
SECTION FIVE

RUN FITS & PASS DROPS

12. Run Fits
13. Defend Wing-T & Option
14. Zone Run Game
15. Spread Pass Game
16. RPO's



“THERE IS ONE SECRET TO HITTING HARD, AND THAT IS TO COMPLETELY DEDICATE YOUR BODY. THAT’S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MAN GOING FORWARD AND A MAN GOING BACKWARD, NO MATTER HOW BIG HE IS”

--RAY LEWIS

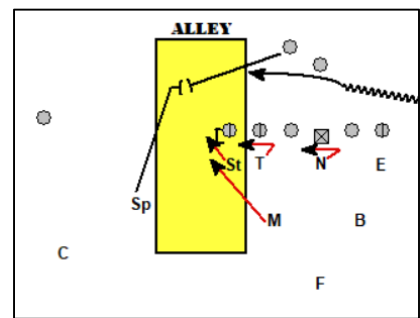
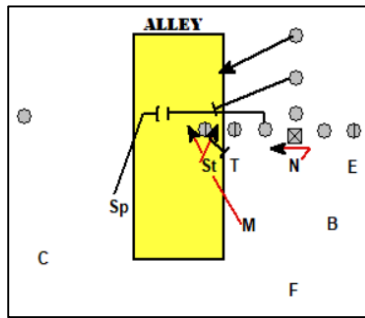
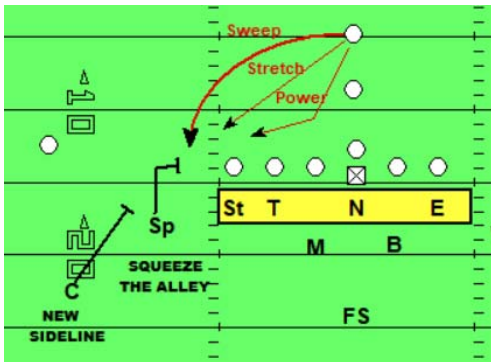
RUN FITS

FUNNEL vs SPILL

Unlike most college teams, our basic run philosophy is to “FUNNEL” the back into the teeth of the defense rather than forcing him to “BOUNCE”. We have a couple of reasons for this:

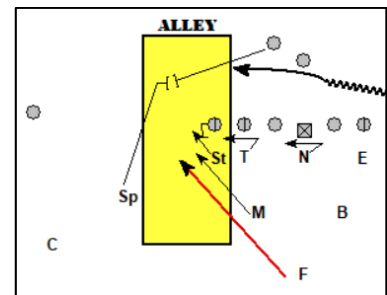
1. We are usually a 1-high safety team, so we don't have the 2-safety angles;
2. We are not very athletic. Most backs we play can outrun our defenders 1on1;
3. Our Corners are “lettuce eaters”. We don't want anything bouncing to them.

The overall goal of our run defense is to force the ball carrier into a very narrow “alley” where he has no room to run and we will outnumber him. This takes a 54 yard field and condenses it down to 5 yards. This slows down the runner and forcing him to go horizontal gives us more time to GANG TACKLE. He is also not in his assigned hole which prevents offense from working as a team.



Turning a Running Back up into a violent alley starts with the D-Line. They are a “**moving wall**” that does not scream upfield, but instead plugs up all the gaps. Once the RB has no holes to run in and works outside, the Hybrid OLB cuts off his path to the sideline. We call this “**squeezing the alley**” since the goal is that the Back has the narrowest running lane to turn up into. The CB is behind the OLB in case the Back does try to get outside. The CBs' job is to “**create a new sideline**”, in other words the CB is the farthest the back can go.

Once the back turns it up into the narrow alley created by the OLB, he should meet the END, ILB, and FS. The MIKE backer is going to fit very tight off the STUD end. The ILB is doing what we call, “**filling an open window**”. The FALCON fits tightly outside off the MIKE LB.



OVERALL RUN PHILOSOPHY

- *D-Line will bounce*
- *Outside Backers will contain*
- *Inside Backers will fill*
- *Corners will set the boundary*
- *Safeties will hunt*

DEFENSIVE LINE

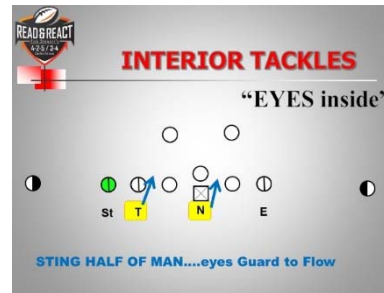
The Overall jobs that the D-Line needs to do is BUILD A WALL.

