
CHAPTER 4



How we call a play

In our system of calling plays, we want to give as much information as possible to our team. A descriptive word is used to denote the backfield action. A two or three digit number will follow the backfield action. A code letter or word will give the blocking.

While the play call is verbose, meaning it requires several words, we feel that it gives us more flexibility versus 1-word play calls that would require much more memorization for our players. By teaching our players a language, it is easier to communicate in practice and make adjustments on Friday nights. If we used a 1-word play call system with all the formations in Chapter 3 along with all the blocking tags described in the next chapter, our kids would have to memorize over a hundred words. In our system they learn the few words that apply to their position but combining all these words in a longer play call allows us to run a lot of stuff.

HUDDLE

Center sets the huddle 6 yards from the LOS and directly behind the ball, hands on his hips looking in at the QB. The Guards and Tackles will align with the Center each being on the side of the Center that they will be when approaching the LOS when the huddle breaks. Simply if they were facing the ball the RG & RT will be on the right and the LG & LT will be on the left. Since we are more often in Right Formations, we will place the TE on the right and the SE on the left. When using 2 TE's, the TE that enters the game to replace the SE will align on the left. They will be facing inward, and they will be the end of the huddle. The HB will align facing the LT, the FB will align facing the LG, the QB will align facing the Center and the ZB will align facing the RT.

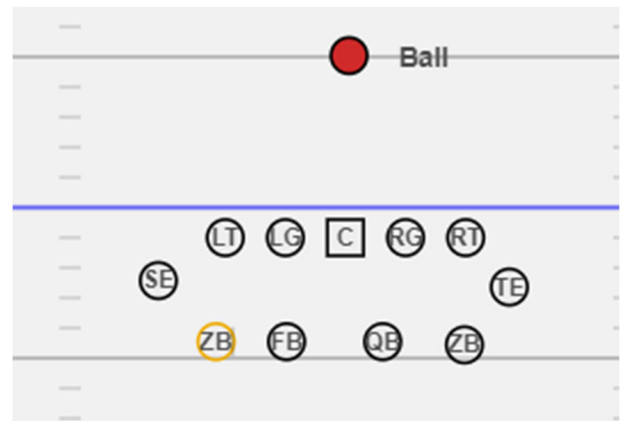


Fig 4-1: HUDDLE

We will either have a player run the play in to the QB or we will have the QB come to the sideline and get the play. We only signal in plays when we are using our INDY package. We only call the play 1 time in the huddle and we call the snap count 2 times. We know our play calls are sometimes long and Coach Moore use to tell me if you call the play 2 times, they will only listen the second time.

- Example Buck Sweep Call: “Dallas Right Buck 42 Special on One”, (at this time the Center, TE and SE will leave the huddle) then the QB will repeat the snap count again “on one, ready break”.
- If it is a playaction pass the Center before leaving the huddle will call the protection used: (Example 2-80).
- When we call 2 plays to determine at the LOS we will say “**at the line**” (Example: “Speed 42-21 at the line”).

THE PLAY CALL

Every play call is broken up into

- FORMATION/MOTION,
- PLAY, and the
- SNAP COUNT.

After the formation and motion, the PLAY CALL is going to fall into 4 categories.

1. RUN play
2. PLAY ACTION pass
3. 3-STEP pass
4. SPRINT OUT pass

Run plays and play action pass are very similar with the exception being the very last word in the play call. Run plays end with blocking rule and play action pass ends with the word “PASS” or a route number. Sprint out and 3-step passes are called the same way. We use a 3-digit number system to tell direction, pass protection, and route by #1 receiver.

After the FORMATION calls, we have to tell the backfield what to do. We do this by calling the backfield action such as Buck, Belly, Ride etc. We teach our backs our plays by steps and aiming points used in each series. So we may call Belly 34 G Bob, Belly 34 G Keep or Belly 34 Pass.

MOTIONS

We don’t always call motions because most are built into the system and they know when they go in motion. However, for communication purposes, especially in practice, we do have names for all of our motions.

If the H Back motions inside three steps, its hit, H-I-T. How many letters is the word HIT? Three letters, that means three steps. If he goes in his three-step motion to put him in a Diveback position, we say. Hum, H-U-M, how many letters? Three letters, it’s three steps. Rhythmic snap count for the Quarterback which for us is on 2. For example, “**Number, Set (slight pause) 31-2**”. The ball is snapped on the 2 and the back must go in motion when the letter “T” is sounded in set.



