

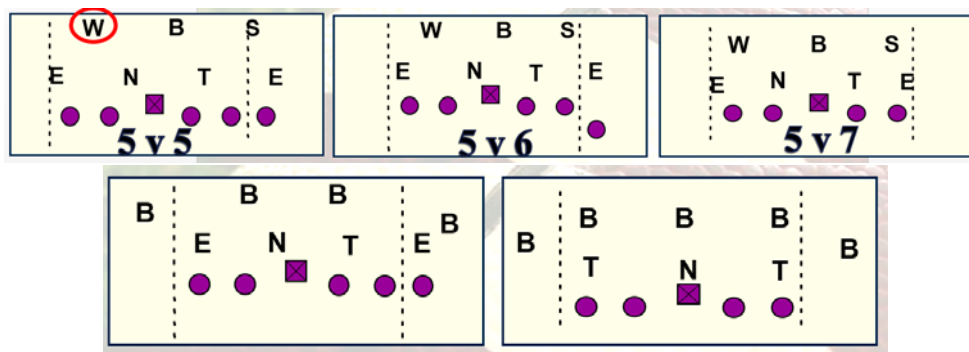
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Attacking Defenses

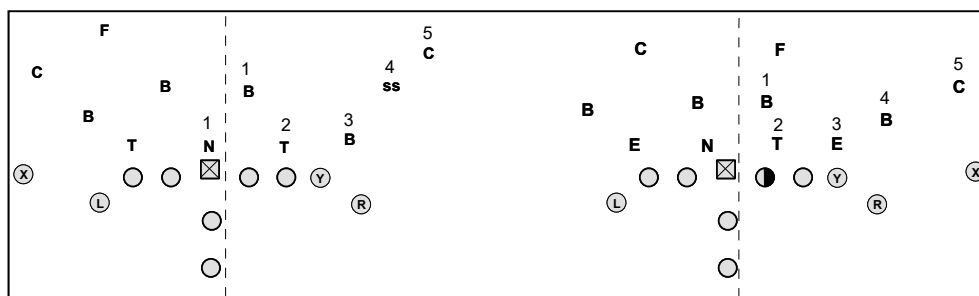
COUNTING DEFENDERS

The first thing to do is COUNT DEFENDERS INSIDE THE BOX.

- 5 vs 5: Run ball inside
- 5 v 7: Run ball outside
- 5 v 6: Attack the flank vs 3-3. Put tight end in a TIGHT alignment for extra blocker.



We begin all game plans by attacking #3. Draw line thru playside A gap and count defenders from inside to outwards.



If #3 seals inside, then we go outside, looking for reaction of #4 defender. If #3 goes upfield, we go inside, looking for reaction from #2 defender.

- If #2 upfield, run up inside him. If #2 squeezes, run outside #2.
- If #4 aggressive, throw behind him. If he is soft, run at him.
- We want to know how backside trails play...down the line or deepest back.
- Vs 8 man...widen TE to attack #3.

FLANK ATTACK

Next is how they line up to your formations. All formations fall into these categories:

- *TE-Wing*
- *SE-Wing*
- *Trips Closed & Open*
- *Unbalanced (Heavy, Tubby, Thumper, Joker)*
- *Special Formations (nasty, 2 TE, Doubles)*

We start by drawing up how we think they will line up versus all of our formations. This happens in the spring when we are self-scouting our past season and again during the week before we play them. As we draw up every formation, we are counting defenders to the sideline and number of defenders in the tackle box.

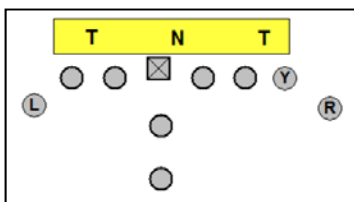
Then on game night, we have an opening script that is formation based, not play based. Our pressbox coach has all the formations pre-drawn and his job is to confirm how they are lining up.

TIGHT END-WING FLANK

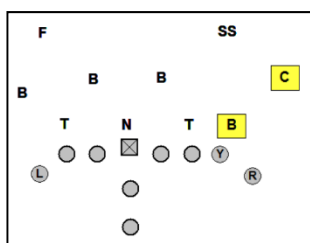
3-MAN FRONT

Get D-Line to shift / slant to tight end.

If they do not bring OLB up and slide the D-Line down, then who stings the TE, keeping him off ILB?



Is OLB/ SS lined up on or outside the wing?



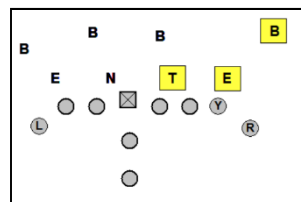
If Outside Linebacker comes up on the tight end, then the CB is flat/contain player, making the safety a deep half defender.

4-MAN FRONT

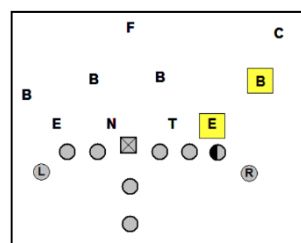
Is DT a 3 tech or a 2 tech head up on the guard?

Is DE lined up as 6, 7, or 9 tech?

Is the DE a squeezer or penetrator?



OLB at 4yd depth or on the line of scrimmage?

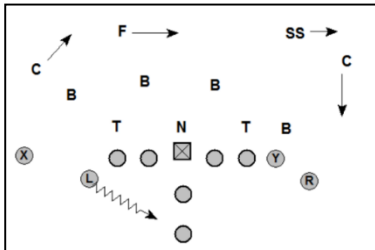


Flex the tight end to see how far the DE will go.

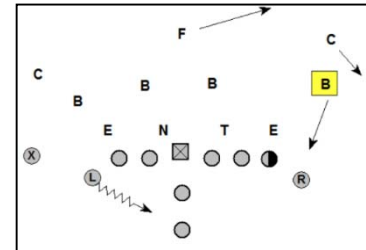
The opening script of plays should quickly answer these questions. Have coaches assigned to the highlighted players to determine their reactions. The pressbox coach records all observations.

The coverage on the Tight End-Wing flank is probably 2 deep with OLB in flats. If they are bringing pressure with the OLB, then the coverage will be man or a rotated cover 2.