- *Do Not Let O-Line get to Linebackers*
- *Near Shoulder Pullers, Sink Hips, Nut Check.*
- *Quarterback does not roll out*
- *Jam tight ends on any release*
- *Relentlessly attack down field after ball is released and strip receiver when ball is caught*



We believe in lining up head up on the offensive lineman for THREE reasons: It breaks the O-Line blocking rules and they don't know which gap we are going to send our D-Line into. Why get in a shaded technique and show your poker hand? Now the O-Line knows which gap you have AND they can angle block you, which is an easier block than a straight-up ON block.

The 3rd reason we are head up is because UNCOVERED blockers give us very clean RUN-PASS reads. In the picture below the offensive Guards have to aggressively fire out to double team the NG or climb to backer. It will be very obvious that they are run blocking. On pass plays, they will aggressively kick slide because in pass protection schemes, the uncovered blocker has to help his teammate. For example the RG will retreat because he might have to help the Center with the NG or the RT with our Defensive Tackle. If we were in a shaded 4i or 3-tech and our NG was on the other side of the Center in a 1-tech, the RG would only have to worry about the D-Tackle and could fire out to block him on both run and pass plays. We would not get a clean read.

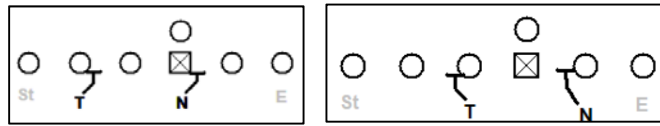


Although at first glance this looks like a 3-4 defense, philosophically it is not. We NEVER 2-gap. As soon as the ball is snapped the D-Tackle steps into the B-gap and the NoseGuard steps into the weak A-gap. They sting half a man (offensive tackle and center) by putting their left hand into the V of the neck and the right hand on the blockers left shoulder. Stay low and “**Bench Press**” the man upwards & away. Both the DT and NG eyes are on the Guards for a visual key.

If we have a smaller NG, we will not ask him to sting ½ a man, instead letting him slant aggressively into one of the A-gaps. Our DT is always our largest lineman, so he has always been able to “**sting ½ a man**”

Alignment Doesn't Change Assignment

Alignment doesn't change assignment, which means if the DEFENSIVE TACKLE is in a 4, 4i, 3, or 2-tech, he always **stings half a man** and has B-gap. The NOSEGUARD will always have that weak A-gap if in a 0, 1, 2i, or 2 technique. Our smaller NG will be in a 4-point stance when they are slanting.



All four of our D-Linemen must keep blockers off our Linebackers. They will not make a lot of tackles but have to be second on the scene. Must be very unselfish players. Against PASS: The D-Tackle bullrushes the inside shoulder of Guard. The DT and NG jobs is to collapse the pocket while the STUD and END forces QB to step up or Draw play. They have B and A-gaps, but try to disrupt vision of quarterback.

All of this applies in our BASE defense with no movement or blitz calls. Any type of Slant, Fury, Pinch, Fist, Outlaw, Tag, Arrow, or Angle call means they do NOT have to sting 1/2 a man, but instead "RIP" thru....

Elbows to Asses, Ankles Deep

This means that as they are ripping thru their gap and it is a run play, they do not go upfield farther than the blockers ankles. They redirect and chase all run plays "Down the Line".

Stimulus Response

GUARD BLOCKS STRAIGHT AHEAD:

Find backfield flow.

DOUBLE TEAM: "Hat in the Crack!"

Dip shoulder and try to split it.

As soon as start losing ground, "Grab Grass"

If strong Guard doubles the NG, the D-Tackle needs to Pitch a tent & think run in his A-gap.

GUARD PULLS BEHIND CENTER:

DT try to grab outside ankle & Knock off track.

Chase down the line on the defensive side of LOS.

Do not cross LOS and chase on offensive side of line.

NG has to re-direct & cross the Center's face.

TRAP BLOCK: Keep shoulders square & stay on LOS.

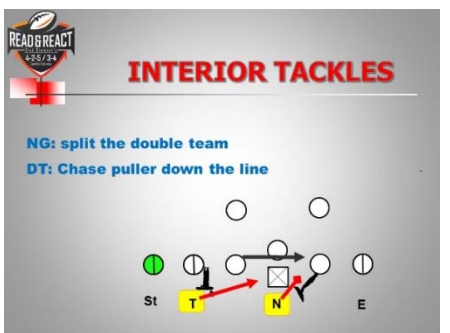
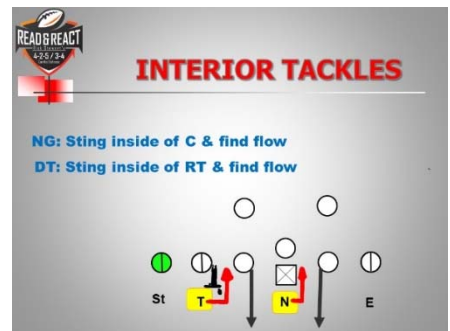
Step into the block with NEAR shoulder.

