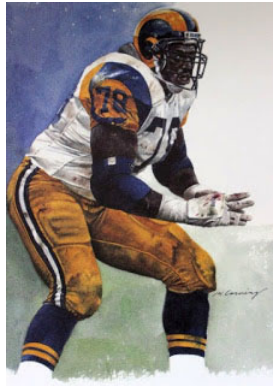

CHAPTER 16



Easy to Install Pass Protections

Your linemen need to understand where the quarterback will be when throwing the ball and how that release point correlates with protection. The protection that you use needs to be functional for the desired drop of the quarterback. The alignment of the defender will determine the pass set of the offensive lineman.

The key in the pass set is for the lineman to position his body as if he were going to "urinate" on the defender's rush lane. Although graphic, this phrasing seems to stick well with players and this concept is key to understanding the pass set.

CARDINAL RULE OF PASS BLOCKING:

Make the pass rusher go around you to get to the QB

Our protections fall into these categories.

- BOOT PASS
 - We can pull both guards (Special), backside guard (X), or no guards (Max).
- 80
 - Belly, Down, and Counter Passes
- 70 PROTECTION
 - 3 Step Passing Game
- 90 PROTECTION
 - Sprint Out Passing Game
- 60 PROTECTIONS
 - Cadillac and Cadillac Flood, and Passes from Gun Empty



PLAY ACTION PASS

The Wing T offense has the best play action pass attack of all the high school offenses. Not only are they more effective if you have a powerful run game, but the threat of Play Action actually helps the run game be more effective. Play action passes can be used for deception as a change-up for a powerful running attack or a surprise attack after a sudden turnover. They are high percentage passes, making them an effective ball-control weapon. The play action pass is also excellent for teams with average sized linemen or less than average throwing quarterback.

The backfield and blocking action looking like the companion run play makes it very hard for the defense to make run/pass reads. Therefore the key to successful play action passing is for the linemen to “flat back” and fire out on the playside. The stance, cadence, formation, and first three steps must make the defense think “run”.

BOOT SPECIAL

Our Boot protection is a little different than Delaware. We pull both guards on Boot Special, but our Playside Guard always pulls for the end man on the line, while Delaware’s playside guard pulled for the #2 defender on the LOS and the Backside Guard had to replace off of what the front side did. Ours is different in that. For example, against a 4-3, if they walk the weakside Linebacker up on the line to bring him, the front side guard’s got him and our Backside Guard turns to log the 5-technique inside of him. We will ask our Wing Back on the side of the Bootleg Pass to always make an “8 call” when he sees 3 defenders on the line of scrimmage to the play side to alert the Guards that the backside puller will need to look inside. Now as the front side pulls for the EMOL and he drops the Guard will then log # 2 and the backside will pull outside as the personal protector.

BACKS

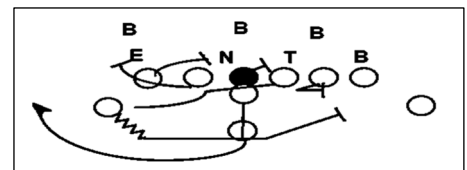
On our Boot special protection, the Wingback on the side of the bootleg makes an “8-8” call if they have three men on the line of scrimmage. This tells our guards that the Backside Guard probably is going to have to look up inside because of a third man coming off the edge.

The Fullback picks up the first linebacker from playside A-gap to the direction we're going. If he's blitzing, he's yours. If he is not blitzing, you'll continue into the flat five-yards deep.

Now we run Boot just as much off the speed motion as we do buck. So when the Halfback that is faking comes across on the Buck or the Speed Sweep, he is responsible for whatever shows outside the hip of the Tackle that does the pull check. Remember the Tackle is pull checking.

OFFENSIVE LINE RULES

Playside Tackle has the #1 on the line of scrimmage, play side from the center. The Playside Guard is going to pull for the end man on the line, which we call EMOL. If the end man on the line drops, he turns back inside to help pin down whatever is coming from inside out. Center’s rule is block over, to backside. Over means anybody that’s head up on me. Anybody that's on me is over. If I don't have a man over, I look backside.