3-MAN FRONT

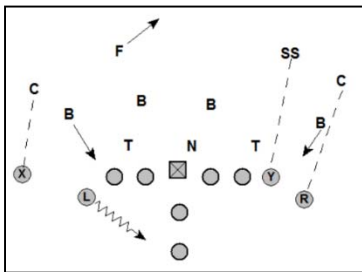


4-MAN FRONT

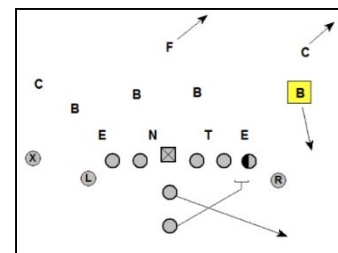


OLB on the tight end, it is man or cloud coverage

OLB pressure is man or cloud cover 2 coverage.



Cover 1 man coverage

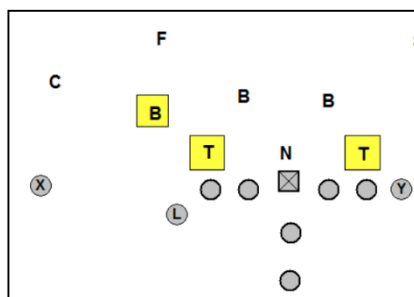


Sprint out puts OLB in conflict if TE runs an arrow

SPLIT END-WING FLANK

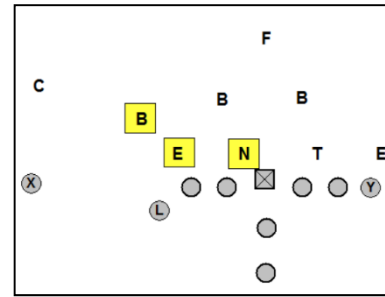
The farther the split by the X receiver puts more stress on the OLB if he doesn't widen out. Just as with the tight end flank, we want to know how far outside the wing does the OLB line up. If he is on the line of scrimmage then the CB has to be a cloud cover 2 flat defender for running back routes into the flats.

3-MAN FRONT



Is D-Line pinching the B gaps?

4-MAN FRONT

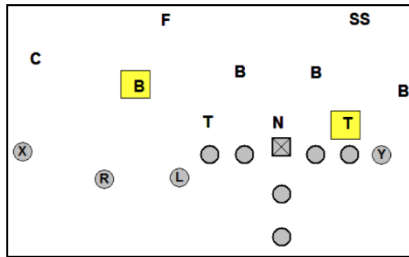


Are they stacked or shaded on weakside?

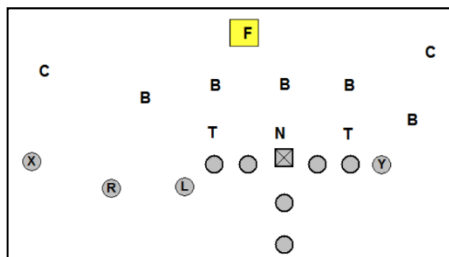
TRIPS CLOSED

How do they line up on #2 receiver? If he splits the difference then we can crack him and if he goes all the way out with #2 slot receiver, then we can run the ball into the B-gap.

3-MAN FRONT

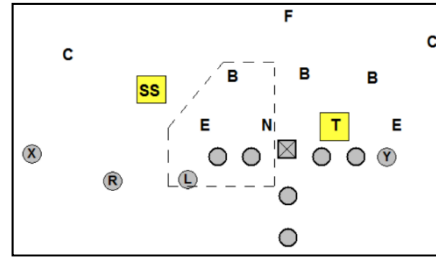


If they adjust with linebackers, then inside run game is enhanced.

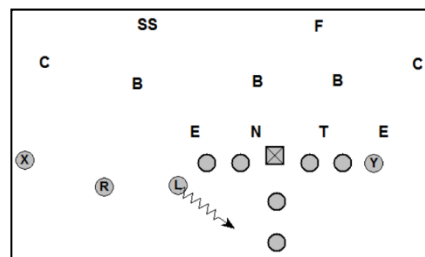


How far over do the safeties adjust to Trips?

4-MAN FRONT



Trips can get a cover 4 team into cover 3. Is there still a 3-tech on TE side of trips?

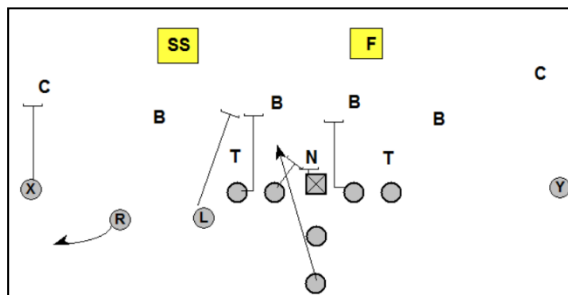


Trips could make it easier to run to the TE side.

TRIPS OPEN

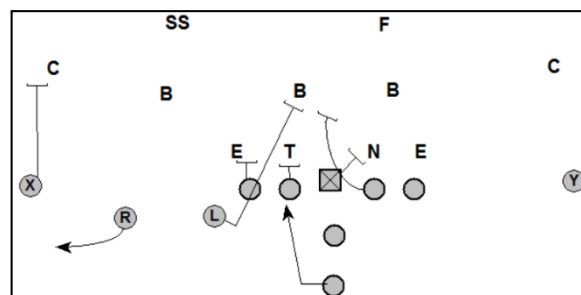
Do they adjust to trips with linebackers or safeties? Will D-Line stack or shade with no TE strength?

