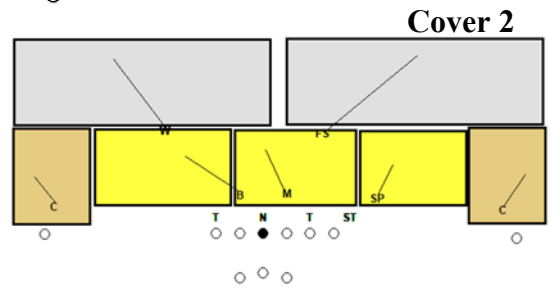
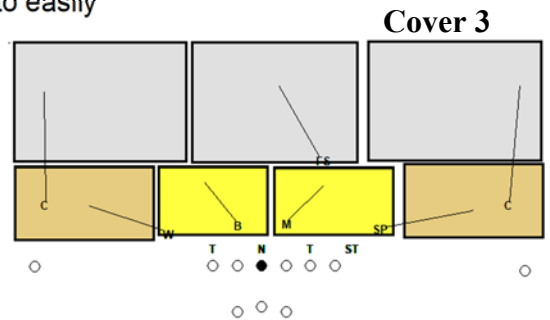


ZONE COVERAGES

Due to its similarities to the 4-4, the most basic coverage in the 4-2-5 scheme is the “bend-but-don’t-break” cover 3. The base alignment of the 4-2-5 makes playing cover 3 a natural fit for the scheme. The presence of five defensive backs makes it possible to easily transition into “Cloud” and “Sky” variations of the coverage as well.

The traditional cover 3 scheme has the Outside Linebackers guarding the flats in a “Sky” variation and we use it mostly to the AWAY side of the field. We don’t use the word “Sky”, we simply call “Cover 3” to the side that we want the Corner deep and the SPUR/WILL underneath. This is good when blitzing because it puts a defender in the throwing lanes to the flat areas, taking away sight adjustments and hot reads that might negate the blitz.

In “Cloud” coverage, the cornerbacks have the flats and the safeties play over the top of them. Again, we don’t use the word “Cloud”, it is part of our Cover 5 coverage and can be played on both sides of the field simultaneously, but it is our majority coverage on the AWAY, or backside. We hardly ever play traditional Cover 2, running Cover 5 instead.



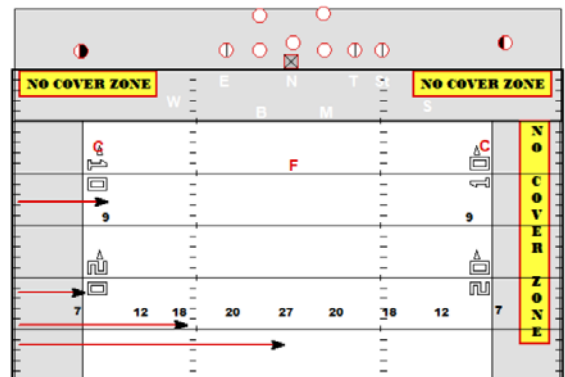
Spot Dropping

The READ & REACT believes strongly in pattern matching because it eliminates defenders “guarding grass” and once the DBs make their reads, becomes man-to-man. However, initially teaching “SPOT DROPPING” is much easier to teach, especially at the lower levels and in the first year of a program build.

We start by breaking up the field. “No Cover Zones” are any routes under 5 yards and in the area between the numbers and the sideline. Quick routes with 1 and 3 step drops will be made before we have dropped to our zones, giving us time to rally to the ball. We react to QB shoulders and palm off and usually break on these out of our read steps.

The No Cover Zone down the sideline is bottom of numbers to the sideline, which is 7 yards wide. These are difficult throws to complete and the trajectory and time the ball is in the air allows our Corners to get to the receiver at the same time as the ball.

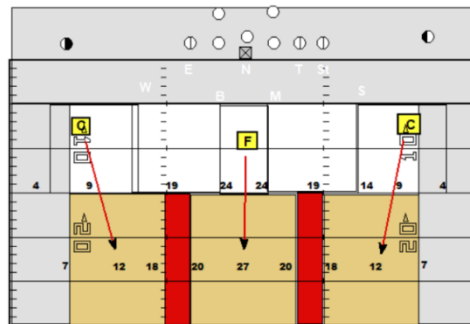
A football field is 9yds to top of numbers, 18yds to the hash, and 27yds is the middle of the field. We reduce the 54 yard field to 40 yards because of the No Cover Zones on the sidelines.



