

Coaching the Offensive Line from A to Z
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Trevor Bernadoni

What Really Matters

I have been associated with football as a player and coach for 50+ years and I hope I have 50+ years left but, I have found the best success is not necessarily the scoreboard but the people you surround yourself with. Loyalty amongst staff is the ability to put others before yourself and stick with them in good times and bad as well as maintaining healthy boundaries with those around you so, you can be loyal to them in a productive way. But what really matters is a coach's ability to adapt to his players skills and abilities and is not about you as a coach, its about your athletes that you have been entrusted to coach in helping making them successful both on and off the field.

Chapter 1

The Offensive Line the Heart and Soul of The Offense

It is my belief that the heart and soul of any good offensive football team is its offensive line. An offensive line coach if he is to get the necessary technique and skills developed, he must be provided adequate practice time prior to going into group and team periods to give his players the necessary tools for success. There is no position in football that requires more discipline or technique than being an offensive lineman. The success of an offensive football team hinges on its ability to control the line of scrimmage. To win consistently, you must win in the trenches, and that means playing on your opponent's side of the line of scrimmage and not yours.

My approach to coaching the offensive line is to out execute our opponent's. This is a lot easier said than done! To take this approach and to believe in this philosophy means a great deal of time must be spent on understanding fundamentals and blocking technique as it applies to the type of athlete being coached. I feel that an offensive line coach must understand what he is teaching and how it applies to the offense. Don't introduce a technique or drill if it doesn't apply to your offense and only teach what you know how to fix.

Remember, strive to keep your blocking rules simple and consistent. By keeping your line calls and rules simple, it will give you the coach a better chance to perfect your technique and drills. You want your offensive linemen aggressive not confused. Whatever your offensive line starts they must be able to finish.

To be a good offensive line requires more than just discipline or good blocking technique, it requires "PRIDE" in yourself, your group, and your team. A team with "PRIDE" is a hard team to beat because they are willing to do the "LITTLE THINGS" that most teams are not willing to do. No detail should be overlooked, regardless of how non important it may look on the surface to you as the coach.

The difference between SUCCESS and FAILURE often lies in your ability as a coach to prepare. Prepare your offensive linemen for the unknown; what I mean here is make sure that your system of calls and rules will apply to sideline and half-time adjustments if needed.

Not every offensive lineman that you coach will start, make the all-district or all-conference team, be an all American, play in college, or play in the NFL, but every player you coach can hustle and practice hard and be a good team player. It is your responsibility as their coach to give them the drills and blocking schemes to help them be successful and they must understand that you care about them.

It is my approach, like many other line coaches that we out - execute our opponents, this is a lot easier said than done! My primary goal as I prepare our blocking schemes is that they be simple and that they have a basic rule that can tie them all into one another. Thus, I try keep the rules and line calls simple, it will give us the chance to perfect our techniques and perform them in an aggressive manner.

The more techniques an offensive lineman can learn and master, the easier it will be to cope with various situations. Repetition must be accepted as a way of life for an offensive lineman, success can only be brought about with tremendous confidence in one's ability. Concentration, self-discipline, communication, and the willingness to pay the price are part of being a respected offensive lineman.

Determined, intelligent, and aggressive blocking is an indispensable quality of a great football team, from both a technical and psychological standpoint. It is difficult for a team, to have outstanding morale, confidence, and enthusiasm when it lacks the ability to sustain a great ground game or provide adequate protection for the passer. As an offensive line coach, you must reinforce daily to your players the importance of controlling the football. A goal for any football team should be that whenever they start the game with the football, they must make a first down in both the first and second half of the football game, this sends a message to your opponent that they are in for a long night and builds confidence in your offensive line and their teammates.

“So Goes the Offensive Line, So Goes the Offense

This manual is designed to take you through the early begins of the great game of football and how offensive line play and the rules that govern got it has evolved in how we coach it today. My manual will introduce terms, definitions, technique and drills which will give you a foundation for which to build your Offensive line fundamentals. The blocking schemes included in this manual are built around the use of zone and man blocking schemes as well as dropback and sprint out passing game protections. A few coaches I meet, say why zone blocking over man blocking rules! This manual will explore both zone and man blocking rules and concepts for the running game with implementation of pass protection schemes and alerts.

I have had the great pleasure to have coached in several different states in this country with each state with its own influences. I have found through my experience that trying to gain advantages by controlling the number of defenders a defense puts in the box can be done by formations, motion and type of offensive philosophy you use that influences the type of blocking schemes that a coach might consider implementing into his offensive approach.

Coaching football is a very complex task. Football is a game that requires physical strength and great psychological conditioning. Thus, a successful offensive line coach must understand about factors contributing to the development of physical strength and football athleticism his linemen possess and the understanding the physical demands interior linemen face. Football is a team sport therefore, an

offensive line coach needs to know how to manipulate the psychological factors, which influence individuals to interact for a common goal (moving the football and scoring). Since football is a game of movement, the coach must understand the physical mechanics of blocking with extended arms, hands and forearms which involve zone blocking as well as man rule schemes that contribute to quick body movement. Because football is a game of physical body contact, an offensive line coach needs to know how to create practice and playing conditions that offer the greatest success and safety for his players. Do not force a player to learn a certain technique or skill that he physically cannot do.

Inasmuch as football involves many physical skills in the offensive line, it is necessary for a coach to understand the physical limitations that some players have. It is as important for a coach to understand the techniques for success, as it is to build the size and strength of his players. Only coach what you know how to fix versus worst case scenario.

As we all know for the most part offensive linemen are perhaps the least publicized but, play the most difficult position in football. It is hard to convince some players who are suited to play up front offensively but prefer playing in the defensive line that great stress is applied more today than in the past because of the need to play players with advanced skills such as speed and strength. Therefore, it behooves all coaches to develop a basic philosophy about offensive line play in general and about interior offensive football players.

As an offensive line coach, we must be able to convince our offensive linemen that their job is as important as any other part of the game, and he must constantly stress the value of the offensive line. As line coaches we must be able to talk to our players in a positive fashion about offensive line play a term that I use is to remind our offensive linemen is " So Goes the Offensive Line So, Goes the Offense." What needs to be instilled into an offense and especially your offensive line is the feeling that whenever we get the ball we will score, and we can score only if the offensive line does their job. As I have already mentioned one of my number 1 goals going into a game is to make sure we get a first down on any first offensive series in the first and second half of a football game, this builds confidence in fact that we can move the ball on our opponent.

Coaches must also develop an approach to the game in terms of the kind of football he wants his team to play. Coaches can use either the simple method and try and keep the offensive plays and line blocking to a minimum or he can use a variety of offensive series and blocking schemes. The one answer coaches search for constantly, what is the best play or method of blocking? It usually appears that every coach has a favorite play or blocking style depending upon his philosophy and the type of players he has on his squad. But there is no unanimity as to what the best way is so, only coach what you know how to fix versus worst case scenario. I never underestimate what our athletes can do if I as their coach have a systematic way to teach them thus, I know they will have a systematic way to learn. So, it becomes obvious that a coach must have a variety of ways of doing things and must present his own patterns for the offensive Line.

The following Chapter will give you a Historical overview on offensive line play and how techniques and strategies got its start.

The First Football Game Looked More Like Soccer

If you think that the 1869 rules made the game look more like a soccer match than a football game, you are right. The rules by which Rutgers played were based on the 1963 London Football

Association's rules. Gridiron football developed by combining these rules with rugby football rules to evolve into the collegiate football games we see today.

Chapter 2

Historical Overview Offensive Line Play

In his book *The Story of Football* (1965), Robert Leckie points out that in the 1870's, one last bottleneck remained to be opened before football could become inimitable American. It concerned the "offside". The word, as used at that time, did not apply to the present violation occurring when a man on either team crosses into enemy territory before the ball is snapped. Instead it was a word the British used to describe a player who got ahead of his own ball carrier or kicker. It is what Americans now call blocking or interference-tactics which were highly illegal in the early Rugby days (Leckie, 1965).



1896

The American's liked the idea of helping the ball carrier along. They often bumped into opposing player as though by accident. In 1879, Princeton used two players to escort the ball carrier during a game against Harvard, thus, the offensive line gets its start (Leckie, 1965).

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Because one of the offensive forwards in a scrimmage was allowed to pass the ball back with his foot, he became known as the "snapperback." Later, because he played in the center of seven forwards or "rushers", he became known as the "center". Since the defensive rushers were permitted to attack him

as he passed the ball with his foot actually squirting it back by sudden pressure on its end he needed protection from his own rushers at either side of him. Because, in effect they "guarded" the center, they became known as guards. It was inevitable, of course, that the rushers at either extreme would be called "end men" and then simply ends, And because the men between the ends and the guards had the best position for making tackles, the eventually earned the name of tackle (Leckie, 1965). Offensive line play, as spelled out in *American Football* and told by Walter Camp (1891), would consist of seven positions: a Center or Snap-Back, two Guards, two Tackles and two Ends (p. 22).



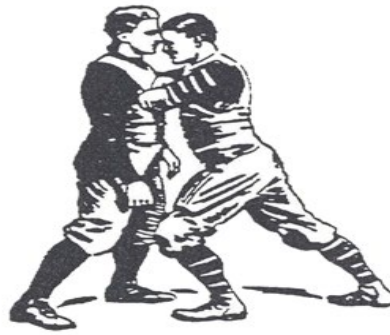
In *The History of American Football* (1956), Allison Danzig that in 1880, the rugby scrummage became scrimmage, and the quarterback made his appearance with a new method of putting the ball into play. Instead of the ball being tossed in between two packs of rushers, or forwards, who sought to heel it out (hit it backward with the heel) to their own back in the rugby "scrum", the procedure of a scrimmage was adopted for putting the ball into play. This procedure was accomplished by the snap-back or center (Danzig, 1956).



In its early days of interference, players were permitted to grab hold of their runners anywhere they could and pull, push or yank the ball carrier along in any direction that would make the ball advance. In a rule established in 1876, stated that holding, carrying, and backward passing of the football would be permitted; this led to rushing as opposed to soccer.



Legal Use of Hands



Legal Use of Arms



Legal Use of Body

Legal use of hands and arms by player of the side in possession of the ball; the player in the middle of the group, in attempting to obstruct an opponent, is keeping his hands together and his arms close to his body.

Legal use of arms by the player on the side in possession of the ball. Player No. 2 is attempting to obstruct an opponent in keeping his arms close to his body.

Legal use of body in blocking: the player on the right has thrown his shoulder against his opponent's thigh, to block him away from the play, but is not using his hands or arms.

In *Football Facts and Figures* (1945), Dr. L.H. Baker, wrote that Princeton, in 1879, was the first team to use interference with the ball carrier, but here the interferes were located on each side and not in front of the ball carrier (1879 Interference is legalized). This was called "guarding the runner". Since little was known about it, the use of interference was carried on in a desultory way, and to avoid possible penalty complications, interferers did not use their hands and arms. It was not until 1884 that interferes would be sent ahead of the ball (Baker, 1945).
is hands or arms.



According to Walter Camp in his book *American Football* (1891), offensive lineman should possess certain qualities because, during that time, football players would play both offense and defense. In the early years of football, the qualities that a coach should look for in a football player were as follows:

The End or Rusher

The end rusher must get into condition early. Unless the end rusher does, he cannot handle the work that must fall to his share, and the effect of a poor performance by the end is to produce disorder at once in the proportion of work of the tackles and halfbacks. When his own side has possession of the ball, his play, like that of any other man, must be governed by the character of the intended move, and the knowledge of what this move will be is conveyed to him by the signal. The nearer the play is to the end, the greater is the assistance he can render. There is no limit to the amount of work an end may perform in this direction. A good end should be able to toss his man back so that he cannot interfere with the play. The end is responsible for the area from the outside of the line to the sideline to the touch line. (Camp, 1891, p. 43)

The Tackle

While blocking may not be the most important duty, it is certainly the one which will bear the most cultivation in the tackles of the present day, for the ones who are really adept in it are marked exceptions to the general rule. The real accomplishment of a tackle depends upon the man's unflinching perseverance and study. A good defensive lineman cannot possibly be blocked every time in the same way, a good defensive lineman will soon become aware of the method and will be able to avoid the attempt. Dashing violently against a defensive lineman just as he is starting to work once or twice, and then he will make a false start to draw this charge and easily slip by the man.

In blocking for a run, the case is very different and depends upon the point of assault. If the run is to be made around the right end, for instance, by the left half-back, the right tackle must block very slowly and long. That is, he must not dash up to his man the instant the ball is snapped and butt him aside, for the runner will not be near enough to derive any advantage from this, and the opponent and runner until the latter puts on steam to circle, when it is his duty to engage his man sharply, and thus let the runner pass. In blocking for an inside run upon his own side, he should turn his man out or in, as the case may be just as the runner reaches the opening, being particularly careful not to make the break too early, lest the opponent reach the runner before he comes to the opening (Camp, 1891, p. 34).

The Guard

A man, who is slow, while it requires less agility than that of the tackle, can never satisfactorily fill the position of guard. When his own side has the ball, the guard must block sharply until the quarter has time for receiving the ball, and, at any rate, to begin the motion of the pass. The blocking of a guard is much less exciting in its requirements than that of the tackle. Not that he must not block with equal certainty, but the act requires no such covering of two men as often happens in the case of a tackle. The guard forms closely towards the center, and then follows his man out if he moves out, but only as far as he can go, and still be absolutely certain that the opponent cannot pass between him and the snap-back.

When blocking for a run, (of course much depends upon where the opening is to be made), and a guard must be governed accordingly. A guard may not move about so freely and must face his man more squarely than a tackle, for the guard must protect the quarterback first, while the tackle considers the half only. Previous to the snap-back's playing the ball, it is the duty of the guards to see that their individual opponents do not succeed in either kicking the ball out from the snap-back's hand or otherwise interfering with the play.

This is quite an important feature, and a center should always feel that he is upon either hand a steady and wide-awake assistant who will neither be caught napping nor allow any unfair advantage to be taken of him (Camp, p. 26).

The Center or Snap-Back

The man who may be selected to fill the important position of center-rush must be a man of sense and strength. Brain and brawn are here at their highest premium. Putting the ball into play at the right time, and properly, is a great achievement, but it does not free the center-rush from all other obligations.

During early progress anew snap-back usually sends the ball against his own legs, or, if he manages to keep him out of the way, is upset by his opponent for his pains. It is no child's play to hold a ball out at arm's length on the ground in front of one and roll it back so that it passes between one's feet, and still preserve a good balance in spite of sudden push of a hundred-and eighty-pound opponent. But that is just what a center has to do each time the ball is down and belongs to his side. The first thing to teach a center is to stand on his feet against any amount of jostling. Then he must learn to keep possession of the ball until ready to play it. The most finished and experienced centers have a way of playing the ball just as they are half-straightening as though to meet a charge from the front.

As to holding the ball, some centers prefer to take it by the end, while others roll it on its side. The ball can be made to rise for the quarterback if sent on end, whereas if played upon its side it lies closer to the ground. A center ought to practice putting the ball into play with either hand until he is proficient with both hands.

A coach should see to it that his center has a variety of men to face, some big, some tricky, and some ugly. If any old players come back to help the team in the way of coaching and among them are some counter-rushers, they can do no better work than by donning a uniform and playing against the "Varsity" center. (Camp 1891)

The Flying Wedge, 1890

Bettman Archive



As Walter Camp wrote in 1891, a football team for the purpose of advancing the ball or repelling the attack of the opponents it has proved advisable for a Captain to divide his eleven men into general divisions: the forwards (Offensive Line) and backs (Camp, p. 18).



In the early years of football the rule that governed the number of players on the line of scrimmage fluctuated; 1895, seven players must be on the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped; 1896, rule again changes stating at least five players shall be on the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped; 1903, rule changes again state that now the number of players on the line of scrimmage could be either seven or five under certain conditions. Then finally in 1910, the rules committee changes for the last time the number of players on the line of scrimmage to seven prior to the snap of the football. This rule change of 1910 has remained unchanged to the present day.



The introduction of the scrimmage line as stated in the book, *The History of American Football, Its Great Teams, Players, and Coaches* (Danzig, 1956), established the principle of possession of the ball, a tremendously important principle that, more than anything else, differentiates rugby from American football. When in 1880, a new rule is formed stating at least eleven players on a side and a scrimmage line established; the latter change eliminated the rugby scrum and aligned the teams on either side of the ball.



Football in America was never so unnecessarily rough as it was in the beginning. After 1888, when the low tackle became legal, the boys came up with a whole series of bone-wrenching, mass momentum plays. The hauling, heaving and gouging drew a public outcry. Eventually the rules were changed, protective helmets were worn (Photograph of Princeton and Cornell in 1903) and the game was somewhat tamed.

Parke Davis wrote of the significance of this change in the *1926 Football Guide*. He said, “The most important incident in the evolution of the game in the late eighteen seventies was the introduction of the modern scrimmage in the place of the rugby ‘scrum’ (p. 15). The tacticians of the period perceived the vast improvement which could be obtained if a method were established of putting the ball in play that it would give to one side its undisturbed possession and thereby permit a strategic and tactical possession and thereby permit a strategic and tactical preparation to advance it (Davis 1926).

In 1883, four current methods of scoring were written into the rules book, touchdown, point after, field goal and safety.

John Heisman, famous coach and one of the inventive minds of football wrote in 1932 in the Yale- Princeton football program, “Camp’s scrimmage plan gave the ball into possession of the center and he alone could put it into play with a snap-back. This control of the ball made it possible for the offensive team to plan plays in advance, and the use of signals by the quarterback made for better team play”. (Davis, 1926)

In 1888 the rules committee established two rules categories which governed how players could block and advance the football: (1) helping runner and using body; and (2) use of hands and arms. These two categories as found in the N.C.A.A. handbook have remained unchanged since 1888 to the present day. In 1888, the rules stated that blocking with extended arms prohibited and holding on offense constitutes loss of ball to opponent.

Pop Warner has been given credit by some for being the first to use linemen for interference. He is definitely credited, however, for introducing the Indian block, rather than the shoulder block in 1890. In his letter he said, “if you look at snapshots of football teams of the old days you will note that almost all players are on their feet.” That was because in the early day’s blockers used only their shoulders, seldom leaving their feet. Pop Warner figured that the use of the full length of the body provided a greater blocking surface than just the width of the shoulders, and also made it less likely for a blocker to violate the rules by using the arms and hands, and also made it harder for the defensive man to avoid the block (Danzig, 1956).



The Encyclopedia of Sports (1978) referred to the line blocking of the early days as “Line Charging”. Very little scientific thought had been put into that department of play before the dawn of the present century. Nearly all linemen, as a rule, lined up squarely against those who played the same positions on the opposing team. They didn't crouch or squat or play low. They mostly stood bolt upright and fought it out with each other hammer and tongs, tooth and nail, fist and feet. The fact is, you didn't stand much chance of making the line those days unless you were a good wrestler and fair boxer.

Certain ingenious plays featured in early-day sport was quite as startling and unique as is the forward pass of today. First was the flying wedge, invented in 1892 and brought out by Harvard. Almost every team in the country promptly copied the play. In the flying wedge, however, nine of the players of the team withdrew about 20 yards from mid-field and at a signal these nine, in two lanes, started simultaneously and at full speed, converging on a point indicated by the ball. By the time they arrived at the ball, they had worked up a stupendous mass momentum, and the interference they gave for the runner was something wonderful to behold, and terrible to stop.



1909

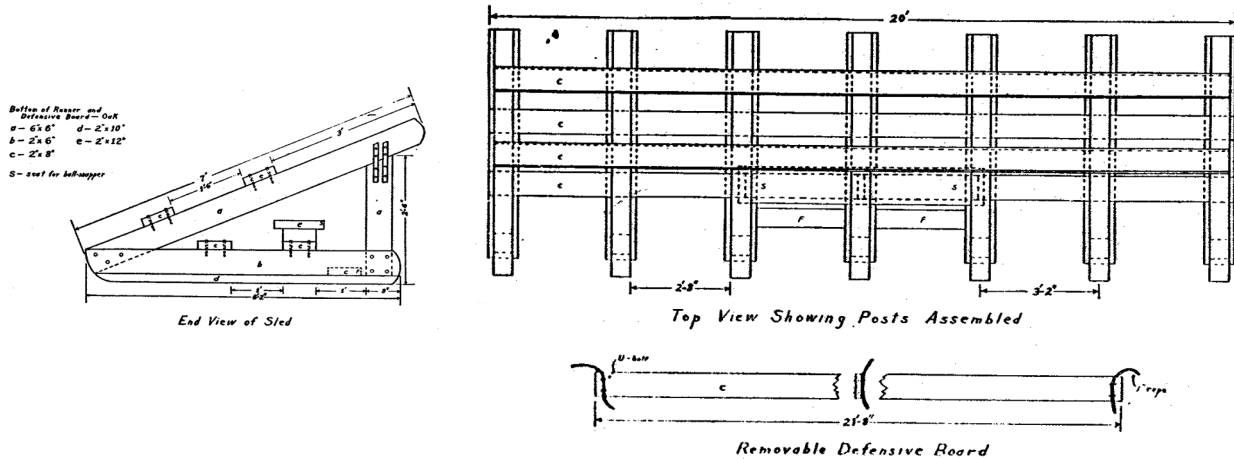
In 1894 Coach Woodruff, at Penn, drafted the principle of the flying wedge for his famous flying interference, which could be put into operation by the team that had the ball in every scrimmage down.

This consisted in starting the tackle and end ahead of the snapping of the ball. They swung back together, between their line and the backfield, and then kept on reinforcing the work of their companion tackle and end, on the other side of the ball. Just before they hit the defensive line the ball went into play, and the results were again almost as disastrous to the defense as was the flying wedge. These two plays were quite as spectacular and thrilling as any that the modern game has produced. So unstoppable were they, however, that the Rules Committee was forced to legislate them out of existence within a few years in order to preserve the proper balance between offense and defense (Encyclopedia of Sports, 1978). In 1896, a rule was established to limit motion to only one player, thus, eliminating brutal momentum plays.

Glenn Scobey Warner stated in his book, *Football for Coaches and Players* (1927) that ball carriers cannot gain ground, no matter how clever they may be, if the opponents are not blocked out of the path of the runner, whereas a good blocking and interfering team can gain ground consistently with mediocre ball carriers.

In the early days of the game all blocking and interfering was done with the shoulder and interferers seldom left their feet, but in recent years the body or Indian block, so named because the Carlisle Indians were the first to adopt it (Warner, 1927).

The following diagrams are of a Line Charging Sled.



In 1906, the forward pass is legalized. This was the most important of all rule changes since 1876. It gave football the balance between offense and defense and reduced the importance of kicking and rushing. One of the primary reasons that the forward pass was legalized was intended to reduce deaths and brutal injuries.

Also, in 1906 and 1912, 10 yards for a first down, plus a fourth down to make a first was implemented. The change to 10 yards came in 1906, the fourth down in 1912, to encourage the offensive game. In 1930 and 1931, as the technique of offensive line play progressed additional adaptations and techniques were added to conform to the new rule changes, which were established during that time period. In 1930, according to the rule under the category of hands and arms, illegal use of hands and

arms by the team with possession of the football is prohibited. Such holding and use of hands and arms includes:

- grasping an opponent with hands and arms,
- placing hands upon an opponent to push him away from play,
- with arm encircling in any degree any part of the opponent, and
- in blocking, using arms in any way to lift an opponent.



In 1931, according to the rule of helping the runner and using the body, no player of the team in possession of the ball might help the runner except by interfering for him, and there should be no interlocked interference.

The rule regarding hand and arms stipulated that the runner might ward off opponents with his hands and arms, but no other player of the team in possession of the ball might use his hand(s) or arm(s) to obstruct an opponent unless the arms were close to the body.

Bernard Oakes, in his book, *Football Line Play for Players and Coaches* (1932), stated that in developing the offensive charge, a charge must be developed before any specific methods of blocking are taught. The offensive linemen must have a quick, hard and sustained charge. All the speed, power, and drive of a well-trained physique is put into the first step. The first step counts most. The head and shoulders are dipped slightly as the first step is taken to insure getting low contact on the opponent and to avoid his hands.

The arms should be snapped up under the chest. The palms of the hands should be down rather than up, or with the thumbs of each hand touching the chest. This position and twisting of the forearms will make them more rigid. The elbows should be extended and tensed, increasing the blocking width of the shoulders and the arms not allowed to drop back loosely to the sides. The hands and forearms should touch the chest to conform to the rule stating that the hand or hands must be in contact with the body (1932).

In his book *Winning Football: Strategy, Psychology and Technique*, B.W. "Bernie" Bierman (1937) pointed out that offensive lineman needs to run or move in predetermined set patterns. Football is essentially a game of precision. Let the blockers move a few feet away from the path laid out for them on a certain play, and a defensive man is certain to leak through and perhaps make the play for a loss. This alone shows how important running or movement is. While details vary, the ultimate objective of blocking is two things. The blocker either drives an opponent out of position to create a running lane or he prevents an opponent from moving into the ball carriers' path. Any person knows that the most

natural way to push or hold a person is by using the hands and arms. Every football fan knows, however, that use of the hands and arms constitutes offensive holding in football and calls for penalties that have been the heart break of more than one crucial game (Bierman, 1937).



