

1

Slowest



Our Slowest Tempo Tools allow us to control the clock or relay important information in critical situations. These have been as useful in attacking a defense as our up tempo tools. Having the ability to manage a game and make a decision in which controlling the clock is a key factor in having a chance to win must be addressed by the procedures being used as well.

The Huddle is a Necessary Tool

A huddle can be defined as a brief, efficient business meeting. If what is said in a huddle is confusing or too wordy, it's time to go back to how you set up your terminology and calls structure and streamline it. In moving to operating from a no-huddle system, I learned much about being efficient with language. The more words necessary to make a call, the more difficult it is to signal in efficiently, and more opportunity for errors are created. The process of learning to operate from no-huddle made us much more efficient in our play call structure.

In the spring of 2012, when we put a huddle back into our offense for the first time in practice in five years, our players looked at each other with confusion. We had to explain to them how to align, they had to listen, and say "break", and it was funny to them. They understood why we were installing it and what we would use it for. We do like to have a huddle for certain critical situations. If aligning as fast as possible isn't a consideration for a third and long or critical red zone play, we can huddle and let our players get together to communicate key information to each other. Huddling is not just a tool to slow it down. We can relay important information that we cannot necessarily get to each other at the line of scrimmage.

SEE Huddle TRICK EXAMPLE. Also, we've used the huddle to help execute tricks and deceptive plays. In the following video, our TE #10 hides behind the guard as we break the huddle and quickly hides his jersey number as he aligns at tackle. The tackle aligns at TE in an unbalanced look but we quickly shift to empty before the defense can gain recognition. The tackle is covered and runs a bubble and the TE, from a tackle alignment, runs a seam and goes uncovered through the defense for the touchdown. Huddling and movement definitely helped us with this play.

Huddle Tempo

Our Huddle Tempo is used in critical situations like 3rd down or on a two-point conversion. In the situations for which we decide to use these, we will give the quarterback a separate wristband card from which he will call plays. We consider this in the game plan. In some weeks we might be using standard answers on 3rd down. Other weeks, we might have some wrinkles added to our base third down calls, and we might prefer to huddle for those. We prefer to utilize our huddle on the goal line because we will utilize unbalanced at times. On the goal line we prefer to break and get to the line quickly. We always want to huddle for two point plays.

HUDDLE	
1	Condor Heavy Sweep Rt
2	Eagle Heavy Sweep Lt
3	Eagle Duo Action Lt Spacing Y-Cop
4	Eagle Load Option Right
5	Heavy Rt Blast Rt
6	Heavy Rt Sweep Rt
7	Heavy Rt Ctr Lt
8	Heavy Lt Sweep Lt
9	Heavy Lt Duo Action Lt Pass Tre/DJ
10	Heavy Lt Duo Action Lt Pass Jo/DJ

Milk It Tempo

Obviously, huddling can slow play down and help consume the clock. We have a procedure which tells our quarterback to hold the huddle until 15 seconds remain on the play clock. In this procedure, our thought is we want to keep a drive moving, but since we are snapping the ball with next to no time left on the clock, we don't want the defense to align, make their calls and adjustments and be settled in to what they want to do. We don't want to go to the line and show the defense our formations, let them get their alignment and calls made, and recognize and process the information we are giving with personnel and formation. Using shifts and motions out of the huddle are valuable because we get back to

doing what we do when we are running at our fastest tempos – we make the defense adjust and process quickly. The less time they have to settle in, the better. This is obviously a procedure that has value in a four minute situation, but it can be used at any time during the course of a game when the thought is to use up the clock. I'd like to point out that Boise State's use of the huddle is done in conjunction with a lot of movement. They force a defense to quickly recognize and adjust much like a fast paced, no-huddle offense.

Conclusion

Huddling and varying the tempo from the huddle are useful tools for any offense. The key to utilizing tempo in any attack is not letting the defense get comfortable with the pace at which the offense is operating.