SECTION THREE

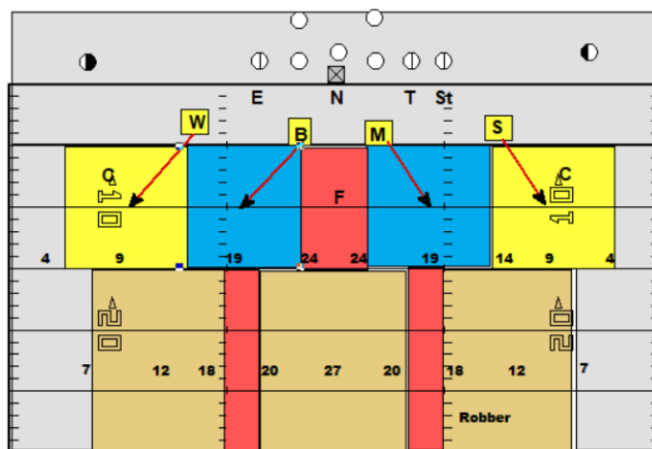
Next we create 10yd by 10yd “boxes” and we train them to drop to the middle of the box as quickly as possible so that they only have to defend 5 yards to any side.

The deep outside 1/3 boxes go from bottom of numbers to the hash. The deep middle box is just inside the hashes. This does leave a small “overlap” of 2yards that both the CB and FS have to cover. So each corner has a 10yard wide zone from bottom of numbers to 2 yards outside the hash. The Free Safety has a 10yard wide middle zone inside hash to inside hash.



The thing that hurts cover 3 the most are the seams marked in red, so we give that zone to both players. We define these OVERLAP ZONES as 2 yards on each side of the seam and our corners and safeties know that they both are responsible for this weakness of the defense.

The four underneath boxes covered by the Linebackers are then defined. The WILL and SPUR drop 10yds to the top of the numbers. The MIKE and BULL drop 12yds to the hash. This will create their boxes, with a “overlap gap” of 6 yards in the middle of the field. This is a difficult throw and we call it our KILL ZONE. Anybody who is thrown a ball here is treated like a person trying to steal our Christmas presents.



While this is easy to teach and it is what I installed in the first year of all three of my turnarounds, there are limitations. The offense will complete easy throws underneath, so you need great pursuit and be great open field tacklers.

Some Cover 3 teams rotate and change their coverage so much that the players get confused. Cover 3 Free, Cover 3 Roll, Cover 3 Sky, Cover 3 Cloud. We have never ran any of those coverages.

READ & REACT COVERAGES

TCU runs three zone coverages in the secondary, a Robber coverage they call Cover 2; a traditional two-deep zone they call Cover 5; and a Quarters coverage they call Blue. With the split field concept, that really gives them nine coverages. They also teach PATTERN MATCHING, where the cornerback, free safety, Spur, and Will read the receivers to determine each defender’s assignment.

Cover 3 Pattern Match-Robber

Our FALCON free safety is not a deep middle player in Cover 3. He only worries about the READ side and plays Robber versus 2-RB sets. Against 1-RB sets he may still rob vs TE sets (11 personnel), but even when he isn’t Robbing, he only breaks to the AWAY side if the QB takes him there.

Our SPUR will re-route #2 with eyes on #1. He will run at #1 if he runs a hitch. He will run at 5yd depth versus any out/bubbles by #2. If #2 runs in front of him, he passes that off to the MIKE and drops to wherever #1 receiver is.