William Glenn Kinninger, in his book *FOOTBALL*, (1939) stated that in the parlance of the football field it is often said that the game is won "up front". This means, and it is almost a football axiom, that the team with the most powerful and best-coached line generally wins the game. Efficient offensive line play is based on expert blocking and blocking is the very essence of offensive football (Killinger, 1939).

Further, to this issue, a coaching point was used that offensive lineman play from a stance, play with their knuckles on the ground rather than fingertips assisting in maintaining proper equilibrium. This not only provides stability, but also protects the fingers from injury (Killinger, 1939). It is important for linemen to practice their skills on a daily basis because, it is natural for linemen to want to use their hands when confronted by an opponent, but the rules do not permit the use of hands by the offense. Thus, in order to make blocking habitual without illegal use of hands it must be practiced (Killinger, 1939).

In the early 1900's many different styles of blocks were devised in order to advance the football. Since, hands and extended arms were illegal, blocking technique focused on the use of head, face, neck, shoulder, body, hips, and legs. Thus, in order to effectively teach the many different blocks, many hours each week would be needed to practice these skills.



The different blocks at that time which needed to be practiced during a daily practice are as follows: Right and left shoulder block, combination hard-shoulder block (double team or combo), cross-body block or Indian block, check block (zone), head-on, combination "break", side-swipe (leg whip), roll, side-flying block, and running side-body block. On an average coach taught thirteen different run blocks (this does not include pass blocking technique).

In the 1930's the primary stance being taught to the offensive line was usually the same for all linemen except for the center. The rules provided that both hands, or both feet, or one hand and opposite foot, shall be within one foot of the scrimmage line.

It is important to understand that since the beginning of the establishing of rules that the defense has been able to play with hands and extended arms. This usually gave the defensive linemen advantage when working against the many different blocks of the offensive line.

Having assumed a proper stance, the most important duties of linemen are either to charge and block, and open holes, or to come out of the line and provide interference for the ball carrier.

The most common fault of linemen, blocking in the line, was that they had a tendency to charge too high and did not keep underneath their man, and they did not follow through (a common mistake still being made with today's linemen).

It was the duty for an offensive lineman executing one of his many blocks to always sustain his block and work towards maintaining close contact (no separation) with the defensive linemen.



Against standing defensive linemen, the offensive linemen needed to work under the extended arms of their opponents to prevent being knocked backward or held off by their opponents' stiff-arm charge. In 1930 two coaches, Robert C. Zuppke and Milton M. Olander from the University of Illinois published

Coaching Football, the Illinois System of Offensive Line Attack. In their book they stated: bring the best blockers adjacent to each other for cooperative action. If the offensive linemen are grouped so that the same men always find themselves shoulder to shoulder, a better organized and a more polished attack will result. The team that controls the first yard beyond the line of scrimmage, all other things being equal, should win (p. 168).

In 1932 Bernard F. Oakes, Head Football Coach, Crinnell College, wrote in his book: *Football Line Play for Players and Coaches* that a compact line contracts the defensive line and vice versa, a widespread line expands the defensive line. In order to have a strong plunging and running attack it is advantageous to have the offensive line well spread. This can be accomplished to a surprising degree by merely having the offensive linemen take a wide stance of the feet. Such a stance also gives the individual linemen a better-



balanced base from which to work. It does not restrict the possibilities of his action in using various charges or blocks by cramping him to a narrow-confined space such as he must work in with a tight line.



There are certain advantages presented by spreading the defensive line. The distance between the individual defensive players is increased and thus the offensive linemen have an advantage over the defensive players as the hole designated by the play called is already partially opened for them. Plays going through the line are often stopped by a defensive player who is partially blocked, but who is close enough to reach the runner with his hands and grab him or some part of his uniform. There is less chance of this happening if the individual defensive linemen are spread (Oakes, 1932).



Oakes also stated that before any specific methods of blocking are taught a charge must be developed. The offensive linemen must have a quick, hard and sustained charge. He must keep his balance and not stumble. The offensive charge is made in an unnatural position. It is natural for a man to run high, although he can exert more straight-ahead driving power by running low. Consequently, a great deal of practice is necessary to keep the men low and to get the greatest power out of the shortest run.

In producing a good charge, the first step counts most. The head and shoulders are dipped slightly as the first step is taken to insure getting low contact on the opponent to avoid his hands. The arms should be snapped up under the chest. The palms of the hands should be down rather than up, or with the thumbs of each hand touching the chest. This position and twisting of the forearms will make them more rigid. The elbows should be extended and tensed, increasing the blocking width of the shoulders and the arms not allowed to drop back loosely to the sides. The hands and forearms should touch the chest to conform to the rule stating that the hand or hands must be in contact with the body. The head should be up, so the top of the forehead would strike an opponent if met head on, and the neck drawn in and tensed, bull-like. Eyes should not be closed but focused on the opponent's legs or feet.

Extending the elbows in charging gives beneficial results other than that of increasing the blocking width of the shoulders (Oaks 1932).

In 1946, hands and arms rule was redefined to read: Use of locked hands, regardless of position of hands is illegal if used in blocking by player of team with possession of ball. Legal use of hands and arms by team in possession of ball was:

- a) in shoulder and upper-arm blocking, player, after making legal initial blocking contact may allow his hand or hands to leave his body if defensive man retreats.
- b) in passive block for protection of kicker, or passer, player may shield his head with his arms, but in no case in such action may he use his hands or arms to strike or punch opponent.
- c) inside body or crab blocks, arms or hands do not have to be close to body (Oaks, 1932).



- d) With the use of hands and arms rule of 1946 being redefined blocking technique begins again to be restructured.
- e) With the use of hands and arms rule of 1946 being redefined blocking technique begins again to be restructured.



In *Offensive Football* (1947), Louis R. Oshins, assistant football coach, Brooklyn College, state that the basis of every play is blocking. Blocking is an art. It asks an offensive man to forget about his hands, and to remove from the play a man who may use his hands.

This gives the defensive player a tremendous advantage. The blocker must use whatever advantages he has. He does know exactly when the ball will be snapped, and he can get the jump on his opponent He does know where the play will go and he can get good blocking position. These factors should compensate him adequately for the lack of hand play (Oshins, 1947).

Blocks are taught that are never used in a game. They take up the valuable time that might be better spent for perfecting fundamental blocks. There are four important blocks that must be learned. They are the Head Block, Shoulder Block, Body Block, and the Open Field Block.



The only difference between the Head Block and the Shoulder Block is in the position of the head. The Head Block calls for driving the head into the opponent's mid-section. The Shoulder Block places the head to one side of the opponent in such a manner that it is between him and the ball carrier (Oshins, 1947).

The most perfectly executed blocks are utterly useless unless they are made at the right time. A block that is made too soon is no better than a block made too late, for the man to recover and make the tackle.

Blocks may have different functions, which influence the technique and the duration of the block. A "T" formation quick opener does not require a long-sustained block. A spinner play demands that the blocker stay with his opponent.

Linemen must know the maneuvers of the backs (in today's game the running backs must know the technique of the offensive lineman) so that they may know which plays are delayed plays that call for longer sustained blocking (Oshins, 1947).



During 1949, 1950, and 1952 rules pertaining to the use of hands and arms are redefined. In 1949 under the rule of helping runner and using body, changes to read: while blocking, players feet may leave ground the instant he makes contact with the opponent (Oshins, 1947). Also, in 1949 the hands and anus rule changes: penalty for illegal use of hands and arms, for offensive player, loss of 15 yards from spot of foul. If, to supplement shoulder or chest block, a teammate of runner uses hand or forearm for blocking; chest block, teammate of runner uses hand or forearm for blocking;

- a) hand must be in contact with body during entire block;
- b) with crab or body block hands do not have to be in contact with body;
- c) hands may not be locked during any block (Oshins, 1947).

In 1950, the hands and arms rule changed to require the hand must be in contact with body, and hand and arm must be kept below shoulders of opponent during entire block by teammate of runner. Note: If hand or arm of player of offensive team in legal blocking position contacts opponent above shoulder before opponent squats, ducks, or submarines, such contact is not violation if hands and arms are otherwise used (Oshins, 1947).



In May 1958, Clem W. Thompson, Francis Nagle, and Robert Dobias conducted a study the results of which were published as *Football Signals and Movement Times of High School and College Players*. This study measured the time it took their subjects to move a distance of 18 inches. Two different starting

signals were used: (1) rhythmic, either a digit signal (one, two, three, four), or word-digit signal (hut one, hut two, hut three; and (2) non-rhythmic word digit signals or non-rhythmic color signal (red, green, orange, etc.). Rhythmic digit starting signals were found to result in the fastest movement times for both high school and college players Thompson et al., 1958).

It is important when understanding rules and technique that the stance has taken on many different looks since 1869, depending on the philosophy of the coach teaching it. The stance, an important aspect of offensive line play, was researched by J.M. Deck (1962) in his doctoral dissertation entitled *Effects of Stance, Body Position, and Initial Step Patterns*. The evidence suggests that a stance with high hip elevation is best. Since other factors such as stability and maneuverability are important to the football stance, appropriate modifications of the suggested starting stance are often indicated.



When fast movement is desired, the best stance is one in which the knees are bent slightly, and the weight is distributed over the feet. Starting on the balls of the feet prior to the movement stimuli offers no advantage because of an athlete's tendency to rock back on his heels before making his initial step.

In *Football Principles and Play*, David M. Nelson (1962), Head Football Coach at the University of Delaware wrote that blocking is the heart and soul of offense just as tackling is the lifeblood of defense. It might even be said that blocking is offense and tackling is defense. The purpose of a block is to prevent a defensive man or men from tackling the ball carrier or passer or from blocking the kick. The closer the ball carrier is to the blocker the more important the block. However, all blocks in an offensive plan are important. There are no second-class blocks, and if they are worth doing at all they are worth doing well. It is safe to say that some blocks are more difficult to execute than others because they must be of a longer duration and require more skill and greater tenacity. Blocks are the foundation upon which running alleys or lanes are made. The nine principles of blocking, according to Coach Nelson are:

1. Design the play to give the blocker every possible advantage.
2. Block the proper defensive man.
3. Use the proper blocking technique.
4. Sustain the block.
5. Block at the exact moment of assignment.
6. Be prepared to make blocking *adjustments*.
7. Remember that the landmarks for the execution of the block control its success.

8. Remember that the intensity of the block determines its adequacy.
9. Make the second and third efforts to block.

All openings inside and at the flanks are based on the assumption that a successful block will be made. The rules of the game, by their reference to the way in which hands, arms, and shoulders may be used, give preference to what is known as the shoulder block. As a result, it is a fairly well-established principle of the game that the fundamental method of blocking an opponent is with the shoulders. Most other types of blocks are variations of the shoulder block and are possible because the defender is following the head and shoulders (Nelson, 1962).

Position is of such importance that it is a phase of some offensive systems to disguise the final position for as long as possible. The backfield shift and the pre-set position of linemen are examples of these attempts. But consequent reduction of the amount of time to examine the defense for assignments has reduced the amount of such shift and pre-set moving in recent years. Once again, a rule is dictating how the game will develop. In this case, it is the 25-second rule (Nelson, 1962).

In 1964, as the game progressed, then Head Football Coach Bobby Dobb wrote of his updated version of offensive line play which he utilized at Georgia Tech. In his book, *Bobby Dobb on Football* (1964), he said:

It is in the offensive line that we find the unheralded and unsung heroes of any football team. The first downs and touchdowns of legendary halfbacks would never have come to pass but for the "blood, sweat, and tears" of an offensive line. Offensive line play can't be faked (p. 31).

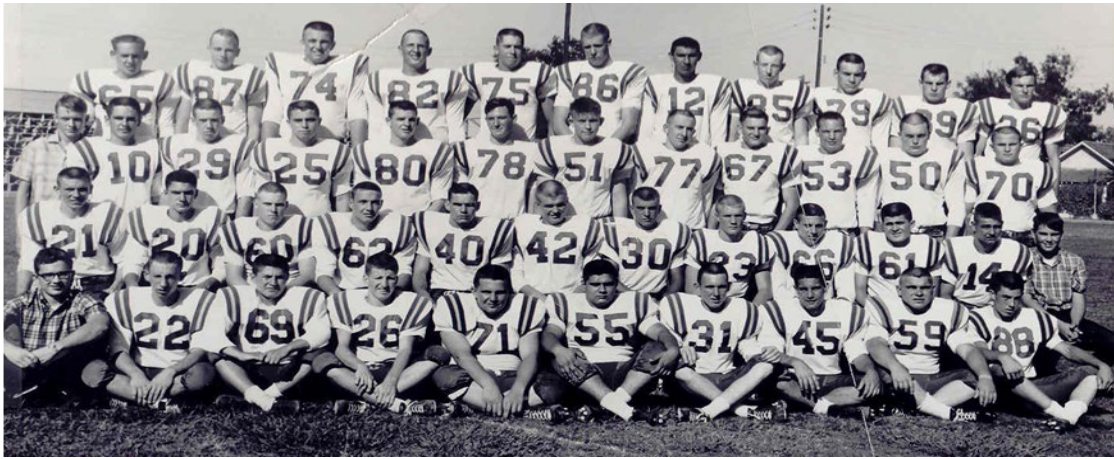
Coach Dobb stated that in order for an offensive lineman to enjoy any success he first must have a good stance to enjoy any possible advantage against his opponent. Next most important factor is releasing from the line of scrimmage (getting off on the football).

There are five major factors necessary to any good offensive stance. Listed in order they are: (1) leg spread, (2) foot stagger, (3) arm position, (4) plane of the hips, back, and head, and (5) weight distribution (Dobb, 1964).

Too much accent cannot be placed on this phase of offensive play. The offensive individual or team that consistently gets off on the snap of the ball is certain to have a most definite advantage over the defense. Too many offensive men are defeated at this stage of the game without ever having had an opportunity to prove their blocking abilities. Getting the jump on an opponent often means the difference between success or failure on any particular maneuver.

To ensure offensive success in releasing from the line, three methods are now being used: (1) the "lunge-out" release, (2) the "step-out" release, and (3) the "all-fours and step-out" release. Of the three releases, the first two are methods that have been in general use and practice for some time. The third method has only recently come into common usage (Dobb, 1964).

It is during this time that coaches first started to mention full-extended arms when blocking. The "all-fours and step-out" release pertains to full extension of arms upon contact with a defender. As the offensive lineman releases from the line of scrimmage, he first leads with his head and extended arms. As contact is established, the arms are retracted to the chest and the forearms rise as extensions of the shoulder blocking surface.



Willows High School 1966
Varsity Record 17-1

Coach Dobb mentioned in his book that the ten primary, blocks that he has his offensive linemen work on for effective productivity are:

1. Straight shoulder block
2. Reverse block or cross shoulder
3. Cut-off block or crab
4. Post block
5. Drive block
6. Trap block
7. Fan block
8. Roll-up block
9. Pass protection blocks
 - a. Aggressive
 - b. Passive
 - c. Screen
10. Punt protection block

It was during this period of time of the 1960's that the Head Football coach, Victor Rowen, from San Francisco State wrote in his book, *The Coaching of Football Line Play* (1968), that it behooves all coaches to develop a basic philosophy about offensive play in general and about interior offensive football players in particular.

The coach must convince these players that their job is as important as any other part of the game, and he must constantly stress the value of the offensive lineman. The coach should emphasize this theory: each time we get the ball we are going to score, and we can score only as long as the interior men do their job.



Chico State College, 1973

According to Clark Shaughnessy, "There is no one best play". Thus, it becomes obvious that a coach must have a variety of ways of doing things and must present his own patterns for the offensive lineman (p. 3).

In 1971, coaches John Ralston and Mike White from Stanford University, writing in their book, *Coaching Today's Athlete: A Football Textbook*, pointed out several different qualities an offensive lineman should have, techniques that they taught in conjunction with the rules in effect at that time, and how they rated their offensive lineman's ability. Each player is rated in terms of the following attributes that we think are important to an offensive lineman:

1. Size potential: This will include a weight for reporting in the fall.
2. Athlete: This will include our evaluation of him as an overall athlete, which includes his ability to run and to control the use of his body.
3. Attitude: This will include his coaching ability as well as whether or not he is what we would term a "winner."
4. Foot mover. This is his ability to move his feet and perform the various techniques that are required of an offensive lineman. This is one of the most important attributes of an offensive lineman and is an important area.
5. Striker: The player will be evaluated on his ability to strike a blow, not only in his drive blocking but also in his pass protection.
6. Strength: This is overall strength, but most important to the offensive lineman is his leg strength and ability to perform the techniques that are required.
7. Speed: This is the player's overall speed as related to the offensive line.

We also rate each offensive lineman in the five basic techniques that are required: (1) pass protector, (2) drive blocker, (3) puller, (4) ability to block on the run, which we are now well aware is one of the most important attributes of an offensive lineman, and (5) rate him in terms of his second effort (Ralston & White, 1971).

It is the feeling of coaches Ralston and White that, during this period of time, a coach must determine the best possible offensive technique or blocking system; he then must develop an efficient method of writing up and presenting his offensive plays. It is imperative to be able to teach assignments quickly to

avoid mistakes that might occur through lack of communication. It is very important to always search for the effective techniques so offensive linemen will be able to memorize the plays quickly but will gain knowledge at the same time. Learning assignments should be accomplished on the field in a competitive atmosphere. Memorization by rote learning is doomed to a very short lifetime. Coaches and players are missing the complete understanding of the game if the athletes do not have some insight into the play, play action, and execution.

Offensive blocking schemes should place a lot of emphasis on the finish of a particular block. It is not enough for the player to know just his assignment; he must know the direction of the play to aid him in a secondary effort according to the pattern of the action.

For this reason, maintaining as simple an offensive philosophy as possible while attempting to be creative in introducing new technique and plays is imperative (Ralston & White, 1971).

In 1976, the rule for the use of extended arms and the use of hands is mentioned and referenced in regard to allowing, them to extend out from the body. The rule stipulates that when a teammate of a runner or a passer uses a hand(s) or arm(s) in blocking or to supplement a shoulder block:

- a) The hand(s) shall be in advance of the elbow.
- b) The hand(s) shall be inside the framework of the blocker's body.
- c) The hand(s) and arm(s) shall be parallel to the ground.
- d) The arm(s) shall not be extended more than one-half of a full extension.
- e) The hand(s) shall be capped or closed with the palm(s) not facing the opponent.
- f) The hand(s) and arm(s) shall not be used to deliver a blow.
- g) The hand(s) and arm(s) shall not be used to grasp, pull, encircle or lift an opponent.
- h) The hand(s) or arm(s) shall not be used to hook, lock or clamp an opponent.
- i) During no block shall the hands be locked.

In 1976, a rule change was made to allow the use of hands and arms to leave the parallel position while blocking. Arms might then extend one-half of a full arm extension while pass blocking as long as hands stayed inside the framework of the body. When offensive men run blocks, arms must still remain parallel to the ground.

As of 1980, offensive linemen might use full extension of their arms while pass blocking as long as they block behind the neutral zone. The retreat block was added to facilitate full extension while pass blocking, which means the offensive lineman must be moving backwards away from the line of scrimmage while blocking with extended arms.

In 1985, the retreat block was deleted, and open hands and extended arms permitted anywhere on the field. This new rule change allowed offensive linemen to both pass and run block with extended arms.

While pass blocking, the change to full extension of arms has allowed linemen to pass block on the line of scrimmage and aggressively run block opponents.

It was during this time that coaches started to incorporate and introduce new techniques and drills to facilitate this new rule change. Since most coaches tend to coach what they already felt comfortable with, blocking with extended arms and hands took a slow change over which some coaches today do not fully understand.

In 1987, Homer Smith, the offensive coordinator at U.C.L.A. published the book, *Football Coach's Complete Offensive Playbook*. In it he wrote about the six principles upon which basic pass protection is based.

- One, a pass protection system should attempt, always, to get interior linemen assigned to the defenders who are most likely to rush.
- Two, the more distance there is between a blocker and the passer, the more secure is the passer. When a rusher does get around a protector, the passer wants time to see the danger and to escape it. The closer a blocker is to the passer, the taller he is in relation to the initial trajectory of the ball.
- Three, with the proper relationship between a blocker and the passer, and with the passer ready to escape in the proper direction, a pass protection block is downhill. It is stated that a runner who is behind a moving blocker and who has two ways to break can escape a potential tackler almost every time. A passer does not have two ways to break, but he can move forward, and a blocker can give a rusher only an outside route.
- Four, all defenders who can rush a passer must be either blocked or watched. Sometimes two defenders can be assigned to a lineman and a receiver, and if only one of the defender's rushes, the lineman can block him, and the receiver can release. This is commonly called a blocking double-read.
- Five, no rusher should be allowed to get to the quarterback before a blocker can make contact. When a back is assigned to a particular defender and that defender threatens to rush in a gap or over the guard position, the guard or center should block that defender and the back should compensate. Backs can see what happens to them and can always compensate for emergency measures taken by linemen.
- Six, the center should not be asked to snap the ball and block a middle guard by himself with the quarterback stopping to pass behind the line. The center cannot invite a middle guard to go to one side, knowing that the passer can protect himself by moving forward. The principle against a Oklahoma or an Eagle defense is that one guard must always be assigned to a linebacker so he can help the center with his block if his linebacker does not rush, possibly help him with the position of his body even if his linebacker does rush. These are the principles; the process of protecting the passer is very difficult (Smith, 1987).

Currently, from 1991 to the present, the rules that affect how offensive linemen may use their hands and arms require that a teammate of a runner or a passer legally may block with his shoulders, hands, the outer surface of his arms or any part of his body only if the hands are:

- a) in advance of the elbow;
- b) inside the frame of the opponent's body with the exception of when the opponent turns his back to the blocker,
- c) at or below the shoulder(s) of the blocker and the opponent with the exception of when the opponent squats, ducks or submarines; and
- d) The hand(s) shall be open with the palm(s) facing the frame of the opponent or closed or cupped with the palm(s) not facing the opponent.



Texas A&M University, Kingsville

The use of extended arms and hands which this writer will call Quick Draw / Punch and Run, enables an offensive lineman to work for pad control by blocking with extended arms as stated in the N.C.A.A. rulebook. Since a great deal of focus is centered on teaching defensive linemen to use quick hands and to develop quick feet, the same idea must be incorporated into the technique taught to the offensive line.

To control and direct the movement of a defender, the offensive lineman must have the ability to get his hands on the defensive lineman and to control or direct his movement. In order to do so, the concept of a Quick Draw / Punch and Run as dictated by the rules governing the use of extended arms and hands is incorporated into the lineman's thought process in blocking.

An offensive lineman, when faced with a larger and faster opponent, must be able to keep up with and control the defensive lineman's ability to disengage blocks. In 1888, the ability to block with extended arms and hands was disallowed because it was considered an unfair advantage for the offense. The technique at that time was limited to pushing and shoving; that technique now has come back in 1985 which was 97 years later, thus hopefully giving the offensive lineman an advantage that he has been unable to use but has been a continued practice by defenders since the conception of American football.

Chapter 3

Definitions and Terms for Implementing and Coaching the Offensive line

The following word base below are terms and definitions that can be used to implement terms that can reinforce and motivate actions by your athletes. The terms and definitions below are used throughout this book to assist you in understanding how many of the techniques and schemes are explained and taught.

The word "Base" is an alert word used in a one - on - one blocking situation and you have no combo responsibility. Any combination block such as ACE, DEUCE and TREY alerts that two adjacent linemen will be working in combo with each other looking for a down lineman and linebacker combination.

Anchor - Term used for the drop step placement of the outside foot in pass protections on straight drop back passing schemes. Set the anchor helps to slow any type of up field bull rushes by defenders. Setting the anchor in pass protection creates the stagger in the base of offensive linemen.

Backside - Backside terminology pertains to any action opposite the direction of the play being run.

Base Block - One-on-one block between an offensive player and a defensive player.

Be Part of the Tackle: Always stick to the defender, using all your fundamentals and techniques. Never find yourself on the ground

Big Eyes - Get the eyes big when drive blocking a defender with the initial punch

Block with Frame - Pass blocking that puts the offensive lineman between the defender and the quarterback.

Build the Wall - Use this term with your offensive linemen when you want them all working at the same level or when working a combo to create cut-off zones versus scraping linebackers.

Bury - In pass protection working to the half man advantage inside vs a gap defender. Get your body across the down defender, helmet to the inside ear.

Charlie – Alert for cross block by two adjacent linemen.

