

PERSONNEL & BASIC STRUCTURE

I am a big proponent of fitting a system to a kid and not a kid into a system. Its hard enough to be a high school kid, never mind a high school football player, so why not put more on myself to fit the system to them, then making them do something that makes it harder to create success.

Every high school has a ton of hybrid kids, they weigh 150 to 190 pounds and are 5'7" to 5'11". Very few campuses have 300 pounders who can move and very few kids over 250 pounds. So how do you stuff the run with 240-pound D-Linemen and Inside Linebackers flirting with 200 pounds?

The Basics

For years we were a 4-4 Cover 3 defense. But with the arrival of spread offenses and playing very different offenses week after week, we found that we needed to be more flexible to defend all of the different looks. We found that we couldn't just run Cover 3 or man-free anymore. We just didn't have the athletes at every spot to man-up every play and we couldn't just sit in Cover 3 all the time. We needed a 2-safety look but wanted to keep a 4-man line.

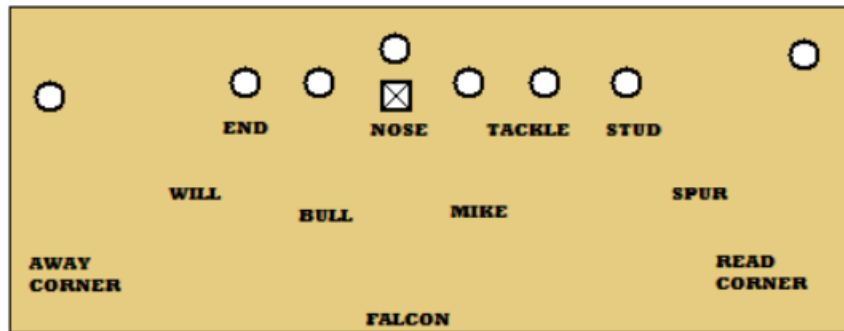
The 3-4 defense involved 2-gap D-Linemen and lots of secondary checks since one of the linebackers was blitzing every play. The 3-5-3 also had extensive blitz packages, was still a Cover 3, and we felt that it was weak against the run since we always passed 400yds total offense when we played those defenses.

The obvious choice was the 4-3 and I still have every 43 DVD that Championship Productions sells sitting on my shelf. The problem was the drastic change in our linebacker play. We didn't want to change our 4-4 rules too drastically. So, instead of switching to a 4-3 we decided to implement the 4-2-5.

The READ and REACT 4-2-5 provides a bend-but-don't-break approach that limits scoring and emphasizes stopping the run, while eliminating the big play and forcing an offense to execute long drives in order to score. The Read & React 4-2-5 is a single gap defense that requires each player to learn four to five basic stimulus-responses.

The READ and REACT 4-2-5 is unique because the D-Linemen are over shifted to the strong side and stacked, instead of shaded. It is a gap control run defense, with the DL responsible for the same gaps as a traditional, shaded 4-4 defense. We run several zone coverages and pattern match instead of spot drop.

PERSONELL



4 DEFENSIVE LINEMEN

St	Smaller End since he defeats smaller TE More agile to cover flats in 30 front
N	Can be small or large depending on roster. Small player shoots A-gaps & chase pulling Guards. Large player bull rushes.
T	Largest, strongest pleyer on defense
E	Stronger than Stud End and More agile than the Tackle

2 INSIDE LINEBACKERS

M	Smart enough to make the Front 6 calls
B	Head hunter. He has no gap responsibilities

2 HYBRID OLB / SAFETIES

Sp	Stronger and less quick. Always on multiple WR side. Primary re-router and trips defender
W	Plays both weakside OLB and Safety in Cover 5 and 4. Strong enough to contain the run, fast enough to cover deep

3 DEFENSIVE BACKS

F	Smartest player on the team. Very physical, downhill, alley player. Must have ILB mentality but speed to defend deep routes
RC	Better tackler of the 2 corners. Will be on the 2 and 3-WR side with coverage help.
AC	Best 1on1 pass defender. Asked to guard backside without safety help.

To Flop or Not Flop

In a perfect world it is better to NOT flop. Players can line up faster and there are no adjustments to change of strength motion or flopping. There have been years in which we had the type of players that did not require us to flop.

The reason we DO flop is because players are not genetically identical. One of our OLB was always tougher and the other one guarded pass better. One D-End was bigger than the other one. Plus, flopping cut the learning in half.