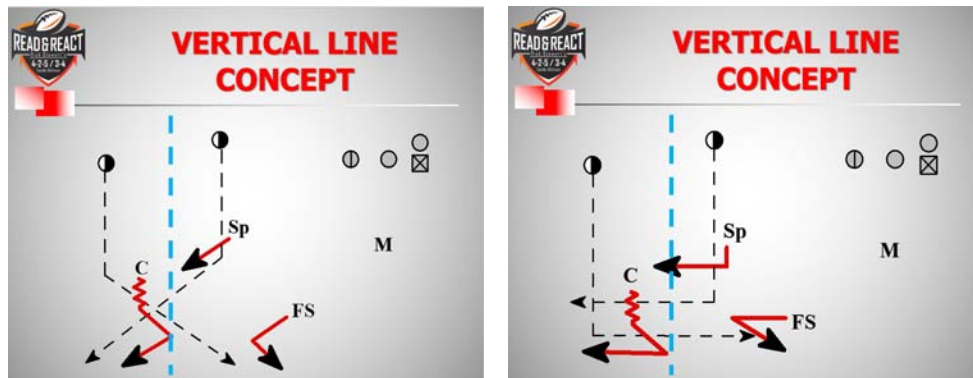
Our CB has his eyes on both #1 and #2. We want him wait as long as possible before turning and running. “Don’t Go Till You Know”...however, our corners are our deep players and under no circumstances can let a WR behind them.

On the AWAY side, the WILL and CB will “Banjo” in Cover 3. WILL takes all the shallow routes by #1, especially slants and hitches. “As 1 climbs, he climbs”, meaning he will continue to drop as long as the WR is running a deeper route. Basically, the WILL takes shallow and inside routes by the WR, the CB takes deep and outside routes. The BULL Inside Linebacker is responsible for the RB.

Cover 4 Quarters

In cover 4, the Will and Free Safety are both ROBBING. We play Cover 4 as much as we play Cover 3, but can only play it on one side in the 4-2-5 Scheme. In our 30 Front, we play Cover 4 to both sides. The 2-safety alignment frees up the SPUR to matchup with a slot receiver in either zone or man coverage, essentially becoming a nickel back. Due to his inherent athleticism as a defensive back, this makes aligning to three and four-receiver sets (especially to trips) much more effective than in a 4-3 or 3-4 scheme, where you likely would be asking a linebacker to engage in coverage.

If both #1 and #2 receiver goes vertical, the colleges lock up man-to-man. Due to our DBs usually running 4.9 forty times, we teach the “vertical line concept”. An imaginary line is drawn between the two receivers and the CB takes whomever breaks out over the line and the Safety (WILL or FALCON) takes whomever breaks in. If both receivers break in (Post + Dig), the CB “squeezes the zone” and will cross the vertical line. Same for the Safety if both receivers break out (Fade + Out).



Cover 5 (2-Read)

Blue coverage, known as 2-Read or Palms in the NFL, looks essentially identical to Quarters coverage if the no. 1 and 2 receivers run vertical; again, it's man coverage. But if the no. 2 breaks his route short, the coverage morphs into traditional Cover 2 coverage, with the cornerback coming up to defend any speed out or bubble by #2 and any hitch by #1. The safety rotates to defend any downfield route by the receiver who is running any deep route (fade, post, post corner).

Bronco

In recent years, Patterson has also added a hybrid man/zone concept called Bronco, in which the corner plays man on the no. 1 receiver and the safety plays man on the no. 2 on any vertical or outside-breaking route, but if the no. 2 receiver runs inside on a slant or short crossing route, the safety lets him go and becomes a Robber. Bronco allows TCU to keep its linebackers in the box to stop the run even if the offense is in a spread formation. Finally, Patterson also features an extensive man-to-man blitz package that allows him to call essentially any blitz or stunt at any time.

Safeties Aggressive Mentality

Just because Patterson's defenders are reading the offense doesn't mean they're passive, though. "Where we are different from other teams is our rule for our safeties: 'Don't go till you know,'" Patterson said at a 2015 clinic. "Other teams have their safeties backpedal, but we sit there and flat-foot shuffle. We want you to try to throw vertical. I was a front coach for many years before I became a secondary coach. There is nothing worse than a secondary coach who is always worried about getting beat deep. We want to take away the short game, we want to take away combination routes, and we want to stop the run." TCU's defense does all three.