Circle the Wagons 8 & 9's - Circle the wagons is a descriptive term used for Jet, Toss running plays that go outside and for the sprint out passing game. Circle the wagons Intel's the full reach by an offensive lineman using drop step crossover footwork. This term alerts the offensive linemen to drop step their play side foot while working to rip their backside arm through the play side jersey number of the defender.

Counter Rotate 4's & 5's - Used when blocking any ISO or Belly ISO play / Part the Sea

Create the "W" – Describes how an offensive lineman when pass setting will punch with his hands. Offensive linemen will want to deliver their punch by bringing their thumbs together and this happens

by turning the thumbs up which in turn will drop their elbows which makes it easier to punch up through the defender's numbers.

Cross-Over Step - Is the second step taken by an offensive lineman in all fast or full zone plays. Used to get to the play side jersey number of a defender to cut him off from making plays. Used to stretch a defender.

Cross Your Face - This term describes a defender working to cross the face of an offensive blocker after contact has been made.

Don't Allow Your Chin Over your Toes - Term used to describe too much weight rolled forward when run blocking, you'll end up on your chin. You will not be able to react to movement by a defender when you have too much weight forward.

Double Team - Combination block by any two adjacent blockers. A double team is accomplished against a down defender with no second level linebacker responsibility.

Down Call - An alert used in pass protection. Whenever a Running Back stays in and blocks in the straight dropback schemes, he will follow the Lucy (Lt.) or Ricky (Rt.) call and double read playside from the inside linebacker to an outside invert. A "Down" alert is used on the side in which the Running back is aligned. Whenever a linebacker on the callside walks up into the LOS, any offensive linemen who has the linebacker walked up on his inside can give a "Down" call which pulls the protection inside and now puts the back blocking the end man on the line of scrimmage.

Drop Step Cross Over Rip Through: "Circle the Wagons" This phrase applies to a full zone scheme when trying to get the ball outside, on a running play. The offensive lineman will drop step according to the shade of the defender. The wider the shade the deeper the drop step.

Duck Walk - A technique that refers to an offensive lineman's foot position with heels turned in and toes slightly turned out. Duck walk is also a drill.

E.M.L.O.S. - Stands for End Man on the Line of Scrimmage.

Fold Block - Used to gain a blocking advantage by any two offensive linemen working an ace, deuce or trey combination. Used with the "Jack" and "Jill" alert.

From Low to High: Term used for run blocking. Starts with good low shoulder level, working into the defender and gradually rising into the defender. Use your base for power. Heels in toes out.

Front Door / Back Door: This expression is used to describe possible shades that defenders will play through. If a defender is on the front side of a combination block, he is considered a front door player. If a defender is playing on an inside shade of the outer most blocker, he is considered a back-door player.

Frontside - Refers to the side the ball is being run or thrown too.

"G" Scheme - Blocking scheme that requires the playside guard to pull frontside.

Gain Depth to Gain Vision - Phrase used for the second puller on counters as he looks for his linebacker assignment

Get Hippo - Two adjacent blockers getting hip to hip

Get off! Ability to accelerate off the L.O.S. using proper technique.

Half Man Advantage: Term used to explain proper positioning in pass pro. Always work from an inside out position on the defender take the 1/2-man advantage, make the defender pass rush you from the outside not from the inside. Used in drop back protection.

Heels in - Toes out: focus your energy on the inside of your feet, this gives you more push power.

Hit on the Rise - Make contact by rolling the hips through the defender. Hit on the rise, head-up, bull the neck with shoulders opposite the punch.

Influence - Action used by an offensive to encourage a defender to react to his block or movement.

Kick Step or Kick Slide - Pass blocking term. Short step with your back foot. The depth of the kick is determined by the width of the defender. When you kick slide always replace the step with the trail foot. Never get over extended. The second step is a slide step, don't pick it up off the ground. Maintain a good base.

Level One Defenders - Refers to the defensive down linemen or those defenders aligned on the line of scrimmage.

Level Two Defenders - Refers to the second level defenders located behind defensive front on the line of scrimmage (linebackers, inverts)

Long Call - An alert used in the trapping game that tells the puller the location of the down defender being trapped. The black alert is made by any offensive lineman playside. The black alert is made to signal to the puller that he will be trapping a 5 technique.

L.O.S. - Line of scrimmage

Look up Thru the Window: The window is the positioning of the hands in pass pro. Bring the two thumbs together forming creating the "W". When punching a defender on pass rush look up thru the window, this will help in keeping the butt down.

Openside - Side of the offense that does not have a Tight End next to an offensive tackle.

Part the Sea - Descriptive term used to describe the blocking scheme for the ISO. All blocks at the point of attack for the ISO play should counter rotate away using the near ear rule.

Pick'in Grass (Show Me the Grass) - Technique used by offensive linemen to keep from dragging their backside shoulder on inside releases (veer, Midline)

Piggyback: Term used to describe the position on combination blocks the trail blocker (uncovered lineman) works for in conjunction the lead blocker. The trail lineman works to an outside position up and behind the lead blocker.

Playside - The side of the offensive formation that the ball is being run or passed.

Proper Point of Aim - Must understand the play and where it is going. Always take the proper step in the direction you are going (no false steps).

Punch and Run: Explains pad control. Once pad control has been established, move your feet maintaining a great base. Finish the block, run the defender, get him on his heels.

Punch up Thru the Window: Punch up thru the window from low to high up and thru the top of the defender's numbers.

Sift Block - Is an inside chip off to a second level defender by an offensive lineman. Example would be a backside tackle chipping through the inside shoulder of a defensive end to an outside invert. A sift block slows the charge of the down defender and influences his movement.

Quick Draw - Term used to describe quick placement of the hands to the chest of the defender. It's the person who can get his hands on the other the fastest that wins.

Run Through: A linebacker stunting. Must prevent linebackers from running through combination blocks. Can prevent run throughs by keeping the head up.

Shoulder Width Apart - Describes the placement of a player's feet in any given stance. Football player's feet should always be positioned shoulder width apart, never compromise your base, and never let your feet come together.

Sit Down in The Chair - Phrase used to set the hips underneath you when pass blocking.

See Your Backers - When working Ace, Deuce, or Trey combos must see your potential run through.

Soft - An alert made by the backside tackle in straight drop-back protection schemes (normally a backside tackle). Soft is a call made to alert the uncovered lineman who has double read responsibility that he can stay inside on the inside linebacker because the outside invert is off the LOS and shows no signs of coming off the back edge.

Short steps - never allow yourself to over stride (big, long, or high choppy steps). Must keep your feet In the ground where you have power.

Show Me That It's OK - Turn the thumbs up sets the elbows down

Slanter: Defensive lineman slanting inside or outside. On combination or zone blocks the inside slanter is picked up by the trail blocker. It is important to get the head between the slanter and the P.O.A.

Step Hinge – Is a term used to explain the technique to step inside secure inside gap no linebacker shows hinge back on the first defender backside. Also, term used when stepping over on the sprint out

passing plays. Whenever on the sprint out game that an offensive lineman steps playside and comes uncovered he then hinges backside for any potential blocker off the backside.

Step on Toes - Concept of coming under control (sink your butt, widen your base) once you close on a defender such as a defensive back or linebacker in the open field.

Stretched: When the defensive lineman reacts in the direction the lead blocker is tracking, the lead blocker will be stretched wider. It is OK to be stretched as long as the blocker stays square and keeps working the defender off the L.O.S. On outside zone plays it is vitally important that the blocker doesn't get flattened. If this happens, the defender will get penetration and escape to the outside into the ball carrier. The blocker must strive to stay square, maintain contact and work the defender off the L.O.S. By doing so, the ball carrier will have room to threaten the outside and read the seams

Stomp the Arches - Term used to explain the push off the inside of blockers feet, heels in toes out, push should come from the inside of the feet.

Stretch Zone - Used with all Stretch plays / Offensive linemen tracking next number over, drop step stay on track with 6 & 7's.

Take It Back 2's & 3's - Taking scheme away from the point of attack using your near ear rule.

Track Your Backers - Adjacent blockers staying on combo while tracking their flowing Lber

Trap - Blocking scheme that pulls the backside guard or tackle across the center. The trap block is designed to block the first defender on past the center.

Tuff - An alert used by a backside tackle to tell the uncovered lineman that has a double read responsibility that a possible outside invert is up on the line of scrimmage and may possibly come hard off the back edge. Tuff tells the uncovered lineman to double read his linebacker to outside invert faster.

Uncovered - Term used to describe an uncovered lineman. In this situation no down defender over the top of him.

Use Your Eyes: The best tools an offensive lineman has are his eyes. What you see tells your brain what to do. If your head is down, nothing goes into your brain. Eyes up, see what you strike.

Wedge - A blocking scheme that requires the offensive linemen to block down and inside especially with the quarterback sneak.

White - An alert used in trapping plays to tell the puller the location of the first defender past the center. White means short pull, the defender being trapped is either a 2 or 3 technique

Shoulder Width Apart - Describes the placement of a player's feet in any given stance. Football player's feet should always be positioned shoulder width apart, never compromise your base, and never let your feet come together.

Shoulders Parallel: In pass protection never allow a pass rusher to get his shoulder out of parallel to the blocker. The Defender is trying to make you turn your hips.

Show Your Numbers: Term used for pass blocking. To get into the correct pass blocking position, expose the numbers on your chest.

Show Me That It's OK - Turn the thumbs up sets the elbows down



The Heart of any Offense is the Offensive Line

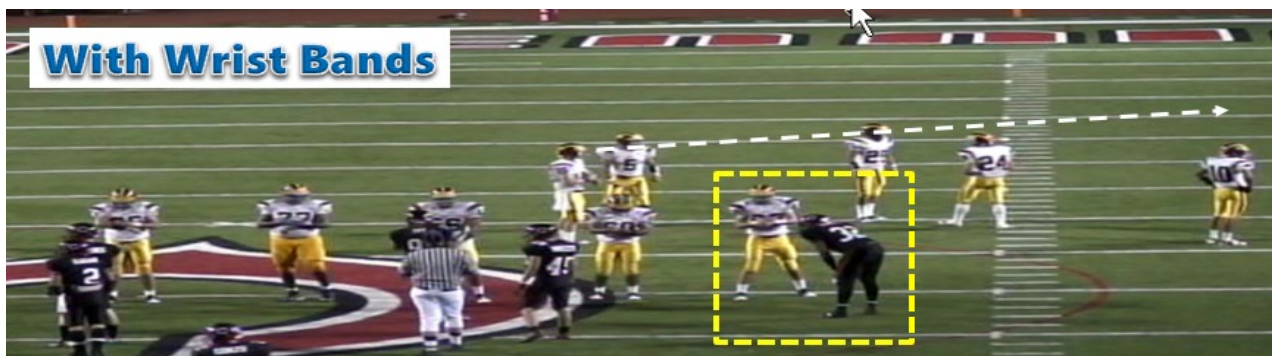
Chapter 4

The Basic Fundamentals

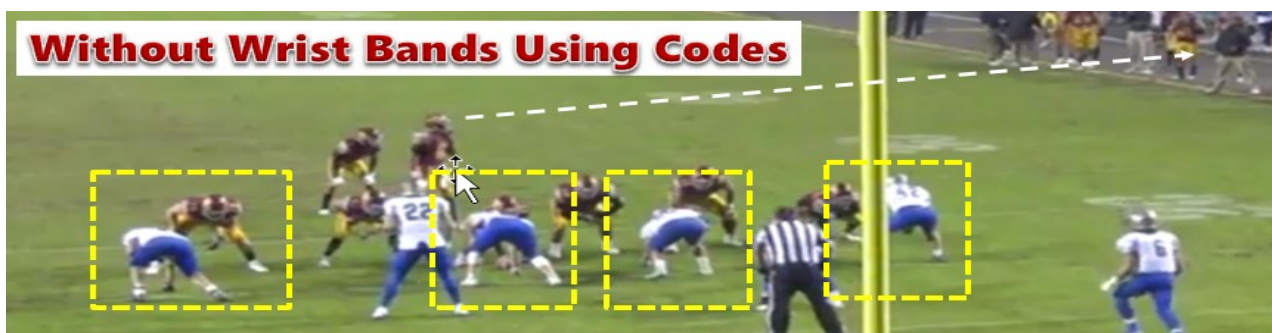
A group that's unified is more apt to do the "LITTLE THINGS" that most teams are not willing to do. No detail should ever be overlooked, regardless of how non-important it may look on the surface. The difference between WINNING and LOSING often lies in the failure to do the little things

Our tenacity on the field starts with the Huddle or No Huddle Hurry-Up offensive approach which demands an aggressive approach to force defensive fronts to put their hands down in the dirt prior to the ball being snapped. Whenever a play has been blown dead the offensive line will hustle back to the huddle or back to their line of scrimmage with a sense of urgency waiting for the next call to be made, this sends a message to their opponent that they are in for a long night.

Reason for no Huddle, it doesn't require a philosophy or play calling change, it only requires that you set the tempo which in turn requires you to condition your players to play fast. No-huddle approach also allows you to dictate the substitution patterns of the opposing defense, forcing them into bad matchups or substitution penalties. We used to work with wrist bands, and I noticed only one defender bent over catching his breath, in the picture below, so we went away from wrist bands and went to working off codes from the sideline.



By having your offensive line hustle back to the line of scrimmage and preset in a 2-point stance it forces the defensive line to get down in their stance which I call putting their hand down in the dirt. By pre-setting your offensive line in a 2-point stance you potentially can wear the defensive line down by the 3rd and 4th quarter. Something to consider.



THE SNAP COUNT - In order to control the L.O.S., it is extremely important that you execute the starting count. The single greatest advantage that an offensive line has over the defense is that they know when the ball will be snapped and where the play is going. Not enough emphasis can be put on the line to get off on the snap count together.

THE PRE-SNAP SET - can be handled in several different ways, according to the beliefs of the coach. In my approach the offensive line is required upon reaching the L.O.S. to get down in their pre-snap playing position, which can either be a two-point or three-point stance. The center becomes a very important factor when getting to the L.O.S. It is the center that the rest of the offensive line sets their stance on, so, the center must get to the L.O.S. and get set.

INITIAL MOVEMENT: As an offensive lineman you must be able to explode out of your stance (the get-off); keeping your back parallel to the ground - make sure you're going forward not upward (must keep your offensive linemen from standing up when the ball is snapped). We want our offensive linemen always stepping with the foot that coincides with the type of play called when exploding off the L.O.S.

Center Gun Snap



From Under Center Snap



CENTER'S STANCE AND EXCHANGE FROM UNDER CENTER, GUN or PISTOL: The stance for an offensive center whether a three-point or two point stance should have their weight distributed evenly over the "full bottom" of both feet, with little weight forward with very little weight placed on the football itself.

Under Center Base: Slightly wider than the shoulders with the feet perpendicular to the L.O.S. using only a slight stagger.

Gun Snap: A center should be able to maintain his same stance as he would if under center the only difference is that the center in gun should drop his tail below parallel so when he snaps the football it keeps the ball down.

Feet: The feet must be parallel as much as possible but never more than 2 to 3-inch stagger.

Shoulders - Back - Tail: Shoulders must stay square to the L.O.S. with the back parallel to the ground if quarterback is under center but, if in gun the center can drop his tail below parallel to keep the ball snapped at the belt buckle of the quarterback.

Initial Movement: The center should explode out of his stance with his near playside foot when exploding out to block or as it applies to the run blocking scheme. **DO NOT ANTICIPATE THE SNAP COUNT.** Snapping the ball early penalizes the rest of the offensive linemen by giving the defense an advantage. Snap the ball on the proper command.

Position of the Ball: The ball should be placed slightly to the right eye and forward of the center's head. Extending the ball in front of you will give you better cut-off angles if snapped with the quarterback under center, if snapping to a quarterback who is in gun or pistol depth the center now can drop his tail which in turn moves the ball back instead of forward.

The Grip: The football is placed so that the laces are facing up. Grip the ball by placing your right thumb between the second and third lace nearest the front end of the ball. The fingers and palm of the hand will grip the ball on the side to have complete control of the ball. The arm should be extended with your wrist straight. NEVER allow your arm to be bent, as this will cause a bad snap.



Effecting the Snap: Snap the ball by turning the wrist one-quarter turn without bending your elbows. This should be one quick movement and is a lifting action. If QB is under center Slap the ball against the quarterback's hand. The quarterback should take the ball from you - NEVER throw the ball to the quarterback. Snapping and stepping with the proper foot should be one of continuous movement. The Center must be the quarterback of the offensive line. The center is responsible for making calls recognizing defensive fronts and alerting the rest of the offensive line to all changes. The center must have a clear understanding of the concept of plays used in the offense. The center must make calls loud and clear!

Effecting the Snap When QB is in a Gun Set: The ball should be placed slightly to the right eye and forward of the center's head, grasping the football is if throwing it. When the center brings the ball back, he will slap the inside of his right thigh if right-handed, this will keep the ball from be snapped to high and will keep the snap of the ball at the belt buckle of the center.

ALIGNMENT AND SPLITS - "THE LITTLE THINGS" make the difference. For an offense line to be successful with its plays, they need to play smart. Understanding splits as it applies to the inside run and outside run becomes an important factor. Offensive linemen need to understand that a wider split helps the inside game and, in some instances, the passing game which will be addressed later in this manual and a tighter split benefits the outside game (helps restrict the defense). Certain plays that require combination blocks by two adjoining linemen must have a sense about themselves when working together.

OFFENSIVE LINE CONCEPTS

To be fundamentally tough and sound, each offensive lineman must know what is required of him and how to master these requirements. Descriptive words can help this process which you will find later in this manual. Blocking can be developed to a greater degree than any other phase of football because it is the most un-natural task. It requires patience and many hours of "hard work" there are many things to learn.

The more techniques you can learn and master, the easier it will be to cope with various situations. Repetition must be accepted as a way of life for an offensive lineman, success can only be brought about with tremendous confidence in one's ability. Concentration, self-discipline, communication, and the willingness to pay the price are part of being a respected offensive lineman.



Determined, intelligent, and aggressive blocking is an indispensable quality of a great football team, from both a technical and psychological standpoint. It is difficult for a team, to have outstanding morale, confidence, and enthusiasm when it lacks the ability to sustain a great ground game or provide adequate protection for the passer. As an offensive line coach, you must reinforce daily to your players the importance of controlling the football. An important goal for any football team is that whenever you start the game with the football, you must make a first down.



Whether in a two point or three-point stance always have your linemen focus their eyes to the top of the jersey number of the down defender. Always look to punch up from low to high and through the top of the defender's jersey numbers.

THE STANCE - GUARDS / TACKLES- I believe that a good stance no matter what level of football you are coaching is basic to sound execution. The stance you are teaching must directly relate to the plays and style of your offensive approach. Without a good stance, your offensive line will be unable to execute their assignments and techniques properly. When I teach the three-point stance I instruct that the weight basically be distributed over the inside of the feet with as little weight on the down hand as possible. It is extremely important that you be consistent with your stance - be able to make all necessary movements from the same stance. Your run stance must look like your passing stance. Defensive players are always "alert" for anyone "tipping" their intentions by changing their stance.

NOTE: Something to consider when working in combo is to allow the offensive line to alter their stance only in short yardage, goal line, or obvious passing situations.



Base: - Shoulder width but never wider. (If the base is too wide, it tends to cause you to false step or to overextend the base on the snap of the ball).

Feet: - "Toes" pointing slightly out - to get to this position you need to emphasize "heels" slightly turned in. This position will force your power through the inside of the knee to the "balls" of your feet. NEVER allow the back heel on the staggered foot to come off the ground more than 1/2 inch. This is important for maximum traction on get-off.

Stagger: - Stagger the feet so that there is a 2 to 3-inch relationship between the up foot and the back foot. Never more than a heel to toe relationship. The stagger relationship is geared to the right and left-handed stance. The offensive linemen playing on the right side of the center will play from a right-handed stance and those playing on the left side will play from a left-handed stance. The purpose for the right and left-handed stance helps to keep the zone steps uniform and to help with our drop back pass protection.

Elbows and Hands: Elbows resting slightly above the knee or off to the side. The hands should be relaxed and not forming a fist, this helps in their get-off (don't be tense).

Shoulders - Back - Tail: You want your shoulders square to the L.O.S. with the back flat or parallel to the ground. The tail should be an extension of the back and NOT in a squatted or drooping position.

Head and Neck: You want the head and neck to be an extension to shoulders, back, and tail. You want the neck to be in a semi-bowed position but not in a "bulled - neck" position that forces the tail to drop to far.

You must make a statement to your opponents, that indeed, we can move the football on them. Make a psychological statement as well as a physical one.

The difference between a great blocker and a fair one is the fractional time between contact and the follow through. To emphasize finishing your block it must be constantly repeated and reinforced daily. Effective line play begins when the offensive lineman sets himself on the L.O.S. Upon hearing the play called by the quarterback, start to visualize your assignment and possible adjustments or calls at the line of scrimmage. Keep the snap count continually in mind. If an offensive lineman is slow getting off on the snap count for any reason, he can expect to get beat. It is impossible to be aggressive when you are uncertain. The following phrases and words help me describe technique.

Nine Phases of a Proper Base Block: (one - on - one)

1. Short first position step, also called base step. (First step ties)
2. Second step must be an explosive up field base step. (Second step wins)
3. Low shoulder level. (pad control)
4. Good punch.
5. Good arm extension.
6. Strike a blow.
7. Wide base.
8. Heels in - toes out. (Push of the arches)
9. Finish.

Deciding What Line Splits to Use

Going back in history in the early 30's and deciding what line splits to use against standing defensive linemen, the offensive linemen needed to work under the extended arms of their opponents to prevent being knocked backward or held off by their opponents' stiff-arm charge. In 1930 two coaches, Robert C. Zuppke and Milton M. Olander from the University of Illinois published Coaching Football, the Illinois System of Offensive Line Attack. In their book they stated: bring the best blockers adjacent to each other for cooperative action. If the offensive linemen are grouped so that the same men always find themselves shoulder to shoulder, a better organized and a more polished attack will result. The team that controls the first yard beyond the line of scrimmage, all other things being equal, should win (p. 168).

In 1932 Bernard F. Oakes, Head Football Coach, Crinnell College, wrote in his book: Football Line Play for Players and Coaches that a compact line contracts the defensive line and vice versa, a widespread line expands the defensive line. In order to have a strong plunging and running attack it is advantageous to have the offensive line well spread. This can be accomplished to a surprising degree by merely having the offensive linemen take a wide stance of the feet. Such a stance also gives the individual linemen a better-balanced base from which to work. It does not restrict the possibilities of his action in using various charges or blocks by cramping him to a narrow-confined space such as he must work in with a tight line.

There are certain advantages presented by spreading the defensive line. The distance between the individual defensive players is increased and thus the offensive linemen have an advantage over the defensive players as the hole designated by the play called is already partially opened for them. Plays going through the line are often stopped by a defensive player who is partially blocked, but who is close enough to reach the runner with his hands and grab him or some part of his uniform. There is less chance of this happening if the individual defensive linemen are spread (Oakes, 1932).

Taking a page from option teams of the past and Coach Mike Leach head coach at Washington State, wide line splits are nothing new to football. It creates running lanes by alignment that puts stress on a defense to now play leverage and in space. In this portion of this manual we will look at three constants, the 1 ft. Split, 2 ft. Split and the 3 ft. Split, as well as the advantages of each. An Advantage of wide line splits would assist zone run lanes and pass blocking assignments because the edge guys are now wider from the QB than they would be. In the beginning a wide line split would be 3 feet and if an offense had no trouble blocking them than you can widen them, if you had trouble then you can tighten the splits down.

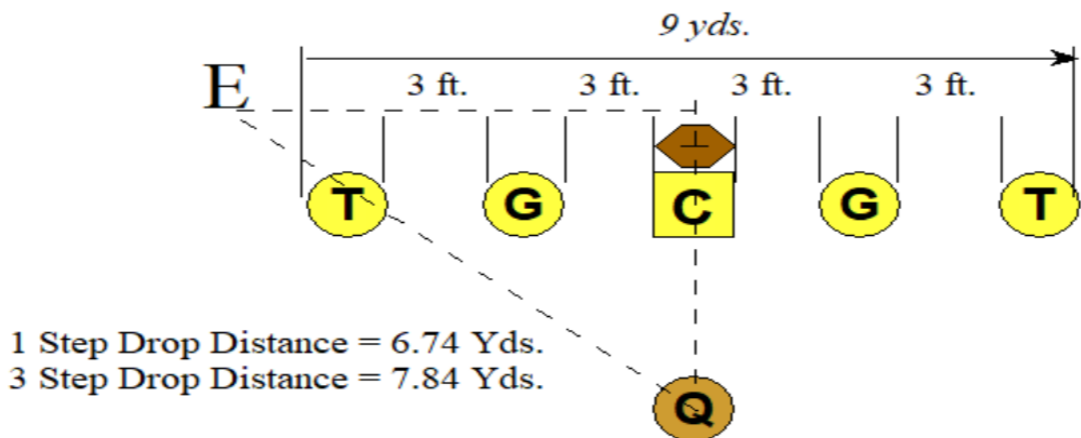
Something that Coach Leach and How Mumme both believed in was the value of one-on-one battles. While slide pass protection and zone blocking have increasingly become the rage, Leach always focused on “man blocking,” where the goal was to win the battle versus the guy across from you. The wide splits were simply that principle taken to its extreme: each lineman split out enough to where they were essentially on an island, as far from the quarterback as possible. On the line, at least, the goal was to have as many one-on-one matchups as possible and Coach Leach was confident his guys would win them.