ADVANTAGES: Less technique to learn;

Techniques match players genetics and athletic abilities

Less practice time since do not have to teach weak & strong side techniques

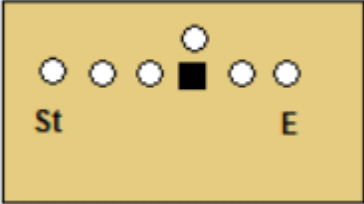
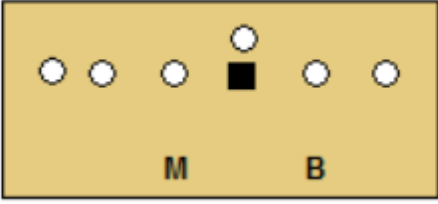
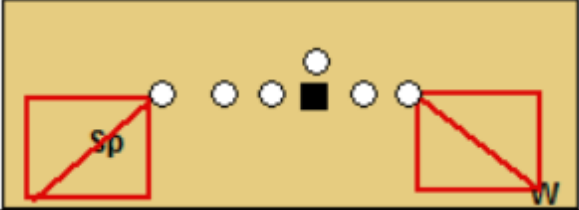
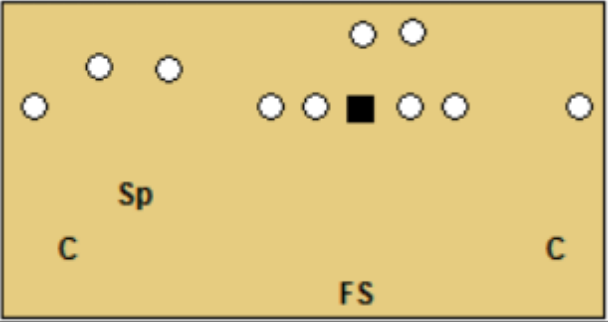
DISADVANTAGES:

Shifts, motions, and fast-tempo, no-huddle teams.

In high school, players are “cross-trained” and moved around because of injuries. They are also moved around year to year due to roster changes and growth spurts. So, the argument that they are learning less techniques may not hold water if a defensive end is learning both strong and weak side and an OLB is learning both the SPUR and WILL.

CROSS TRAINING: Challenging in practice to get a player reps at 2 defensive positions.

FLOPPING TACKLE: The Defensive Tackle has to go to the run strength.

<p>FLOPPING ENDS</p> <p>Since Offensive Tackles are bigger & slower than Tight Ends, we believe in putting our more agile, smaller end to the TE side. TE releases are different than tackles and TE almost never setup to pass block.</p> 	<p>FLOPPING INSIDE BACKERS</p> <p>Flopping makes it easier to learn the blitzes. Also, the gap responsibilities are different. Finally, the MIKE gets used to playing behind the TACKLE & STUD, while the BULL gets used to the NOSE & END.</p> 
<p>FLOPPING HYBRIDS</p> <p>We put the SPUR hybrid to the multi-receiver side, which means he defends trips, most twins, and is always inside of 5 yards. The WILL is only hybrid that plays back as a safety in Cover 4 and the only one who learns robber & pattern reading.</p> 	<p>FLOPPING CORNERS</p> <p>We want our best CB on the AWAY side. Our read CB gets used to trips coverages.</p> 

Basic Alignment

The READ & REACT 4-2-5 is based on the following premises:

- Does not take inside backers out of the box, so adjust with a pattern match, 2-read coverage (COVER 5) on the side with the least amount of receivers.
- To cut the learning in half and because our two outside hybrid safeties are not genetically identical, we FLOP. Which means the WILL is the only safety that has to learn quarters concepts.

<p>If not flopping, the Left & Right Safeties drop back to become 2nd deep safety</p> 	<p>4-3 teams will slide an ILB out of the box</p> 
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SECTION SIX

The base alignment of the 4-2-5 is similar to the 4-4 defense, with the main differences being in personnel. Rather than two outside linebackers, the 4-2-5 employs two additional safeties. We call them HYBRIDS, since unlike the college teams, these two positions play a lot of outside linebacker. Essentially, it is a variation of the Nickel package. However, the added athleticism allows for greater flexibility and versatility in terms of both alignment and coverage.

Along the defensive line, the alignment is the same as that of a traditional 4-man front. Two interior defensive tackles hold down the middle of the defensive line and two ends anchor the edges. Again, a major difference in the traditional 4-2-5 versus the READ & REACT is that the two DT are headup on the Center and Strongside offensive tackle, instead of the traditional 3-technique to the strong-side and a 1-technique to the weak-side,