The Backside Guard, you've got pull and react to the block of the Playside Guard. If he logs, you lead it outside. If he has to kick the end man on the line, the Backside Guard looks up inside. The Backside Tackle pull checks, which means he pulls flat down inside to where the guard was, hinges, and picks up anything from the backside B-gap.

TECHNIQUES WHEN BOTH GUARDS PULL

As described in Ch 17, both guards pull “special call” the playside guard will open at 4 o'clock and gain 1 ½ half yards depth and he is pulling for a spot 1 yard outside the EMOL and looking to log him (diagram 1). If the EMOL gets upfield and you can not log him, we ask the frontside Guard to simply kick him out (diagram 2). Since we still have our Quarterback directly under center the backside Guard will open just past parallel to the LOS and start to gain depth behind the Center we want him to be at a depth of 2 yards when he gets to the playside Tackle. If the Playside Guard logs the EMOL he will continue outside and become the QB’s personal protector. If the frontside Guard must kickout the EMOL because he ran upfield, then the backside guard will turn up and secure for inside out run throughs.

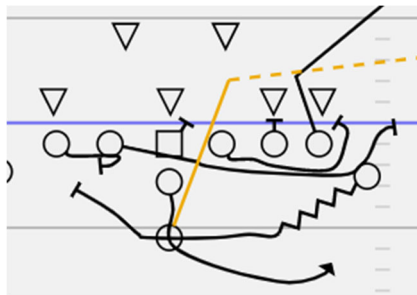


Diagram 1

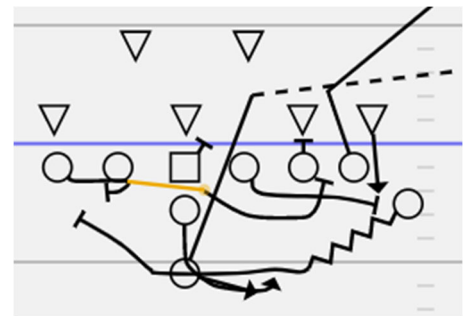
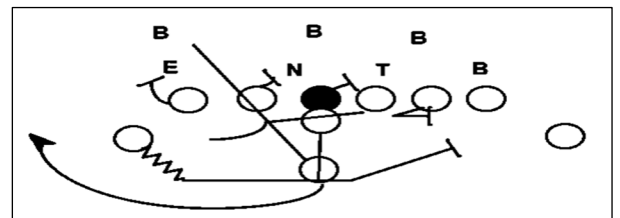


Diagram 2

BOOT X PROTECTION

Now, for us, we have now gone to where we're using Boot X Protection because of the shaded Nose Guards in the 4-3 defenses or shaded 50 fronts. When that shaded Nose is attacking up field, our tackle has a hard time getting down to him. And the Center can only block this shade defender in the same direction that the Quarterback is running the Bootleg.

So our Center will make an “X” call on any bootleg that's going in the direction of the shaded defender on the Center. X means only the Backside Guard pulls. The Playside Tackle is now responsible for number two and the Playside Guard is responsible for one, which is the shaded Nose. So the guard’s got the shade, the tackle has the next threat which is two. Doing it this way allows our Center to block back.

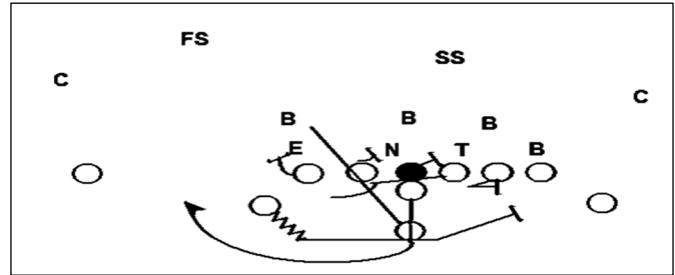


The Fullback is responsible for the Playside Linebacker. Say we're playing against the 4-3 and the Weakside Linebacker is off and deep, then the FB goes right through the B-gap and runs his flat route. If the Linebacker blitzes through the B-gap, the FB takes him. If the Linebacker walks up on the edge of the line of scrimmage, then the Fullback attacks and kicks him out because the FB is responsible for the Playside Linebacker.



