
SECTION THREE

COVERAGES

6. Robber & Man Rules
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8. Trips Coverage



***“WHEN YOU PLAY GOOD DEFENSE, YOU GIVE YOURSELF A CHANCE TO BEAT TEAMS.
WHEN YOU PLAY BAD DEFENSE, YOU GIVE YOURSELF A CHANCE TO LOSE TO ANY TEAM”***

SECTION THREE

ROBBER & MAN RULES

We number our receivers from outside in. Starting from the sideline, so receiver closest to the sideline is #1.

ROBBER COVERAGE

TCU runs a Robber coverage that they call Cover 2. This is a "cheat half" principle by the corner, who will play half the field, the SPUR OLB plays number two to the flat, and the free safety handles number two vertical and "robs" the threat of number one on a curl route. The safety and corner read the #2 receiver, typically a slot receiver or tight end.

- #2 runs route deeper than 8 yards, safety man on 2 and CB man on 1.
- #2 runs inside or outside route in front of Linebackers, Safety "Robs" the #1 receiver
 - "Robbing" means read the QB eyes to break up or intercept any inside curl or post route.

We don't have a "Robber" coverage. We teach our Safeties the above "Robber Concepts" that they can run in Cover 3, Cover 4, and Cover 5.

- COVER 3: Rob versus any 2-RB sets. Sometimes vs 1-RB sets with a tight end.
- COVER 4: Always Rob. Falcon robs read side and Will robs away side.
- COVER 5: Basically robbing.

When executing the ROBBER techniques, the WILL or FALCON safety will do the following:

1. Get in free throw shooters stance and buzz feet, (do NOT backpedal);
2. Read uncovered Offensive Lineman for run-pass read.
3. PASS READ: Eyes immediately go to the #2 receiver.
4. If #2 runs any route deeper than LB depth, safety starts his drop and establishes inside leverage.
5. If #2 runs a shallow out route in front of the linebackers, then the eyes go from #2 to the #1 WR.
 - a. Play curl to post, keying the hips of the receiver. Sinking hips means he is going to stop
 - b. Immediately jump this route. If the hips don't sink, then the safety goes to a junction point to intercept the post route. He does not run at the receiver.

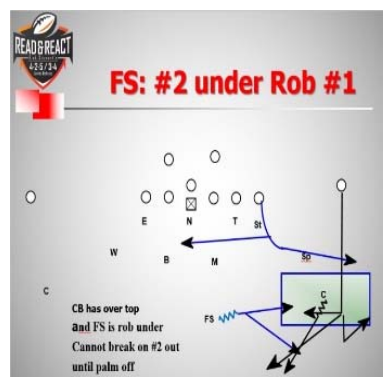
WHEN ROBBER

COVER 3

- > ALWAYS: 2-RB sets; Trips Closed
- > TENDENCY: Trips Open; Twins + Pro

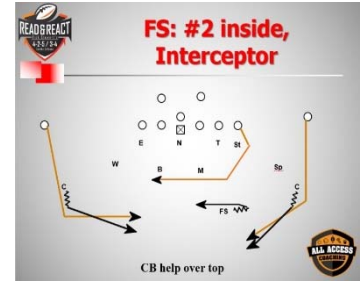
COVER 4

- > ALL formations
- > Twins + Pro
- > 2 x 2 sets



SECTION THREE

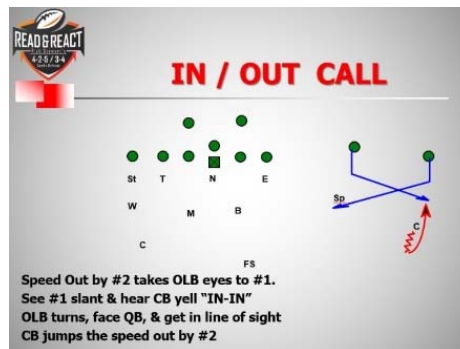
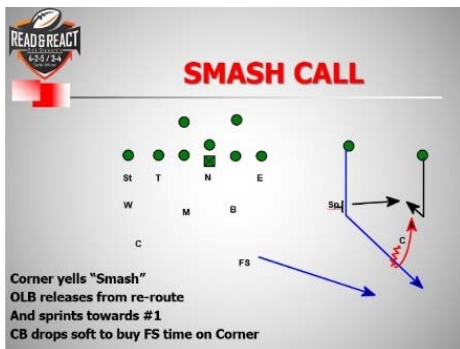
A couple more thoughts on the ROBBER reads. If #2 goes over the middle, at a depth between Linebackers and Safety, the rule is that the Safety has him. However, get in QB eyes. Don't let the Crosser run the safety one way so that they can isolate #1 on the CB. If the QB looks or rolls opposite the crosser, then the Safety needs to play off the crosser and start in a direction to help the CB.