Sink hips, put fist in his crotch.

Treat log block like a Reach Block

OUTSIDE PULL:

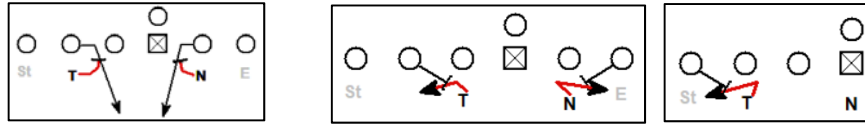
Cross Face and Chase.



SECTION FIVE

DOWN BLOCK: This is when the offensive tackle is releasing inside to get a Linebacker or working all the way down to double the NG. D-Tackle immediately prepares for Trap-Kickout block. Sink the Hip closest to Down block. Stay square to LOS, put inside hand on chest or arm of the Tackle and other hand on his hip. Push him down the line!!!

This can happen to the NoseGuard while in the “G” alignment.



The other Down block is a TE down blocking the DT or either the NG or DT getting down blocked by their offensive tackles while in the “G” alignment.

Push back against the Down block and cross the down blocks face. We prefer keeping our shoulders square, which requires the D-Line using the arm closest to the blocker to punch the blockers shoulder and push him down the line towards the QB. Rip the opposite arm across the blockers chest to cross-face him. At times we may Punch the opposite arm over the blockers shoulder and past the earhole of his helmet, but this turns into a “Swim” move, which we do not like. As a last resort the D-Line can “SPIN” out of the double team.

REACH BLOCK: Immediately steps outside with outside foot, bench presses blocker’s numbers, keeps outside arm strong never allowing blocker to hook him.

The DT may lose the RT and the NG may lose the C, but under no circumstance can either Guard cross the DT or NG face! Keep your helmet in the crack between the two blockers.



DEFENSIVE END

- Two-point stance
- Mirror Step & Sting are first move: ALWAYS!
- Eyes on screws of the man lined-up on
- Little bit off the LOS so we can react.
 - More experienced Ends can be on the Line.

Against Run: Can’t get pushed or come up field
“Moving Wall.” Must protect backers by jamming offensive linemen’s release. Will lead the DL in tackles.



Against Pass: If offensive tackle pops up into his kick-slide right away, Rush at QBs upfield shoulder. Will not have to Sting. Disrupt vision of QB and get a piece of any ball thrown in your pass lane. We only teach a few moves:

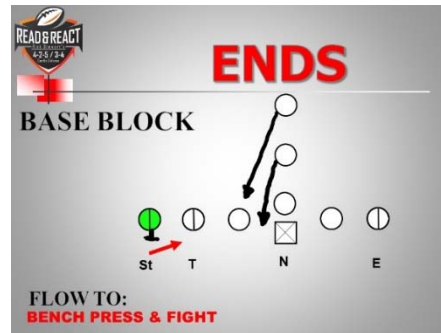
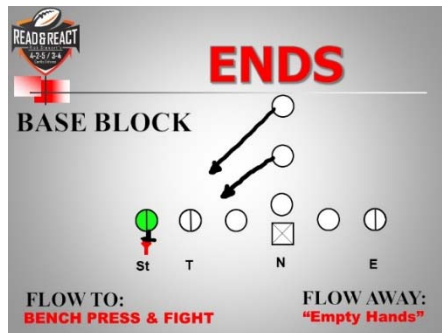
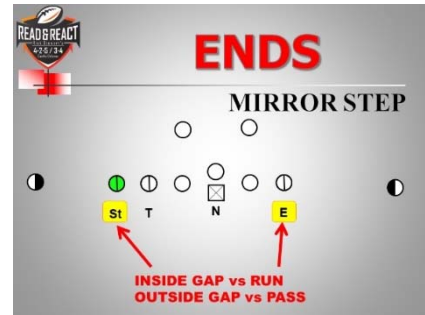
- Speed Rush: Use vs slower tackle. Setup with head-foot fake inside.
- Bull Rush: Use vs passive tackle. Push-Pull is counter move
- Rip: Pull blocker to you and rip under with heavy inside lean.
- Club & Punch: Punch thru the outside ear of blocker
- Rip Thru & Cross-Face if Draw.