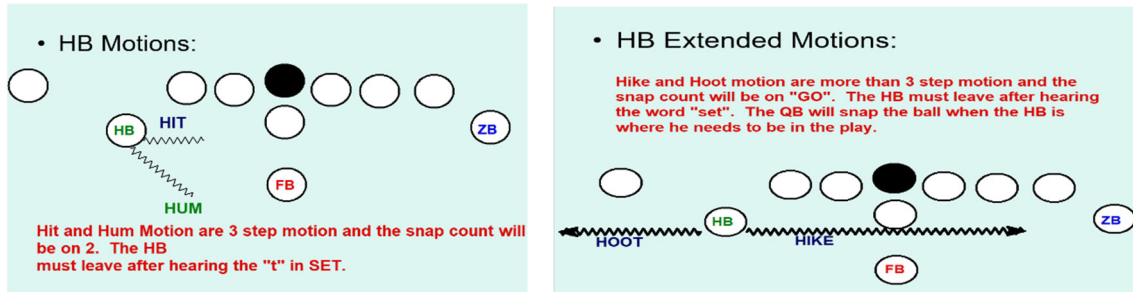


Fig 4-2: HALFBACK MOTIONS

If we want the H-back in extended motion across the formation, we call it hike, H-I-K-E. How many letters? It's more than three, so we now have to use our 'go' snap camp. That means the Quarterback is calling a number, he'll stay set, the guy leaves in motion and the Quarterback snaps the ball when he's where he needs to be. We can extend him in motion, snap the ball that's extended. H-I-K-E, H-back goes where? Inside, H-I.

If he's going outside, his motion is hoot, H-O-O-T. H-Back goes out. How many letters? Four letters, so it's extended motion. The Quarterback does not use his rhythmic Wing-T snap count.

All of our Z-back motions are going to start with the letter Z. If the wing is in a three-step motion inside, it is Zap. Three steps deep, Zip. He's Zap or he is Zip. The ZAP motion is for the old Wham block schemes; I haven't done a lot of that lately. Wham block is when you motion the wing down and he traps the nose or whatever from the backside, you can tag it. It's all built into the system to help fit like our blocking system formations, motions, it will fit whatever system you want to run. Now he's got to extended motions.

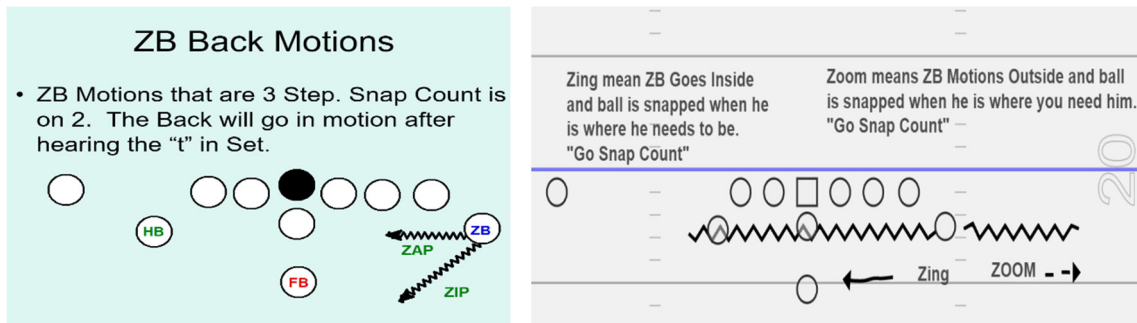


Fig 4-3: Z-BACK MOTIONS

Those are rhythmic, so if he's coming inside, Z-back going in ZING four letters. If it is four letters, he's motioning as far as the Quarterback needs him to on that play. If he motions outside, it's Zoom, Z-O, Z-back goes out. Four letters, extended motion, Quarterback your non-rhythmic snap count.



TRADING AND SHIFTING

TRADE

Now, what do you do with defenses who flip flop their personnel? They have a strong side of their defense, and they have a weak side of their defense. The first thing we want to attempt to do is we're simply going to trade the Tight End and that's always sudden. Trade Double Right. Trade Dallas Right.

The only person we're talking to now is the Tight End. If we say trade, he knows he goes opposite of where he's going to end up. If we're going to Dallas Right, everybody else lines up like Dallas Right, Tight End goes opposite. Before the trade takes place, we are in an unbalanced formation. We're forcing the defense to make an adjustment right now because we're unbalanced.