Our Coverage Call: First digit is Read side, Second digit is Away side. Then there is a word for Trips. So “45 Solo” means: Cover 4 on Read Side; Cover 5 on Away Side; Solo if they come out in Trips

COVERAGE SUMMARY

| | READ CB | FALCON | SPUR | WILL | AWAY CB |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|
| Cover 0 | #1 receiver | blitz adjuster funnel technique man free | #2 WR outside tackle box | #2 WR outside tackle box | #1 receiver |
| Cover 5 | 2 vert/in: man 1 2 out: jump flats has 2 wheel | 2 vert: man 2 2 out: rob 1 2 in: QB eyes | Wall #2 eyes on #1 #3 flats / wheel | 2 vert: man 2 2 out: rob 1 2 in: QB eyes | 2 vert/in: man 1 2 out: jump 2 has 2 wheel |
| Cover 2 | Jam #1 inside Trail #1 Flats/Force | Deep 1/2 player reading 2 to 1 | Wall #2 eyes on #1 #3 flats / wheel | Deep 1/2 player reading 2 to 1 | Jam #1 inside Trail #1 Flats/Force |
| NOT A READ SIDE CALL | | | | | |
| Cover 3 | Deep 1/3. 2 vert: split 1&2 | Deep Middle vs 1-RB sets Rob vs 2-RB | Curl/Flat/Swing #2 #2 wheel Re-Route vs Twins | Curl/Flat/Swing #2 has #2 wheel Re-Route vs Twins | Deep 1/3. Split two vert |
| Cover 4 | 1 out & 1 vert 1 in: zone 1/4 #2 wheel vs 2-RB | 2 vert: man 2 2 out: rob 1 2 in: QB eyes | Curl/Flat/Swing #2 #2 wheel Re-Route vs Twins | 2 vert: man 2 2 out: rob 1 2 in: QB eyes | 1 out & 1 vert 1 in: zone 1/4 #2 wheel |
| TRIPS: Rattle | 3 out: squeeze 1 3 vert/in: squeeze 2 | 3 out: squeeze 2 3 vert/in: middle 1/3 | Flat-Curl-Seam | COVER 3 vs 1 WR Backside COVER 5 in boundary COVER 2 READ vs TWINS | |
| TRIPS: Roll | Start at 7 yards Jump any outs by #2 or #3 | Outside 1/3 | Curl-Seam | Middle 1/3 | Outside 1/3 |
| TRIPS: Solo | CB, Sp, F read #1 & #2 COVER 2 puts SPUR closer to box COVER 4 puts SPUR in the flats | | | Takes #3 Vert. #3 out: help Away side CB | Man on 1 |
| TRIPS: Special | Man on 1 | COVER 2 | COVER 2 SPUR acts like CB | COVER 3 vs 1 WR Backside COVER 5 in boundary COVER 2 READ vs TWINS | |
| TRIPS: Survivor | COVER 2 | COVER 2 | Man on 3 | COVER 3 vs 1 WR Backside COVER 5 in boundary COVER 2 READ vs TWINS | |

Non-Trips COVERAGES

| | |
|---------|--|
| Cover 0 | Man Coverage. |
| Cover 5 | Soft Cover 2 that puts the hybrid safety closer to the box to help with run. Becomes Cover 2 with early, outside release by #2 and Cover 4 vs #2 vertical |
| Cover 2 | Hard Cover 2 where CB is outside flats, re-routing #1 to the middle Safety is deep 1/2 player. Will only run to Away side and in the boundary. |
| Cover 3 | Traditional 3 deep by CB and Falcon. Linebackers are spot dropping while pattern reading. Falcon will play robber to the Read side versus 2-RB sets. |
| Cover 4 | Quarters concept with CB, F, & Will reading #2 release. |

READ SIDE COVERAGES

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 WR (solo) | Cover 0 or 4 |
| 1 WR + TE (pro) | Cover 3, 4, or 5 |
| 2 WR (twins) | Cover 3, 4, or 5 |
| 3 WR (trips) | see Trips packages |

AWAY SIDE COVERAGES

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1 WR (solo) | Solo, 3, 5 |
| 1 WR + TE (pro) | Cover 3 or 4 |
| 2 WR (twins) | Cover 0, 2, 3, 5 |
| 1 TE (tight) | Solo, 3, 5 |

TRIPS COVERAGES

Our automatic check to Trips is Quarter, Quarter, Halves (RATTLE).