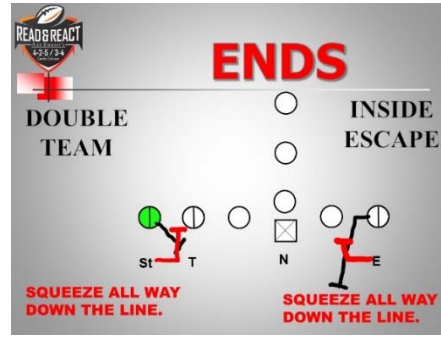
END READS

Our ends have to mirror step the End Man on Line of Scrimmage. They are NOT 2-gap players. They have inside gap vs run plays and outside gap (lane) on pass plays.

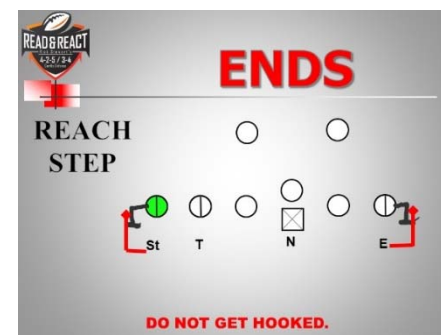
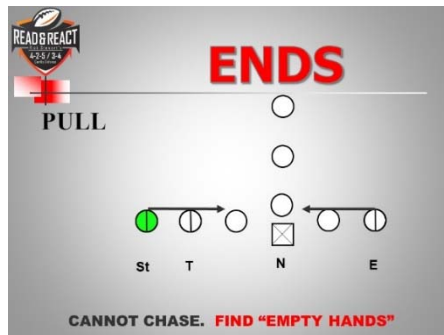
1. Base Block: Immediately steps forward with inside foot, violently bench presses blocker's numbers, keeps his ground(can't get pushed), fights inside and finds ball.
 - a. FLOW AWAY: Cannot chase until see the QB without the ball: **"Empty Hands"**



2. Down Block: Immediately steps inside with inside foot, violently jams blocker's release by pressing inside hand into blocker's chest or shoulder and pushing with outside hand on his hip. keeps shoulders square, stays on LOS and looks inside for kick out block or ball coming at him. If blocker attempts to log block him, he treats it like a Reach Block (see Reach Block)



3. Reach Block: Immediately steps outside with outside foot, bench presses blocker's numbers (Push-Pull), keeps outside arm strong never allowing blocker to hook him



4. Inside Pull or Release: Squeezes inside
 - a. He has QB. Look for **"empty hands"**.
 - b. Punish the QB on any option fake.

- Outside Pull or TE Release:
 - a. Treat like Reach block for 3 steps
 - b. Release & look inside for pass block

INSIDE LINEBACKERS

FILL OPEN WINDOWS – SCRAPE CLOSED DOORS

READS & KEYS

We do not believe that a player can read two keys at the same time. While many of our players have two keys, we teach a rapid read progression that starts with one key and the eyes move to the next key:

“See a little, see a lot. See a lot, see nothing.”

Our Linebackers will read lineman on their 1st two read steps and then find backfield flow. Remember, the read steps are outside foot, then inside foot. The O-Line will only determine the Linebackers first few steps and then they react to backfield flow.

Shuffle Steps

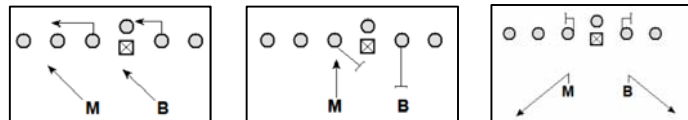
The READ STEPS and the steps that follow are some type of shuffle step. The amount of lateral space covered by a shuffle will depend upon what type of flow develops or what your responsibility is. You do not want to cross over on the first step. Shuffle or slide. Keep your shoulders square.

Linemen & Backfield Keys

Back reads are very clean and easy, but deceptive. Line keys take longer to master, but are always true. In our stimulus-response system, we want our players laser focused so they can react thru muscle memory. We teach them to focus on the lineman on the 1st, maybe 2nd read step. Then move the eyes to the backfield. OL is our primary key and backfield action is our secondary key.

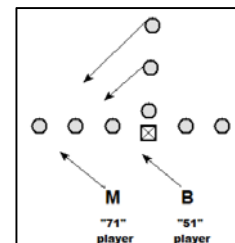
It is very hard to read Guards when they are covered up which is why we believe in head up alignments.

- **If the blocker pulls, go in that direction immediately while finding flow.**
- **If the blocker double teams, fill the open window while finding flow.**
- **If the blocker comes at the LB, take him on with inside shoulder while finding flow.**
- **If the blocker pass sets, drop into pass coverage.**



Backfield keys are simple reads that are confidence builders for inexperienced players and we will read backs if there is only 1 RB in backfield.