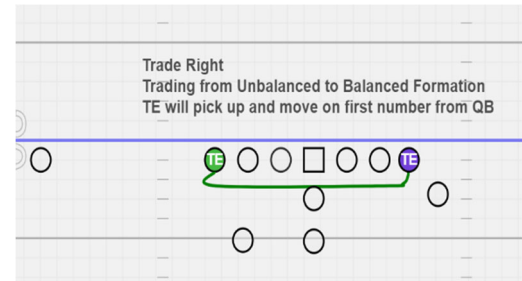


Fig 4-4: TRADING

The Quarterback goes to the line of scrimmage and he says any number, '14, 14.' The Tight End simply picks up and moves over. Now the defense immediately has got to go from whatever their adjustment was going to be from unbalanced, back to their balance call and by the time the Tight End picks up and moves, '14, 14', he picks up moves, he sets down, the Quarterback starts his normal cadence and now the Wingback is going back in motion in the other direction. You're trying to create a moment of indecision, so that's the simplest thing.

We can also trade from a balanced to an un-balanced. If we call Trade Double Southern in the huddle, then we start off in a balanced formation and the TE picks up & moves to Southern when the QB says any number. Now we are quickly in an unbalanced look. That's one of the things that we want to try to get accomplished with a trade.

SHIFT

Now, the next thing that we look at is we want to shift. Here's all we do when we shift.

- Split End starts tight if he is supposed to end up wide. If he ends up tight, then he starts wide.
- H-Back starts as Wing if he is supposed to end up in backfield. Or start in backfield if ending as a Wing.
- Tight End lines up at Fullback.
- Fullback lines up as Tight End opposite of where the strength's going to be.

For example, if we are shifting to our base Right formation, our Split End knows that he is going to be in a normal Split End alignment. So, in the huddle we say "**Shift Right**", then the Split End starts out in crack alignment, he H-Back starts out as Wing, the Diveback starts out in the backfield, TE is at fullback, and our FB is at tight end on the left side. Once the QB says a number everyone quickly shifts to a Right Formation.



So it starts off in an unbalanced formation and the defense is making calls and adjusting. Once the defense sets and makes their call, the Quarterback says, '14, 14' and everyone moves. By the time the five offensive players get in a stance, now somebody's going in motion. It's all about deception.

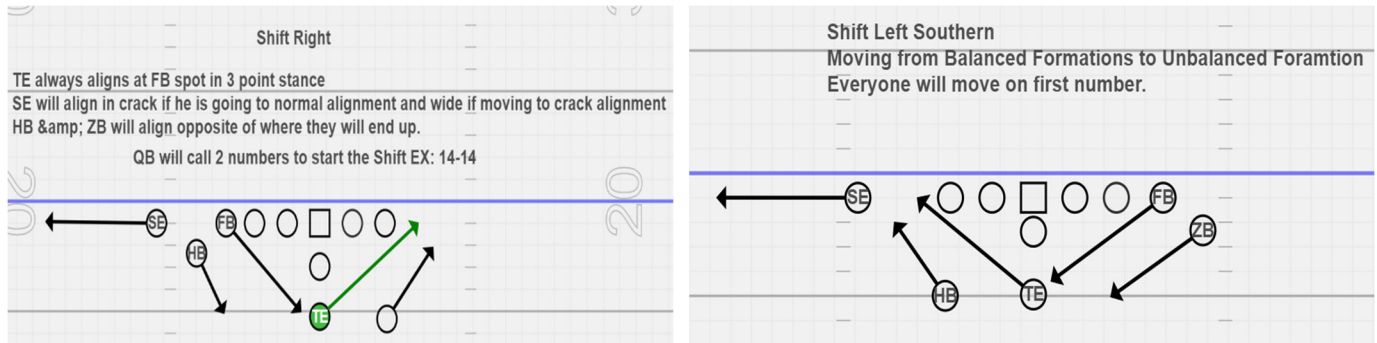


Fig 4-5: SHIFTING

The opposite occurs if we go from balanced to un-balanced. Lets say the call in the huddle is: “**Shift Left Southern**”. Obviously, your Offensive Linemen are never changing. The Fullback goes opposite the strength call and looks like our TE, forcing the Defense to declare the strength to the wrong side. The SE will align opposite of where he ends up. The HB & ZB will align opposite of their final alignment either at Wing or Dive Back

We want to use trades and shifts mostly when teams are flip-flopping their defensive personnel, trying to get their strong side to end up on the weak side, the weak side ends up on the strong side. The purpose is this: if the defense knows that we only have a Tight End side and a Split End side, then they can work Bucksweep, Power Sweep, Down, and Down Option on their strongside defense. Their weak side is going to work the Belly, Weak Side Jet Sweep, Weak Side Bucksweep.