CORNERBACK

Play half the field, **1x7 inside of the number one receiver. Has deep post, fade, and outs deeper than 10 yds by number one.** On the snap, flip hips to middle of the field and get on hash.

Our CB helps the safety by making vocal calls. A shallow slant is an “IN” call which is actually talking to the SPUR, because our CB and OLB switch on shallow slant/arrow routes. The SPUR is responsible for all routes in front of him (approx. 5 yards) by #1 or #2.

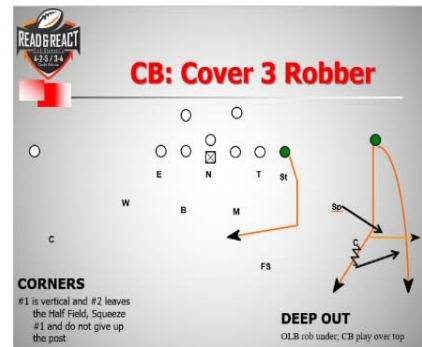


A 5yd hitch is a “SMASH” call, which tells the SPUR to sprint at #1 and the FALCON is helping the CB on over the top routes by #2. The CB cannot break towards the smash hitch route by #1 until he see QB take his “PALM OFF” the ball. That is a basic rule for our CB: “Palm Off”. Our Safeties cannot break until the arm action or actual release of the ball.

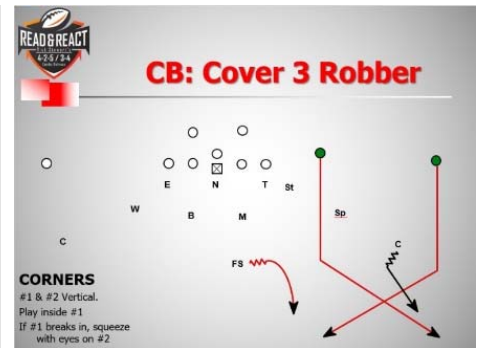
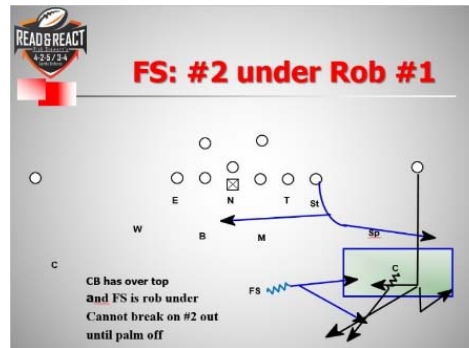
The FALCON also helps the CB with his calls by yelling “wheel” on shallow out routes by #2. That call tells the CB he has an outside route coming at him, and his eyes should go to #2. The CB continues to squeeze #1 to the FALCON.

In Cover 3 and 4, the CB only takes the wheel route early vs 2-RB sets, otherwise he doesn't come off for the wheel route until the quarterback's eyes and “palm-off” action takes him there. In Cover 5, the CB has flats and wheel no matter what, so he wouldn't even squeeze the post by #1.

If #1 receiver runs a post, fade, or deep out, the CB has him. It doesn't matter what the #2 receiver does.



If #1 runs a shallow route underneath the Linebacker, the CB helps the Safety with #2. But he has to watch QB, because he breaks on any PALM OFF. So QB quick throws to #1 on slant, speed out, and hitch will have CB help pretty fast since these are 1-3 step drop throws. It's not like the CB is going to be running towards #2 and be 12-15 yards off when the quick throw is made to #1.