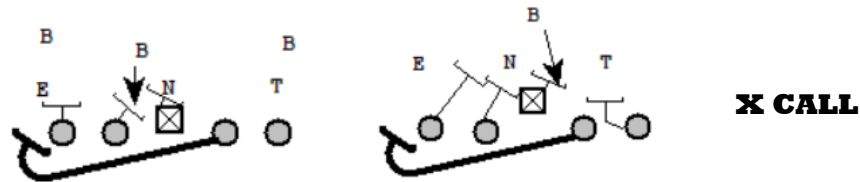
The Backside Guard now becomes the personal protector to the Quarterback.

On the BACKSIDE, the Center blocks 1st lineman backside. Pulling Guard pulls and looks for the #3 defender or leads QB outside if no #3. The Backside Tackle pull checks. The same thing against the 4-4, no difference. That's been a great adjustment for us.



TECHNIQUE WHEN ONLY BACKSIDE GUARD PULLS

If an A-gap threat presents itself then the frontside guard will stay and not pull. He will also stay vs an odd front with A-gap blitz, which is a “X” call by the center.



80 PROTECTION

Our 80 protection is a protection that we use on the Down Pass, the Belly-Ride Pass, and the Counter Pass. All three of these plays use the same protection. The QB backfield actions are different but his reads are the same depending on whether the defense is in a 1 high or 2 high look. As we discuss in another chapter, we will change the routes based on coverage which will aid our QB in his read progression. The beauty is the protection on all three series and variations of the plays will be the same for all three series. This is a definite advantage in our ability to condense our practice times for protection issues.

- **PLAYSIDE TACKLE:** has “Zone” which means over, then outside. So he blocks the first man over him, otherwise block the first man to his outside.
- **PLAYSIDE GUARD** has an “Area-Help”. Area means to block the man that's in a one-two or three-technique. If no defender is in a one, two or three, the Playside Guard is going to help either the Center or Tackle. Who the Guard helps depends on the scouting report based on the best pass rusher or which of our two the Center or Guard is the least effective on pass protection? Also, he will automatically help with a defender that is shaded the direction of the pass.
- **CENTER:** rule is “Over”. If nobody is over, then he will begin working straight back off the LOS and look for someone rushing from the backside. It is important that he works straight back and not go to meet the defender, let him come to you.

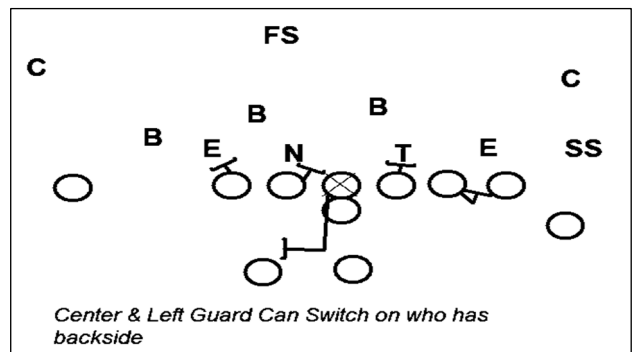
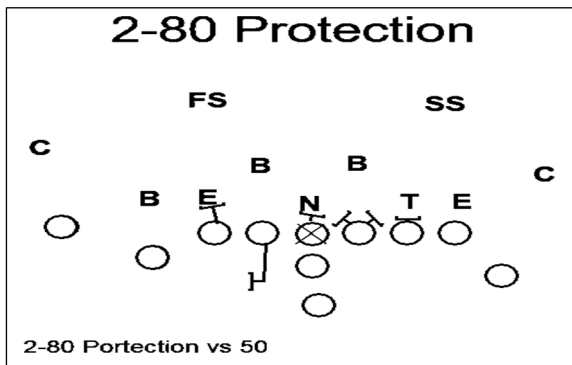