By not using formations, motions, shifts, and trades, our opponent only has a limited number of plays that their defenders have to defend. The minute we shift and trade your weak side now is going to have to play against my strong side run game. We really believe that that is an advantage to what we're doing by adding the shift and the trade.

IDENTIFY COVERAGE

We do something that is a little bit unique and different. As the Run 'N' Shoot offense was coming into existence, I sat in on a Run 'N' Shoot clinic talk. I advise all coaches to listen to talks that may not be part of your system because it helps you to understand your opponents better.

The Run 'N' Shoot receivers & QB would identify the coverage pre-snap and the receivers routes were based on what the coverage was. Well, I like that concept but we run the football so much we did not have time to teach receivers different route adjustments based on coverages. Instead, what we do is have the QB identify the coverage pre-snap, which we narrowed down to either 1 or 2-high safeties. So everything to us is either cover 2 or cover 3. Man to man is cover 3 as is anything with a 1-high safety.



The Quarterback is going to call the coverage in the cadence. The QB will call the coverage with the first number. So, for example, if our QB goes to the line of scrimmage and says: **“2, SET, 31-2”**.... That means the coverage is Cover 2 and the receivers will run routes designed for Cover 2. If it's one high safety, he's going to say, “3, Set 31-2”. And our receivers routes will change based on the coverage that our Quarterback thinks he's seeing. The set 31-2 is our rhythmic snap camp, which does nothing more than helps us time the motion.

CHECK WITH ME

This number is also used on plays that are packaged or direction is determined at the line of scrimmage. Now the first number is the hole that we want to run to. For example, if we wanted to run either Buck Sweep or Belly G based on the how the DE was aligned, in the huddle we would call Buck 42 Special or Belly 34 G Bob. At the LOS the QB would say **“2 SET 31-2”**, which means we are running Buck 42 Special. If the QB said **“4 SET 31-2”**, then we would run Belly 34 G Bob.

SNAP COUNT

We will use 4 snap counts and our QB will be the person that determines which one we use by knowing what is needed to make the play work.

1. **ON 1:** *No motion. Snap the ball on the first sound out of the QBs mouth.*
2. **ON 2:** *Wing goes in motion on first “SET-GO” and ball is snapped on the next “SET-GO”.*
3. **HOLD TWO:** *Wing*
4. **ON GO:** *QB pauses between words “SET” and “GO”*

This snap count will be: **“[coverage #]..slight pause..SET-31-2”**. When I asked Coach Moore why he said 31-2 his reply was that because people will tend to draw our words such as Ready but you can only say 31-2 one way. Made sense to me so we have never changed.

A big part of the Wing-T is the 3-step motion by a wing which is part of a rhythmic snap count. In the Huddle, the QB will say on “TWO”. At the Line of Scrimmage, the QB lifts his heel to start the Wing Back. When the heel hits the ground the QB says **“SET-GO”** and ball is snapped on the next **“SET-GO”**.

If we are trying to draw you offsides we will go on **“Hold Two”** We will us our normal on Two snap count and if the defense does not jump, he will say “check” after finishing the count and begin the snap count over again and we will run the play. This keeps us from having to call a timeout and waisting that timeout on 4th and short if we are going for it.

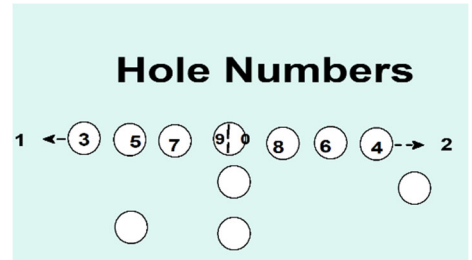
Our last snap count is when we are using speed sweep motion, which is when the motion man is going in extended motion of more than 3 steps. We call the snap count “on Go”. The QB will call: “coverage # (pause) Set and then say GO when the person in motion is where he needs to be.



