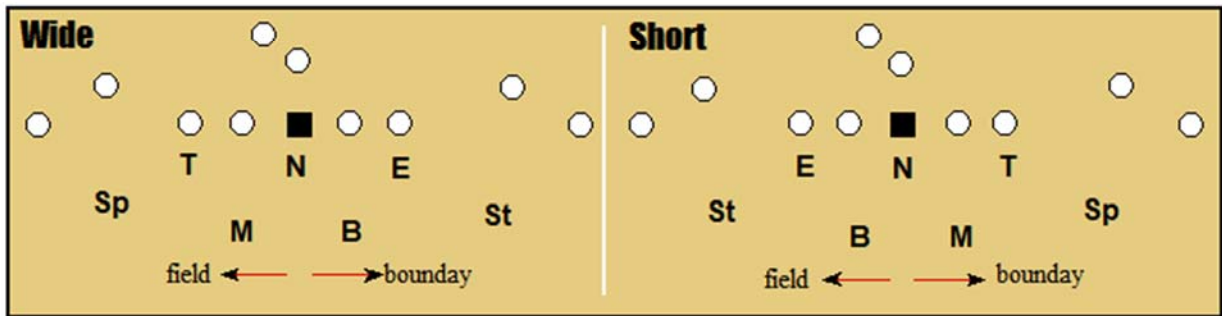
Run Strength

*These calls are very rare out of the 30 FRONT.
The advantage of these calls are vs 2x2 Sets
There might also be an advantage in OVER / UNDER calls*