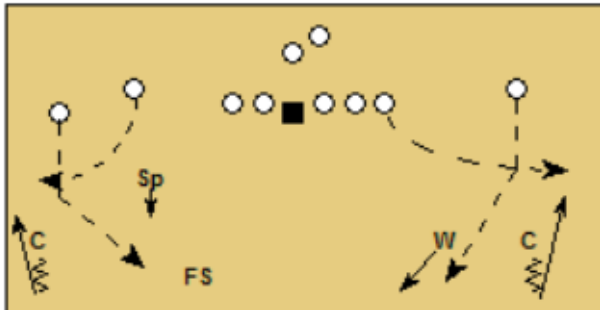
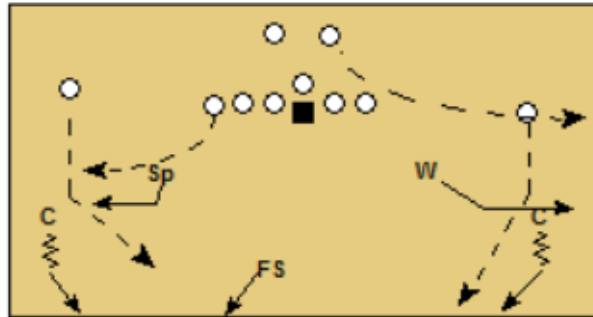
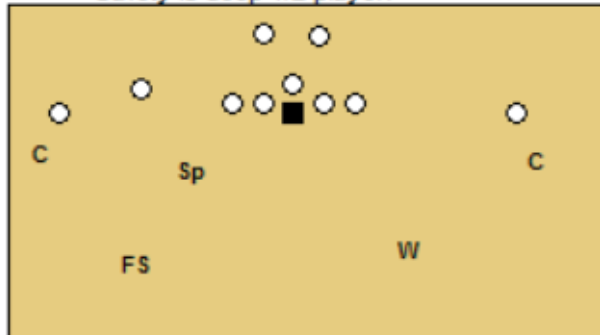
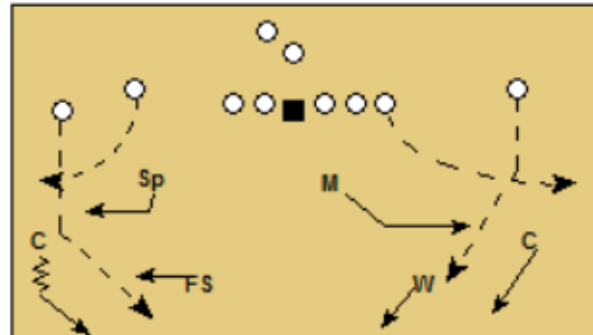
If we want to run any of the other 4 Trips Coverages, it is at the end of our coverage call.

Our main 3 are Rattle, Solo, and Special. Film scout and personell dictate which one we run more. Roll is for teams that run alot of bubble & slip screens out of trips.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| TRIPS: Rattle | Conventional 1/4, 1/4, 1/2 with no backside help from Will Hybrid "Rattle Read" is the CB & Falcon reading #3 |
| TRIPS: Roll | Trips side CB rolls down to play flats & Spur pedals back to hook-dig zone Falcon, Will, & backside CB cover the deep 1/3's |
| TRIPS: Solo | Backside CB plays man vs single receiver opposite the trips. Will post snap rolls to middle & takes all deep post routes, allowing F to read 2 to 1 |
| TRIPS: Special | Trips side CB plays man vs #1 trips receiver. F & Spur play 2-Read off #2 & #3 Will helps backside CB on the solo receiver. |
| TRIPS: Survivor | Spur plays man on #3 trips receiver. F & CB play 2-Read on #1 and #2. Will helps backside CB. Mainly run this vs Trey (TE trips) formations |