- **BACKSIDE GUARD:** has “ Area-Bakside”, which means anybody that's in a one-two or three-technique is area and you will have him. If there's nobody there, he will work straight back off the LOS and look for a backside rusher. Just as the Center he should not go to a rusher, but allow him to come to you.
- **BACKSIDE TACKLE:** rule is the same as the playside Tackle “Zone” which is over-outside, so both tackles are the same. Block the man over you or block first man outside if uncovered.

The Wingback is responsible for the defender outside of the Playside Tackle. The motion man is always coming around and getting the EMOL. The Full Back is responsible for any blitzing Inside Linebackers.

You must coach you QB to sprint and attempt to get outside on 80 portection. If he must pull up due to the EMOL getting upfield he should get the ball out quick. In this protection you can not always pick up a 4th defender rushing from the backside unless you use a TE backside and do not allow him to be in the routes.

So here are examples of our 2-80 protection. The 2 means that we're throwing the football to the right.



Against the 4-3, the Right Tackles rule is over-outside. On the example on the left he block the man over him and on the example on the right he blocks outside on the End. The Center blocks the NG on the left drawing and works backside in the drawing on the right. Both Guards rule is area, which means they have the one-two or 3-technique.

The Center and the Left Guard can make a switch call. The Center can turn back for the one and allow the Guard to be the backside help. The Backside Guard, if you don't get a blitz inside, then you work back to pick up backside pressure.



60 PROTECTION

When using 60 Protection the launch point for our QB is straight behind the Center at 7 yards deep. It gives us the ability to use straight drop and this allows us to use the whole field in our passing game and not just half due to sprint out.

If we're going 2-60, it means we're protecting to our right side.

- Left Tackle has number two on the line of scrimmage,
- Left Guard has the first man on the line of scrimmage.
- Center has Backside Linebacker, if there's 1-technique to his left he can make a Switch Call and change the assignment with the Left Guard and the Center will take # 1 on the LOS and the Left Guard will have the backside Linebacker.
- Right Guard has to make the call in this protection. His rule is, I'm going to block the first defender from the Center to my outside shoulder. So if the Center is covered, he says, "down, down, down". If the Center is uncovered, he says, "over". He's going to block down first. If there's nobody to block down on, he blocks over. That affects what the Tackle does.
- Right Tackle's 2-60 rule is if the Guard calls "down", I'm going to block the first defender from the Guard outside. If the Guard says "over", now he blocks the first man over the Tackle to his outside.
- Fullback, you're responsible for the first linebacker from the Center to the right side. If there's no blitz, you will be able to release it into your route.
- Right Half, you're going to block the second linebacker to the right side on 2-60.

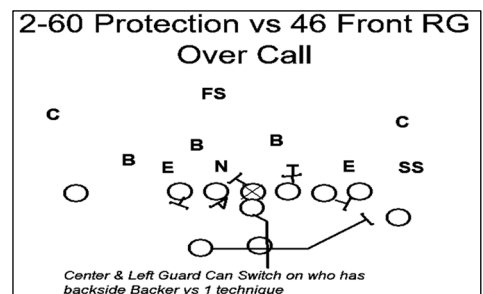
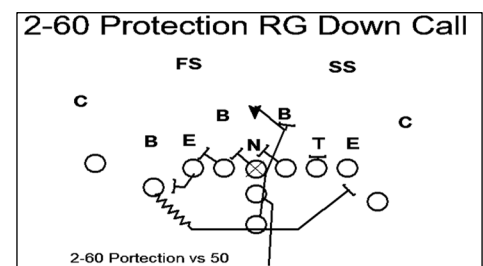
So here we go, we've got a 3-4. Left Tackle knows I've got number two on the LOS. Left Guard knows I got one on the line.