3-MAN FRONT



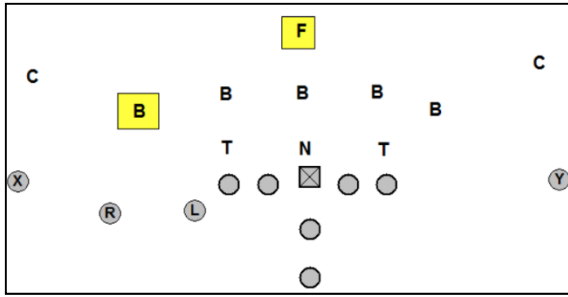
Run Baylor or Belly to Trips side

4-MAN FRONT

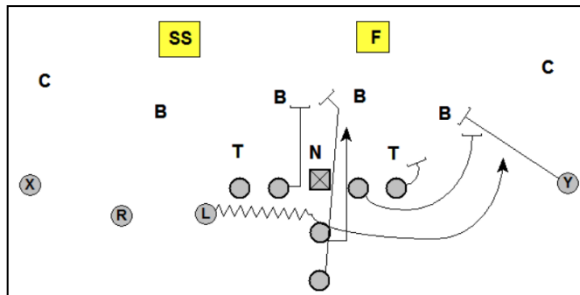


Run Baylor or Belly to Trips side

3-MAN FRONT

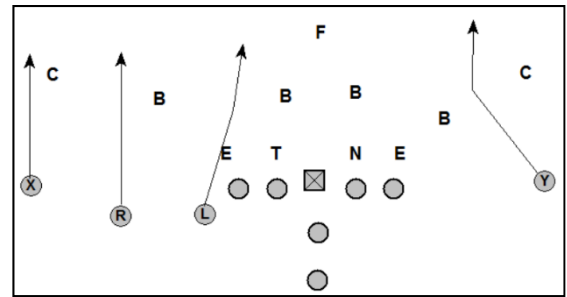


Where is Safety going to commit his help?

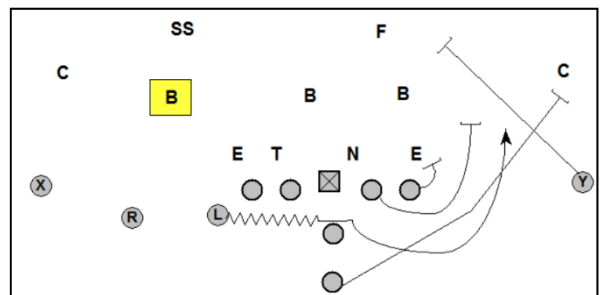


If LB shifts...run fly sweep to SE side.

4-MAN FRONT



How will they defend Verticals?



UNBALANCED - Heavy

By using HEAVY formations we have determined that defenses can only adjust in FIVE WAYS!

1. The first thing is the do nothing. If this happens we Gain a Blocker at the Point of Attack!

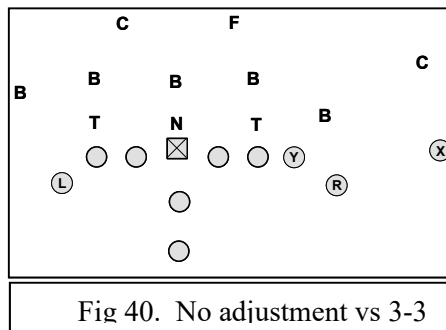


Fig 40. No adjustment vs 3-3

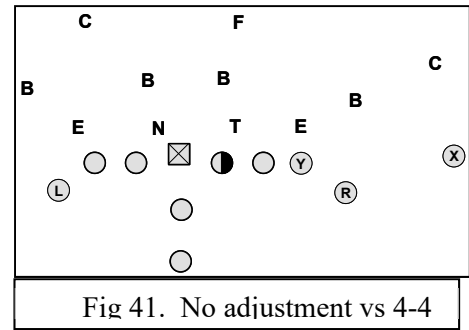


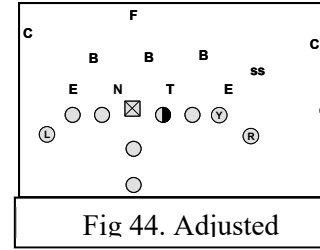
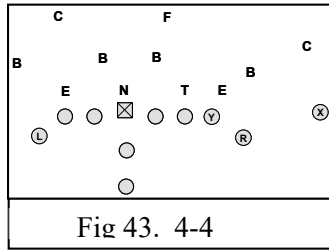
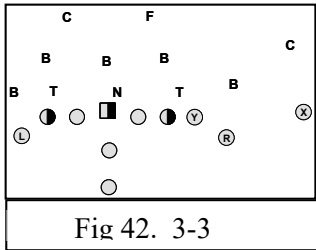
Fig 41. No adjustment vs 4-4

2. The second option is if we move a man they will move a man. Example is if we move a SE over they will move a Outside LB over. We like this because they lose their Pitch, Contain Player to the weak side.

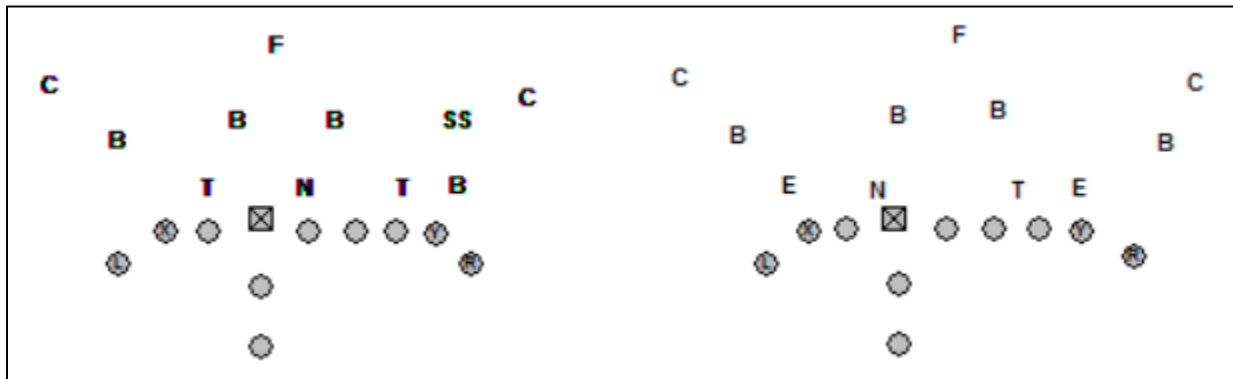
3. The third option for the Defense is they can roll the Secondary to a Cover 2 look. We like this because it allows for a better weak side run game and takes away secondary support off tackle strong!