BASIC COVERAGES

These are detailed in great detail in Chapter _____

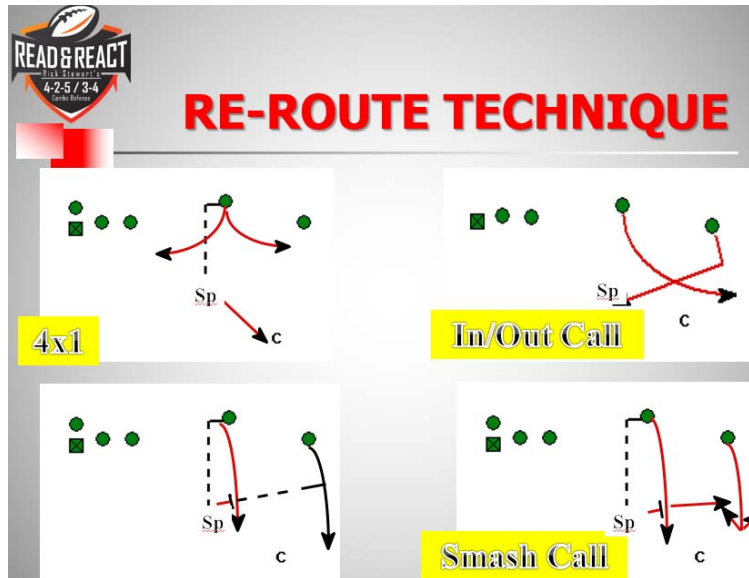
| | |
|--|--|
| <p>COVER 5</p> <p>Soft Cover 2 that puts OLB closer to the box to help with run. Becomes Cover 2 with early, outside release by #2 and Cover 4 vs #2 vertical</p>  | <p>COVER 3</p> <p>Traditional 3 deep by CB and Falcon. LB spot drop while pattern reading. Falcon plays robber to the Read side vs 2-RB sets</p>  |
| <p>COVER 2</p> <p>Only run to AWAY side</p> <p>Hard Cover 2 where CB is outside flats. re-routing #1 to the middle. Safety is deep 1/2 player.</p>  | <p>COVER 4</p> <p>Quarters concept with CB, F, & Will reading #2</p>  |

TRIPS

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| TRIPS: Rattle | Conventional 1/4, 1/4, 1/2 with no backside help from Will Hybrid READ #3 by CB & Falcon ("Rattle Read") |
| TRIPS: Roll | Trips side CB rolls down to play flats & Spur pedals back to hook-dig zone Falcon, Will, & backside CB cover the deep 1/3's |
| TRIPS: Solo | MAN Backside Single receiver by the CB. Will post snap rolls to middle & takes all deep post routes, allowing F to read 2 to 1 |
| TRIPS: Special | MAN #1 Trips Side receiver by the READ CB. F & Spur play Cover 2 vs #2 & #3 Will helps backside CB on the solo receiver. |
| TRIPS: Survivor | MAN #3 Trips Side receiver by the Spur. F & CB play Cover 2 on #1 and #2. Will helps backside CB. Mainly run this vs Trey (TE trips) formations |

OLB TECHNIQUE

We Re-Route in Cover 3 and Cover 4



RE-ROUTE

The OLB (most of the time the SPUR), aligns outside eye to inside eye of the slot receiver. His inside foot is at 4 yards and outside foot at 3 yards. He is reading the EMOL and when he gets high hat pass from the Tackle or Tight End, he pivots on the inside foot so that the outside foot is not at 5yds. He is facing the sideline and waiting for #2 receiver to come at him.

While Re-Routing, he has to have his eyes on #1. If the outside, #1 WR breaks off a hitch at 4, 5, or even 10yds, the SPUR immediately stops re-routing and sprints to #1 WR. He cannot look back at the QB or he will never get to the Hitch in time. He sprints, even yells, at #1 and if ball arrives before he does, he needs to "SHOW UP WITH HEADACHE"....in other words, separate the ball from that receiver.

We want the SPUR to re-route as long as possible and keep getting depth as long as #1 WR is running deep. "If HE CLIMBS, I CLIMB". Quit re-routing at any point #1 receiver sinks the hip (10yd dig, 12yd out) and pass #2 off to the safety. If the #2 receiver escapes the re-route, then drop to wherever #1 is.

CAN'T RE-ROUTE

If the #2 receiver breaks off an inside OR outside route under 4 yards, he does not re-route. This is important that he waits to re-route so that the Safety can make a clean ROBBER read.

If the receiver breaks in, then SPUR drops to #1. If the receiver breaks out, then SPUR goes with him, but runs at 5yd depth towards sideline since he has the wheel also. If the receiver breaks out, and #1 breaks in, the CB yells "IN-IN-IN" and the SPUR stops to pick up the slant. The CB takes #2 on the out and on the wheel.