The Center is responsible for the backside backer. The Right Guard has the first threat down, so he makes a "down" call, and blocks the Nose. The Right Tackle with a down call now has the first 5-technique who is the first defender from the guard out, that's our turn back protection.

The Fullback has the first linebacker from the Center and play side. Halfback has the second down lineman or EMOL against this 4-3 look.

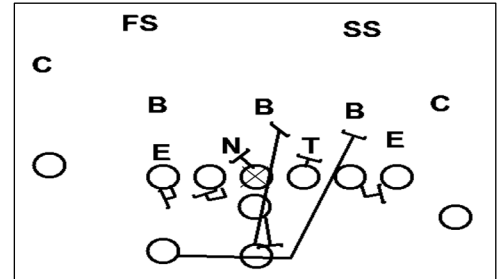
Versus the 46 fronts, which is a split wide tackle look, the Playside Guard always makes the call. If he's got a man over, he says "over, over". That means the Tackle now has the first man over-outside of him.

The Center's rule on 60 protection is to take the Backside Backer. However, if there's a 1-technique between the Center and his backer, then the Center makes a switch call. The Switch call puts the Center on number one and now the Guard has the Backside Backer.

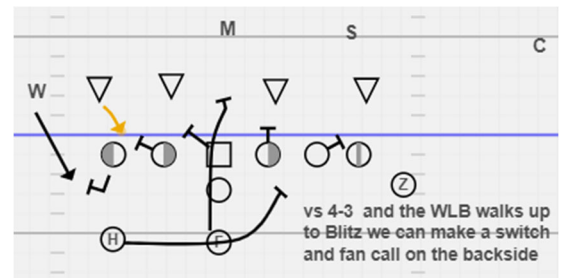


Left Tackle has number two. This leaves one outside backer unaccounted for which is why it is a little bit scary to throw 60 protection against an eight-man front.

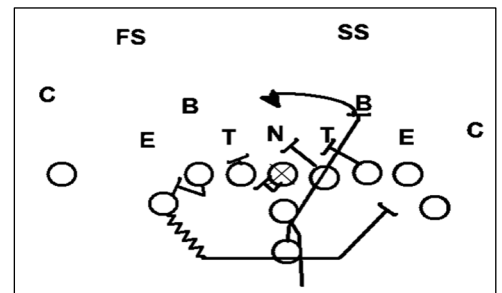
Now we've got a 4-3. Guards makes the first call, which is "Over, Over". The Tackle now has over-outside. Center has Backside Backer but there is a lineman between C and LB so he make a switch call. The Center takes the 1-tech. The guard can help the Center, but he's eyeing the Backside Backer. The Left Tackle has 2nd man on the line. The Fullback has the first backer from the Center. The H-back has the Sam. We want to get big on big if we can in this protection.



If the WLB in a 4-3 walks up and we have a "Switch" call from the Center and the LG has the WLB now he can call fan and the LT will fan to # 2 (WLB) and the LG will take # 1 on LOS the 5 technique that will be working inside on the blitz.



The last thing that can happen is we get a Double Eagle look. Playside Guard rule is Down, which tells the Right Tackle he has the first man from the guard out. So he's got blocking down on the 3-technique.



Fullback has the first linebacker play side. Wingback has the second back play side. The Center has the backside backer. Of course they can switch vs a 1-technique.

So we can protect them all again seven-man fronts.

SPRINT PROTECTIONS

Sprint out Passing forces the defense to defend both the perimeter-run as well as the entire field against a good passing attack. When the QB sprints out, the defense must rotate quickly so that he will not get outside the coverage zones. The secondary rotation often leaves the backside vulnerable to screens and draws.

While having a running QB makes sprint out even more dangerous, all you really need is an athletic QB who can get 5 yards to make the defensive coordinator sweat. Additionally, the QB run threat forces one LineBacker to commit to run and not drop back to a zone. Also, the moving pocket forces the pass rush and coverage to move also.