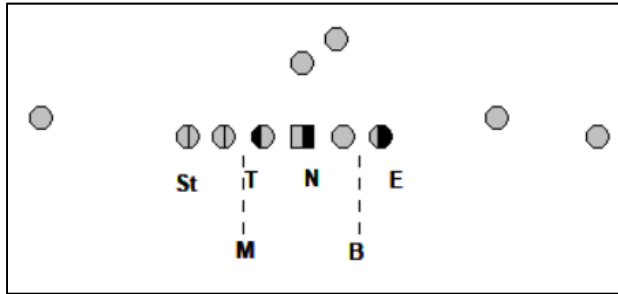
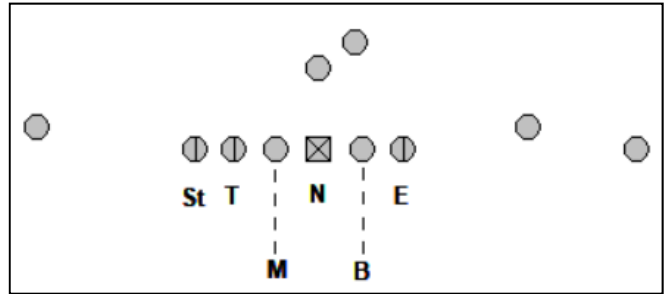


Fig TRADITIONAL FRONT



READ & REACT FRONT

There are two linebackers in the 4-2-5. The READ & REACT has them head up in 20-techniques over both offensive Guards. The college 425 has one middle linebacker aligned over B-gap to the weak-side, and the other linebacker aligned either in a stacked-look over the 3-technique, or over the B-gap to the strong-side. The backers are aligned five yards off the ball.

READ & REACT 425/34 PERSONNEL

REMEMBER this
Guy for later

STUD TACKLE NOSE END

▀ **Don't Need 4 Linemen**

- > Smaller linemen slant a lot
- > NG can be 150-180lb wrestler
- > Only the Tackle gets double teamed
- > Stud End goes with TE

ALL ACCESS COACHING

READ & REACT 425/34 PERSONNEL

St T NG E

MIKE BULL

▀ **Two good, not great ILB.**

- > Only need 3 to 4 linebackers
- > Mirror teaching is easy to cross train

ALL ACCESS COACHING

We believe that at the high school level that it is hard to find TWO hybrid safeties that can play both the flats and deep quarters. Additionally, there is not enough time at the high school level to teach both techniques so the READ & REACT 425 is a flopping defense. The Strong Safety (SPUR) always goes to the passing strength and therefore always is a flat, underneath zone player. The Weak Safety (WILL) goes opposite so he is ALWAYS the safety who drops back into Cover 4. He also never faces trips

READ & REACT 425/34 PERSONNEL

St T NG E

SPUR WILL

READ CORNER COVER CORNER

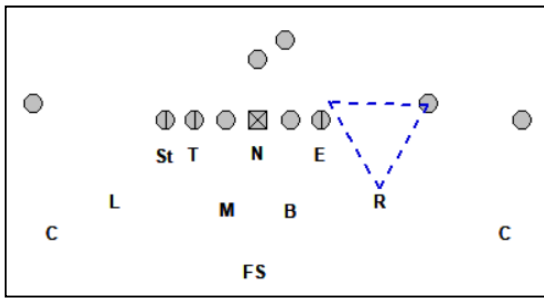
FALCON

REMEMBER these 3 safeties for later

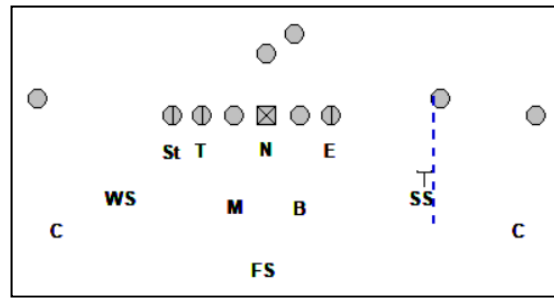
▀ **Easier to find 5 DBs than 4 LBs**

ALL ACCESS COACHING

There are several different ways that 4-2-5 teams across the country handle the two safeties who double as outside linebackers.

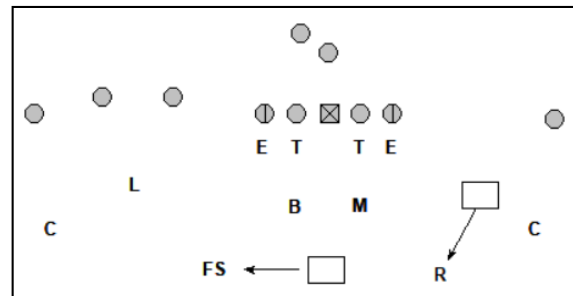
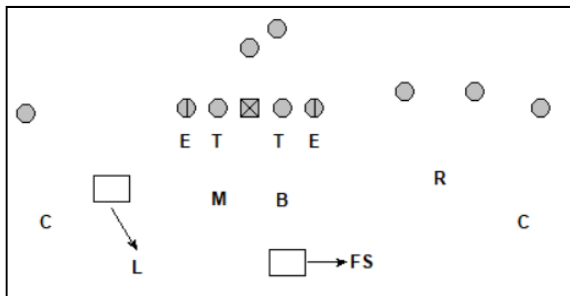