4. The fourth option is they slide their LB's over 1 man. We like this option because it opens our inside run game because of the Inside Linebacker fits

5. The last option is they slide down 1 man with their front. When this happens we have made an Even Front Odd, & an Odd Front Even. We like this because we have created conflict in option responsibilities

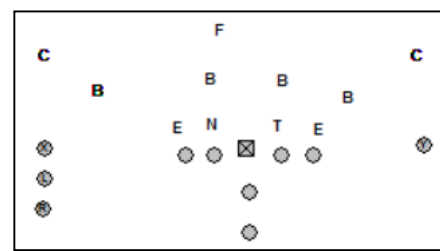
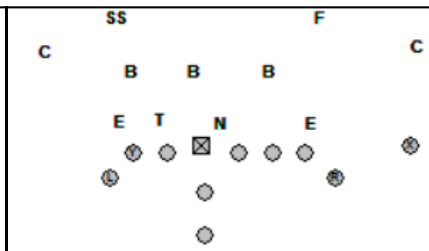
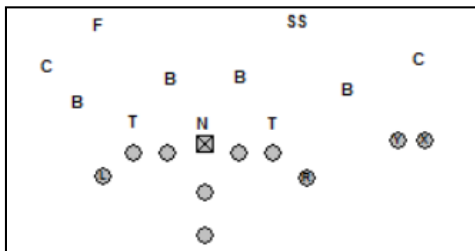


UNBALANCED - Tubby



Option #1 is to slide D-Line over one man, which gives us weakside Baylor vs 3-man front and 32 G vs 4-man front. Option #2 is to slide linebackers over, in which case we run to weakside with counter, jet, or G-Belly. Option #3 is to slide the defensive backs over, leaving a CB to cover two eligible receivers.

SPECIAL FORMATIONS



Doubles

Joker

Triple Stack

Defeating Eight Man Front Defenses.

The 6-2, Wide Tackle 6, and other eight man fronts are even looks with the center uncovered. The 5-3 is also an eight-man front but it is an odd look with the center covered and is a very peculiar defense that requires special attention but has very specific weaknesses.

There are many variables to the even eight-man front defense:

- (1) Alignment of the DT and ILB; Usually shaded 1 tech & 3 tech with ILB having the opposite gaps.
- (2) Alignment of DE and OLB; Usually DE are head up and have “C” gaps leaving OLB with “D” gaps.
- (3) DB’s will be in Cover 3 or rolling Cover 2. On blitzes, FS will have TE and CB has the wing.

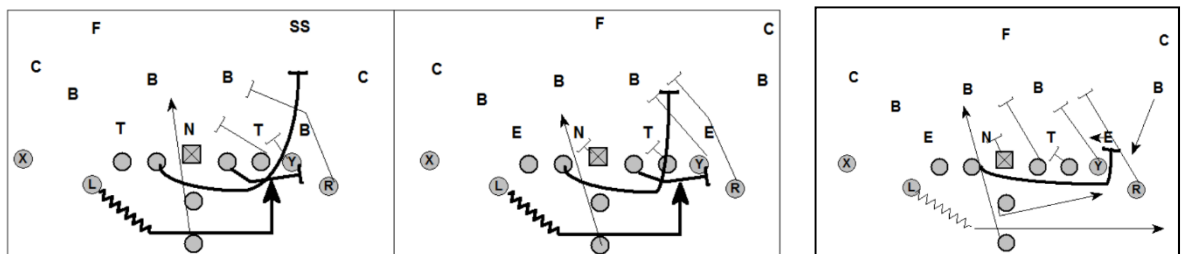
The Wing-T created to beat the 8 man front. As we begin to formulate our game plan versus 8 man fronts we start by looking at different unbalanced formations and determine what advantages we can gain by creating a flank. Then we run off tackle at #3 or #4 defenders because one of them has dual responsibilities. If DE takes the off-tackle hole, then the OLB is in conflict guarding flats as well as D-gap runs.

ATTACKING THE 4-4 DEFENSE

Begin with off tackle game. Try moving TE out into a five foot NASTY split. This stretches the off tackle area making it impossible for #3 to defend.

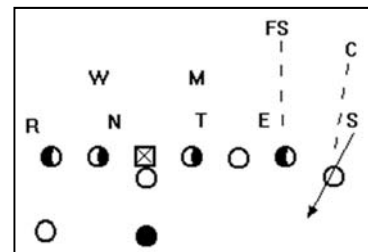
- ◆ #3 DE squeezes or lines up inside; #4 reads
 - Buck (26 G.O.); Cal;
- ◆ #3 DE squeezes or lines up inside; #4 aggressive
 - Option (Down & GO); Jet (Liz/Rip); Rocket; Belly Sweep (Belly 28-G)
 - Play Action Passes to the flats with QB sprint out action.
- ◆ #3 DE upfield; #2 squeezes
 - Down (36); G-Lead(26); Belly (34); Counter

Run Down if OT is better than DT to TE side. The QB will option the 4th defender on down option play. Combo of “26 G.O.-kick” and “28-G Option” creates conflicts and neutralizes playside edge blitzing.



Line coach watches the #1 and #2 defenders to tell you when to go to the internal game. Receiver coach watch the #4 and #5 defenders to tell whether to throw or run at the flanks

- ◆ #3 DE upfield; #2 upfield
→ Guard Trap (32-G); Tackle Trap (22-Trap); G-Sucker; Army
- ◆ WEAKSIDE Attack if NG is a 1-tech
→ Belly; Baylor;
- ◆ WEAKSIDE Attack if Inside Linebackers making tackle on Tight End Side
→ Counter (GO 43 and Down 43 Counter);
- ◆ WEAKSIDE Attack if backside OLB is to aggressive
→ Belly Sweep (47-G); 17-G Pass



Defenses will also have Safety man up the TE and Corner man the Wing.

When they block down, they fill to give a 10 man front.

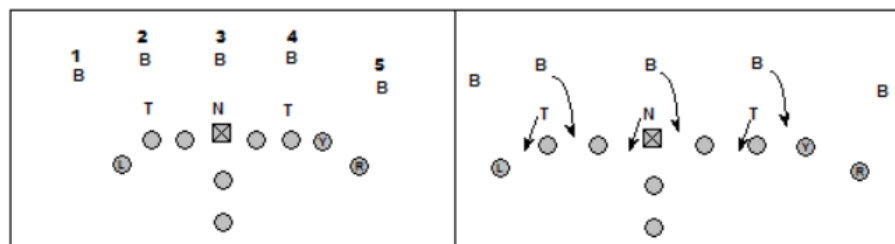
Run away from TE by motioning the wing back.