Sprint out passing lessens the burden on the offensive linemen when it comes to blocking for the pass. The sprinting out foreces the pass rushers to go in one precise direction, and since the blockers know which way the QB is sprinting, then can expect the rushers to charge a specific way. The techniques of pass blocking become greatly simplified, often times the same techniques used in Reach run blocking can also be used in sprint protections.



We like to sprint out vs 8-man fronts that blitz often. Most of the Blitzes will come from the interior and we can handle this much easier with our lack of time to spend on blitz pickup with our indepth running game.

It is my belief that to have an effective “Sprint Out” attack you must have 2 blockers to fit outside your playside offensive tackle. With this in mind and how our personell is set up we will almost always go to a SE over unbalanced look (Northern or Southern) to utlize our Sprint Out game. We will not use our TE to replace the first blocker outside the OT and the FB will become the second man outside the OT. We like to motion our backside wingback across in motion to give us the ability to sprint to trips looks.

PLAYSIDE

The initial steps taken by the offensive linemen and the Tight End reflect the direction of the sprint action: Sprint Right (2-90) means blockers first step is a reach step right. Again, this is the same first step taken on our Speed Sweep so the defense will be slow to determine run or pass. This first step is 45-degree if defender is head up or slightly inside shade and 90-degree lateral if slightly outside shade.

The second step depends on whether the blocker is playside or backside. Playside linemen need to get their 2nd step between the defender’s legs and helmet across his chest. Backside linemen will do the same if their playside gap (inside) is immediately threatened. If not they need to hinge step back so that they are facing the sideline, followed by backpedaling in direction of the QB sprint. Backside technique is the next section.

Our Fullback is coached to attack a spot that is 1 ½ yards outside the TE. If a defender is coming off the edge we would like to log him. If we can not log the edge rusher the Fullback must kick him out and the QB will react under the block. Because we are motioning to trips and they bring a defender off the edge we should have a hot route to the motion man available now.

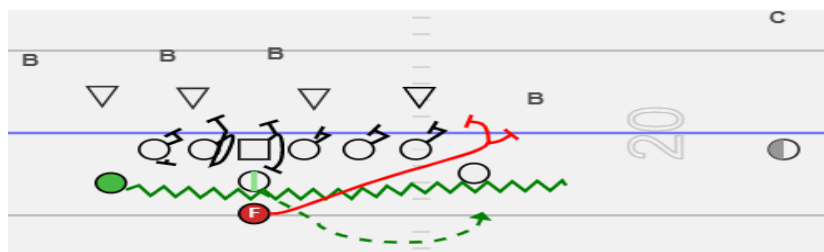


Fig 12-1: Playside Blocking for Sprint Protection

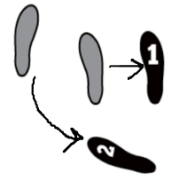
When we want to ensure our QB will get to the edge we can go with a 2 man route using our SE and the WB in motion and call “**FIRM**” and this means the playside Wingback will step and hinge just as the TE and the FB will attack 1 ½ yards past the Wingback. We like this vs. a 9 technique that is an exceptional pass rusher and we can still handle an edge blitzer with our FB.



BACKSIDE

The backside guard and tackle use a blocking technique that is described as a hinge scheme. They try to gain depth while obtaining an inside leverage position that forces the rusher to go outside of them.

The blocking techniques of the backside are different because blockers can't always tell who they will be blocking and sometimes there will be more rushers than blockers. The technique will be cup protection (step & hinge) that will be described in more detail in the next chapter. The initial step is a 90-degree lateral step in direction of the sprint. The second step is a drop step on a 45-degree angle with the line of scrimmage. Once this position is taken, the backside blockers will protect their inside area first and from there, they will block any defender coming head-on them or slightly to their outside. If more than two defenders rush then the outermost rushers will go unblocked because they should not be able to catch a sprinting QB from that deep of an angle.