LEFT-RIGHT SAFETY SYSTEM
No Flopping



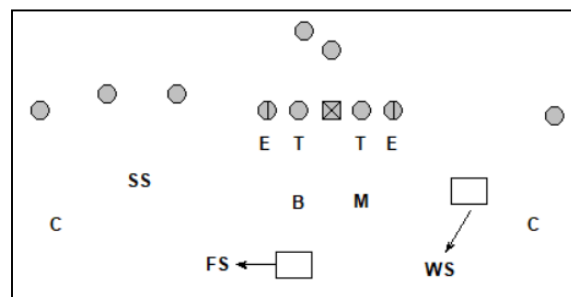
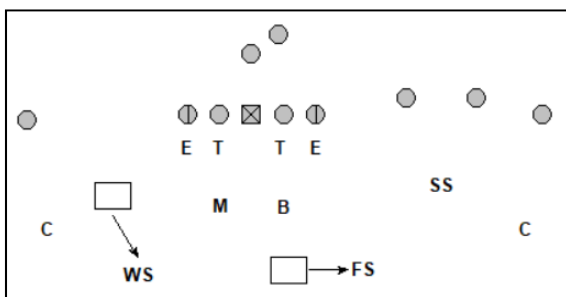
STRONG-WEAK SAFETY SYSTEM
Flopping

Depending on your base alignment and coverage, both a 1-safety-high or 2-safety-high look may be used. In a 1-high look, the free safety would play in the deep middle of the field, while the strong safety and weak safety would play like traditional OLB, lining up at 4 yards, widening out to cover slot receivers or trips formations, or lining up tighter to become edge-of-the-box defenders. Again, a fundamental difference between the READ & REACT and college, is that we want to violently re-route #2 slot receivers instead of splitting the difference, or “APEXING”.



LEFT-RIGHT SAFETY SYSTEM: No Flopping
Both the Left & Right Safeties have to know Trips coverage as well as quarters techniques

In a 2-high look, one of the players who were playing OLB in the 1-safety-high must drop back to play safety. There are several ways to accomplish this, depending on whether you are flopping or not. Again, in the READ & REACT, we flop our safeties because we want our Strong-Safety-Hybrid (SPUR) to become an expert at defending trips without having to learn quarters-safety concepts and our Weak-Safety-Hybrid (WILL) to not have to deal with trips but get really good at being our 2nd quarters-safety cover guy.

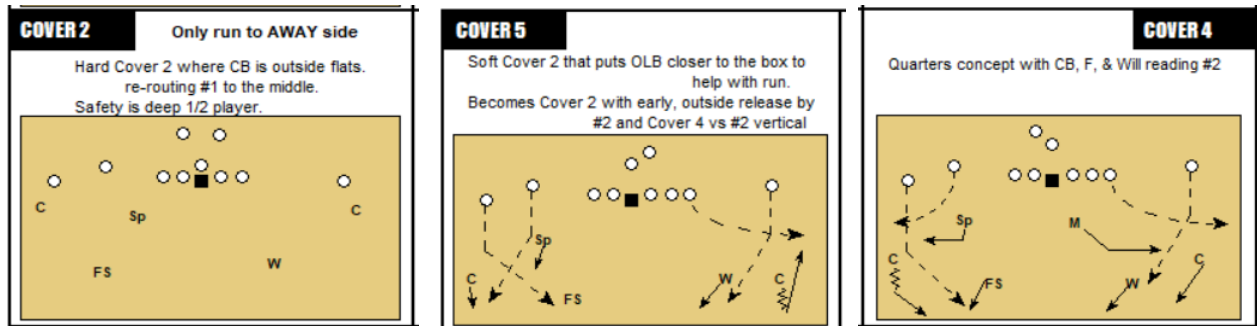


STRONG-WEAK SAFETY SYSTEM: Flopping Sides
Spur always defends Trips; Will always the other quarters safety

SECTION SIX

The FALCON needs to be the second leading tackler on the team and he has to make tackles close to the line of scrimmage. The SPUR and WILL hybrids should be in the Top 5 in tackles.

Cornerback alignment in the 4-2-5 can vary, based upon coverage and call. You can press them, bail them, run traditional squat cover 2 with a trail technique, run quarters concepts, or have them backpedal into a cover 3. The READ & REACT 4-2-5 does not run a squat cover 2 since our 2-read (COVER 5) accomplishes the same thing.



In the middle box, the CB and FS end up running quarters since neither receiver on the offensive right threatened the flats. The WILL and CB on the TE/WR (pro) side runs a cover 2 concept as the CB jumps the out by the TE. If we ran Quarters on the TE/WR (pro) side, the TE would beat our ILB to the flats (see far right box).

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