Flopping TE or shifting Wings will catch the safety on the wrong side if he is in man coverage.

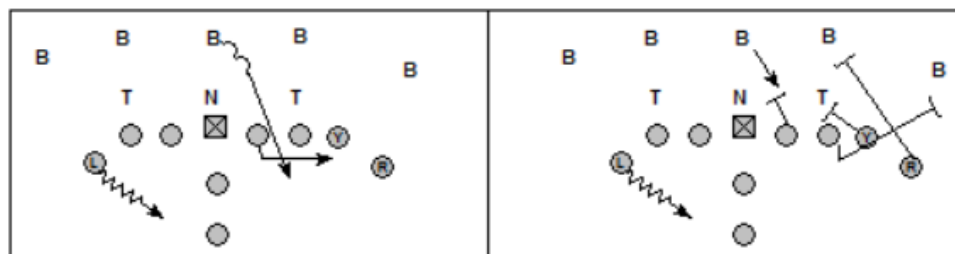
Also gives you 1 on 1 coverage on X receiver, so manipulate formations to get him with their #2 CB.

ATTACK the 3-3 DEFENSE

Main priority is making all of their possible blitzes simple to block for you linemen. First, tell the O-Line that if the LB shows the gap he is blitzing in, he also showed you the direction of the D-Line slant. Second, we emphasize to “stay on your track” and that “you are laying asphalt”. You can’t turn and anyone who gets on your tracks or asphalt is road kill.



3-3 stack teams will slide their Mike Backer on motion and “read blitz” when the playside guard pulls on G.O. or Down. We neutralize this with our “Tee” call.

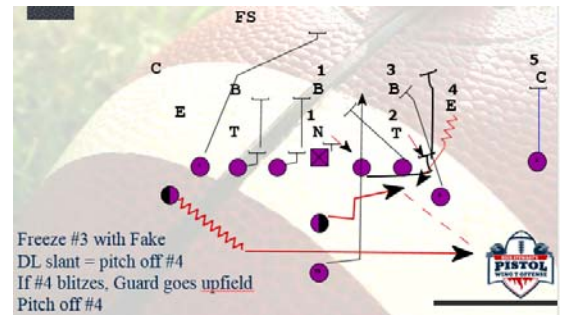


Difficult to attack a 3-3 or a 5-3 defense if stay with TE / WB on one side. FS on TE and CB on WB become 9th & 10th defender when they read block downs. You need to create leverage by formations.

- ◆ #2 DT pinching B-gap; #4 lines up at 4 yards and reads
 - Down 36-T; Cal; Power (26 G-Lead) to tight end side;
 - Buck (45 G.O.) to split end side;
- ◆ Formation the D-Line out of 0 and 4 tech. Get them to shift into A and C gaps towards Tight End.
 - If DL shifts to TE, then it is a 4-3 under. Attack weak 3 tech
 - If LB up on TE, then it is a 4-4. Out of comfort zone
- ◆ Attack Flanks and put the #4 OLB defender in conflict.
 - Jet (28-O / 47-O); Belly Sweep (47-G); Option; Belly & Down Pass with sprint action
- ◆ Come Inside Later in Game
 - Baylor and Guard Trap the 4 techs;
 - Belly is a “double gut” block, reading the NG.

QB has to roll out. If TB can fool the stack LB...

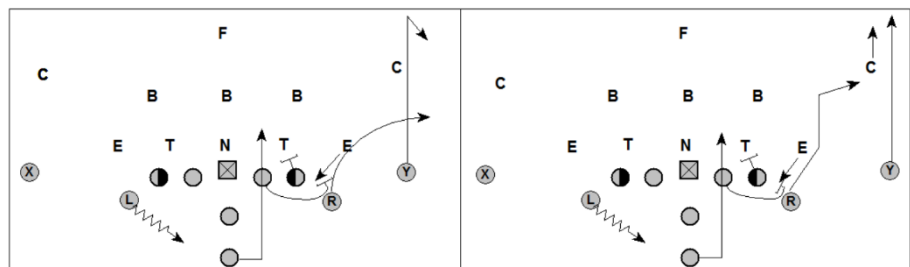
the Option man can get the OLB and QB can run.



ATTACK the 5-3 DEFENSE

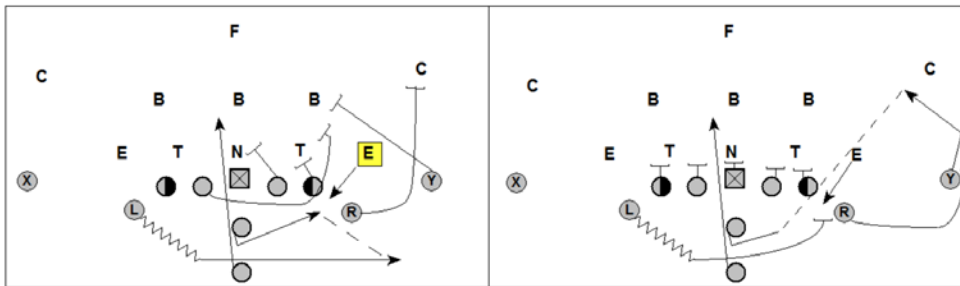
The 3-3 stack is related to the 5-3 except the DT will line up as 3-techs and the outside linebackers will be replaced with standup Ends. We hardly ever see this defense at the varsity level, but very popular at youth levels.

- ◆ Run LOOSE formation forcing safety into the middle of the field and out of man.
- ◆ Off Tackle attack is different because of the standup End that will be very aggressive.
 - 28-G Option; Cal; Belly Option; Belly & Down Pass with sprint action



To finish the series we will run the 43-counter and 17 GO Pass.

Now let's look at the GO series. Start with 26 G-Pass for the same reasons that we ran the Belly Pass - the outside linebacker cannot stop the slant unless he widens and then the internal and off tackle game will open up. The backside end must be held by the threat of the reverse and the GO Pass. If the backside defensive end is too aggressive then keep this play in reserve until he is softer off the edge.