COVER 3 RULES

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|---|
| Read CB | 2x7 inside #1 | Deep 1/3. Split 1 & 2 versus two verticals vs 1-RB sets On top & over #1 vs 2-RB sets. Defend the post |
| Falcon | C gap at 8yds ("C8") | Deep Middle vs 1-RB sets. Rob vs 2-RB sets |
| Spur | 4x4 off TE 4x1 vs twins | Curl-Flat-Swing. Eyes on #1 WR; expand with #2 Re-route vs Twins. Has #2 wheel. |
| Mike | 20 tech | Wall Player. Eyes on #2 receiver as drop to hash Has #3 (RB) swing & out of backfield |
| Bull | 20 tech | Wall Player. Eyes on #1 receiver as drop to hash Has #2 swing |
| Will | 4x4 off TE 4x1 vs twins | Curl-Flat-Swing. Eyes on #1 WR; expand with #2 Re-route vs Twins. Has #2 wheel. |
| Away CB | 2x7 inside #1 | Deep 1/3. Split 1 & 2 versus two verticals vs 1-RB sets On top & over #1 vs 2-RB sets. Defend the post |



GENERAL RULES

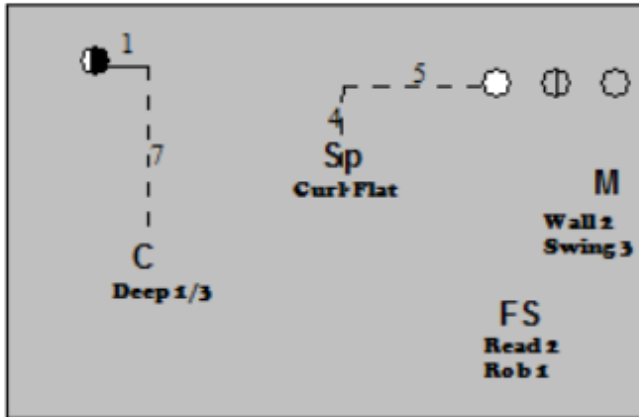
- ‡ **FALCON follows robber rules. Read 2, rob 1**
 - CB: #1 shallow slant
 - "IN" call to Spur. Stay in zone (double move/wheel)
 - CB: #1 out/hitch under LB depth
 - "OUT" call to Spur. Slow drop & help Sp & F'
 - CB: #1 Vertical.
 - Man if no call/switch from F. (vert line concept)
 - OLB has wheel with CB help



COVER 3 to Read Side

Traditional Cover 3 vs 1-RB sets. Robber on READ side vs 2-RB sets

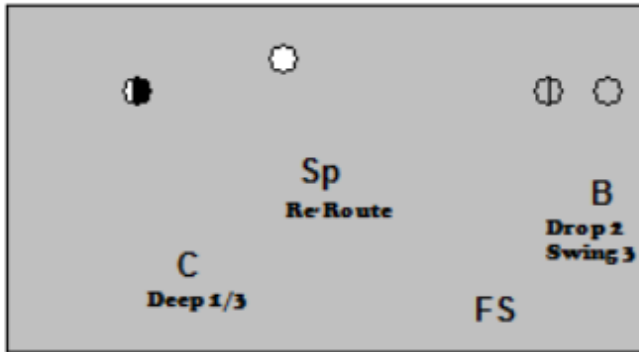
PRO



| | |
|----|---|
| CB | Split 1 & 2 vs two verticals vs 1=RB sets. On top #1 vs 2-RB sets. Defend post. |
| Sp | Curl-Flat-Swing. Drop to #1, Expand with #2. |
| F | Deep middle vs 1-RB sets. Robber vs 2-RB sets |
| M | Drop to #2. Wall player. Take RB swing out of backfield |

Remember, the STUD ends job is to make sure TE doesn't release into his route.

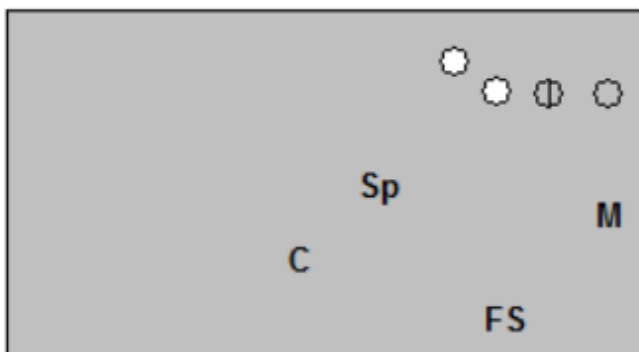
TWINS



| | |
|----|---|
| CB | Split 1 & 2 vs two verticals vs 1=RB sets. On top #1 vs 2-RB sets. Defend post. |
| Sp | Re-Route #2. Seam drop until #1 or #2 threaten flats |
| F | Deep middle vs 1-RB sets. Robber vs 2-RB sets |
| M | Drop to #2. Wall player. Take RB swing out of backfield |

MOF: Twins is the Read side.