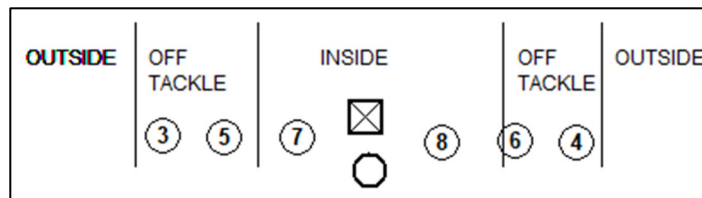
RUN PLAYS

For many offensive systems, the hole the ball is going is the gap between linemen. In our system each of our offensive linemen have a number and they are known as the call man. Everything is predicated by the call man.

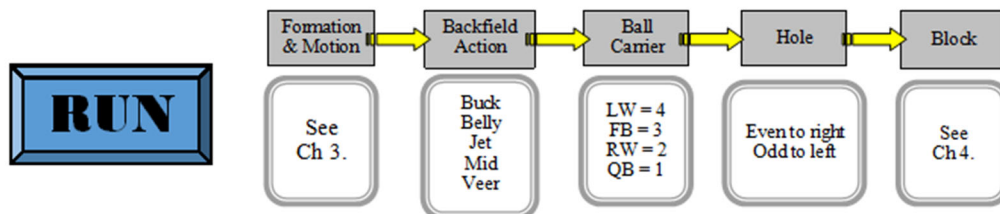
In our numbering system all even numbers are to the right and odd numbers are to the left. The numbers do not flip with a play call. Example Buck 42 Special is always Bucksweep to the Right and Buck 21 Special is always Bucksweep to the Left. Our center will have two numbers assigned to him to determine which side the lead block is coming from. His numbers are 0 on his right cheek and 9 on his left cheek.



In our offense, there are only three areas to run: INSIDE, OFF TACKLE, or OUTSIDE



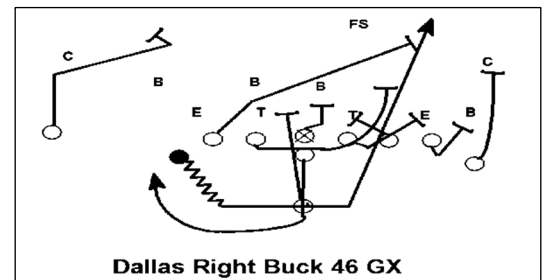
Inside Holes are 0, 9, 7, & 8. Off-Tackle Holes are 3,5,6, & 4. Outside are 1 & 2 hole plays



An example of a play call is: Buck 46 GX (Buck Sweep variation to the right).

- Buck – tells our backs the backfield action and this is how we teach the backs their steps.
- 46 – “4” back is getting the ball (Left Half) and running to the 6 hole.
 - The “6” is also the call man and the blocking rules begin with him.
- GX – is the blocking rule and who is pulling and the technique the pullers will use.

The part of this system that I love the most is that the linemen only have to learn the last digit and their blocking assignment. We joke in practice by having the linemen cover their ears and mumble “blah, blah, blah” until the last number and word after it is called. For example, we can run.



All the linemen heard on the above plays was the 6-Hole and the Blocking assignment, “GX”.



A three-digit play call would indicate that two backs are involved in the ball handling. The 1st digit is the first back, the 2nd digit is the second back, and the 3rd digit is the hole. The 4-back gives the ball to the 2-back who runs to the 5-hole. “Y-REVERSE” is the blocking scheme, which will be covered in the next chapter.

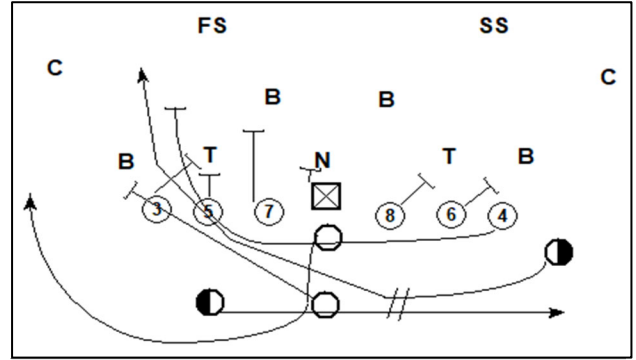


Fig 4-6: 4-25 Y REVERSE

PLAY ACTION PASS

We call our Play Action Pass the same way we call our Run Plays. Formation, Motion, back who is faking, and the hole he fakes to sound just like a Run Play. The difference is that instead of giving a blocking assignment, we just say “PASS” or give the route concept.