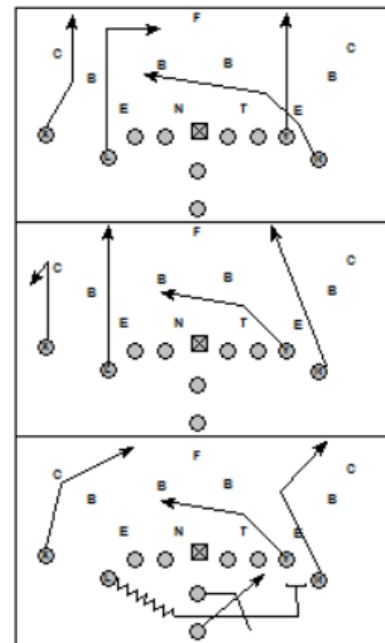
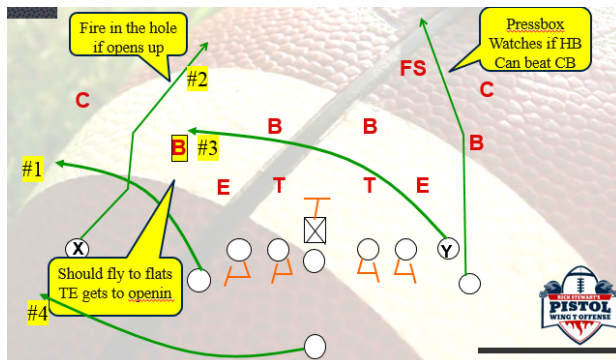


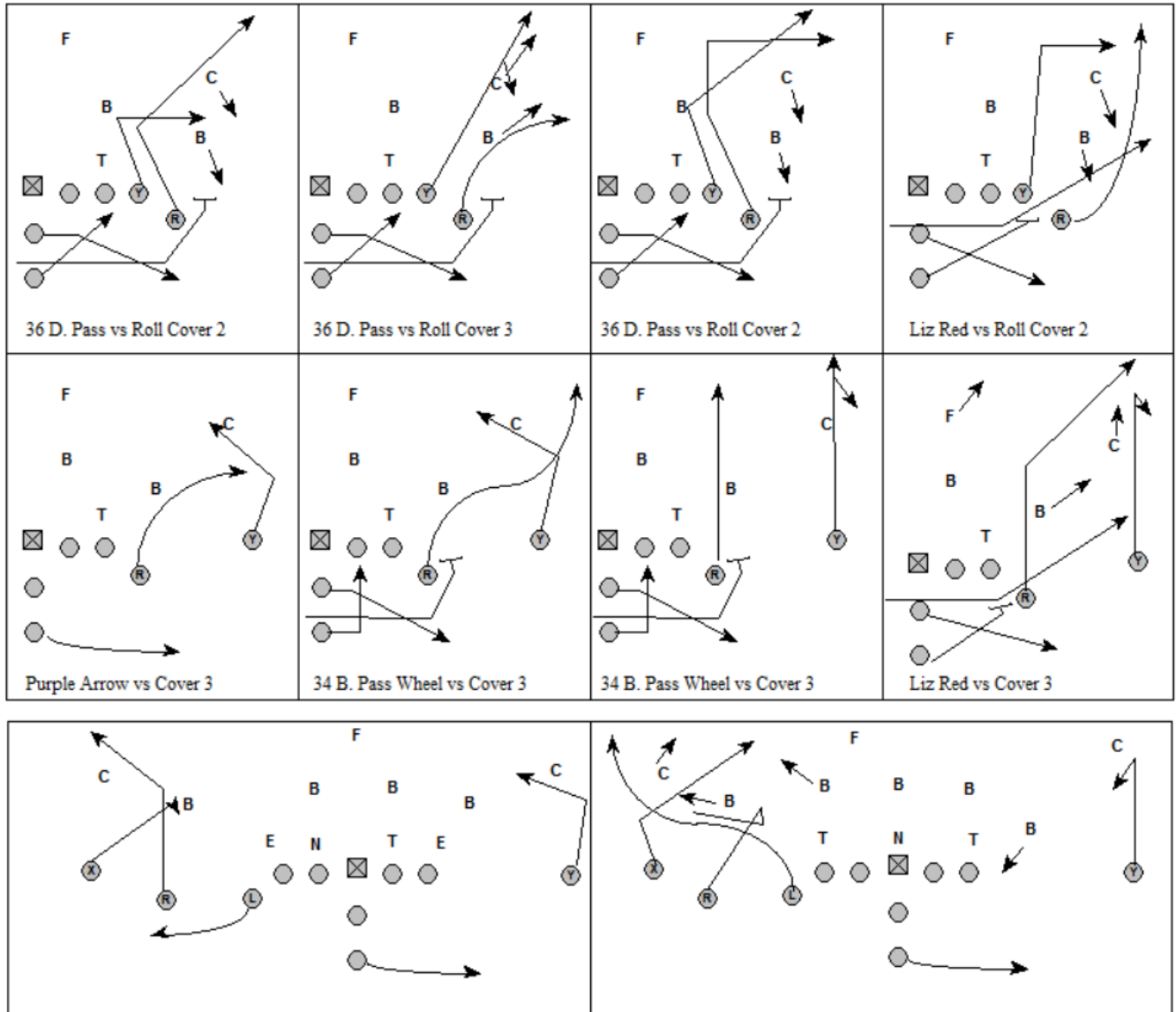
When running the trap option it is best to crack the stacked OLB and pitch off of the DE. The wingback flares to block the corner and the combination of the trap option pass and the trap option are antagonistic to the defense.

Once the OLB begins to widen to stop the 26-G Pass and the 28-G Option the internal and off tackle game will open up. To run up the middle with the buck series we would use no motion plays to keep the OLB wide.

THROWING vs 8-MAN FRONTS

- Force the #4 Defender to play in conflict by running Play Action Passes.
- You can also create conflict by using Liz & Rip flat motion.
- Motion to Trips and Sprint out to avoid all Blitzes from the inside.
- Run 3 step passing game vs Cover 3 or Cover 1





SEVEN MAN FRONTS

The starting point of the seven-man front attack begins to the tight end and wingback flank, since the wing has outflanked the 3rd defender. The attack is based on whether the secondary rotates or not. Offenses should run to the wing with no rotation and away from the wing with rotation or inverted safety.