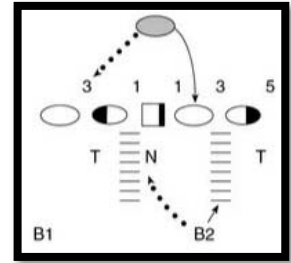
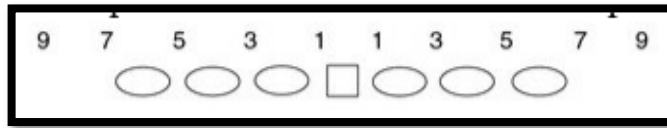
- **When my keys comes to me, I attack my frontside gap;**
- **When my key goes away, I attack my backside gap;**
- **When my key shows pass block or pass route, I drop into my coverage rule.**



It is easier for a LB who is taught to read linemen to transition to keying a running back, versus trying to train a LB who is trained to read backfield to start reading linemen the week you play Wing T.

TAKE EVERYTHING ON WITH INSIDE SHOULDER

RESPONSIBILITIES



The first digit is the PLAYSIDE gap that he is responsible for and the second digit is his BACKSIDE gap. So “31” tells the LB he has B-gap on runs at him and backside A-gap on flow away. Outside LB only have a 1-digit responsibility.

Flopping our inside linebackers, Mike & Bull, limits the number of techniques they must learn.

BASIC MOVEMENTS

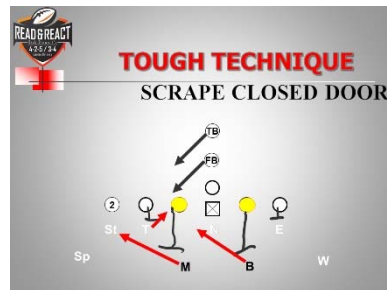
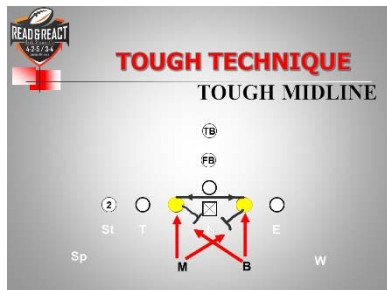
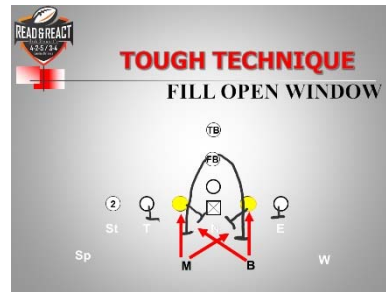
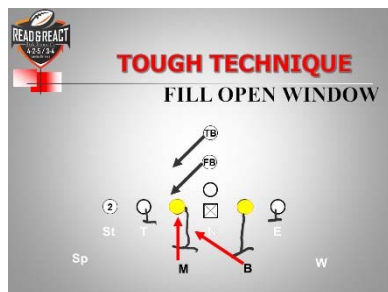
Everything we teach in regard to defeating the run involves THREE basic movements. Double teams and pullers are automatic triggers. When linemen come at the LB, then must move to secondary key of backfield flow.

Remember: **FILL OPEN WINDOWS, SCRAPE CLOSED DOORS.**

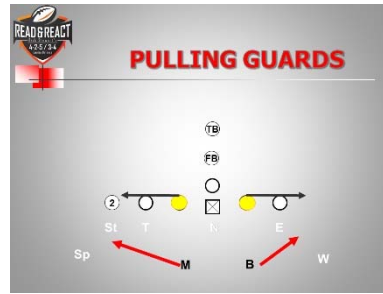
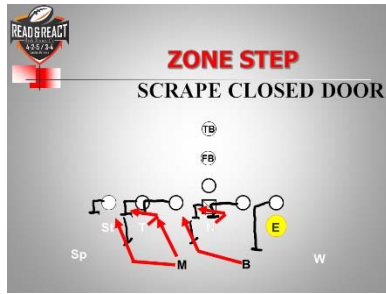
1. TOUGH: Take on blocker, back, or both coming right at you. Commonly called a fill or plug.

TOUGH MIDLINE: Opposite A or B-gap. LB has to cross the center’s midline.