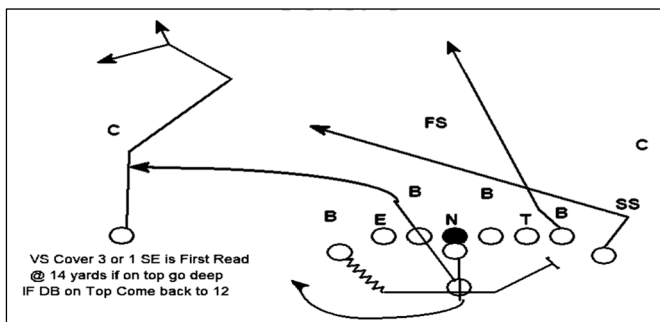
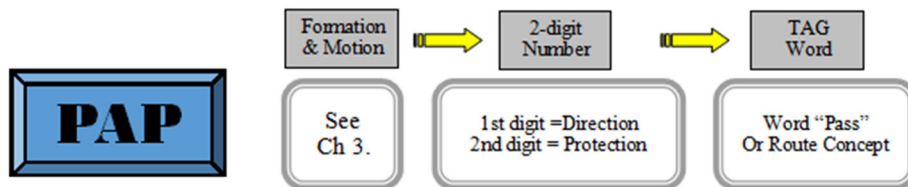


Fig 4-7: DALLAS RIGHT BOOTLEG @ 1

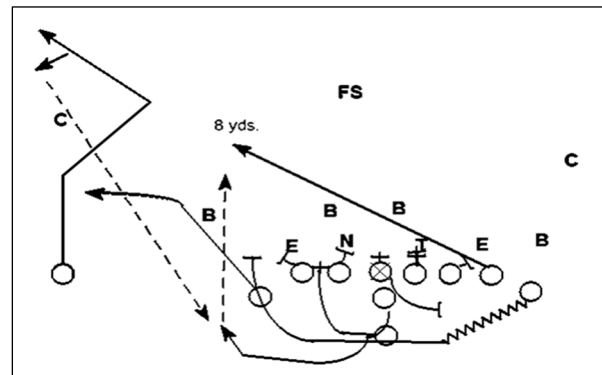
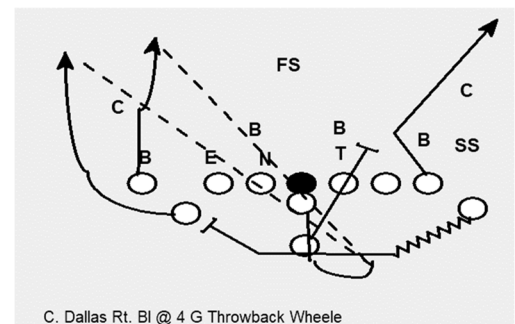


Fig 4-8: DALLAS RIGHT RIDE 35 PASS

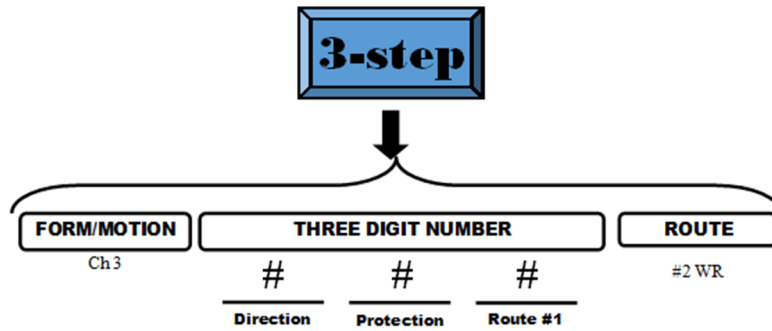
When we say “@ 1” or “@ 2” at the end of a bootleg or waggle play call, this tells the QB to sprint out past the tackle box with an option to run the ball. In fact, since most play actions are called on 1st or 2nd down, we tell him to run the ball if the deep ball is not open.

If we say “@ 3” or “@ 4” at the end of the call, then the QB sets up on the inside leg of the tackle.