30

Wide / Short

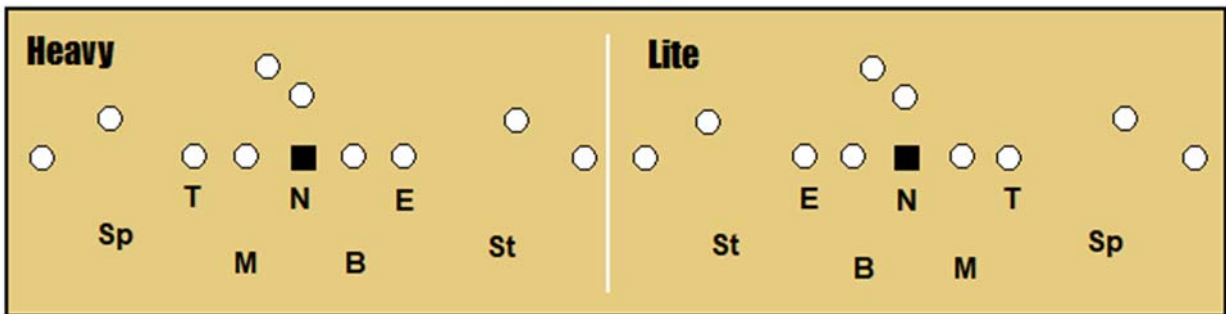
FIELD / BOUNDARY



Would not put STUD on wide side without subbing

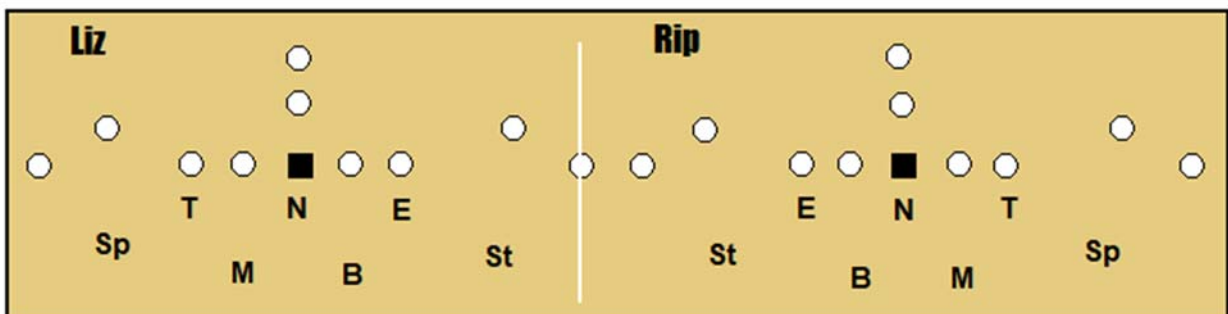
Heavy / Light

BACKFIELD



Liz / Rip

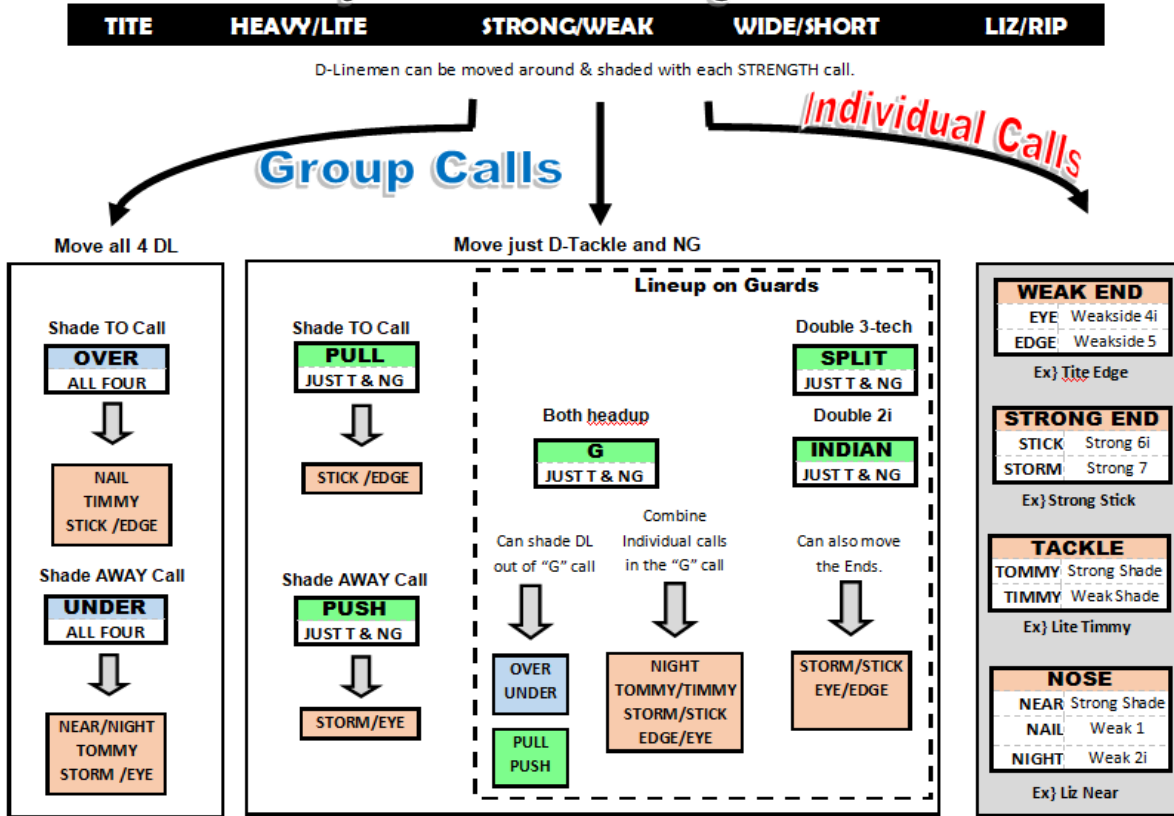
DEFENSIVE DIRECTION REGARDLESS OF OFFENSIVE FORMATION



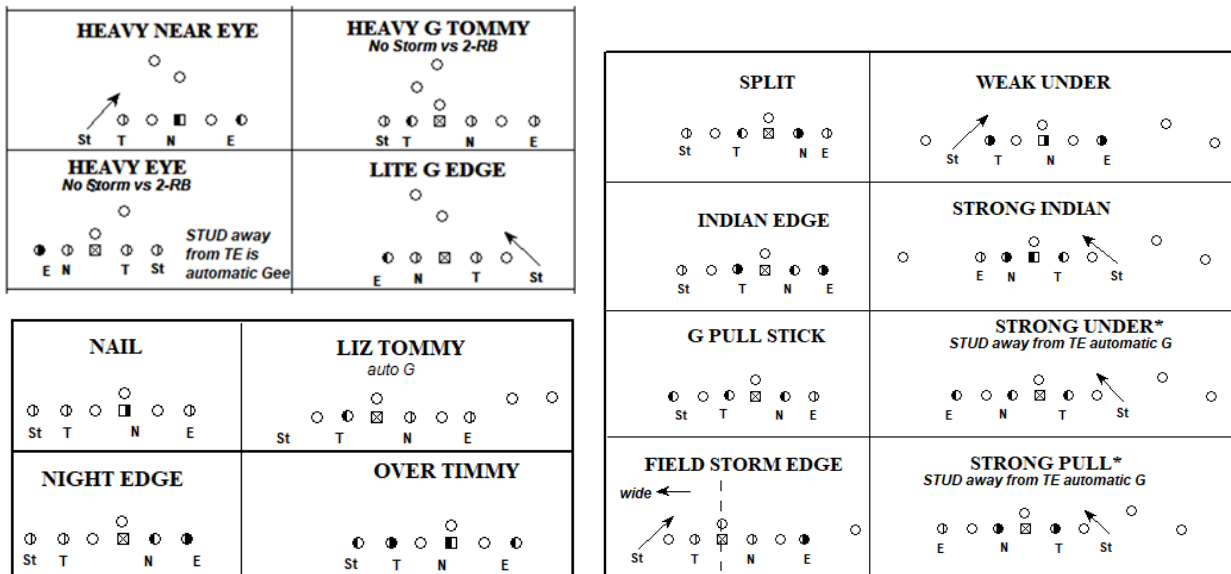
The way we call alignments, DL movements, and LB blitzes will sound like an English class because we have over 200 possible calls in this system. The key is to limit the amount of teaching and make it easy for kids to understand, NOT to have a very short call to make. If the DC wants to keep every call down to only 2 or 3 words, then you will have to teach your players 100 words in order to have 200 possible fronts.

The long, verbose play calls allow you to have A LOT of multiplicity while teaching your players very few words.

Always Make a Strength Call

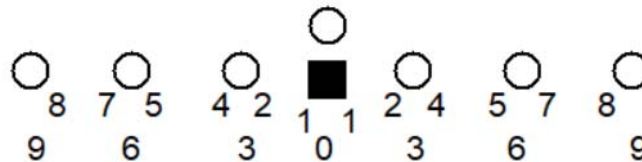
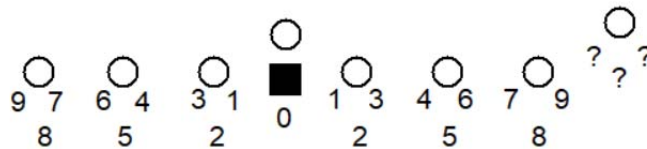


SOME POSSIBLE CALLS by COMBINING WORDS:



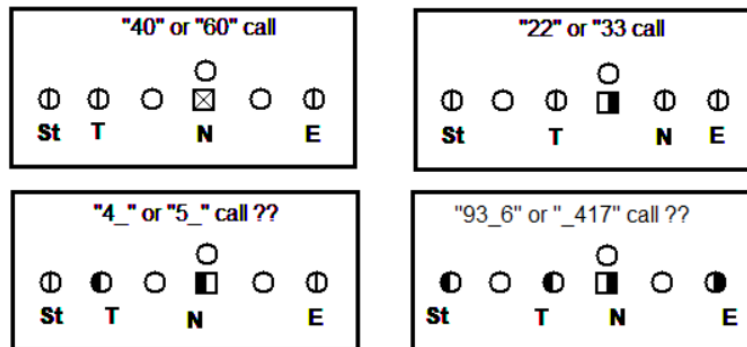
USING NUMBERS TO LINE UP THE FRONT 4

Many very smart defensive coordinators use numbers to line up their front 4. They modify the techniques that are on page 33 and assign the offensive linemen and their shades the following numbers:



Our staff searched far and wide for a system that would give us the multiple looks we wanted in order to keep the other teams O-Line coach from making easy game-day adjustments. The number systems that we came up with had the following flaws:

- Did not account for Shaded Nose;
- Ran out of numbers to line up our Ends outside the Tight End;
- Did not follow an easy pattern, such as all even numbers are head up and all odd numbers are outside shade.



In our old BRAIN DEAD system, we did still decided to use words instead of numbers to line up our linemen. However, we limited the number of words, which in turn limited our MULTIPLICITY. This much simpler system, which also has spot dropping instead of pattern matching, and a simpler blitz system, is on the GANG GREEN DVDs that I made with Championship Productions in 2010. The playbook that goes with those DVDs is called the BRAIN DEAD 44 Defense.

With the READ & REACT, we wanted more multiplicity and more ways to keep the offense confused. This requires a more elaborate call system.