Quarterback is at a depth of 5 Yards

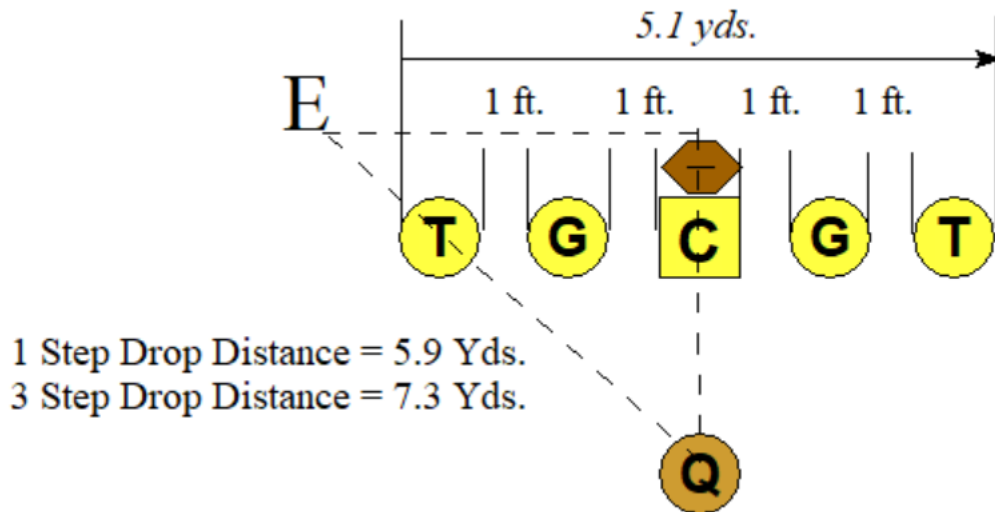
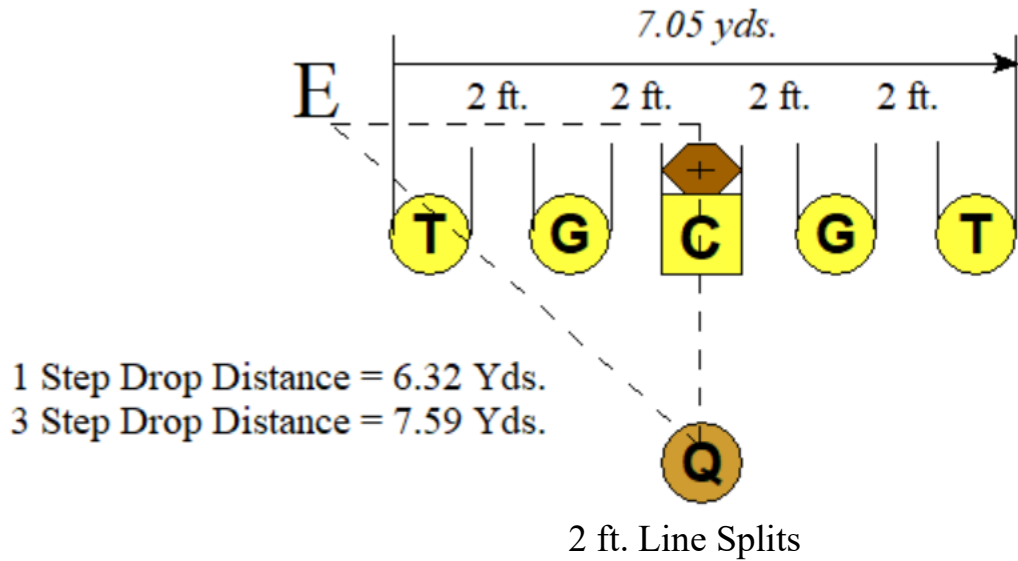
The line splits as presented below, and the defensive end being able to run a 4.8 forty-yard dash as an example. If we allowed the variable of the wide-set tackle and resistance from blocking this idea could take on a great set of variables. So, as you can see you have a definite distance on a one step drop of 5.9 yards, and on a three-step drop of 7.3 yards, that the defensive end would have to travel in order to reach his goal getting to the quarterback.

The solution Leach came up with were large maximum splits, which had the effect of (a) stretching the defensive line from sideline to sideline, lengthening the space they had to rush from and (b) making any extra interior blitzers or guys who wanted to shoot the gaps more obvious. In terms of the passing game, Leach felt that it put his guys at a significant advantage. As he put it:

3 Ft. Line Splits



Whether you use 1 ft., 2ft. or 3 ft. splits they can be adjusted to accommodate many different scenarios possessed by defensive alignments. It has been proven that 2 ft. splits seem to be the happy medium that fit any and all offensive situations both in the run and passing game. It has been my experience that 2 ft. splits accommodate both the inside run and the widening and stretching defensive alignments. 2 ft. splits accommodate your Ace, Deuce and Trey combos. Something you can allow your offensive line to do whenever they are going to be working in tandem or combo is that they can tighten down their splits to assist in accomplishing their combo and tracking linebackers.



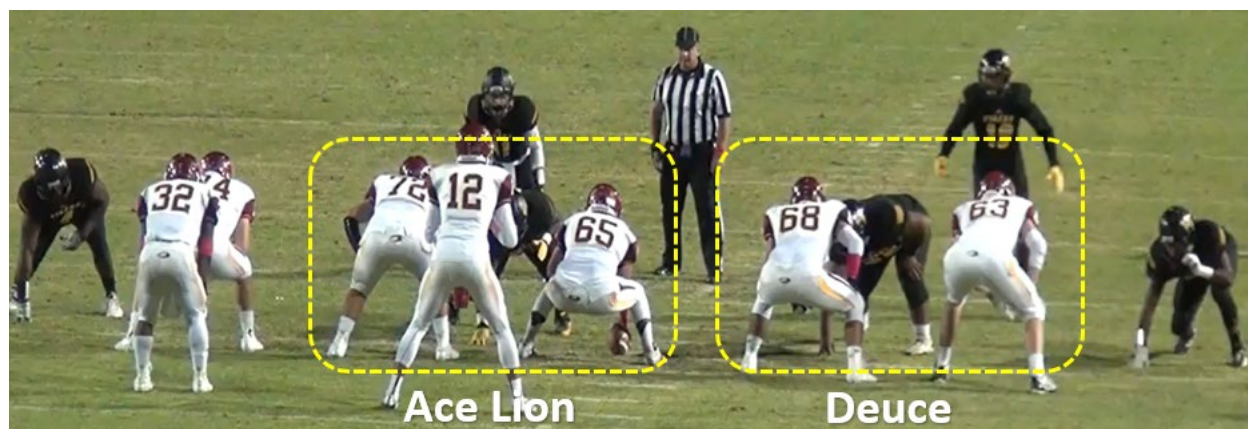
1 Ft. Splits

The advantage of tight splits is easy to see: Linemen are closer to each other which allows your combo a better chance of closing the door on the down defender; there are fewer or at least narrow gaps between the two adjacent linemen when using 1-foot splits and the line is constricted to keep defenders away from outside runs and quick outside throws.



As you can see in the above picture the offensive line from Tackle to Tackle are either foot to foot or using a 1-foot split.

Remember depending upon your approach whenever two adjacent linemen are going to be working on a combo together, they can tighten their splits to assist in closing the door to the down defender.



Chapter 5

Implementing the Stance

The beginning of every great football play starts with a great stance. It is essential for the man or zone schemes that offensive linemen need to become comfortable in their stance and have the ability to move in and out of it quickly and easily. To develop this, the athlete should go through a variety of Stance and Start drills daily in practice

Zone or man an offensive lineman's stance typically utilizes a base that puts the feet slightly wider than shoulder width apart with either foot staggered back slightly. The stagger typically correlates with the down hand and is in heel-to-toe or instep-to-toe relationship. The variance depends on the coach's philosophy. Some coaches want their lineman to the right of the ball to put the right hand down, and those on the left side to put their left hand down. Some like a deeper stagger. Others allow the athlete to start where they are more comfortable and may even teach a balanced stance.

In the three-point stance, the key is balance. The athlete's body weight should be evenly distributed between the feet and the front hand. This will help to reduce the occurrence of false stepping and allow for more stability through initial movement.

Once the feet are set the linemen will lean forward slightly, turning the toes slightly in which will ensure that they keep their backs flat and parallel to the ground. Once the back is flat the linemen will drop the appropriate hand, slightly offset from their body's mid-line, they will place all five fingers on the ground. The linemen will shift their weight forward slightly to achieve even weight distribution at each point of contact with the ground. The linemen will keep their offhand outside the knee in a loaded position ready to strike the opponent and will keep their knees over their toes and in line with their hips, this helps to keep proper balance and allows for more power when exploding out on the snap of the ball. You should have your linemen eyes focused at the top of the defender's jersey numbers while maintaining the ability to see the defense and the field in front of him.



The Two Point Provides Balance and Vision

In the two-point stance, the feet will be set in the same manner; however, the lineman will keep both hands off the ground and in the loaded position. In this stance, your linemen will maintain a ski-slope in the back, again with their head up and their eyes yes focused on the top of the jersey number of the down defender. In this position the linemen need to ensure that their chest and shoulders are held in a proud position. Again, weight will be shifted slightly forward, and will assist in keeping their shoulders in line with their knees and ankles. In both stances your linemen will transfer their body weight to the insteps of their feet with their heels slightly off the ground. This enables the lineman to move quickly in both directions and helps to ensure greater balance.

Coaching the Two Point Stance Advantages: Balance and Vision

A 2-point stance affords better vision and balance for an offensive lineman as his head is upright and able to see how the defense is lining up and/or moving around. It's harder for an offensive lineman to see what's in front of him when he's in a 3-point stance as the head naturally wants to look down.

An offensive lineman can move his alignment out wider or tighten down because his hand isn't on the ground. This is beneficial for offenses that check or change their plays once everyone is set. Also allows for realignment if the defense changes their front.



2-Point Stance Advantages: Balance and Vision

A 2-point stance makes it easier for linemen that might not be as flexible (particularly in the hips) to get down into a stance. This allows for an offensive lineman to theoretically get his hands out and on a defender quicker as they are on his thighs pre-snap as opposed to having one hand on the ground.

Most Offenses that are primarily pass oriented typically have their offensive linemen go out of a 2-point stance as it makes it easier for them to begin their pass protection as soon as the ball is snapped by ensuring their head is back and hands are ready to punch the defender.

It has been determined that many linemen say that they are better able to hear the Quarterback's cadence when they are in a 2-point stance because their head is up.

Easier for linemen to communicate with each other and makes it easier to reach and track a wider aligned defender.



A term I use and one I picked up from Les Steckel's when he coached for Denver Broncos is "THE FIRST STEP TIES, THE SECOND STEP WINS" it's that second step that helps the finish. Keep your feet alive, never compromise your base by allowing your feet to come together or stop moving.



3-Point Stance Advantages: Balance and Power

In the three-point stance, the key is balance. The offensive lineman's body weight should be evenly distributed between the feet and the front hand. This will help to reduce the occurrence of false stepping and allow for more stability through initial movement. Before the ball is snapped, a 3-point stance gets the offensive lineman's pad level down or slightly lower than the defensive player across from him.

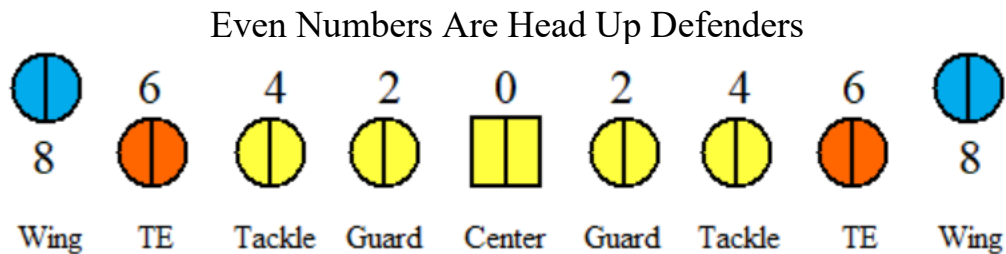
Most teams who build their offensive approach primarily around the running game will have their linemen go out of a 3-point stance as it gets them better prepared to "explode" off the ball once its snapped.

The three point stance provides less of a chance an offensive lineman to "false step" once the ball is snapped as weight displacement is almost always going to be the same out of a 3-point stance and affords better pre-snap loading of hip, knee and ankle angles in order to explode and move a defender more easily than a 2-point stance.

Understanding Defensive Alignment by the Numbers

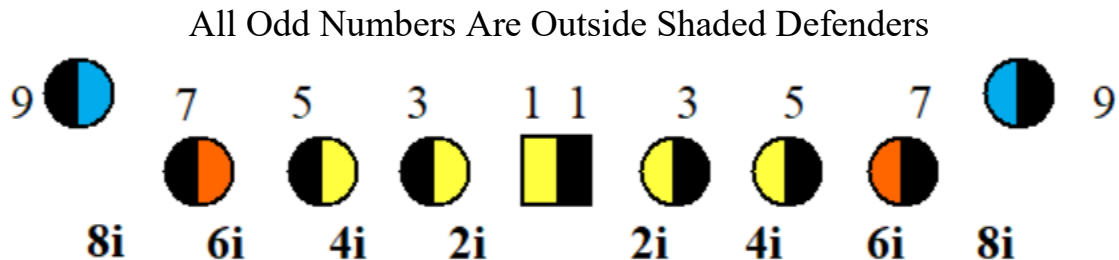
I have added defensive alignment terms and illustrations which will provide you information needed when discussing defender alignments vs your offensive formations and schemes. Anytime a defender aligns head-up against one of your offensive linemen he will be known as an even numbered defender. Whenever we talk about a outside shaded defender, he will be identified by using an odd number and any inside shaded defender as an 2i, 4i or 6i shade.

The importance for having your offensive line understanding defender alignments is because, it will make it easier when discussing strategy, assignment responsibility, and gameday adjustments on the sideline when your offensive line comes off the field.



- "0" Technique: Head up alignment on the Center.
- "2" Technique: Head up alignment on the offensive Guard.
- "4" Technique: Head up alignment on the offensive Tackle.
- "6" Technique: Head up alignment on the Tight End.
- "8" Technique: Head up alignment on the Wing your side.

When discussing shaded defenders, the base alignment will be the inside foot of the defender splitting the midline of his offensive alignment. Whenever talking about a wide alignment it will be the inside foot to outside foot of the offensive personnel. When we talk about a ghost alignment it will be a defender outside on air, usually to an openside.

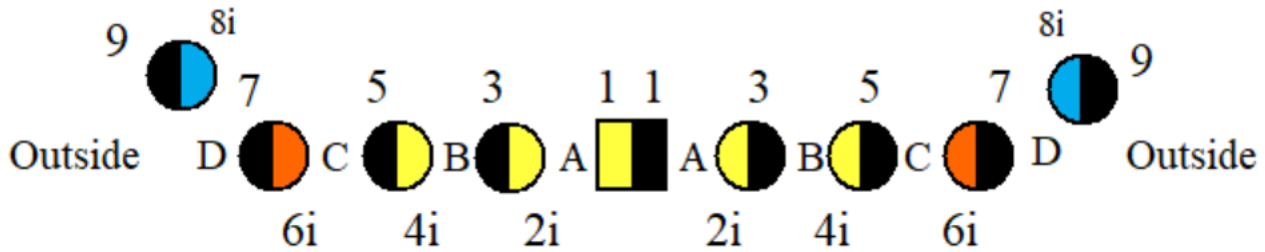


All I's Are Inside Shaded Defenders

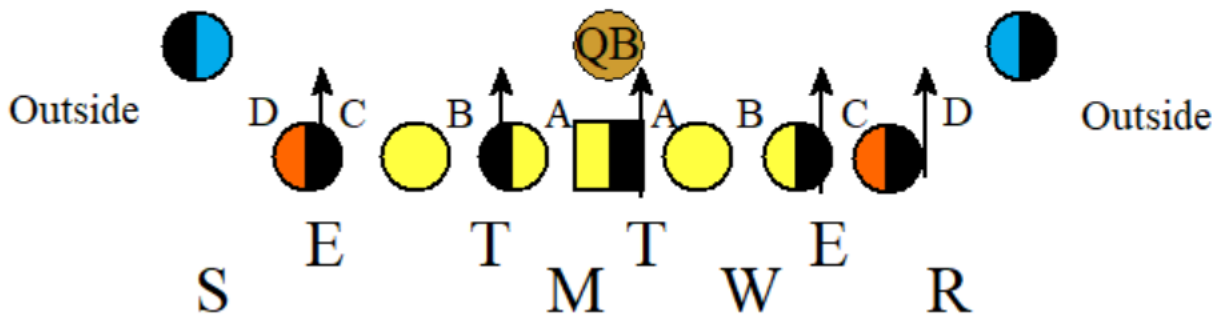
- "1" Technique: Shade alignment on the Center.
- "2i" Technique: Inside Shaded alignment on the offensive Guard.

- "3" Technique: Outside shaded alignment on the offensive Guard.
- "4i" Technique: Inside shaded alignment on the offensive Tackle.
- "5" Technique: Outside shaded alignment on an offensive Tackle.
- "6i" Technique: Inside shaded alignment on a Tight End.
- "7" Technique: Outside Shaded alignment on the Tight End.
- "8i" Technique: Inside shaded alignment on a Wing your side.
- "9" Technique: Outside shaded alignment on a Wing your side.

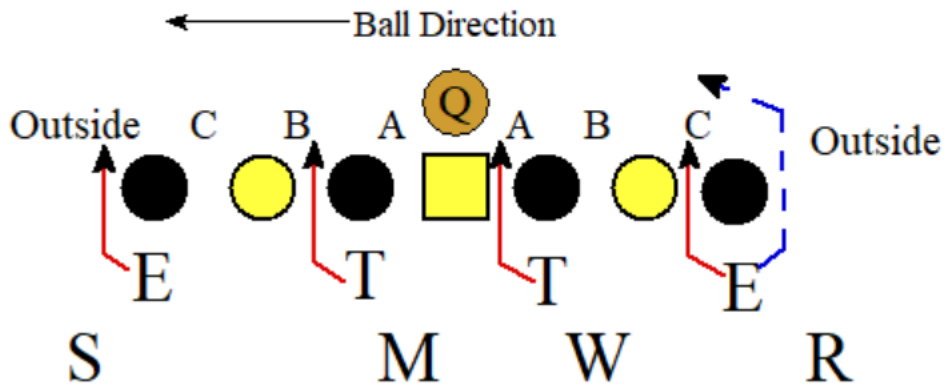
Any Odd or "I" Defender Is a Gap Control Defender



The information above will describe gap responsibilities and how you name the area between each offensive blocker. Whenever a defender takes up a shade on an offensive blocker, he has for the most part taken up a gap responsibility. An example of this would be a 3-technique aligned on the outside shade of a guard becomes a "B" gap defender. Any defender aligned on the outside shade of the tight end or is aligned as a ghost nine technique has what we call outside responsibility, this normally is contain responsibility.

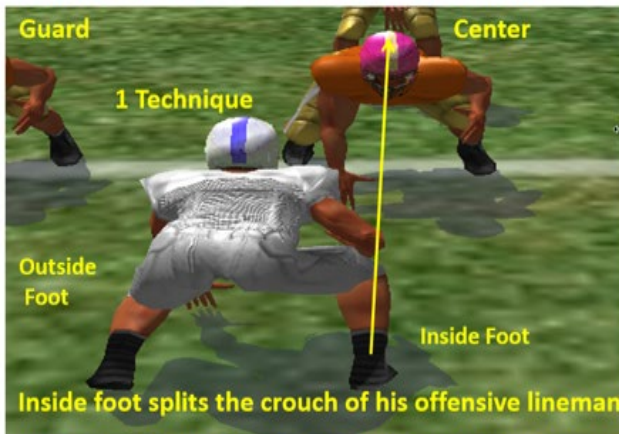


Whenever a defender is aligned head-up in either a 0, 2, 4, 6, or 8 alignment he is considered in a read technique. Normally his area of responsibility will be dictated by the direction the play is going.

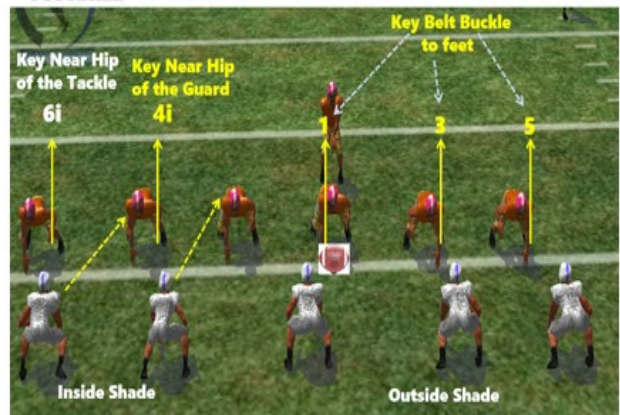


Understanding defensive alignments and the potential responsibility of the down defender is very important for an offensive lineman

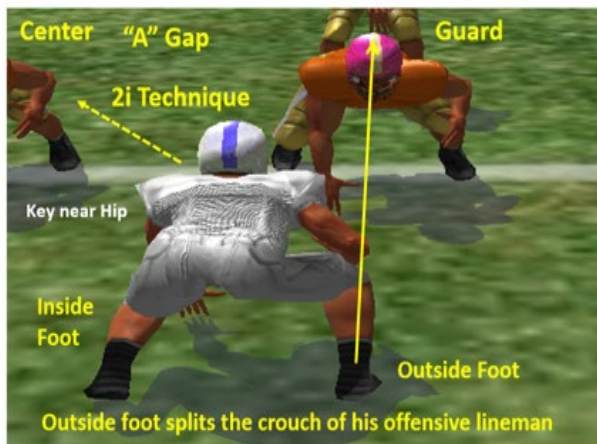
Outside Shaded Defenders



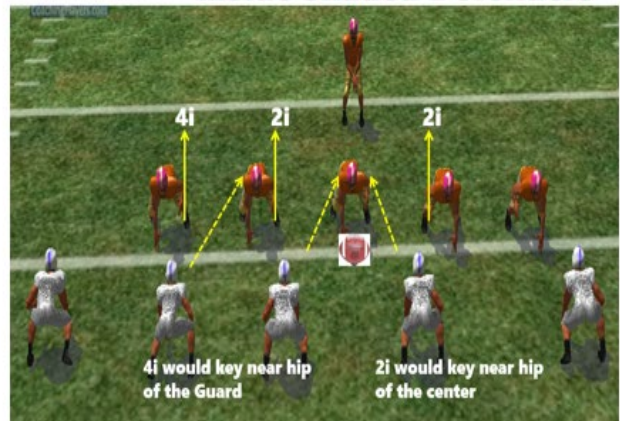
DL: Keys and Reads For Outside Shaded Defenders



Inside Shaded Defenders and Alignments



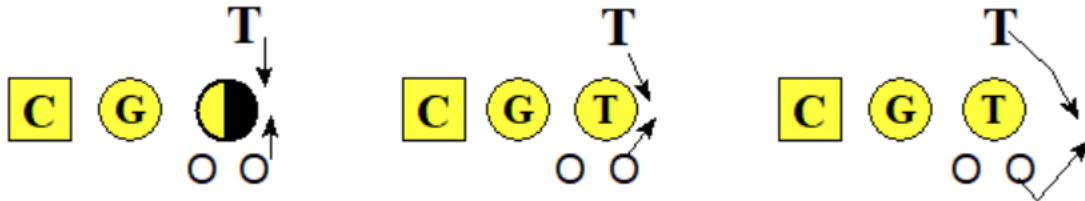
DL: Keys and Reads For Inside Shaded Defenders



Chapter 6

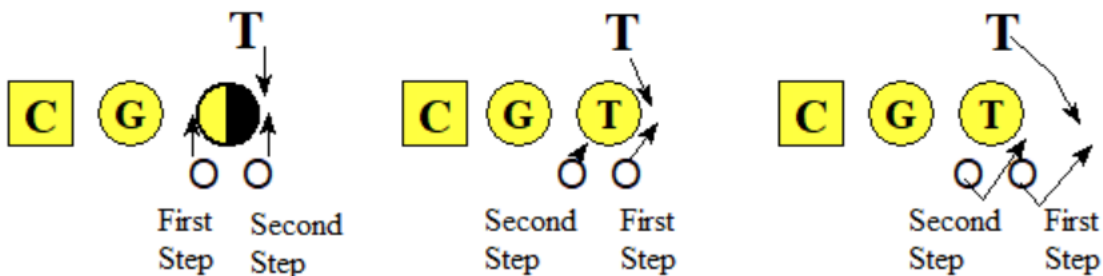
Implementing the Base Block

The Base Block - The "BREAD and BUTTER" block in most teams running game. This technique will be used by offensive linemen when blocking at the point of attack or in a single block versus a down, gap, or walked up defender. When base alert is called our offensive linemen will have the option of blocking the defender according to his near ear rule and taking him in the direction called for by type of play being ran. The type of movement desired is to blow the defender straight back off the L.O.S. or at least get movement that takes a defender back and away from the play called.