WING



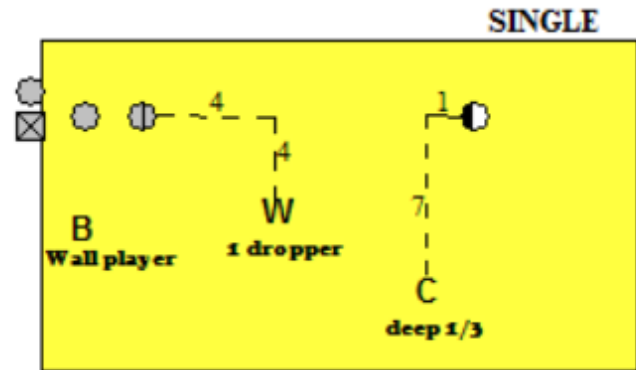
| | |
|----|---|
| CB | Take TE or Wing on deep sideline routes. |
| Sp | Aggressive on run. Has flats, but CB will help flats on play action |
| F | Cannot rob. More focused on run fits. |
| M | Drop to #2. Wall player. Take RB swing out of backfield |

SPUR may bite on play action, so CB will be aggressive on any routes to the flats.

COVER 3 to Away Side

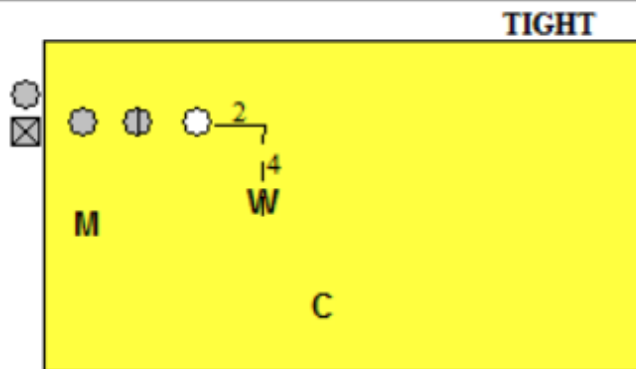
| | |
|----|------------------------------|
| W | Curl-Flat-Swing. Drop to #1. |
| CB | Deep 1/3. |
| B | Wall 1, Swing 2. |

WILL & BULL spot drop while reading #1 & #2 routes. WILL drops under 1 with CB over the top.



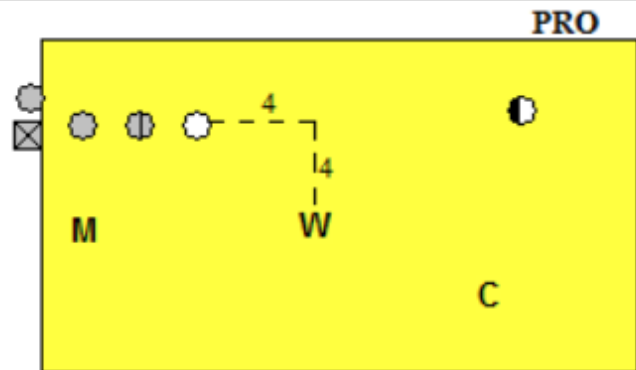
| | |
|----|------------------|
| W | Flat-Swing. |
| CB | Deep 1/3. |
| M | Wall 1, Swing 2. |

Since TE gets re-route by STUD, Will can really focus on run support



| | |
|----|------------------|
| W | Curl-Flat-Swing. |
| CB | Deep 1/3. |
| M | Wall 2, Swing 3. |

WILL drops to #1. Has 1 hitch or TE out.



Can only have PRO if TWINS on other side

| | |
|----|--|
| W | Re-Route #2. Seam drop until #1 or #2 threaten flats |
| CB | Deep 1/3. Zone turn. Split #1 & #2 on the drop. |
| B | Wall 2, Swing 3. |

WILL has in/out & smash calls during re-route. Keep re-routing if #1 & #2 vertical.