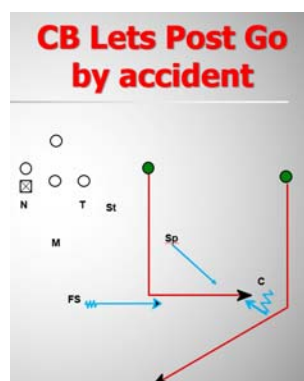
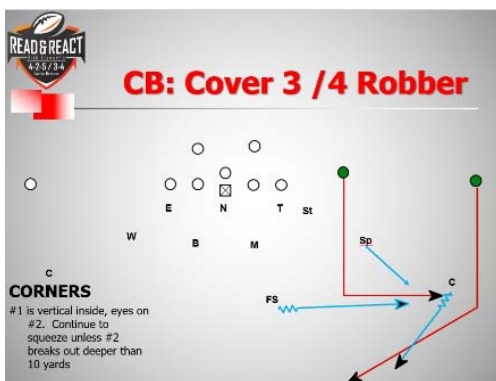


On deep routes by #1, the CB will yell “POST-POST” to the FALCON, while still running in-phase with #1 on top of the WR upfield shoulder. A deep receiver can never get behind a CB in Robber. If the FALCON has his eyes on #1 because of a shallow route by #2, then the #1 WR will be double teamed by both the CB and FALCON. If the #1 and #2 WR run deep crossing routes, both the CB and FALCON make an “SC” call, which tells them to switch routes.

The college playbooks say that the Safety and CB play lock man on all deep routes and there is not switching. Our talent level was never good enough to do this. Remember, I have never coached a scholarship kid, but have defended Marquis Wilson (2013-14 Chicago Bears), Virgil Green (NFL 2011 – 2020), two other D-1 receivers, and three D-1 Quarterbacks. While we could play man on the teams we were SUPPOSED to beat, we always devised our training and playbooks for the teams that we NEEDED to beat. So we were not going to waste practice time on man-to-man when that was not going to help us beat the giants on our schedule.

The problem with switching was this route. A deep out (10-15yds) by #2 with a post by #1 looked very similar to a deep Post-Corner combination. We did not see deep Post-Corner combinations very often and when we did, their QB was usually sacked before he had time for those routes to develop.

It was the deep out by #2 / Post by #1 route combination that gave us problems and we repped a lot in practice. We wanted our CB to stay on the top of the Post, our FS to run on top of the out, and our SPUR to drop under the out. If the Safety lets the Out go by accident, we still have the SPUR dropping under the out and the CB breaking on Palm Off. BUT under no circumstance can we let the POST GO. The CB has to be very, very sure about switching with FALCON.



OLB IN ROBBER

SPUR has flat responsibility or "swing deep of number three" meaning the out route of the number three receiver. Align 4x4 off the tight end and 4x1 off slot receiver. The SPUR is responsible for outs by #2. If FS is taking #2 vertical, he yells "Push, Push" to the SPUR, which tells him to drop under #1.

INSIDE BACKER IN ROBBER

The Inside Linebacker to the Robber side or the "read side" of coverage reads 2 to 1, Walls off any crossing route by #2, and is a 3 Receiver Hook (3RH) dropper and drops in relationship to #3. He has #3 vertical. If the #3 (Running Back) swings or attacks the flats, he pushes that to the SPUR, and expands looking for a route coming back inside.

The other Inside Linebacker is actually playing Robber rules. He has to take the RB vertical and drop to #1 if the RB blocks or runs a swing/flat route.

AWAY SIDE

On the weak AWAY side, the corner only has underneath safety help in Cover3. We don't like running Cover 4 on the AWAY side vs Twins, but if we were, the CB has to be cautious about jumping out routes because the CB has the wheel route in Cover 4 and 5.

SUMMARY

Robber coverage can be employed against a number of different formations. However, its most effective against the tight end and double-tight formations. Robber allows safeties to walk down into the box, creating an 8-man front to help stop the run and creating various opportunities to pressure the quarterback.