Backside blockers do not have to be great blockers since the passer's pocket gets further away with each second the rusher is delayed. The act of hitting, retreating, and re-hitting makes for very effective pass protection as long as the charging defender is slowed down.

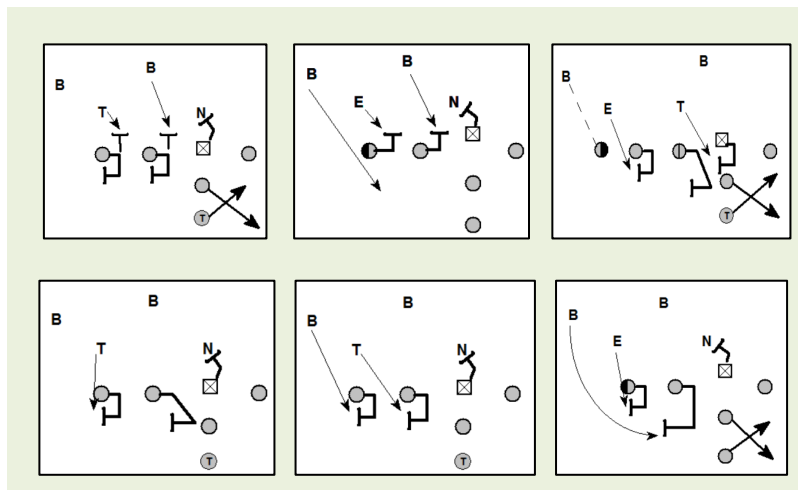


Fig 12-2: Backside Blocking for Sprint Protection

3-STEP PROTECTION

Our 3 step pass game is our 70 game. We will call 2-70 (right) or 1-70 (Left). We want to make sure that we always have the A,B,C gaps secured when throwing our 70 game. Our OL will all close their splits to 1 foot in our 70 game and they will all step inside and never give ground. We want them to step slightly forward with their inside foot to the foot of the offensive lineman to their inside. It is important that the OL all keep their shoulders square to the LOS and we want to maintain bend in our ankles, knees and hips (power clean position) so we are keeping the defenders low and our QB can throw over the DL. Our Fullback is taught to go the direction we are throwing the 70 pass and he must attack the line of scrimmage and fit just outside the hip of the offensive tackle to that side. We coach him if the defender gets his hands up that he is blocking to just place firmly the palm of his hands just below the belt buckle of that defender and as you can imagine this will get his hands down. The player aligned where the TE would be opposite the direction we are



going is responsible for the “C Gap” on the backside and will not go into a route. He will step down inside just as the OT on that side. If we are throwing away from the TE then he will set inside and if we are throwing the 70 game to the Tight End side the WB on the backside will step inside and not run a route.

FINAL THOUGHTS ON PASS PROTECTION

If the concept of rule blocking is taught in the correct way, it can be easily understood. No substitute exists for repetition when the offensive line is first trying to learn or completely understand the schemes in the Wing-T.

Your offensive linemen must understand that they can depend on the rules of each specific play. No matter what the defensive alignment, the rule progression will take care of their assignment. Linemen need to know their rules to be completely effective on game day. It is the job of the coach to prepare the offensive line to play against each defense anticipated, and no situation should arise during a game for which your linemen are unprepared.

We are not into a deep well defined, pass, throw, kick, slide, vertical sets and you can't be a great running team or predominant run team and have enough time in your offensive passing game to be a great protection team, and handle all the blitz pick-ups, and where your QB throws hot, etc.

With the challenge of time constraints and the amount of knowledge that the Wing-T line coach must teach to his players, the pass-protection drills may be tough to fit in. It is the job of the coach to avoid using the limits of time as an excuse, but instead to be creative with his use of time and combine drills as frequently as possible. The mirror progression could be taught in a pre-practice segment, while the kick-step and power-step drills could be used as a conditioner. Again, know what the run-to-pass ratio will be in your offense and plan accordingly.