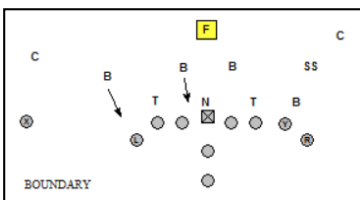
There are basically two types of seven-man fronts:

- (1) 3-4 Odd Front. The outside linebackers are flat-contain players just like the 8-man fronts and will be put in conflict the same. This defense has to blitz a LB or put the OLB on the TE, otherwise, the Wing-T running game will gauge them. Will always have a two safety pre-snap look, but they will invert based on who is blitzing.
- (2) 4-3 Even Front. The wingbacks could have leverage on the inside linebackers, so safety support on D-gap runs such as option is necessary. Flat coverage will come from cloud cover 2 corner or a rolled safety.

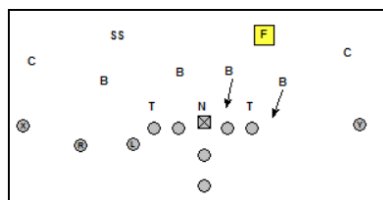
The only two things that these defenses have in common are the 2 safeties. We will start off tackle versus the *ODD* front *SEVEN* man front (3-4) and decide whether to come back inside (based on DT) or attack outside (based on OLB). We will start inside versus the *EVEN* front *SEVEN* man front (4-3) and work our way to off tackle and outside.

ATTACKING THE 5-2 OKIE and 3-4 DEFENSE

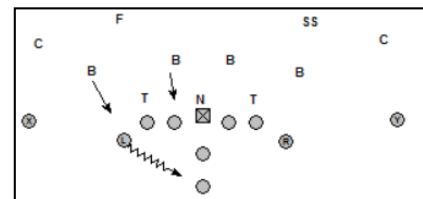
These defenses will have a lot of movement with D-Line slanting/penetrating and one of the 4 linebackers blitzing. Spend time trying to find out tendencies of where the 4-man pressure will come from. Their pressures will fall into three categories: Field / formation / motion.



Give up boundary flats

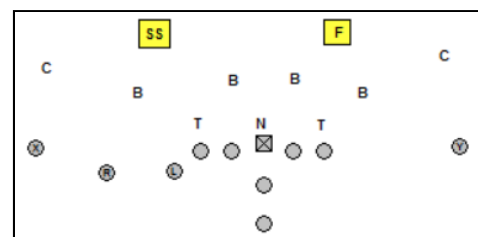
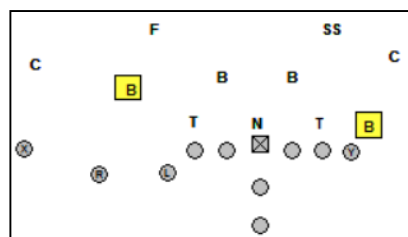
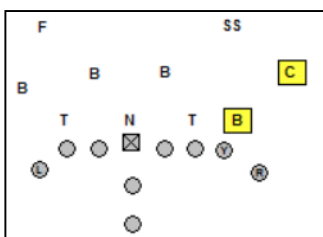


Blitz from weak side



Blitz based on motion

Formations can put the OLB in conflict with the Wingback alignments and they have to adjust to the TE-Wing flank. Use of TE and trips make them more predictable and force a CB into flat-contain responsibility.



◆ START OFF TACKLE (OLB conflict)

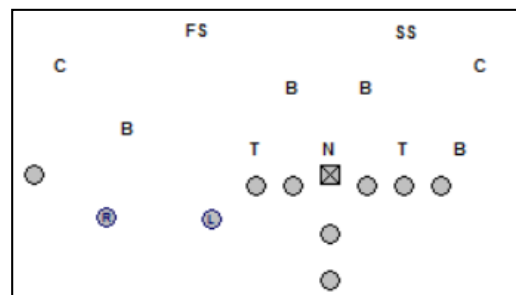
- Down, G.O., G-Lead, Cal
- Tee block Down & G.O. if DL are 0 & 4 techs.
- If DL slides towards TE, then it is a 4-3.
- Run G-Lead if 2 safety roof.
- Run Cal if OLB not squeezing the TE

◆ ATTACK INSIDE (DT conflict)

- Belly to Trips side;
- Belly is double GUT, TB reads NG, and QB cannot shuffle feet into LOS.
- The TB cutting back vs slanting NG on Belly is a great play.
- Guard Trap not as good, 30 On might be best play.
- Guards opposite & Guards Away early on to see if ILB reading guards
- Baylor if DL shift

◆ FORMATION CONFLICTS

- How far will OLB go out on doubles & trips?
- Tight trips is a problem, because OLB has to come up on TE, but safeties have to stay back.



◆ SAFETY CONFLICTS

- Belly Pass (SE-WB) if Roll Safety to TE
- Down Pass (TE-WB) if Roll Safety to TE
- Belly Sweep (47-G) to SE-WB Flank
- Belly Option

◆ PERIMETER BLOCKING

- Crack/Arc OLB; Jet at TE-WB Flank
- Run Jet & Rocket away from inverted Strong Safety.

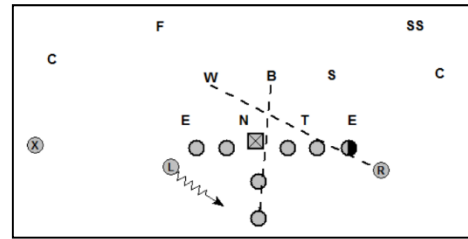
ATTACKING THE 4-3 DEFENSE

The safeties play a big role in run support on perimeter plays such as Jet and Option, so line blocking on run/option/play action pass has to look the same to confuse his reads.

Linebackers tend to read backfield: Mike follows the tailback.

Sam and Will will key near back.