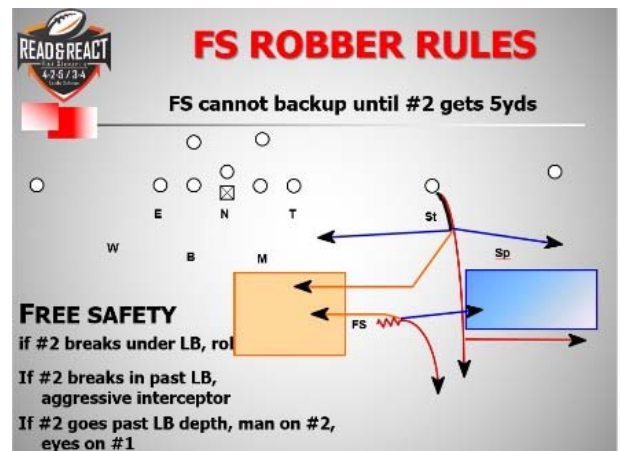
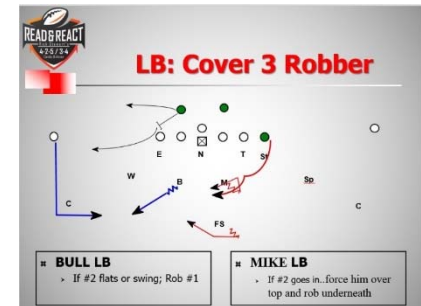
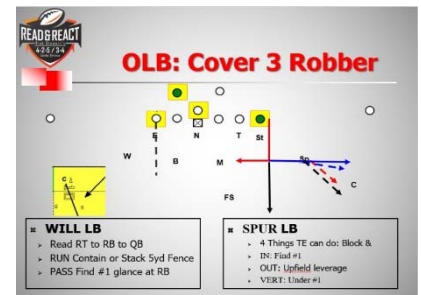
Robber occupies zones with unexpected defenders, helping the zone-blitz packages and creating the impression of a man blitz, which would typically vacate the underneath-middle zone of the field. However, with the safety free to roam that area, it adds a defender to a zone where the quarterback likely did not anticipate there being one.

Strengths:

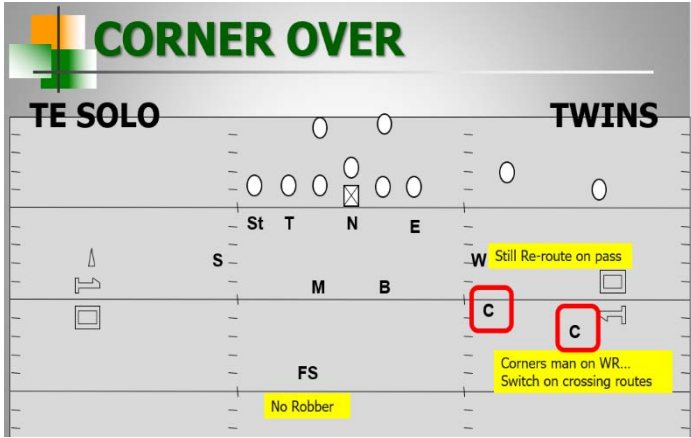
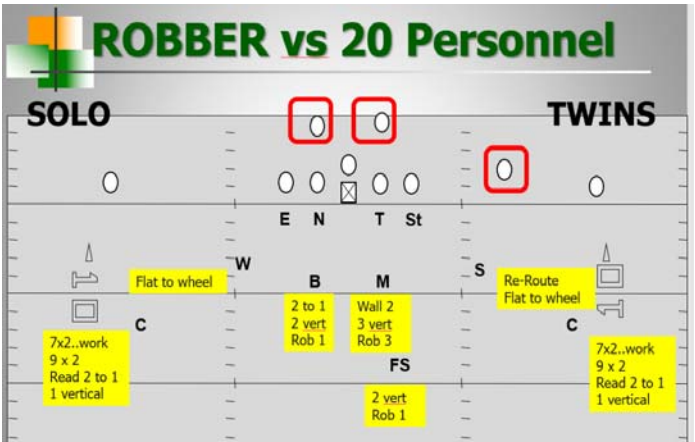
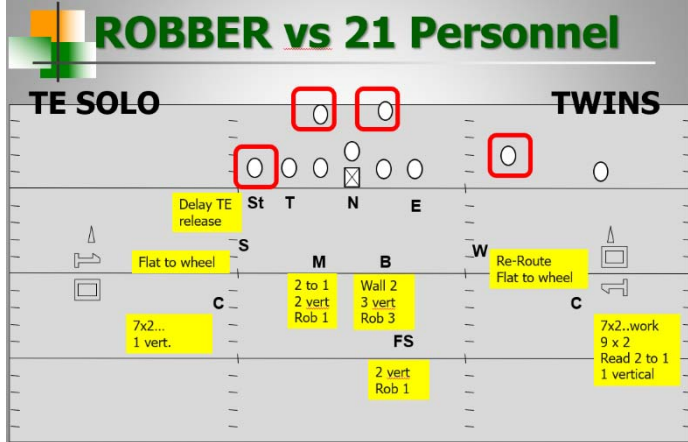
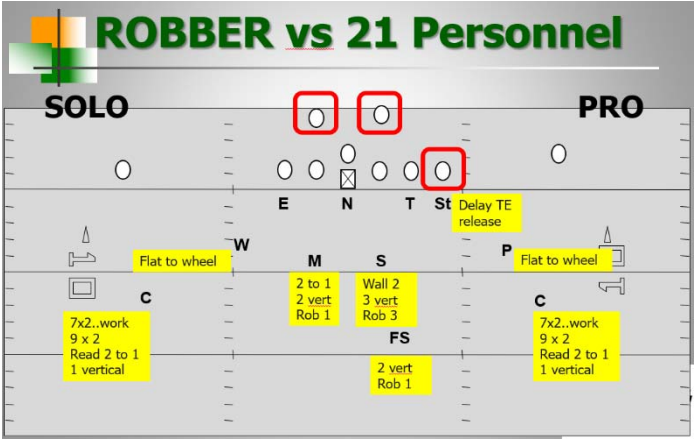
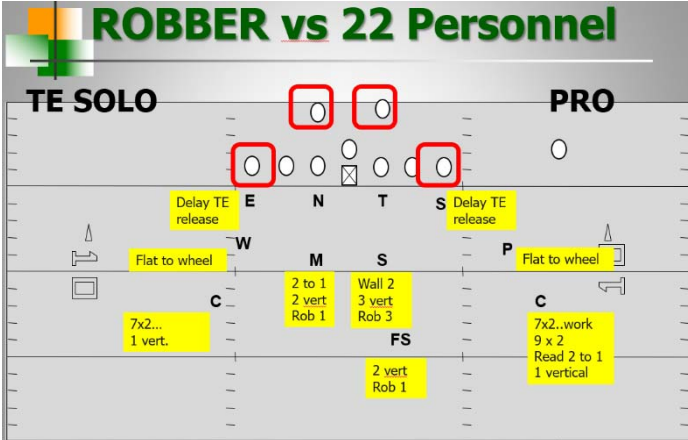
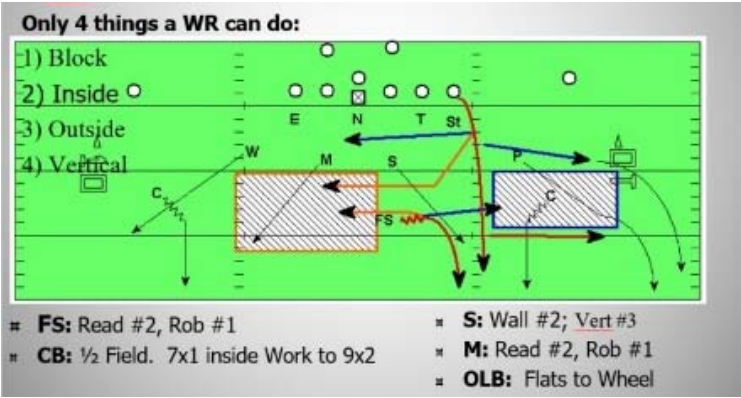
- With the addition of the Free Safety, the ability to place up to nine defenders in the box against the run game.
- Direct support to the strong side flat with the presence of the strong safety.
- Good against short passing game such as the strong side hook to curl area because of the presence of the free safety.