- Window opens up between interior DL
- Fill or scrape past the “midline”
- Fill any void between interior DL



2. SCRAPE: Move laterally, shoulders square to playside C-gap while attacking LOS. Fit outside End.

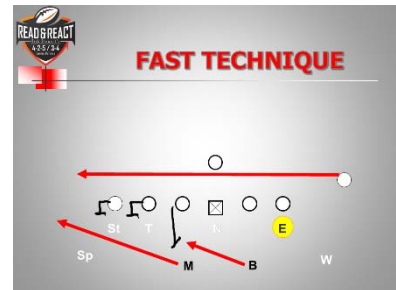


3. FAST: D-gap and wider. **“Find the Alley”**

- Turn hips towards sideline and run, trying to keep shoulders square.

“Alley” Concept

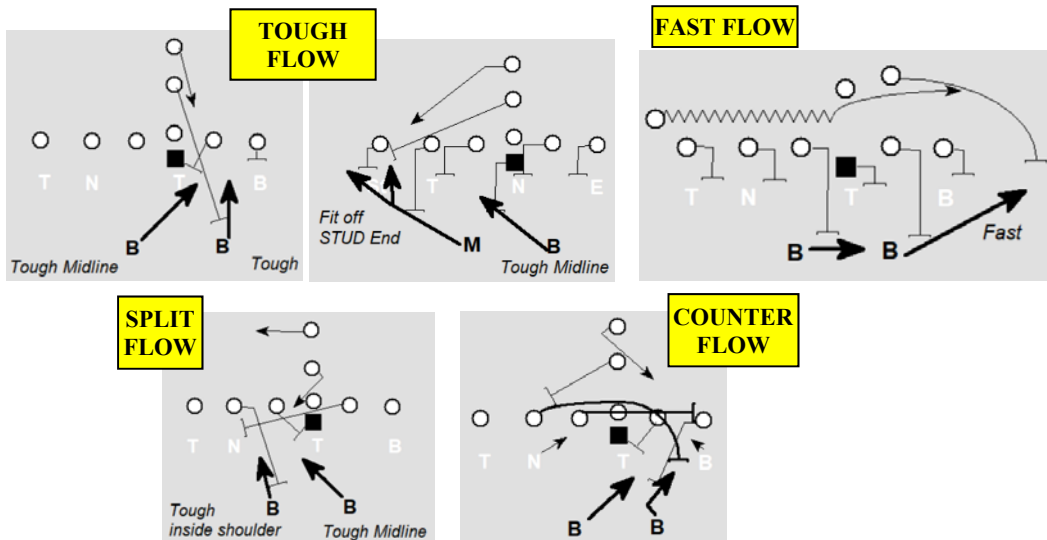
- Outside reads take ILB into the “alley”
- Fill any void left by Defensive End.



BACKFIELD FLOW

Basic rule of thumb is: If ball carrier is inside the tackle box, shoulders square. Leaves box, press the RB inside hip. If we can see both of the RB numbers, we shuffle flow. On any block, we cross faces – we do not come under blocks. If we see RB ribs, take off and run.

1. FULL FLOW: Tough Flow: Inside Tackle Box (iso)
Fast Flow: Outside Tackle Box (sweep, toss, jet)
2. SPLIT FLOW: One back inside tackle box, other outside. (split back veer)
3. COUNTER FLOW: Backs go in opposite directions.



Rep the basic plays that every offense runs so much in summer & August that players only need keys for nuances. Iso, counter, toss, trap, jet should be recognized on offenses 1st or 2nd step.

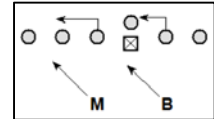
SEVEN BASIC BLOCKS

PASS OR DRAW: Yell “PASS” and keep eye on Guard for first few drop steps looking for draw.

BASE: Guard or FB coming right at him. Start with this block because we can focus on the technique of just defeating the block as described above. Attack ½ man while finding flow.

REACH: LB shuffles for width first, taking G on with inside foot. If ball goes inside, push or squeeze the blocker into the ball carrier. If RB bounces, simply push off the inside foot to pursue. The wider the reach block, the wider the play. Don't be two aggressive and run upfield vs reach blocks.

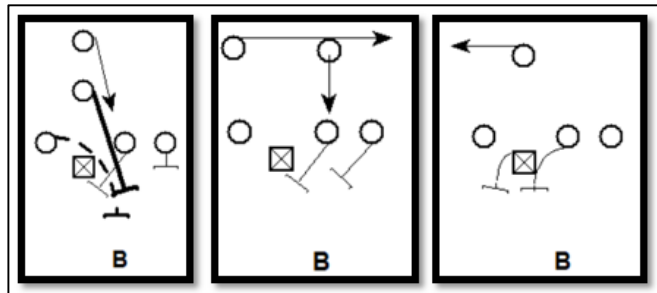
FRONTSIDE PULLS: Immediately scrape to C-gap or FAST FLOW to sideline. Find flow as LB moves laterally. Open window might immediately open and LB can make a negative-yardage tackle.