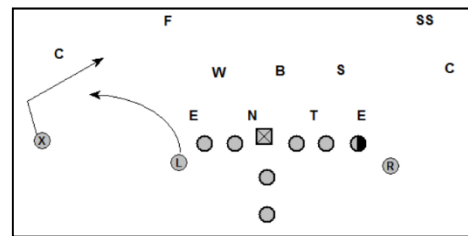
If near back goes away they will cross key.



Where is Strong safety lining up vs all the flanks? TE-Wing? Spit End-Wing? Trips?

Weakside flats are usually open.

Quick passing game is lethal



◆ **ATTACK INSIDE (DT conflict)**

- Find the 3 Tech - upfield run G, Army, Trap.
- 3 tech is squeezing run G.O. and Down.
- Find the 1 Tech (Baylor, Belly, Counter)
- Belly is fan blocking...not looking for windback.
- Sucker if head up on Guards.
- Criss Cross Counter if they are cross reading the running back with Linebackers.

◆ **ATTACK OF TACKLE**

- G.O. and Baylor to SE-WB Flank;
- G-Lead to TE-WB Flank, especially if 2-safety roof.

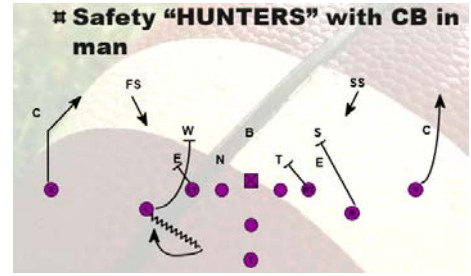
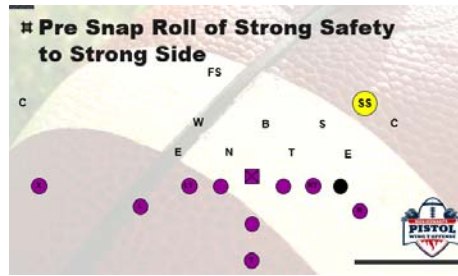
◆ **ATTACK OUTSIDE**

- Belly Sweep (47-G); Jet to TE-WB flank; Rocket; *(crack block the safeties)*
- Belly & Down Pass vs Over Aggressive Safeties

◆ **FORMATION CONFLICTS**

- Doubles & Trips: will linebacker come out or safety invert into cover 3?

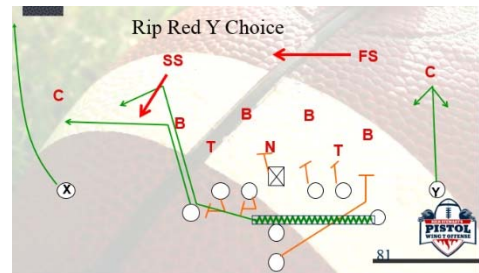
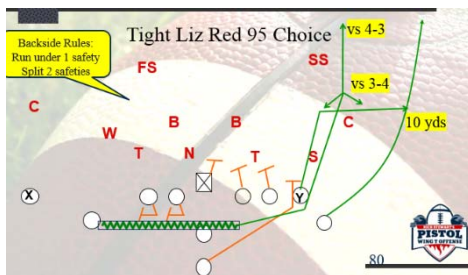
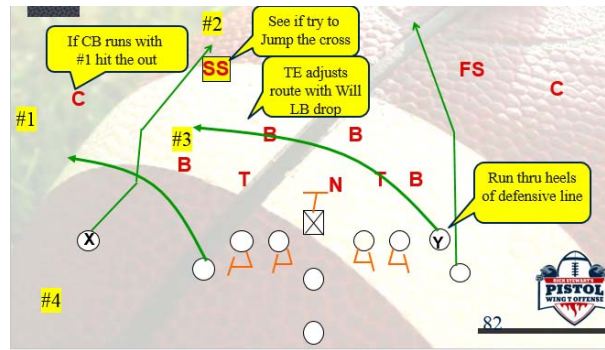
PASSING ATTACK vs TWO SAFETY HIGH



Pocket Passing (arrow) (double cross)

Smash vs inverted safety

69 Corner vs Cover 2



SUMMARY

7-MAN FRONTS:

Find the flank opposite rolled up safety. Where is SS lining up vs TE/WB, SE, and balanced sets. On SE side, the OLB/DE is in conflict. Weakside flats. Use balanced formations vs odd fronts.

5-2 weak OLB is on the LOS. Shift the HB. First 6 plays should have 6 different formations. Spread places Weak OLB in conflict. Quick passing game is lethal. Run away from SS or formation him away from play if he is declaring a strength.

6-1 Tackle trap, G.O., Down, Down option with SE on TE side. Weakside options. Quick pitch. Put FB on ILB and WB on FS when running down option.

4-3 Sucker, Weak options, Army, Baylor, Belly to SE and TE sides, G.O. to SE side. Flats.

5-3 Tackle trap to motion man. Cal. Down Tee. Loose/Trips/Trey All Options. Quick Pitch. 3 step pass game. Jet

8-MAN FRONTS:

Start off tackle running at #3 or #4. One of them has dual responsibility. . If DE takes the off-tackle hole, the OLB is in conflict. Attack middle with gut. Attack weakside with Belly, gut, criss-cross counter, and waggle. Use unbalanced formations vs even fronts. Use shifts/Joker if flopping their personnel. Use doubles/trips to get OLB out of the box.

4-4 Belly, B. Option, sucker. Pick on #3. Is he a contain player or off-tackle? Down Option. G.O. to SE Run everything out of Loose formation except Down series. Are they rolling secondary?

6-2 Roll secondary? Attack the flats. Run option, Belly Pass, Down Pass. Put the SE on TE side.

BEAR Weakside HB in flats. Change formations. Tackle trap to motion man. Option & formations kill this defense. Guard trap, Belly, Belly Option, Belly Pass. Cross WR in Waggle.

RUN THESE PLAYS WHEN....:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| G.O. | Corner is making tackles off edges. Hard squeezing DE |
| Guard Trap | When DT is penetrating |
| Counter | DL running upfield to stop Boot. |
| Belly | Anytime. Can run Belly vs any defense. |
| Belly Option | When OLB makes tackle on Belly |
| Tackle Trap | Backside ILB on Belly |
| Down | OLB or DE running upfield. |
| Down Option | OLB makes tackle on Down. |