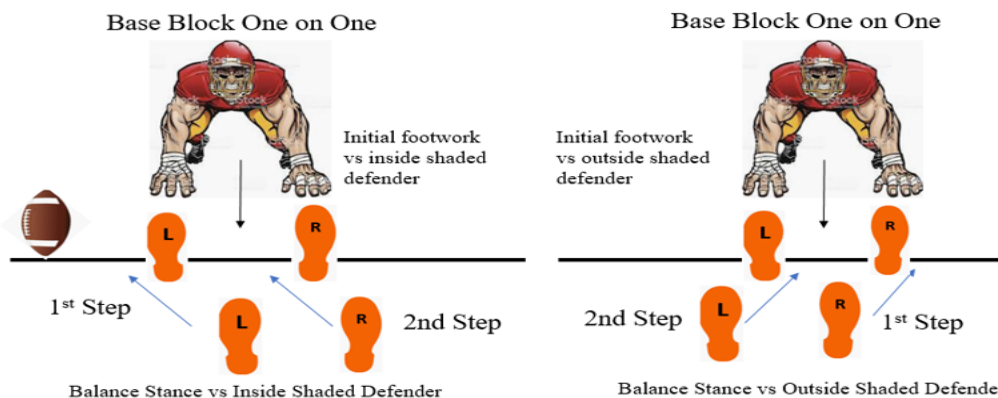


Landmarks: On each running play, our offensive line will be given a landmark which is an aiming point for their initial step and punch. This landmark or aiming point is the near ear on a down defender for the inside running game and the outside jersey number and hip for the outside running game in order to give them the leverage to force the defender away from the point of attack. In running the inside zone (BEND, DIVES, TRAPS, and COUNTERS) we ask that our offensive linemen always keep their shoulders parallel to the L.O.S., we don't want to open any doors that the defender can run through. We want to force the defender to take a side allowing the back to option his run off the offensive lineman's block, while reading the defenders path. This is very important in the approach part of the base block.

The First Step Ties the Second Step Wins



Approach: Must be able to explode off the L.O.S. on the correct snap count. This is accomplished by first taking a correct position step with the near foot or playside foot and exploding or rolling off the takeoff foot. As our offensive linemen take their base step or position step, it is important to work to get a proper base with their feet shoulder width apart. As the offensive line explodes out of their stances it is important that they always keep their backs parallel and their shoulders square to the defender (don't open doors). This will aid in our offensive lines ability to get under the defender's pads. The point of attack for our linemen is to punch up and through the top of the jersey number of their down defender this will assist in rolling their hips through the block.



As your offensive linemen take their first step versus a base block on an inside or outside shaded defender you are looking to punch two hands to two numbers on the down defender. Depending what type of play is called for any inside run your helmet placement would be to the near ear of the down defender.

Man Blocking and Rules for Gap, Down, Backer

Installing man rule blocking schemes have been around for many years and widely used due to the relatively easy way to teach this type of blocking scheme. The Gap, Down, Backer approach is simply on your inside release if anyone crosses your face block him. Anytime we pull our guards it can create a single down block.

Gap, Down, Backer pertains to a blocking scheme using a man rule scheme by the offensive line when created when pulling guards and tackles. The meaning of Gap, Down, Backer simple means to block the first defender to your inside whether he is aligned in a gap, aligned head-up on next lineman inside or no lineman aligned in either of the previous rules of gap, down thus, taking your path inside to the linebacker (Gap, Down, Backer).

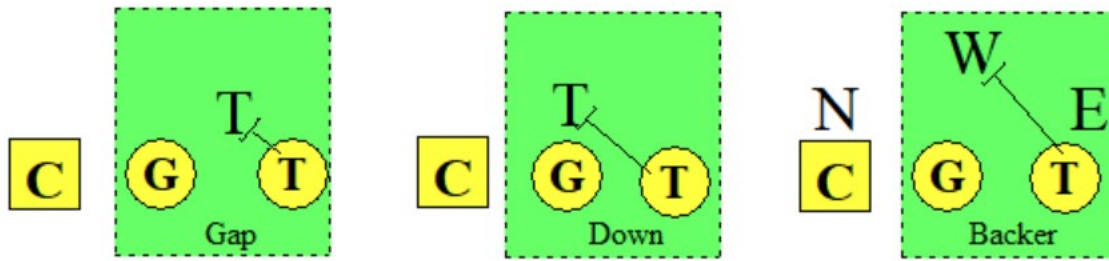
Gap: Indicates a down defender aligned in the gap on your inside and between to adjacent offensive lineman.

Down: Means that there is no defender aligned inside in the gap but aligned on the next offensive lineman inside.

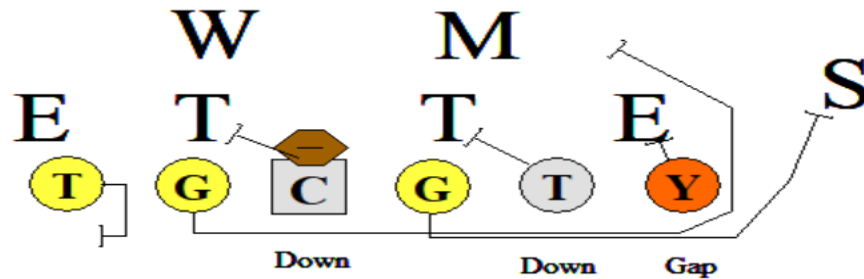
Backer: On the inside release you have no gap or head-up defender inside, but you have a Linebacker located at the second level.

What gap down backer means on your inside release is simply you have the first defender inside whether he is aligned in the gap, head-up on the next offensive lineman inside or with no one inside but a linebacker at the second level.

Creating angles for man rule blocking can be facilitated by backing your offensive linemen back off the ball. For teams that like to create greater blocking angles and to assist in pulling a general rule like the picture below demonstrates is to have your linemen as an alignment landmark would be to put their helmet on the hip of the center.



Installing man rule blocking schemes have been around for many years and widely used due, to the relatively easy way to teach this type of blocking scheme. The Gap, Down, Backer approach is simply on your inside release if anyone crosses your face block him.



What gap down backer means on your inside release is simply you have the first defender inside whether he is aligned in the gap, head-up on the next offensive lineman inside or with no one inside but a linebacker at the second level.

Contact: First contact must be with a proper position step and punch, followed by keeping the feet alive and driving through and up through the defender. Upon making contact, you will want the blocker to drive the palms of his hands up into the defender's chest with a lifting type action. Once the punch has been delivered the offensive line must be able to turn their thumbs up which drops the elbows and facilitates the drive and finish. By turning the thumbs up after the punch this will aid the blocker in controlling the defenders shoulder pads, peck plates and getting the roll-of-the-hips into the block and to control the defender. It is important that the power producing angles remain in the legs and that the shoulders remain higher than the hips. The blocker must now arch his back and get his feet underneath him.



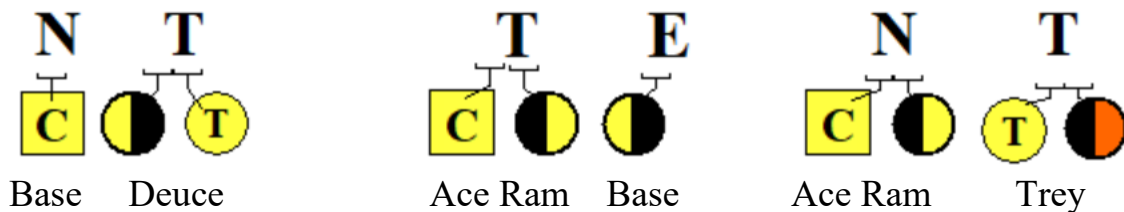
To assist man blocking rules the deeper the linemen set themselves back off the L.O.S. the great angles that they have when using man blocking schemes

Chapter 7

Offensive Combination Blocks & Techniques

Zone blocking initially starts out as a combo or double team at the point of attack on the down defensive linemen, but the advantage of it is that one of the offensive linemen will leave to attack the linebacker while one stays to take over the defensive lineman. The key is for the two offensive linemen working in unison to combo a defensive lineman and track who and when one of them will leave to block the linebacker (let the linebacker come to you).

The following calls are the different COMBINATION BLOCKS used between adjacent offensive linemen when installing the running game.



Contact: First contact must be with a proper position step and punch, followed by keeping his feet alive and driving through and up through the defender. Upon making contact, we want the blocker to drive the palms of his hands up into the defender's chest with a lifting type action. Once the punch has been delivered our offensive line must be able to turn their thumbs up which drops the elbows and facilitates the drive and finish. By turning the thumbs up after the punch this will aid the blocker in controlling the defenders shoulder pads and getting the roll-of-the-hips into the block and to control the defender. It is important that the power producing angles remain in the legs and that the shoulders remain higher than the hips. The blocker must now arch his back and get his feet underneath him.

A combination zone block normally consists of a covered lineman pulling an uncovered lineman with him as they track a down defender to a second level defender (linebacker). Zone blocking involves the center, guard, tackle and tight end working in combination to block an area with an emphasis on creating double teams who are aligned on the L.O.S. and tracking linebackers instead of chasing them.

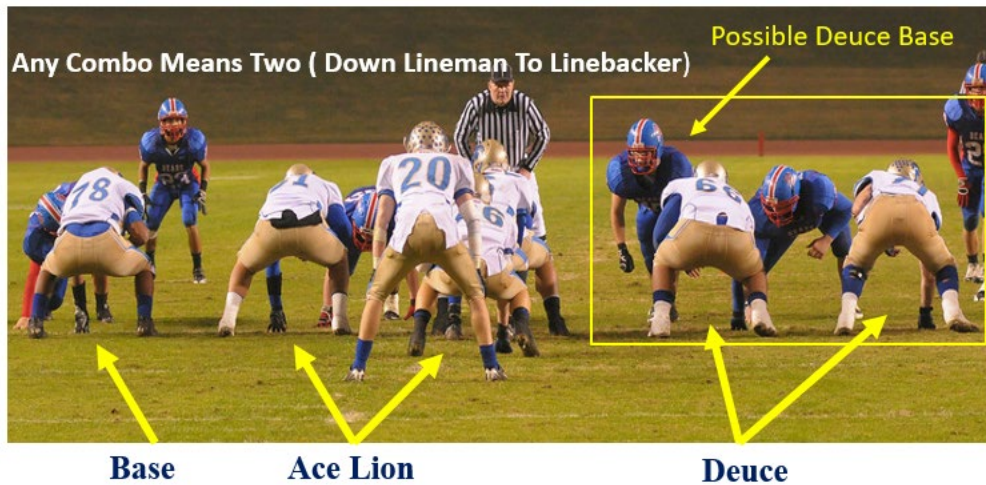
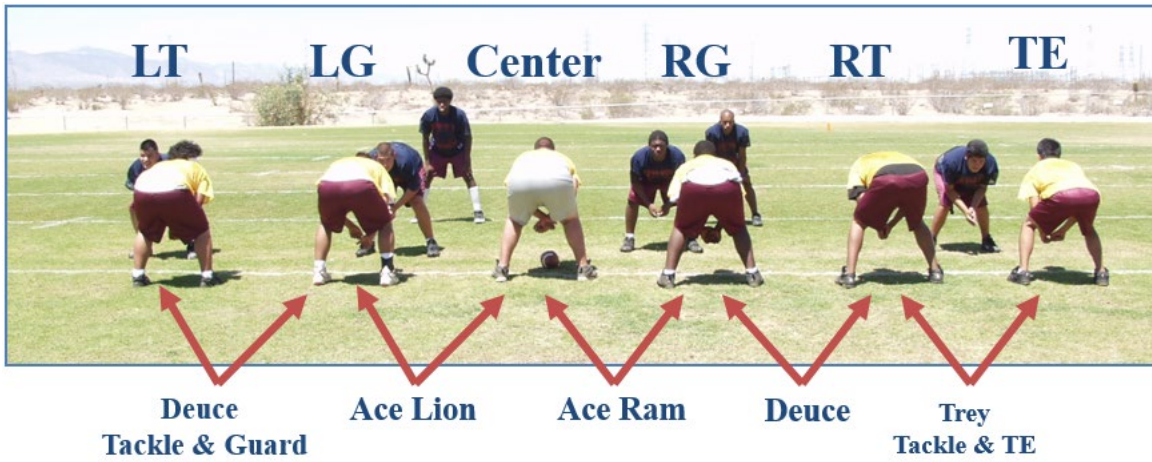


The concept of creating combination blocks is for two adjacent linemen to come off in unison and attack the defensive line to the play side or to the side the ball carrier is going. The advantage, as opposed to man blocking, is that you create a combo which is also known as a double team with two players blocking one defensive lineman while tracking a linebacker. This allows the offensive linemen to be aggressive because he knows he has help.

The following pages will illustrate the use of base blocks as well as combination schemes. Combination blocks are between adjacent linemen. Any combination between the center and a guard is considered an Ace combination and depending which guard you work with will either be a Lion or Ram call. Ram for the right guard and Lion for the left guard. A combination between the guard and tackle is a Deuce, and any combination between the tackle and tight end is a Trey combination.

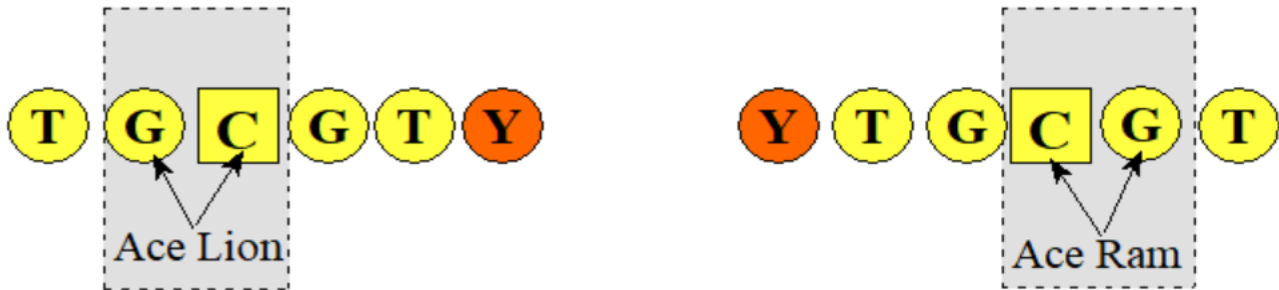
A combination Ace, Deuce, Trey means "two" and the combo will always be between a down defender and a linebacker. A big coaching point when teaching the art of the combo is to see your linebacker. Combination blocks are geared to tracking down defenders to second level linebackers, So, "see you linebacker".

Combination Alert calls Between Two Adjacent Linemen.



Ace Block - Combination alert for the center and guard to work together in running situations. If the Center is working with his right guard, he will alert "Ram" if the Center works with his left guard he will alert "Lion".

Ace Combo Center & Guards



Ace Combo Means See Your Linebacker

Ace Base - Combination between the guard and center, the base call is alerted whenever a linebacker walks up into a position that does not require him to be tracked with an Ace Combo, base calls off the combination. Base puts both the center and guard one on one with their blocking assignment.

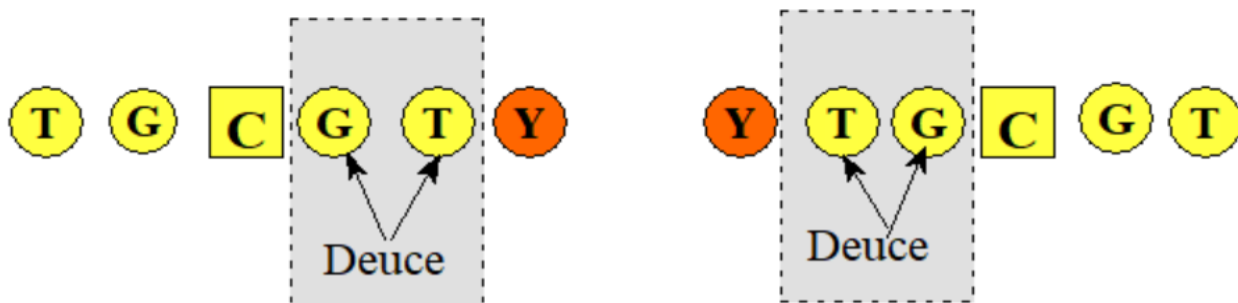
Ace Get Hippo – Ace alerts a center and guard to get into combination with each other and to get hip to hip on their down defender. Get Hippo is automatic to the Ace call and can be used on outside, stretch, vertical and slow rotating zones for the center and guard.

Ace Fast - The Ace Fast is used with the center and guard on plays that go outside, normally with sweeps, tosses and load option plays. The fast combinations are normally used with drop step footwork.

Ace Slow - The Ace Slow combination block requires the L-step footwork and is used on ISO, speed, bounce, and inside veer option plays. Slow combinations require that the combination block slowly rotates on the down defender while tracking their assigned linebacker.

Deuce Block - A combination block between a guard and tackle.

Deuce Combo Between a Guard & Tackle



Deuce Means See Your Linebacker

Deuce Base - Once the combination deuce call has been made it alerts the combination to track a down defender to a second level linebacker, if the deuce feels that they can acquire their blocks without the combo then the alert base can be used and now puts the tackle and guard in a one-on-one block.

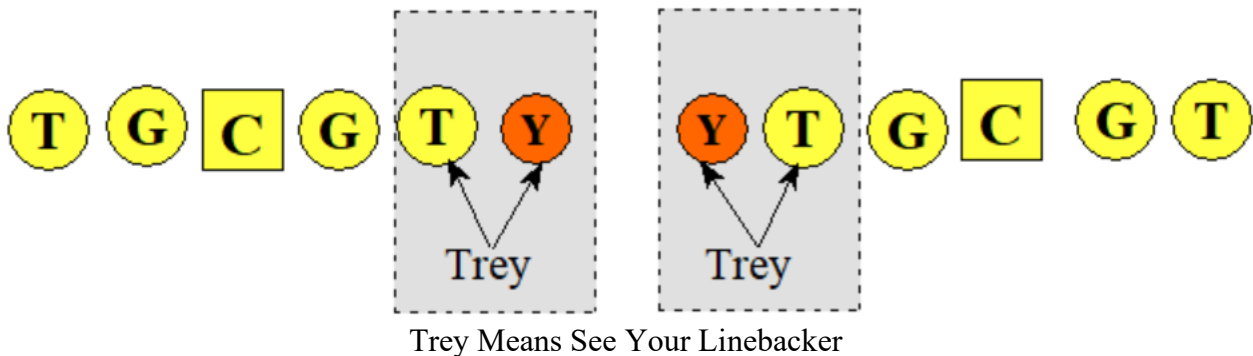
Deuce Get Hippo - A combo block between a guard and tackle that requires an L-step with either a vertical push or slow rotating zone play.

Deuce Fast - Combination block between a guard and tackle that requires a fast come around while looking for a second level linebacker. The footwork required for fast zones is a drop step, crossover and rip through technique.

Deuce Slow - Combination block between a guard and tackle. The slow combinations usually apply to plays like ISO, Bounce, and any plays that require either combos or base blocks to rotate slowly away from the point of attack.

Trey Block - Combination block between a tackle and tight end.

Trey Combo Block Between a Tackle & Tight End



Trey Base - Trey base can be alerted by either the tackle or tight end if they feel they can handle their combination block by themselves. Example would be when a linebacker walks up on the LOS and the tackle alerts a base call that puts him one-on-one with the linebacker and the defensive end one-on-one with the defensive end.

Trey Get Hippo - Whenever a tackle and tight end work with each other on vertical pushes or slow rotating zone schemes they should incorporate the L-step getting hip to hip while tracking a down defender to a second level linebacker.

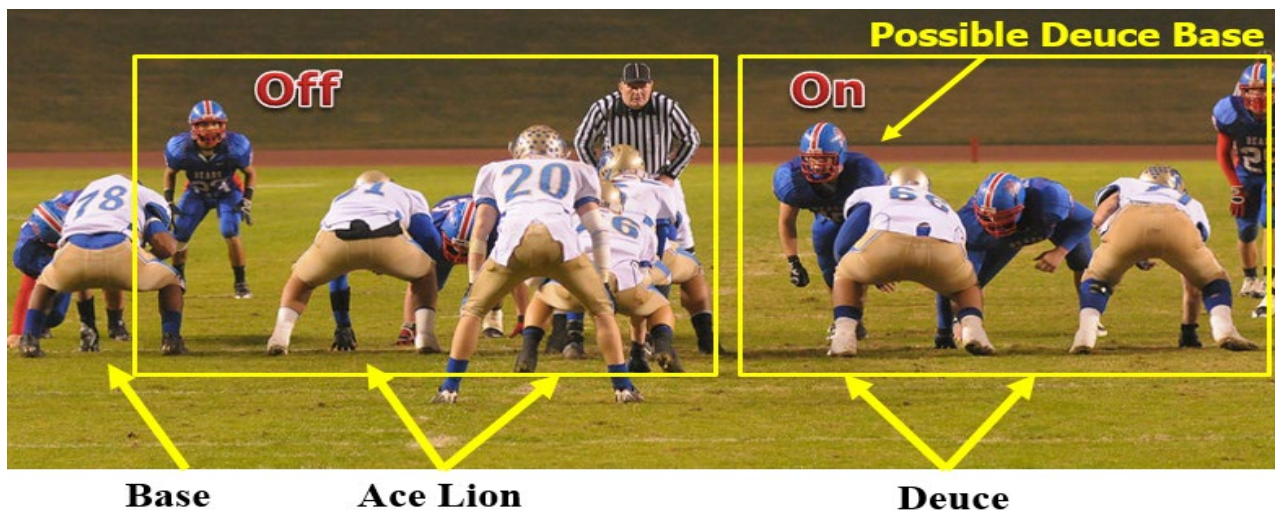
Trey Fast - Combination used by the tight end and tackle on plays that go outside on either toss schemes or stretch zone plays. Trey fast requires the combo between the tackle and tight end to rotate fast because of the flow of the linebackers scrapping to defender the fast-outside action of the running back.

Trey Slow - Combination scheme used by the tackle and tight end that requires them to track a down defender to a backside linebacker. They track the second level defender by rotating the Hippo slowly.

Get Hippo with Your Partner

Combo's Close The Door / Get Hippo

Hippo - Descriptive term used to alert two adjacent linemen working together on a combo block to get hip-to-hip on either a vertical push or slow rotating zone scheme. Hippo requires the use of the L-step by both linemen.



Ace, Deuce and Trey Fold Schemes - JACK & JILL

As you read through the following pages sometimes a change in a blocking scheme may be required and a fold scheme used. Our fold schemes are known as Jack and Jill and the Jack and Jill scheme can be used with any combination block called. If Jill is alerted it means the inside blocker on the combo blocks out and the outside blocker comes around. If a Jack alert is used it means the outside blocker is down inside first with the inside blocker coming around and outside.

(Fold - it) blocking schemes are an exchange of assignments between two offensive linemen at or away from the point of attack. The offensive linemen responsible for blocking back from the playside will always go first in this scheme. The lineman blocking back will use an ANGLE DRIVE TECHNIQUE - Drop step with your near foot towards the hip to block his near number. This will place the offensive lineman approximately in the middle of the numbers or through the defenders playside ear. Upon contacting the "nose" of the helmet, whip your arms and use all the same elements of a base block. The lineman stepping around will use a drop step with his near foot allowing the first man to cross his face. He will then explode up through the hole to the second level and block the linebacker's play side number.

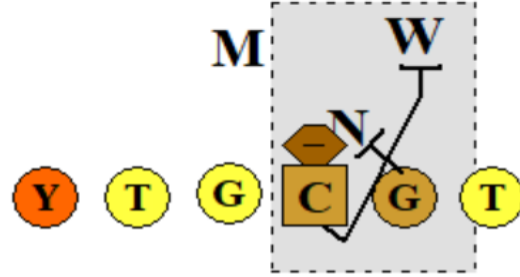
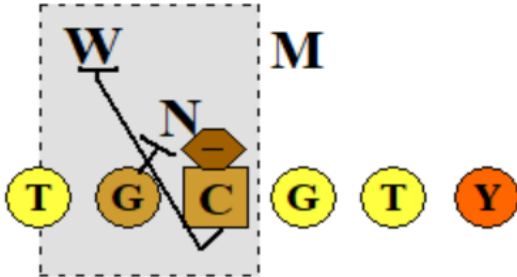
ACE JACK / JILL - Exchange between CENTER and GUARD. This call can be made by either the center or guard and will depend upon the play that is being run. The Center will block back first with the guard stepping around and up through the hole to the second level.