Weaknesses:

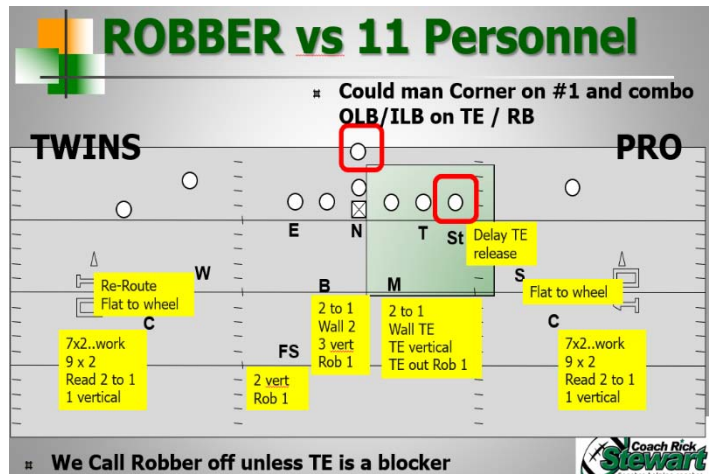
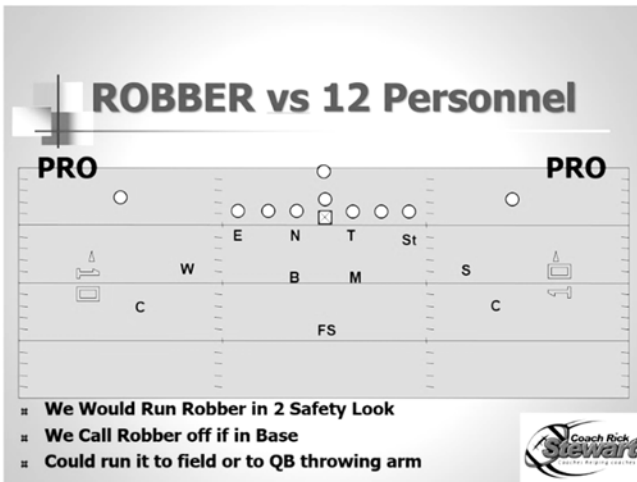
- Cornerbacks can be left one-on-one on an island with wide receivers.
- Weak side of coverage is vulnerable to flat area if WILL is back.
- #2 vertical to occupy FS. #1 runs deep out or comeback that the backpedalling CB cannot come up to defend.



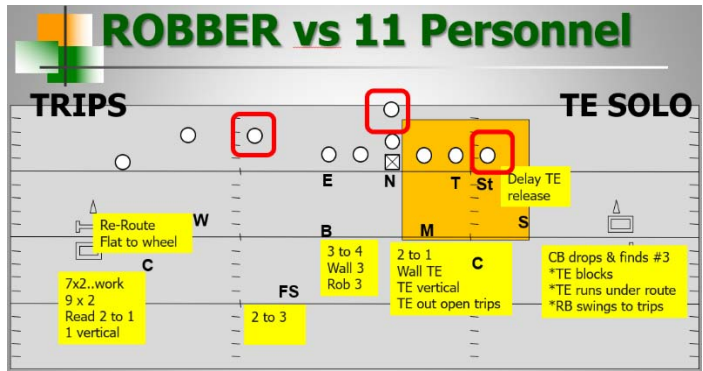
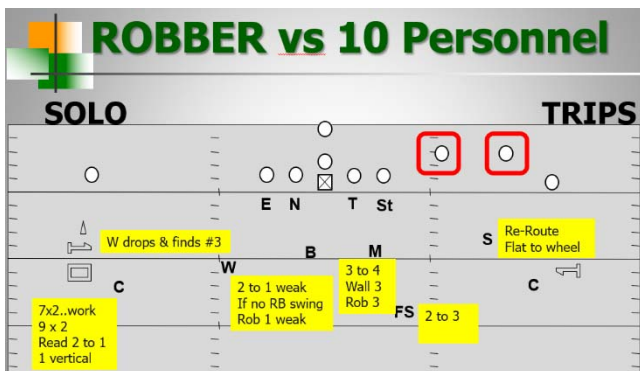
ROBBER ALIGNMENTS



ROBBER ALIGNMENTS



As a rule we will not let our FALCON use his Robber rules if there is only 1 running back. However, many high school teams do not use their TE in the passing game and when this is the case, we would let our Falcon rob the Twins side. That leaves the Corner and the SPUR to guard the solo receiver and back out of the backfield. The MIKE would help if the TE surprised us by going out for a pass.



We would NEVER rob vs Trips. What we do with the WILL depends on the type of Trips coverage.