BACKSIDE PULLS: Tough-Midline into opposite A-gap. As find flow, if no RB threatens that A-gap, continue scraping, looking for an open window. He has cutback, but do not move slowly !!! Must yell “COUNTER” so other ILB can re-direct since he might have false stepped.

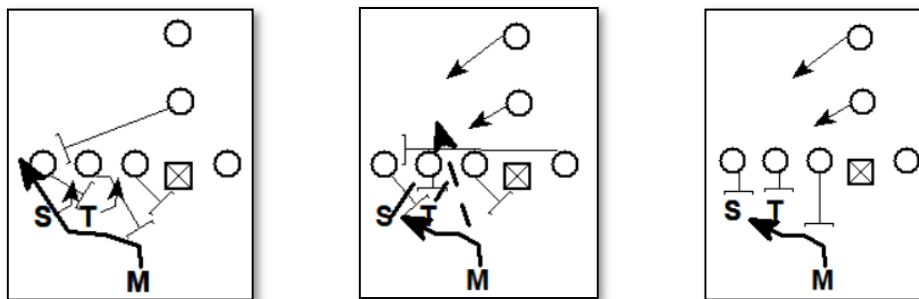
IF HE PULLS AWAY, I HAVE “A”

INSIDE DOWN BLOCK: Begins a series of three blocks that all look the same. A down block by the G means Iso-Trap-Veer. The Iso-Trap means attack B-gap TOUGH. The Veer block means the Tackle also blocks down and the DL should be squeezing hard, forcing the ILB to **SCRAPE A CLOSED DOOR**.



The other time a G will down block is when he is actually “SCOOPING” because the flow is going away. The ILB should see flow away on his 2nd step as his eyes move from the Guard to the Backfield.

SCRAPE DOWN BLOCK: Our headup alignments make it really hard for the defense to run off tackle.



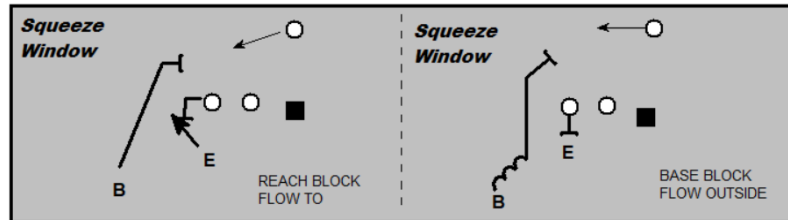
OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS

The initial read should be End Man on Line of Scrimmage (EMOL). After getting this initial read, eyes snap to backfield to see full flow coming at you.

Squeeze the Window

REACH STEP: **“Squeeze the Window”**: Attack LOS but never go more than 2yds across unless you are sure you can make the tackle. Turn it back inside. The RB does not get outside

Take on all lead blockers with your inside shoulder. Cut blockers in half. Do not try to go around...”ripping” through blockers sideline shoulder is OK if RB is trying to get outside.

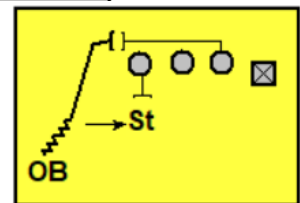


BASE BLOCK: **“Find Flow”**.

RB flow outside the Tackle Box: **“Squeeze the Window”**

RB flow inside the Tackle Box: **“Vice”**

RB flow away: **“Stack & Stay”**.



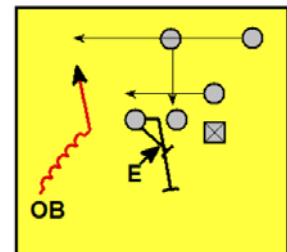
Versus a base block, there might be a pulling G or FB trying to kick out with flow coming at you.

- **“Squeeze the Window”**: Attack LOS while coming towards the RB.
Don't come upfield & give the RB a window to cut up into & then bounce.
- Take Lead Blockers on with inside shoulder. Match their angle...
 - If you drew a straight line between you & the blocker, then travel on that line full speed with the intent of knocking the blocker back into the RB.

BASE or DOWN BLOCK (Inside Release)

The backfield may be running option at you.

- This ASSIGNMENT is same as “Set the Boundary”, however there is no lead blocker, just a pitch man.
- The TECHNIQUE is to slow play the QB. Come at him to get him to make a decision early, but keeping an angle so that if he pitches it you can get the pitch man without the pitch man getting around you.