Ace Lion Jack

Center and Left Guard

Ace Ram Jack

Center and Right Guard

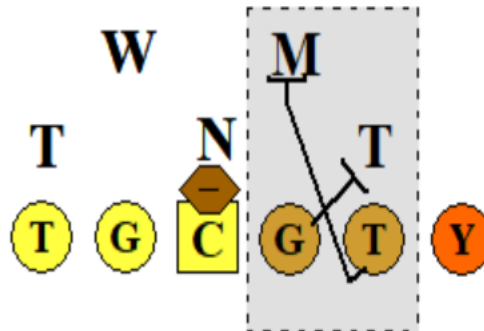
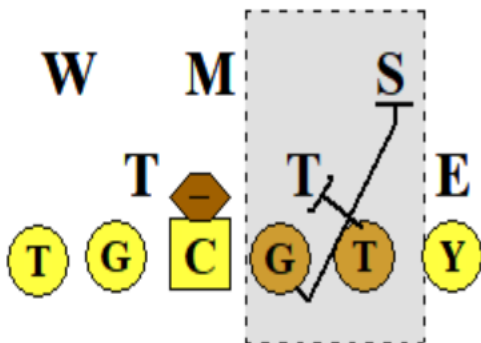


Lineman responsible for the fold should always stay as tight as possible with his dropstep when working off the backside of the fold. Lineman responsible for the dropstep should always drop the foot nearest the combo partner.

DUECE JACK / JILL - Exchange between the GUARD and TACKLE. This call will basically be made by the tackle when the defender aligns on the inside eye or shoulder in a shade technique. The playside tackle will block back first with the guard stepping around and up through the hole to the second level.

Deuce Jack

Deuce Jill

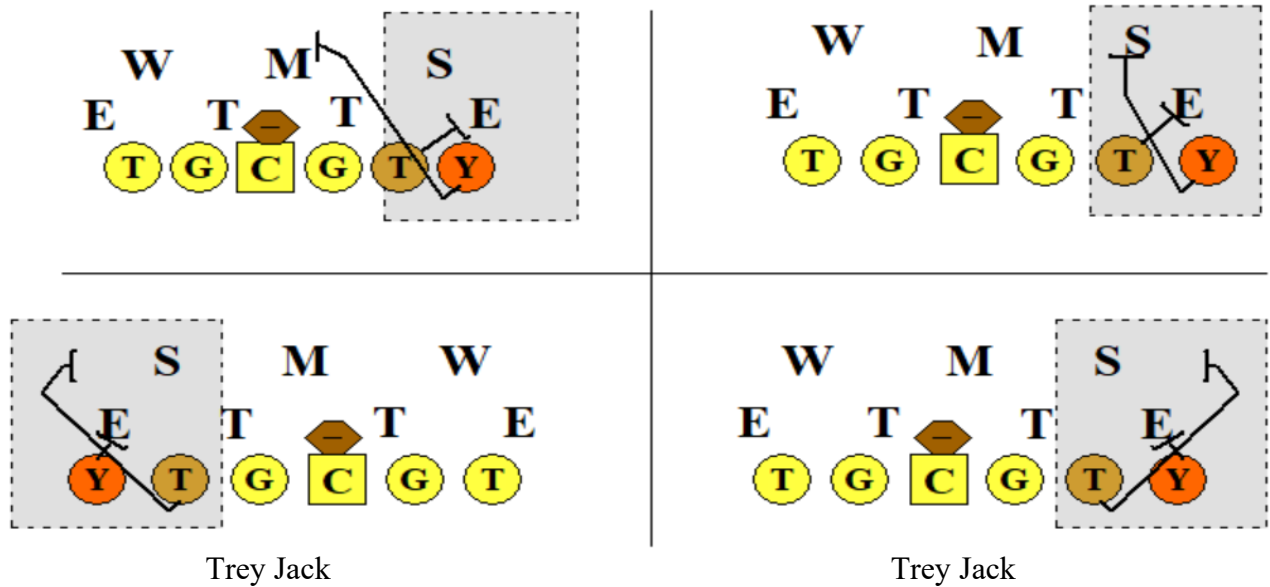


The "JILL" Technique for the lineman coming around is to drop step with their inside foot working as tight as possible to the near hip of the lineman blocking out. "JACK" scheme puts the lineman on the outside of the fold blocking down. With the backside of the fold using a dropstep to come around the down block.

TREY JACK / JILL - Exchange between the TACKLE and TIGHT END. This will basically be made by the Tight End when the defender aligns on the inside eye or shoulder. The Tight End will block back first with the tackle around.

Trey Jill

TreyJill



Trey Jack

Trey Jack

The following definitions and terms when implementing and coaching the offensive line. The definitions and terms listed below will help in our installation of the offense and keep us all on the same page with each other, many different descriptive terms exist but the ones used here will be the most beneficial for our athletes to remember and learn from.

Combination Blocks Explained

Combination blocks can be between any two offensive linemen responsible for blocking two defenders in a specific area. All combo blocks start as a double team on level one - as movement begins either the POST MAN or the DRIVE MAN (outside blocker) will control the defender, allowing the other blocker to come off the block to handle the linebacker. It is important to create movement on level one or at the point of attack before one man leaves to handle the linebacker (have patience while looking for level two).

POSTMAN (Inside Blocker) - You are responsible for stopping penetration and for preventing the defender from "splitting" the initial double team. Step with the near foot using a 30-degree angle step to the defenders near jersey number to insure all the good elements of a base block. Aiming point for both hand and foot placement is the inside number of the defender.

INSIDE BLOCKER - (uncovered offensive linemen). Zone blocking footwork is predicated on the type of play called which will be addressed as you read through the manual. As the inside blocker takes his zone step, it is important to read the movement of the defensive man aligned on him. Use a one hand read if the linebacker stays in front or just behind the offensive blocker. Concentrate on his playside number, look at the linebacker and feel the defensive end. If the offensive blocker feels the defender's near hip coming towards him, explode up and under the defender's chin making sure to stop penetration. Upon making contact, whip your arms and your feet like pistons working to get movement up the field. If the defender has locked - on or is widening with the outside blocker - Punch and Push Off the defender and explode to the 2nd level to block outside or playside breast of the linebacker. **NOTE:** When in a pre-stance alignment read the positions of the defender on the outside blocker. This may give you a feel by his alignment if he is going to come inside or not.

DRIVE MAN (Outside Blocker) - Power step with the inside foot by taking a 30-degree angle step aiming at the playside number of the down defender. The aiming point for hand placement is the play side number. If the defenders playside number starts to disappear inside, punch and push the defender inside and look for the second level with patience, so to allow the second level to come to you (don't open any doors).

OUTSIDE BLOCKER - (Covered offensive lineman). The outside blocker must read the alignment of the defender aligned on him so he can hit the proper landmark and initially create movement on level one. Footwork for the outside blocker is also determined by type of run play called if the defender is aligned head up, he will step with his playside foot aiming his head gear under the chin of the defender. If he is aligned inside-eye or shoulder, you will pivot step with your outside foot to block to the near number of the defender. If the defender loops-out or locks-on, you want the outside blocker to maintain contact and work the defender off the L.O.S. This movement off the L.O.S. is important in Zone Blocking Principles.

If the defender remains inside of you, continue to drive and maintain contact - once you feel contact from the inside blocker now you can block the scrapping linebacker on level 2. If the defender aligned on you that slants inside - PUNCH and PUSH-OFF the defender and explode to the 2nd level to block the playside linebacker. Block the linebacker by exploding up and through his numbers by using a good base block technique. DO NOT allow linebacker to cross your face, you may have to run with him.

Chapter 8

Getting Ready to Install Your Zone Blocking Schemes

Zone blocking is a technique used in modern day football that is a simple and effective scheme for creating lanes for running plays.

In a zone blocking scheme, fleet-footedness and athletic ability trump size as desirable qualities in offensive linemen. Coordination and technique matter more than muscle in implementing a successful scheme because defensive linemen are often double-teamed at the point of attack. In this blocking scheme which takes much from the Veer blocking system, creating movement on the defensive line is more important than opening a specific hole in the defense.

One of the simplest reasons many teams have incorporated zone blocking in their offenses is that zone blocking rules do not change based on the defensive front. In a "man block" system, blockers are paired with defenders according to certain rules to create a running lane. If the defensive front changes, or if the defense stunts or blitzes, the blocking rules may change. This requires learning multiple rules for the same play. Zone blocking uses very consistent rules that do not change according to the defensive front.

Linemen Techniques

When using a running back out of the backfield, zone plays are usually categorized into three types: Inside Zone (IZ), Stretch Zone (SZ) and (OZ) Outside Zone. These types describe the initial landmark of the ball carrier. A common approach is: Inside the tackles for IZ, just inside the last offensive player for the stretch zone (SZ) and just outside the E.M.L.O.S. for Outside Zone (OZ).

For each type of zone there are many different blocking schemes available: - The most basic form asks the offensive linemen to identify whether he is covered or uncovered. If uncovered, he is asked to help play-side on a combo by using wide lateral steps or even bucket steps. The resulting combo then reacts to the movement of the linemen as well as the movement of the linebacker. The initial movement of the combo blocks helps to equalize defensive talent and creates cutback lanes.

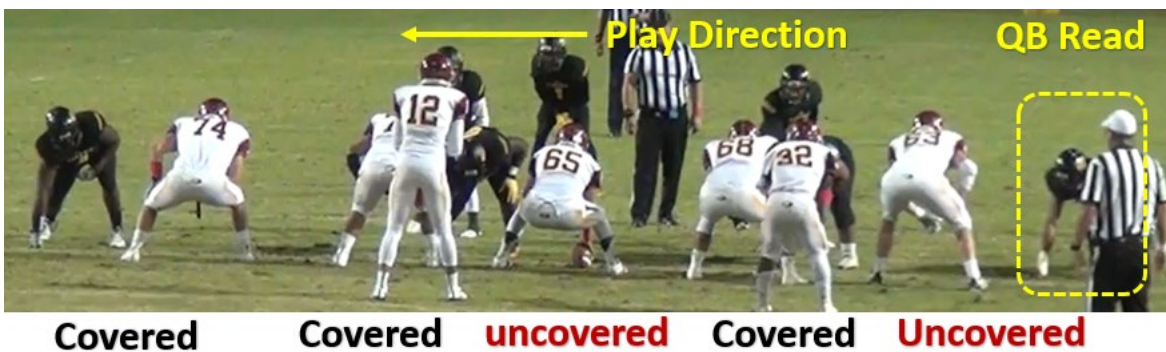
Another scheme asks the offensive linemen to imagine a "railroad track" parallel to the running backs path and block everything they find on their way. This could be a linebacker, but also a slanting defensive lineman from somewhere else. Starting from either inside or outside, some offensive lines always pair two on one and use a fullback to block the remaining defender outside. This makes it necessary for the offensive linemen to use a variety of line-splits and steps:



Covered: This is when a defender is in the blocking zone of an offensive lineman.



Uncovered: This is when there is not a defender within an offensive lineman's blocking zone.



Normally Alert Cals Start from Outside-In

- The outside lineman (tackles or tight end) makes the initial blocking call.
 - If the guard is uncovered, he will make the call to notify the tackle he will be getting blocking help by alerting Deuce.
 - If the tight end is covered, the tackle will determine if he can help with the tight end by alertin Trey.
 - If the center is uncovered, he will determine if he can help with a guard's blocking assignment by alerting Ace Ram or Lion.
- If no help is possible, the covered lineman must block his defender one-on-one by alerting Base

Zone Blocking

When the final rule that allowed for hands and arms in advance of the body in 1985 it opened the door for Zone blocking as we know it today. Zone Blocking took front and center stage with the new rule change that affected how offensive linemen may use their hands and arms which require that a teammate of a runner or a passer legally may block with his shoulders, hands, the outer surface of his arms or any part of his body only if the hands are:

1. In advance of the elbow.
2. Inside the frame of the of the opponent's body with the exception of when the opponent turns his back to the blocker.

3. At or below the shoulder (s) of the blocker and the opponent with the exception of when the opponent squats, ducks or submarines; and
4. The hand (s) shall be open with the palm (s) facing the frame of the opponent or closed or cupped with the palm (s) not facing the opponent.

The use of extended arms and hands with this writer we will call Quick / Draw Punch and Run, which enables an offensive lineman to work for pad control by blocking with extended arms as stated in the N.C.A.A. rule book. Since a great deal of focus is centered around teaching defensive linemen to use quick hands and to develop quick feet, the same idea must be incorporated into this technique taught to the offensive line play (blow delivery). The Quick Draw allows control across the entire area of the defender as long as the hands can work inside the framework of the body. This is done by keeping the feet moving at the same angle as the defender. An offensive lineman needs to utilize to his advantage the natural reaction of movement of the defender; you are not trying to redirect movement but to help it along. The coach needs to incorporate into his teaching progression that for every action there will be a reaction. Coaches must understand movements of defenders as they read and react and run to the football. Quick / Draw Punch and Run allows the offensive line the ability to control different levels of play such as the defensive line level one to second level linebackers. Defenders can be slowed and passed onto other blockers as offensive linemen read the alignment and movement of defenders on the snap of the football.

The philosophy behind Quick Draw / Punch and Run should be directly related to the philosophy of the offense. Since defenses are becoming multifaceted, offensive linemen with the rule changes of 1985 should be able to compensate for size and speed of a defender by using extended arms and hands. The goal here is not to have to redirect size and speed, but to help a defender along when he commits to the offensive lineman's movement. The goal with Zone Blocking is a lineman's ability to get his hands on the defender before he can get his on him.

The most difficult phase of coaching is putting the right player in the right spot at the right time. The key to the selection of an offensive interior lineman is the player's ability to move quickly and to block for the forward pass. A player's size is less important than his skill in these two categories. In general, take the four best interior offensive football players and put the faster two at guards and the slower two at tackles. Blocking for the forward pass is one of the most difficult skills in football.

A combination zone block normally consists of a covered lineman pulling an uncovered lineman with him as they track a down defender to a second level defender (linebacker). Zone blocking involves the center, guard, tackle and tight end working in combination to block an area with an emphasis on creating double teams who are aligned on the L.O.S. and tracking linebackers instead of chasing them.



The concept of creating combination blocks is for two adjacent linemen to come off in unison and attack the defensive line to the play side or to the side the ball carrier is going. The advantage, as

opposed to man blocking, is that you create a combo which is also known as a double team with two players blocking one defensive lineman while tracking a linebacker. This allows the offensive linemen to be aggressive because he knows he has help.

Zone blocking initially starts out as a combo or double team at the point of attack on the down defensive linemen, but the advantage of it is that one of the offensive linemen will leave to attack the linebacker while one stays to take over the defensive lineman. The key is for the two offensive linemen working in unison to combo a defensive lineman and track who and when one of them will leave to block the linebacker (let the linebacker come to you).

Zone schemes are built around two adjacent blockers using a covered & uncovered rule. The general case is to never pull a covered lineman with you thus the uncovered rule applies. A combination zone block normally consists of a covered lineman pulling an uncovered lineman with him as they track a down defender (defensive Lineman) to a second level defender (linebacker). Zone blocking consists of offensive lineman blocking an area instead of a man. The purpose of using the zone blocking scheme is to stop penetration, create movement on level one and seal off a level two or filling linebacker to the call side and backside for cutbacks when possible. Zone blocks initially start out as an inside out double team. As movement begins, either the outside blocker or inside blocker will gain control over the down defender on level one, allowing the other blocker to come off his block to handle the linebacker on level two. In this type of blocking scheme, it is critical to create movement on level one before coming off for the linebacker, track your linebacker don't chase him.

Inside or Vertical Zone

Implementing Inside Zone which is an inside run play predicated on multiple double teams and a vertical push at the line of scrimmage. Inside Zone is best run towards the one technique if presented with an over front or under front. Each lineman will take a six-inch angle-step to their playside gap getting hippo (Hip to Hip) with their partner according to their near ear rule and will read the defenders in front of them, blocking the man to the nearest ear closest to them the combo blocks will push vertical predicated by the alignment of the linebackers behind and near their down defender. If no linebacker shows, the lineman will continue their vertical track looking for any second to third level defender that shows in their area. The ball carrier presses the LOS of scrimmage, usually with an aiming point at the play side guard's outside hip. As the back presses for any open daylight in the defense. When it opens, he attacks the hole. The result, if the ball carrier is patient and has good field vision, is often a large running lane and huge cutback behind over-pursing defenders.

Zone Blocking Principles - Combination Blocks

Zone blocking consists of offensive lineman blocking an area instead of a man. The purpose of using the zone blocking scheme is to stop penetration, create movement on level one and seal off the outside linebacker, level two or filling linebacker to the call side. All Zone Blocks initially start out as an inside out double team. As movement begins, either the OUTSIDE blocker or INSIDE blocker will gain control over the down defender on level one, allowing the other blocker to come off his block to handle the linebacker on level two. In this type of blocking scheme, it is critical to create movement on level one before coming off for the linebacker.

INSIDE BLOCKER - (uncovered offensive linemen). Take a drop step with the playside foot followed by a crossover step aiming for the near hip of the defender aligned on the next offensive

blocker to the playside, this is referred to as a ZONE STEP. As the inside blocker takes this zone step, it is important to read the movement of the defensive man aligned on him. Use a one hand read if the linebacker stays in front or just behind the offensive blocker. Concentrate on his playside number, look at the linebacker and feel the defensive end. If the offensive blocker feels the defender's near hip coming towards him, explode up and under the defender's chin making sure to stop penetration. Upon making contact, whip your arms and your feet like pistons working to get movement up the field. If the defender has locked - on or is widening with the outside blocker - PUNCH and PUSH OFF the defender and explode to the 2 level to block outside or playside breast of the linebacker. NOTE: When in a pre-stance alignment read the positions of the defender on the outside blocker. This may give you a feel by his alignment if he is going to come inside or not. Listen for slug or moby call by outside lineman for possible inside slant by the defender.

OUTSIDE BLOCKER - (Covered offensive lineman). The outside blocker must read the alignment of the defender aligned on him so he can hit the proper landmark and initially create movement on level one. If the defender is aligned outside eye or shoulder the outside blocker will drop step with his near foot and then crossover step with the back foot, ripping the backside arm through and aiming your head gear for the outside breast or number. If the defender is aligned head up, he will step with his playside foot aiming his head gear under the chin of the defender. If he is aligned inside-eye or shoulder, you will pivot step with your outside foot to block the near number of the defender. If the defender loops-out or locks-on, you want the outside blocker to maintain contact and work the defender off the L.O.S. This movement off the L.O.S. is important in ZONE BLOCKING PRINCIPLES.

If the defender remains inside of you, continue to drive and maintain contact - once you feel contact from the inside blocker now you can block the scrapping linebacker on level 2. If the defender aligned on you that slants inside - PUNCH and PUSH-OFF the defender and explode to the 2nd level to block the playside linebacker. Block the linebacker by exploding up and through his numbers by using a good base block technique. DO NOT allow linebacker to cross your face, you may have to run with him.

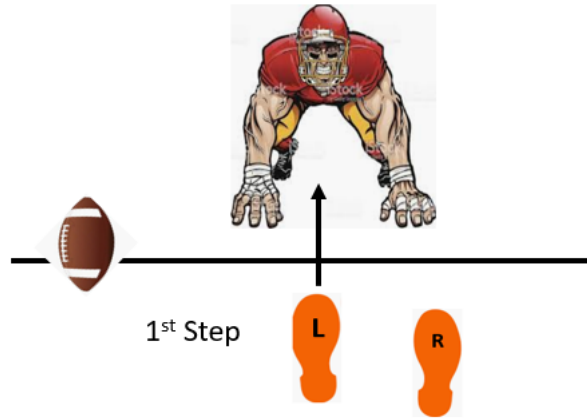
Zone Scheme Footwork

Executing the zone blocking scheme requires specific footwork depending on the play call and the defensive alignment. Again, the lineman should drill these techniques daily to develop a high level of proficiency in the various movements required to execute zone running plays.

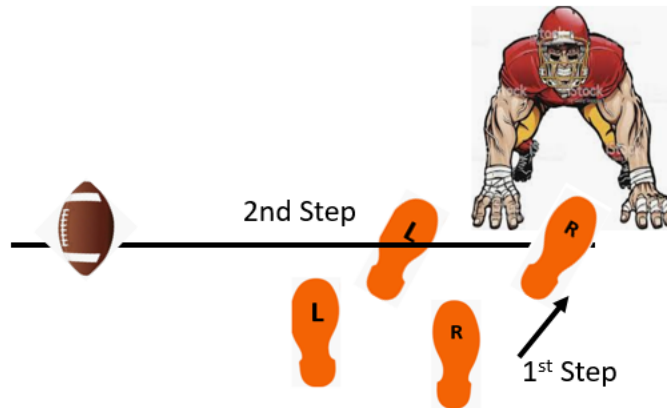
Basic Steps

Zone scheme linemen need to have physical proficiency with three basic steps to gain the angles and leverage necessary for a successful zone play. The initial step is a short step; think six inches and replacing the toe with the heel.

The Base Step – The base step is used most frequently on the Inside Zone play and usually occurs when a lineman is covered by a down lineman in his backside side

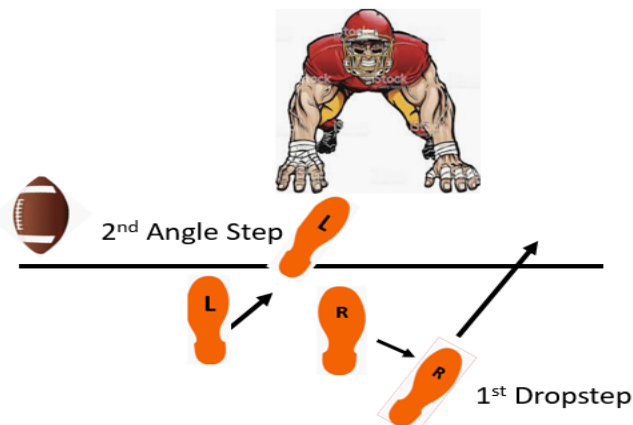


Angle Step – The angle step for inside zone can be flat or a 30 to 45-degree angle step depending what you are used to for vertical Inside Zone Combinations or Stretch Zone the when uncovered, covered heads up, or covered in the play side gap by a down lineman.



1. Bucket or Dropstep – The bucket step is used on the Stretch and Outside Zone Plays when uncovered or the near play side defender is in a wide technique. The Only difference between Stretch and Zone footwork is that Stretch stays on a track and Outside Zone brings the offensive lineman’s hips around.

Stretch and Outside Zone Footwork Initial Steps

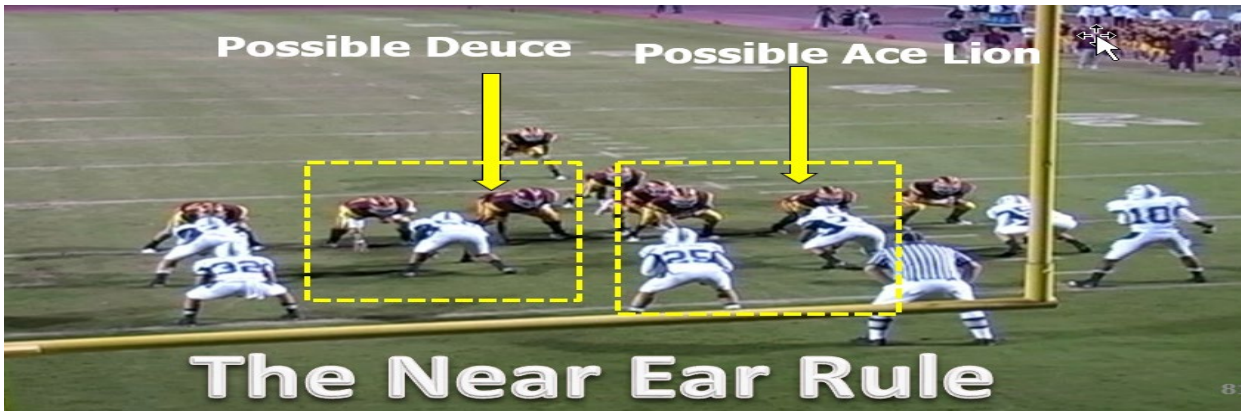


Each of these steps establishes the angle and eventual leverage of the lineman's attack. In the diagram below we see how the first step establishes the direction and angle of his movement and his second step continues in the same direction. His second step aiming point is through the crotch of the defender. This brings the athlete's base back under him while also reestablishing the stagger. The following diagrams demonstrate where the lineman's second step will be.