DROP BACK PASS

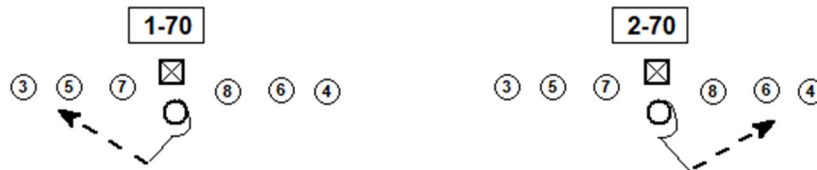
Our pass protections (further explained in Section Six) are: 60,70,80,90 protections. The first digit tells everyone the direction that we are throwing. A “1” is being thrown left and a “2” is being thrown right. We do have a special protection called RAM and LAM, which are used instead of the 1 & 2. These are covered in the pass protection Ch. 16.



5-step drop behind the center.



3-step drop behind the center or in the A gap



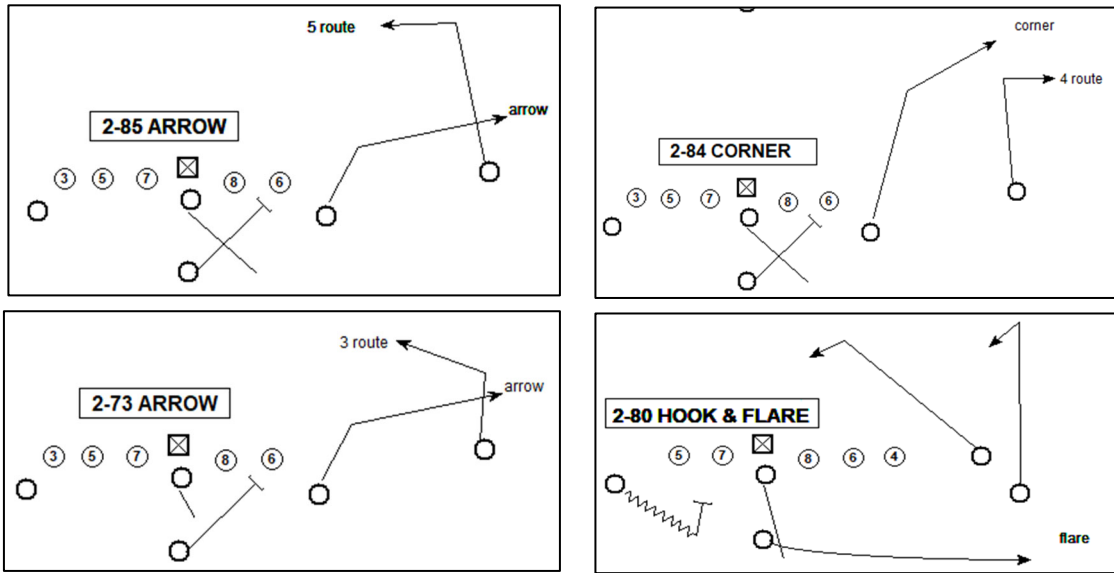
5-step drop behind the guard to behind the tackle. This is also the run & shoot concept. The QB technique is a half roll, throwing on the 3rd or 5th step when going to the right. Or the 4th or 6th step when going to the left.



Full QB sprint out outside the end's position.

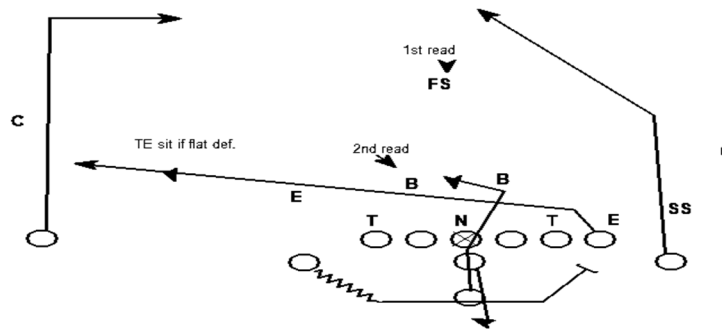


The last digit indicates the route of the outside receiver. The inside receiver's route will be called by name.



When the last digit of the pattern ends in zero, this indicates no pattern or route is called. A word will follow to indicate the pattern. The complete passing tree is in Chapter 15.

2 Buck Cadillac



We like Cadillac vs 3 Deep Coverage

We will use our 60 Protection on all Cadillac Pass Plays. This will be covered in our Play Action Pass Chapter.