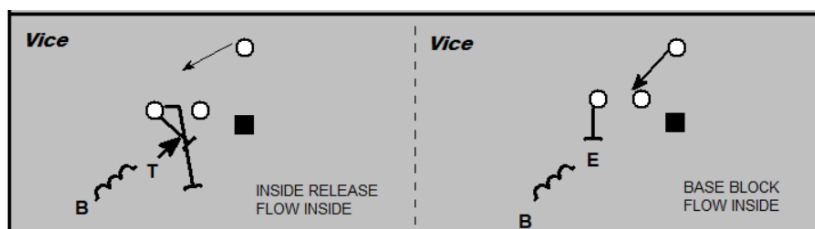
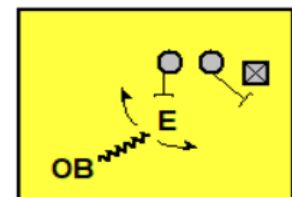


Vice Technique

Flow at you but inside the Tackle Box (Iso / Belly type plays):

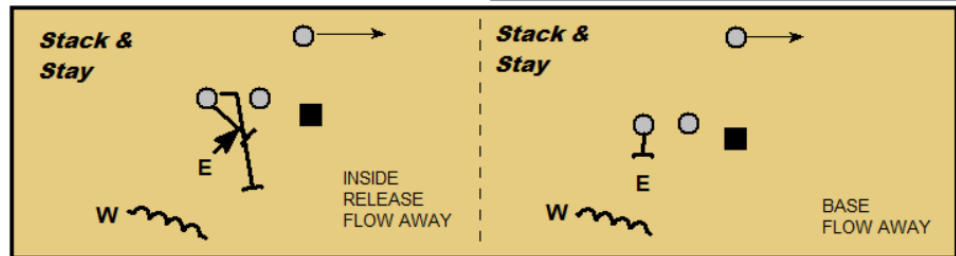
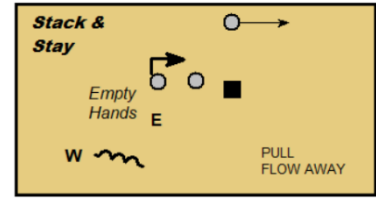
“VICE”: Sit at a 1x1 off the DE hip. You cannot commit to the TB/FB inside because the ball carrier can bounce it outside or the QB can pull & run around the edge after faking inside to the RB.

- When you see QB **“empty hands”** then go for the tackle in the B-gap.
- RELEASE INSIDE or PULL AWAY: **“Find Flow”**.



CBR (Counter-Boot-Reverse) on flow away:

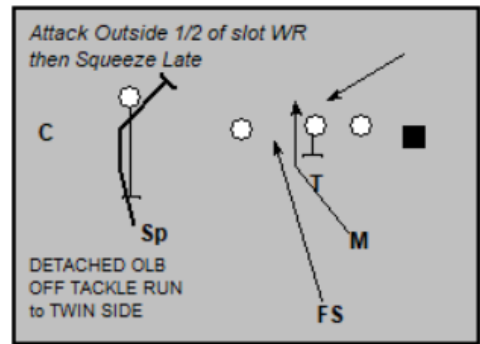
- Initial read is EMOL with backfield flow away.
- “**STACK & STAY**”: Stack 5yds behind the DE. Find WR/Wing on opposite side of formation. Look for pulling OL from other side. Make sure QB has “empty hands” on his boot path. Backside OLB and DE are the only players responsible for CBR. The other 9 players pursue flow.



Run Defense With 2 WR On Their Side.

4x1 on the #2 slot receiver in Cover 3 and 4 so that we can VIOLENTLY re-route vs pass. Split the difference between EMOL and #2 WR in cover 5.

But they still have all the run responsibilities previously mentioned from a landmark that is farther away.



FALCON & SAFETIES

FALCONS

The Falcon is a bird of prey who HUNTS. This is not a timid position. If our Falcon weighed another 20-40 pounds he would be an Inside Linebacker. They are the “ADJUSTER”, which means they fit off the Inside Linebackers based on how the MIKE and BULL take on blocks. If an Inside Linebacker is blocked, the FALCON must compensate and fill into that Linebackers run fit position.

- Aggressive alley players who should make more than 10 tackles per game.
- We want the FALCON to make tackles at the Line of Scrimmage.
- They do not backpedal, keying the uncovered offensive lineman (GUARDS)

CORNERS

Corners are pass-first defenders, but do need to know how to tackle. They should be the 10th and 11th best tacklers on the team. Their primary job is to “CREATE A NEW SIDELINE” by supporting the SPUR and WILL in containing the running back and not letting any run play go around them.