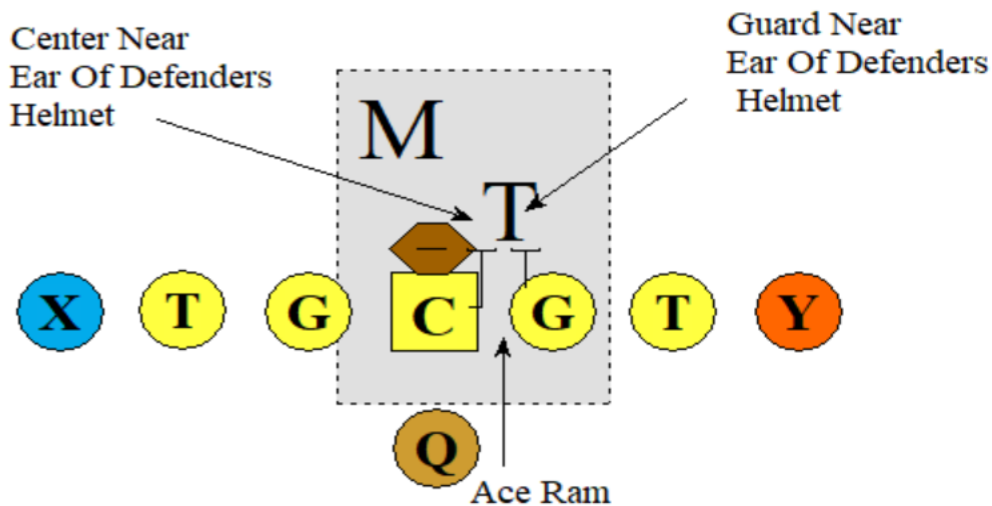
When developing as a zone scheme blocker, the first two steps need to be in the ground as quickly as possible. The quicker it happens, the more devastating the lineman's blocks will be. The following video demonstrates an excellent drill to practice the Base Step, the Angle Step, and the OZ step.

Chapter 9

The Near Ear Rule & Understanding How Plays Are called

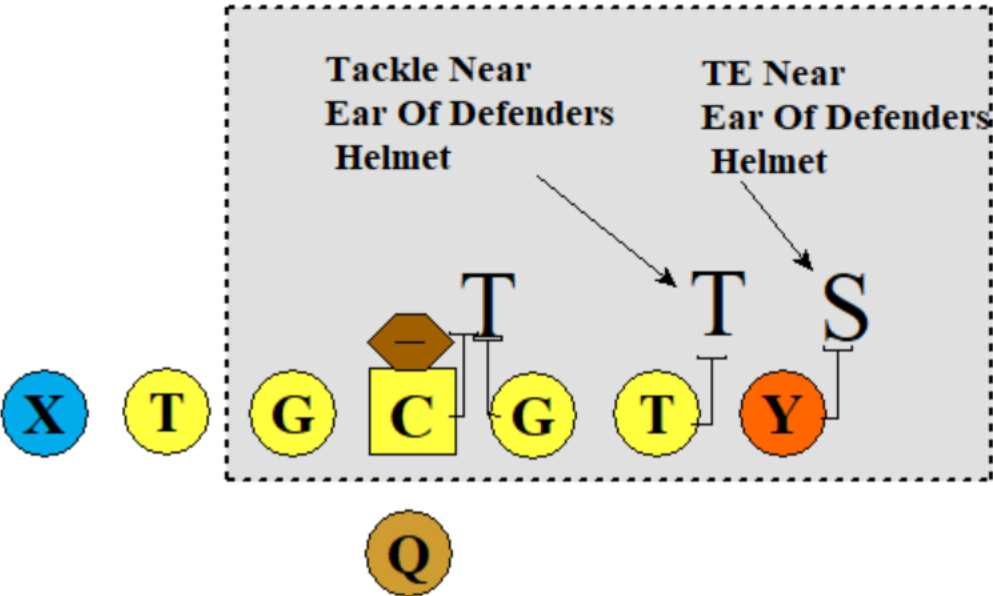


Near Ear Rule - The near ear rule pertains to where an offensive lineman places his helmet on an inside running play. In other words, an offensive lineman will locate the nearest ear of a down linemen and use this as a landmark for his helmet placement. The near ear rule is how the blocking schemes are set. According to type of play called will determine where your offensive lineman will place their helmet on the down defender in the running game. With all numbers 0-1, 2-3, 4-5 our offensive linemen will landmark the near ear of the defender's helmet for who he will block and where he will place his helmet on the snap of the ball. 6 & 7's puts the offensive line tracking through the outside number for play side combo and next number over for the backside combo linemen. The footwork and technique used here is a drop step with the lineman ripping his backside arm through the playside jersey number of the down defender.

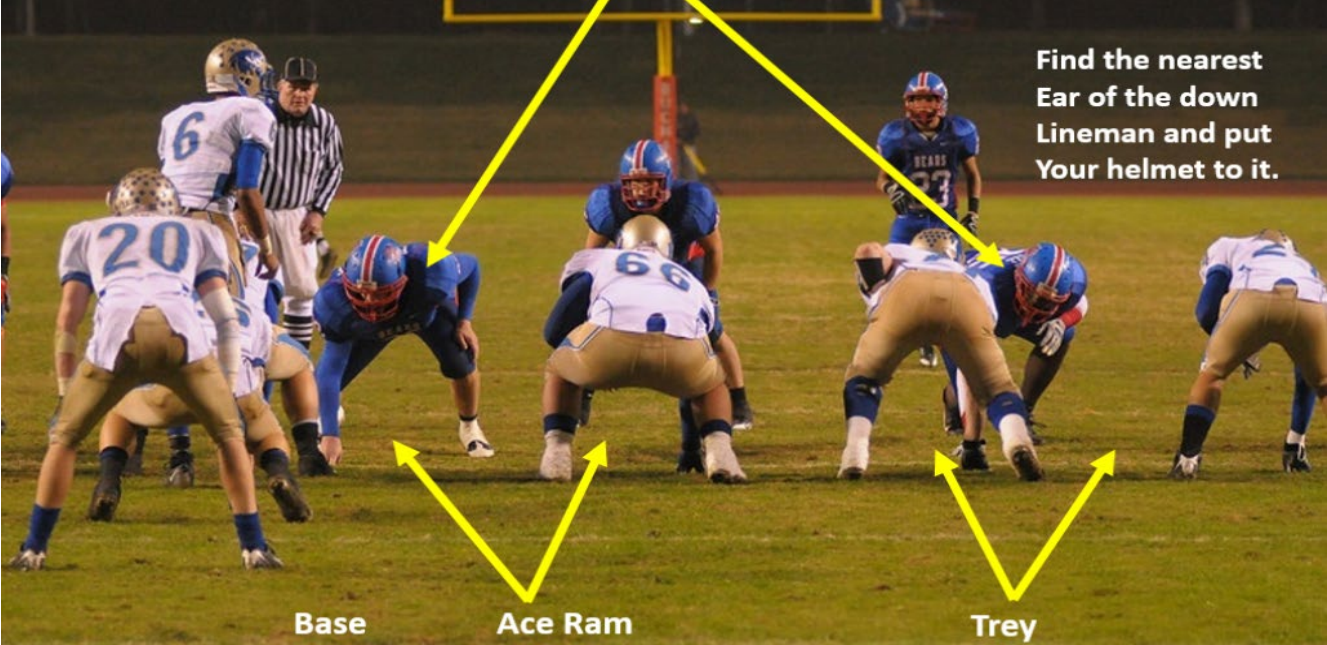


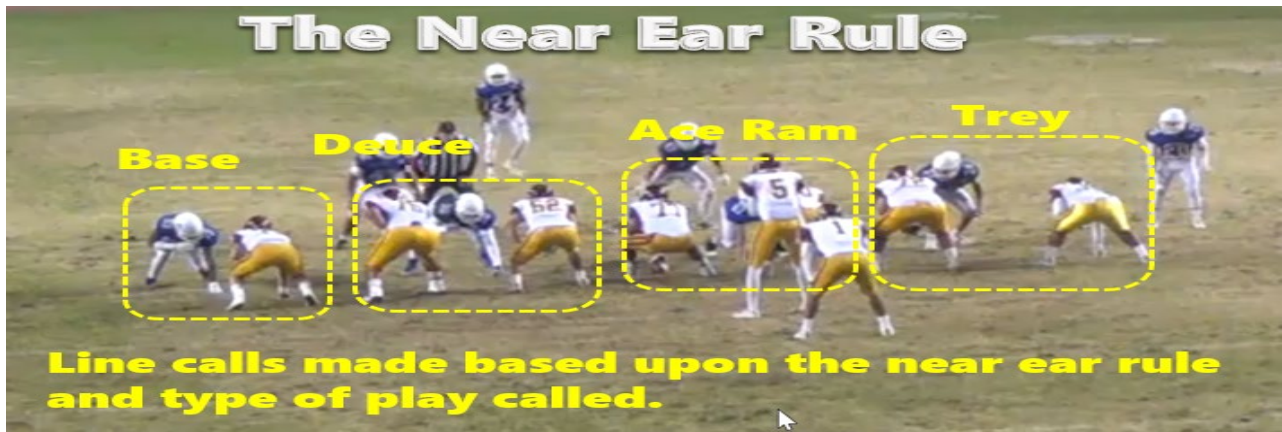
The near ear rule is how the blocking schemes are set. According to type of play called will determine where your offensive linemen will place their helmet on the down defender in the running game. With all numbers 0-1, 2-3, 4-5 our offensive linemen will landmark the near ear of the defender's helmet for who he will block and where he will place his helmet on the snap of the ball. 6 & 7's puts the offensive line tracking through the outside number for play side combo and next number over for the backside

combo linemen. The footwork and technique used here is a drop step with the lineman ripping his backside arm through the playside jersey number of the down defender.



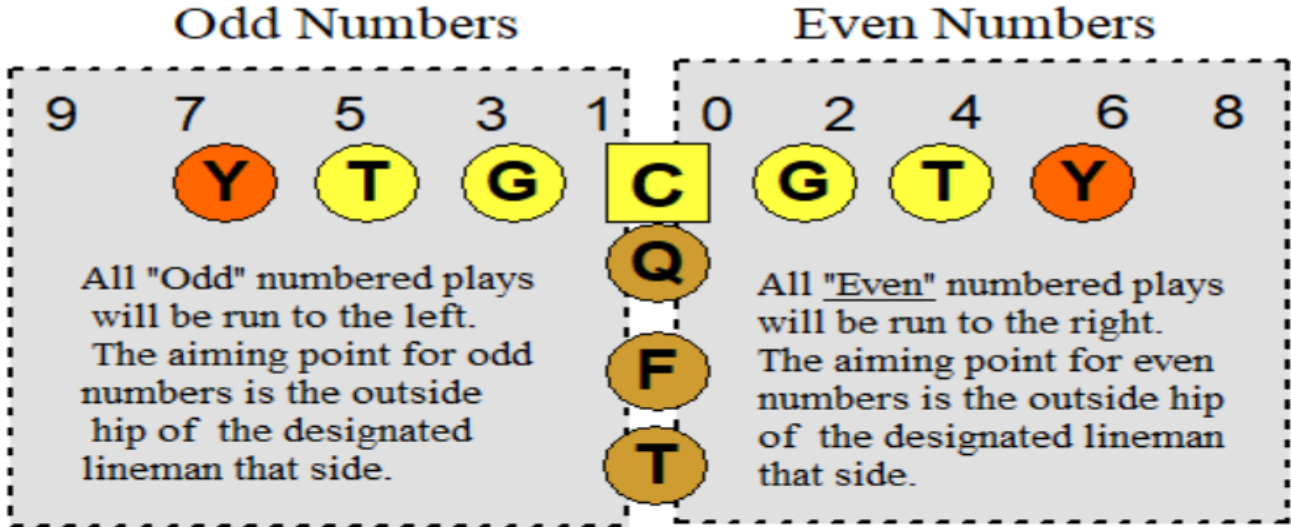
The Near ear rule as you see in this picture dictates your combos and the technique used will be dictated by type of play called.



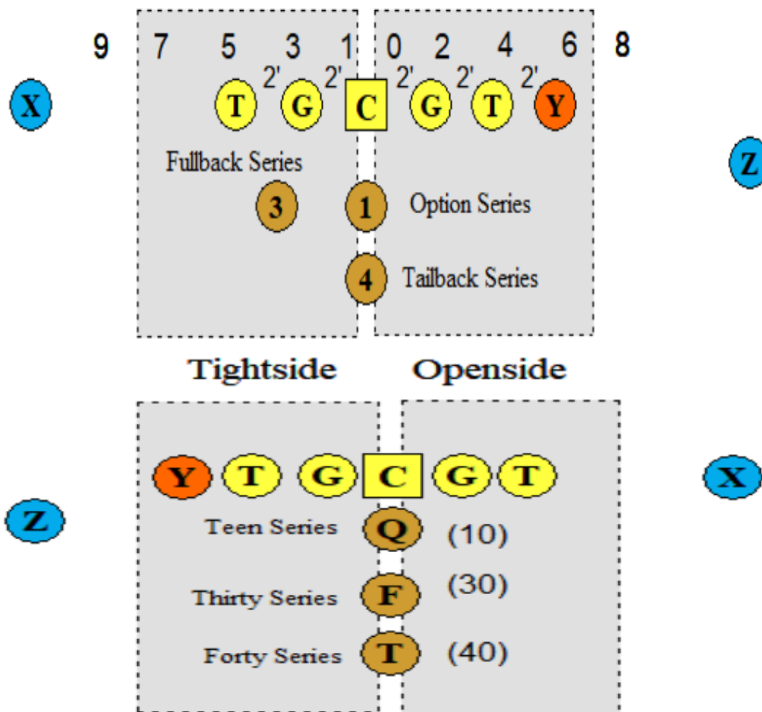


There are many ways to call plays in which I use coded words but, for simplicity and understanding how the offensive line understands what play is being called and direction it is being run I will demonstrate using a numerical system for this manual. The hole numbering system is based upon even and odd numbers. All even numbered plays are run to the right and all odd numbered plays are run to the left. The first digit that the offensive line hears tells them which back and what series is being run. The second digit tells them direction and blocking scheme. The following will give you the information needed for understanding how we number and run plays using a number system.

Understanding How Plays and Blocking Schemes are Called



All running and passing series plays will be designated a number. With the running game each play called in the huddle will be given two numbers which designates the type of play to be run and the area the play will be run at. The type of play (ISO, Toss, etc.) to be run will always follow either the formation or motion needed to execute the play called. The first number with the running game designates the type of series to be run followed by a second number that tells us how we are going to block it.



The running game is broken down into series, with each series determining the type of footwork and how the quarterback will open up on the snap of the ball.

The **Teen Series** pertains to the option game. The teen series can be run from either the gun, pistol or from under the center. The teen series involves the quarterback being a part of the play with the option of keeping, giving, or pitching the football.

The **Thirty Series** requires the quarterback to reverse out, also known as a belly action.

Forty Series plays is fronted out by the quarterback and requires a 45-degree initial open step towards the play called. The forty series plays puts the ball in the hands of the Tailback.

Broken Down Into 5 Phases

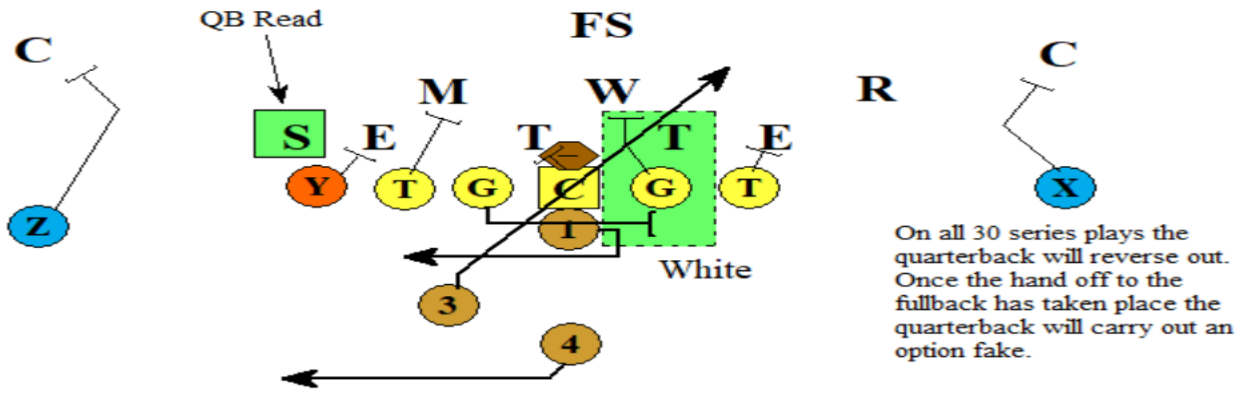
- 0 – 1 = Trap Schemes, Midline the 3 or 2 Tech.
- 2 – 3 = Take it Back Schemes (Read the 5 tech.)
- 4 – 5 = ISO Schemes “Part the Sea at The Point of Attack”
- 6 – 7 = Take It Out on Tracks (Backside Read)
- 8 – 9 = Bring the Blocking Scheme Around (Read the 9 Tech.)

Basically, I divide our offense into five phases with each having its own distinct style. Our blocking schemes are designed around zone and man concepts that require us to track and combo down defenders to linebackers. The following description will describe how this is done.

Phase 1: 0-1 Traps, Midline

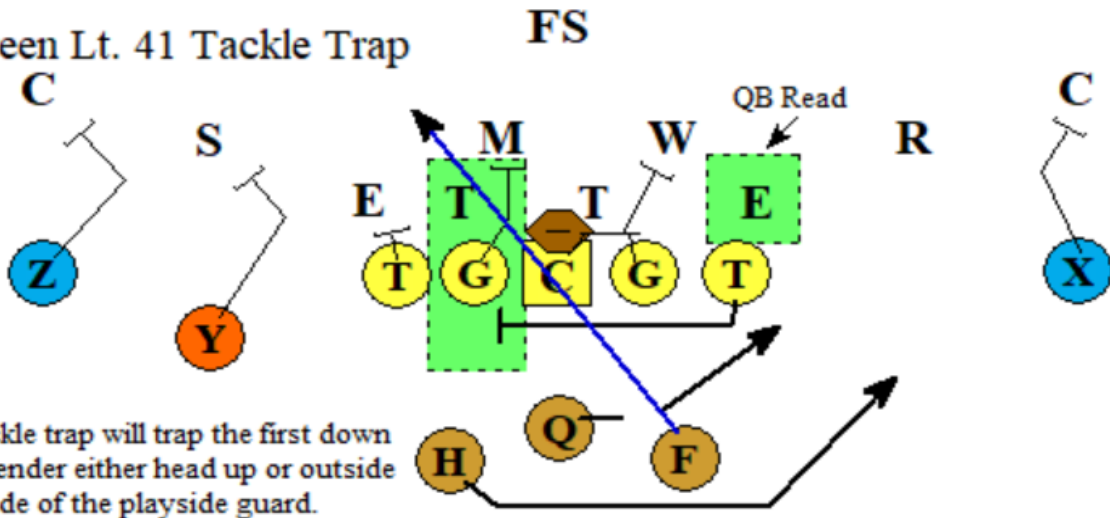
The digit “0” means we are taking the play to the right side and the digit “1” to the left side. Whenever we teach the trap the rule is to trap the first defender either head-up on the guard or further out depending upon the location of the first defender on or past the guard. The midline option follows the same rules as the trap in which we will when running midline option, the first defender on or past the guard. The first defender past the center can be any down defender aligned head up or outside the guard. The following illustrations is what we mean by first defender past the center.

Example: King Left 30 Trap



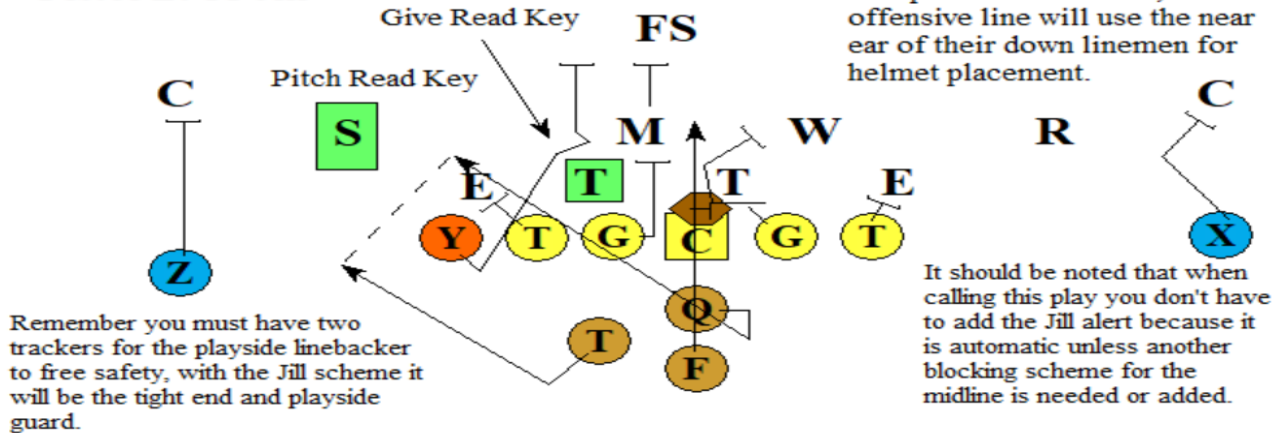
The example would be called 30 Trap which is a fullback play running right. Offensive line knows that the first defender on or past the guard is going to be trapped by the backside guard.

Gun Green Lt. 41 Tackle Trap



10-11 Midline

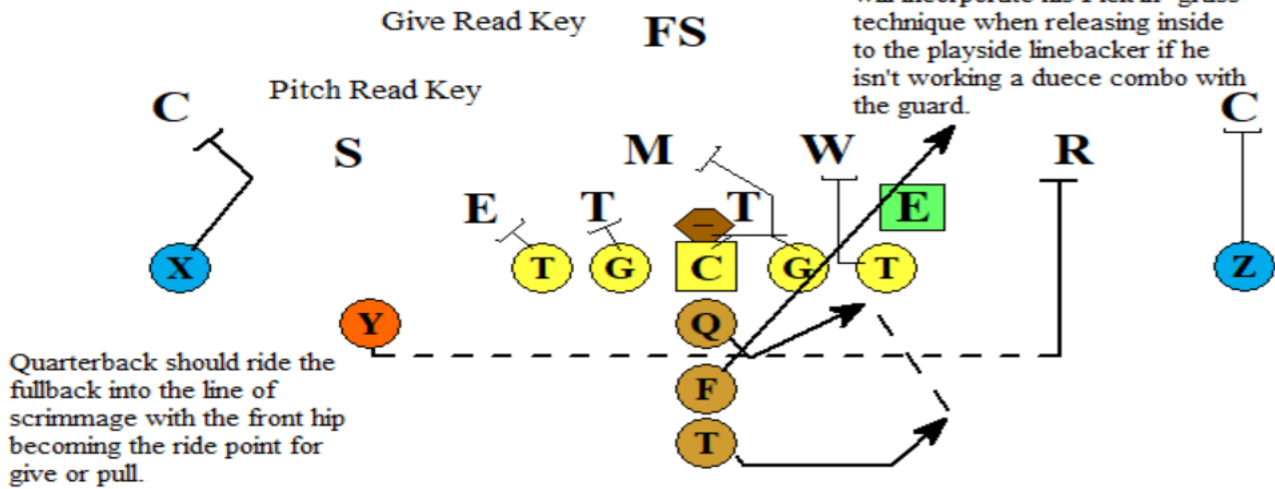
Pistol Lt 11 Jill



Phase 2: 2-3's "Take It Back" Schemes Veer, Speed, Counter Plays

2's & 3's incorporate the slow zone rotating blocking schemes that we use for our ISO plays. Our ISO plays are blocked by using the term "Part the Sea" at the point of attack through the near ear. All ISO plays will be rotated away from the hole and slow rotates our offensive linemen as they track their 2nd level linebackers.

Green Left Tom 12 Veer

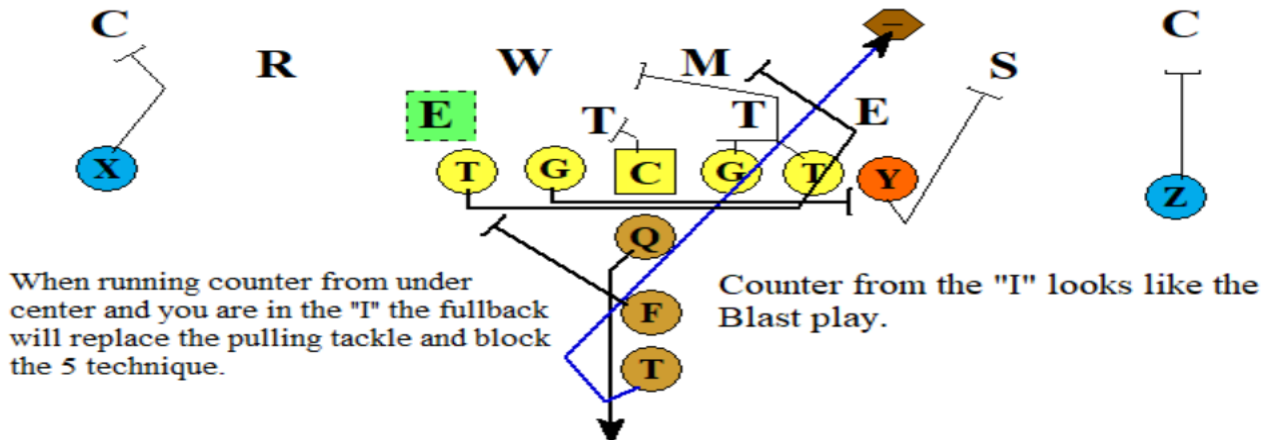


Counter Scheme

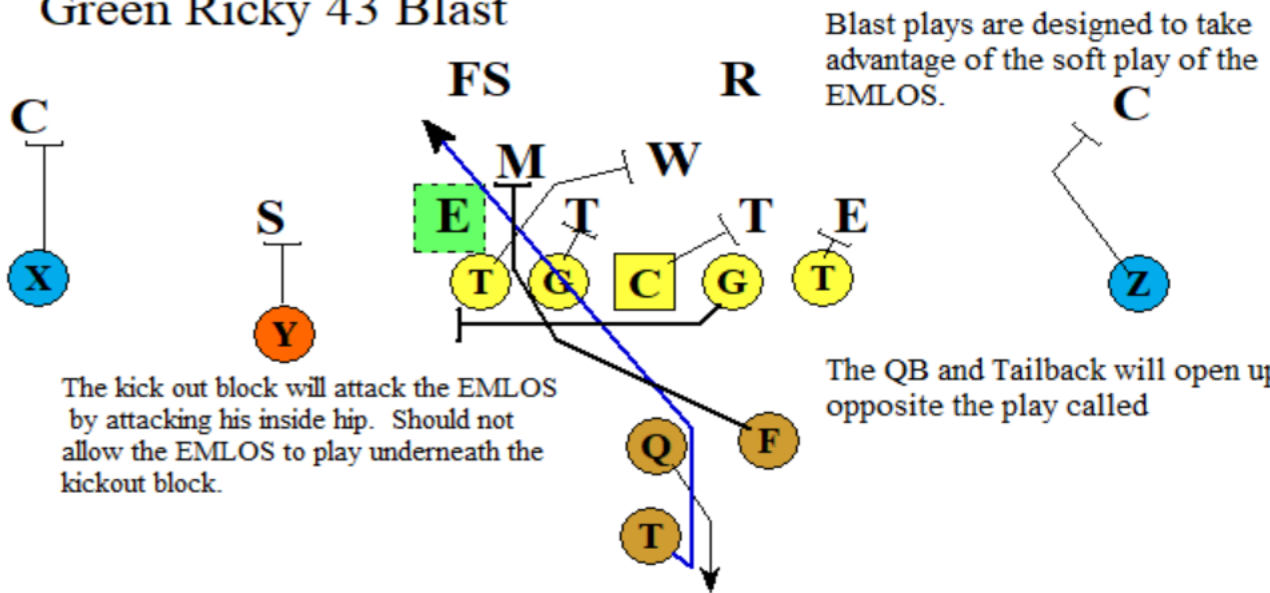
The counter scheme can be run from several different formations and backfield sets. The counter takes advantage of defenders who are over running plays. The counter is used to keep defenses honest and to make defenders stay home and defend their assigned areas. The counter becomes two plays in one depending upon the end man on the line of scrimmage. If the EMLOS plays up the field the counter turns into trap, if the defender plays down as if to spill the play outside then it turns into counter sweep. The counter is broken down into two distinct names 1. 42 - 43 Counter 2. 42 - 43 GT.

When running 42 or 43 Counter you will get a backside guard pulling along with a fullback as the second blocker on the pull. 42 - 43 GT pulls the guard (G) and tackle (T). When running 42 - 43 we will always have two pullers tracking playside. The two pullers are responsible for EMLOS and the playside linebacker. The following illustrations will demonstrate how to install these schemes.

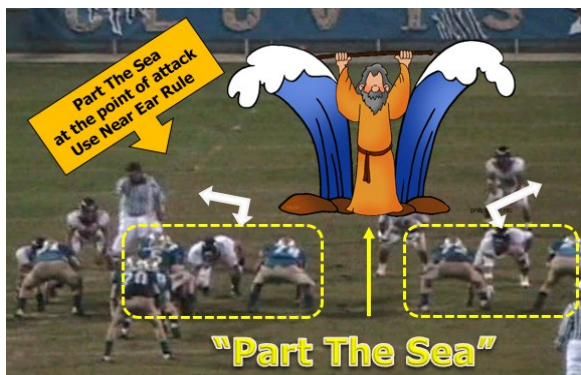
Rt. 42 Counter



Green Ricky 43 Blast



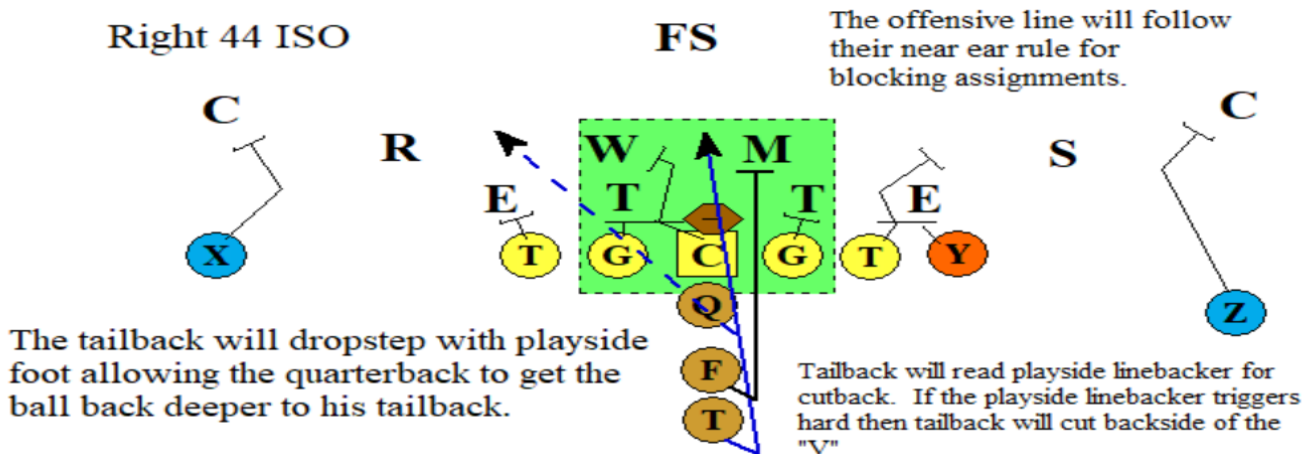
Phase 3: 4-5's "Part the Sea" ISO Plays



Any play called that ends with the number 4 or 5 is an ISO play which uses the term "Part the Sea" at the point of attack. With plays ending with the number 4 or 5 we are running an ISO play that will require the offensive line to counter rotate their blocking scheme at the point of attack. The term "Part the Sea" is what it looks like when blocking the ISO's.

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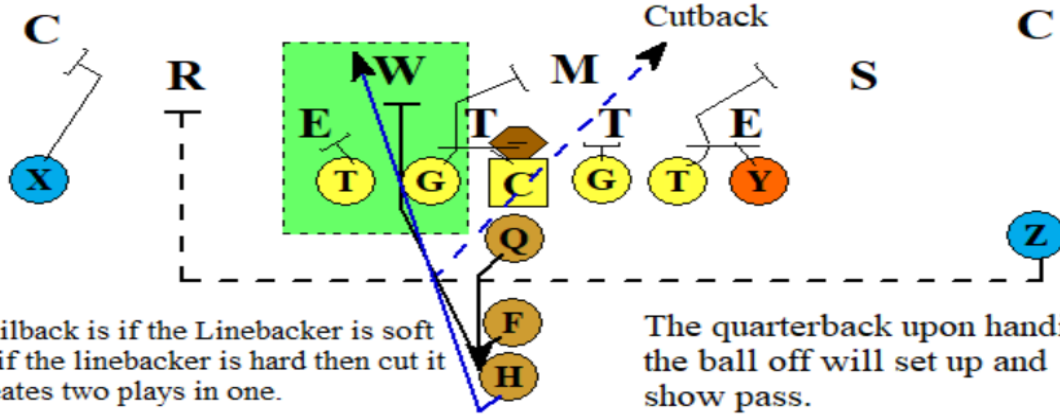
Right 44 ISO





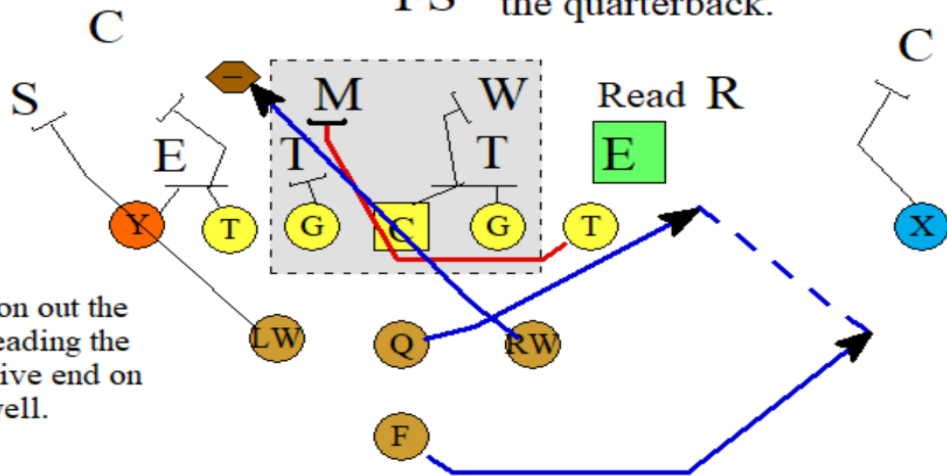
The picture to the left is a guard ISO with the backside guard pulling playside and up through Base Ace Ram alert. This is a "Part the Sea" concept using counter rotating zone blocking scheme.

Left Zip 45 ISO



Diamond Odd 15 Tackle ISO

This is a backside zone read for the quarterback.

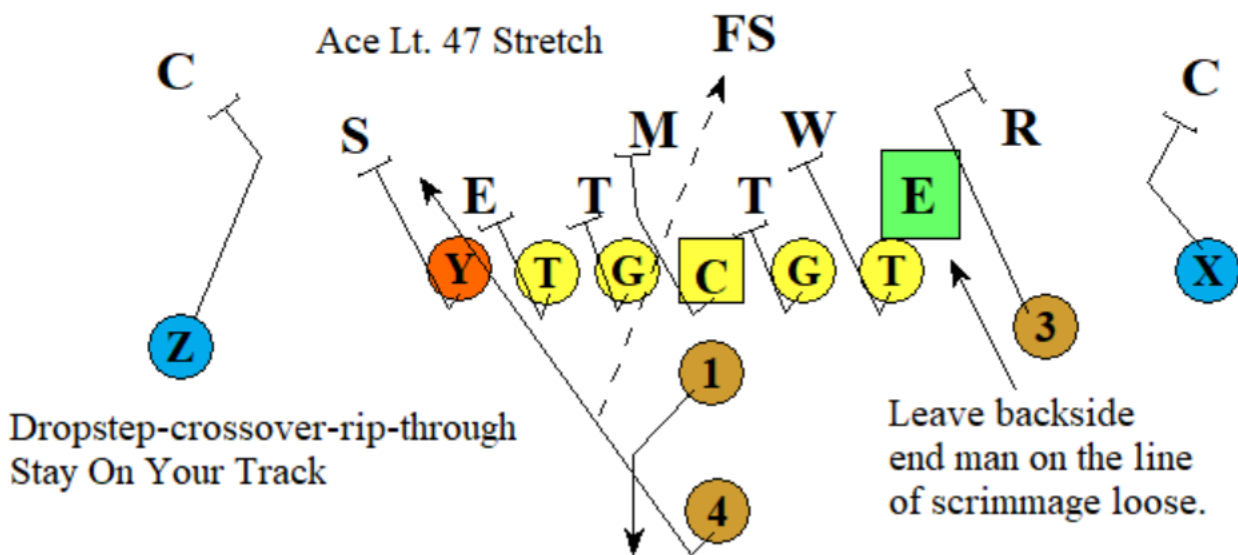
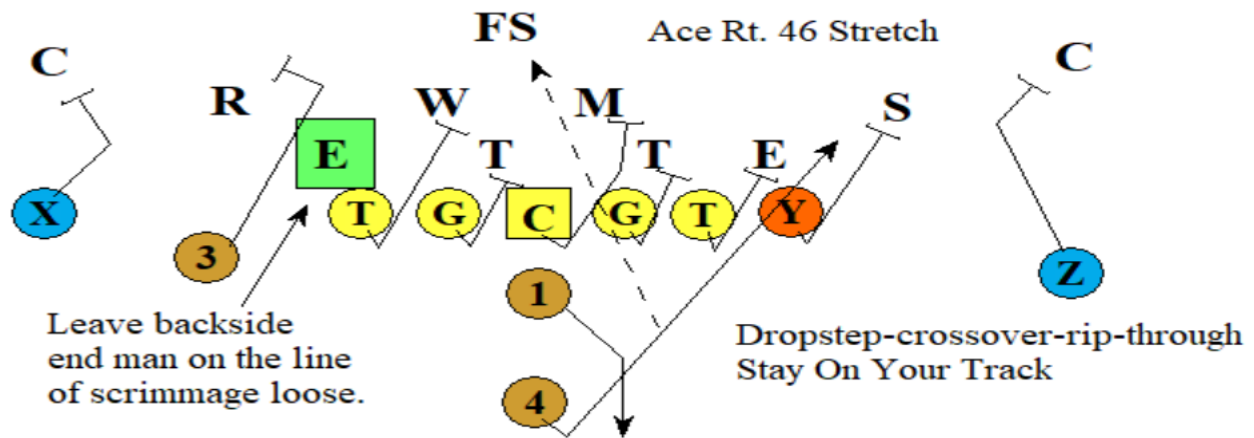


Phase 4: 6-7's "Take It Out on Tracks" Stretch

The "Stretch Zone" looks like the outside zone on the outset but has no rotation, linemen get themselves on a track and then stay on the track. The Full zone concept is a run to daylight concept

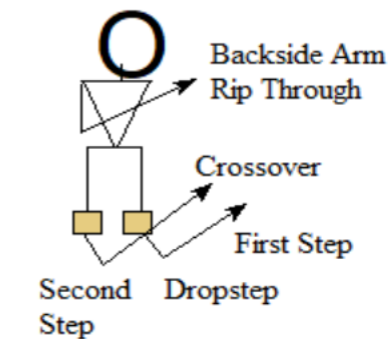
that stretches the defense with the running back looking for the first seam inside the stretch. The Stretch schemes consist of second digits 6 and 7.

Unlike the inside zone where the near ear is the landmark for helmet placement the next number over becomes the landmark or aiming point. for all 6 and 7 alerts. Stretch zone requires a drop step crossover and rip through which puts the offensive line on a track in order to stretch the defensive scheme. The tight end will start his alert "Trey" call only if his tackle is uncovered. The rule of thumb is to never pull a covered lineman with you unless it is the backside tackle or tight end. The backside end man on the line of scrimmage is always left unblocked as your offensive line works towards the callside. The backside lineman which is unblocked is accounted for by the boot action of the quarterback or treated as a zone read in which the quarterback can read keep or give the ball to his running back. The terminology used here is: "Dropstep, Crossover, Rip Through" this describes the footwork to be used, some coaches use the term "Bucket Step" to describe their footwork for this type of play such as outside or full zone concepts.

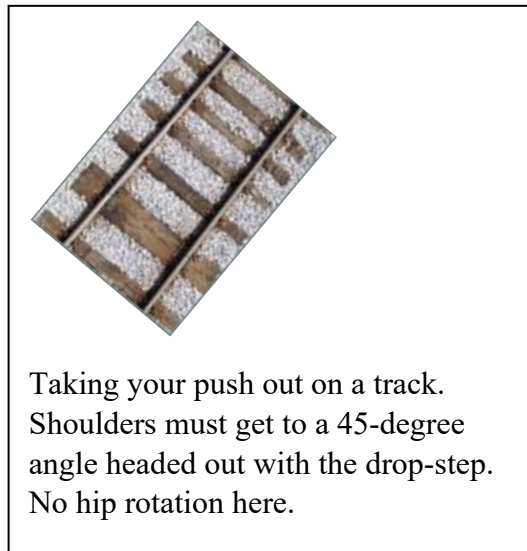


Drop Step Crossover Drill - Lead Blocker

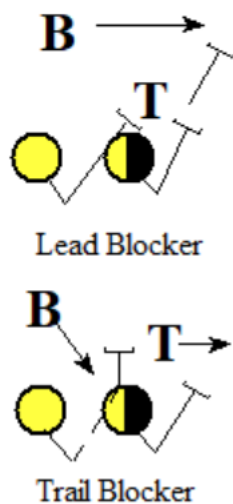
I describe the "Stretch Zone" as follows, the lead blocker in the combo or base block comes off with power and quickness aiming at a point that puts his helmet on the outside playside hip of the first level defender. The stretch zone is accomplished with the dropstep with backside foot crossover with the backside arm rip through. The lead blocker must stay low with a level back and good base during his get-off. the dropstep is determined by the alignment of the defender the wider the alignment the bigger the dropstep. The next process is to rip the backside arm through as the crossover step takes place. Must fight to keep a tight hip to hip relationship with the defender throughout the track.



Note: The backside rip through and hip must stay tight to the defender, no separation.

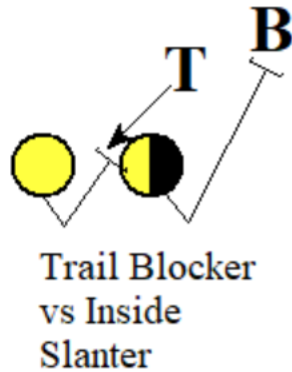
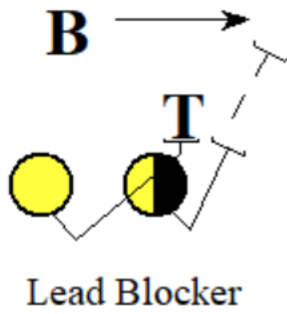


Taking your push out on a track. Shoulders must get to a 45-degree angle headed out with the drop-step. No hip rotation here.



If the defender is playing a tough take-on-the-blocker technique, the lead blocker will get his helmet on the outside hip and number of the defender and use his rip through to keep his track on the defender. As the blocker rips through he lifts through the defender driving him off the L.O.S. If the blocker wheels out to soon by letting his hip drift away from the defender, he will lose force and control.

Unless the trail blocker has a backside, linebacker run through he will join the lead blocker at this point helping him knock the first level defender off the L.O.S. into the second level. The lead blocker must have his head and eyes up looking for the first level defender to either slant backside or stretch. Remember, the lead blocker is on a track to the outside number and up to the next defender.



Patience is the key to coming off on linebackers in a zone scheme but with a fast zone using 6 and 7's blocking the key is to stay on your track and allow the running back to read his cuts and run to daylight principle.

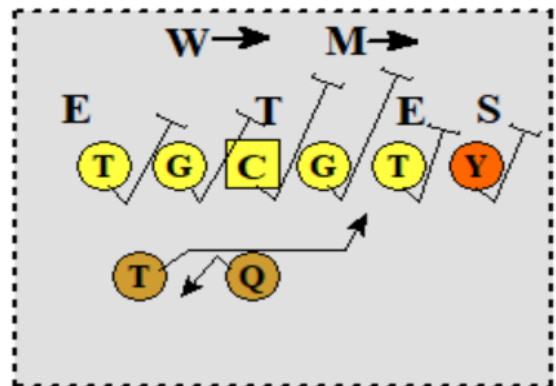
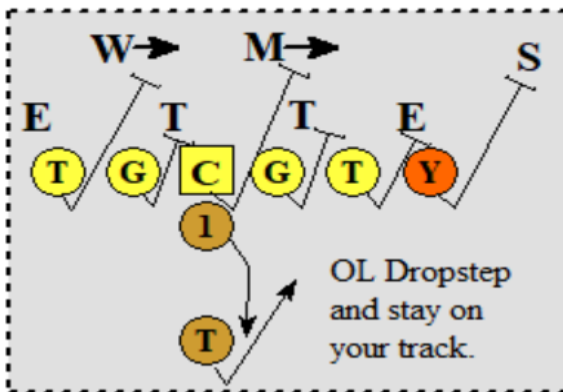
If the first level defender slants inside on the lead blocker stay on your path and don't chase after the slanter your trail blocker will pick him up. With the 6 and 7 type schemes the quarterback will assist in the stretch of the defense by the way he will present the ball to the running back. The linebackers normally will flow at the exact same angle as the ball is delivered.

If the down defender plays outside into the path of the lead blocker, the blocker stays square with the track working the defender off the L.O.S. He can't be flattened; he wants to stay square and stretch the defender to the outside. A wide aligned defender will most likely widen when the blocker dropsteps.

Shoulders must get to a 45-degree angle headed out with the drop-step. No hip rotation here.

Stretch Zone

The Stretch Zone is an outside run play predicated on reaching the defender in your play-side gap and stretching the defensive front horizontally. This is why it is sometimes referred to as an Outside Zone. When the Stretch Zone is called, the offensive lineman will take either an outside zone step or a "bucket step" in order to gain the leverage and proper angles necessary to get to the outside shoulder of the defender they are going to block. Once again, they block anyone that attacks their assigned gap and if no one shows they continue on their track and looking to track Linebackers their side. The ball carrier again presses the LOS, this time with an aiming point at the outside hip of the edge blocker. This is usually the tight end or play side tackle; but might also be a slot receiver or other player depending on the offensive formation. Once again, the ball carrier looks for a running lane opens up in the defensive front.



Key Characteristics for the Zone Scheme Offensive Lineman



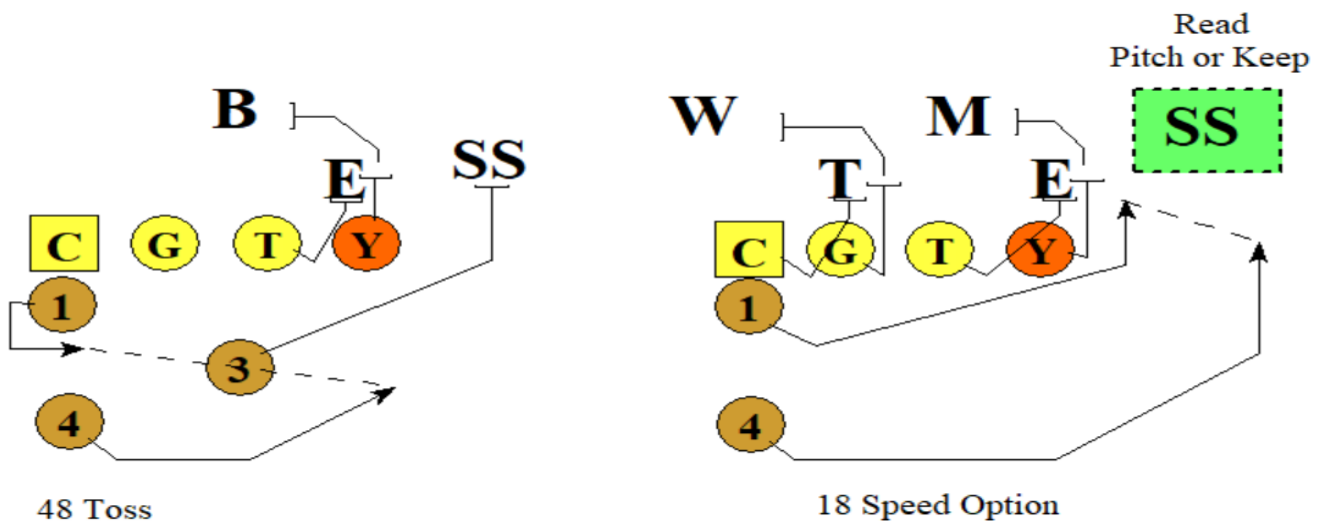
When developing an offensive line for the stretch zone scheme ideal lineman for stretch zone does not need to be the biggest or strongest player on the field. It is far more important for him to be athletic and intelligent with great field vision and an ability to execute a specific set of techniques. The following attributes are essential for a dominant zone scheme blocker

Flexibility – To execute with maximize effectiveness

Phase 5: 8's – 9's “Circle the Wagons” Bring the Scheme Around

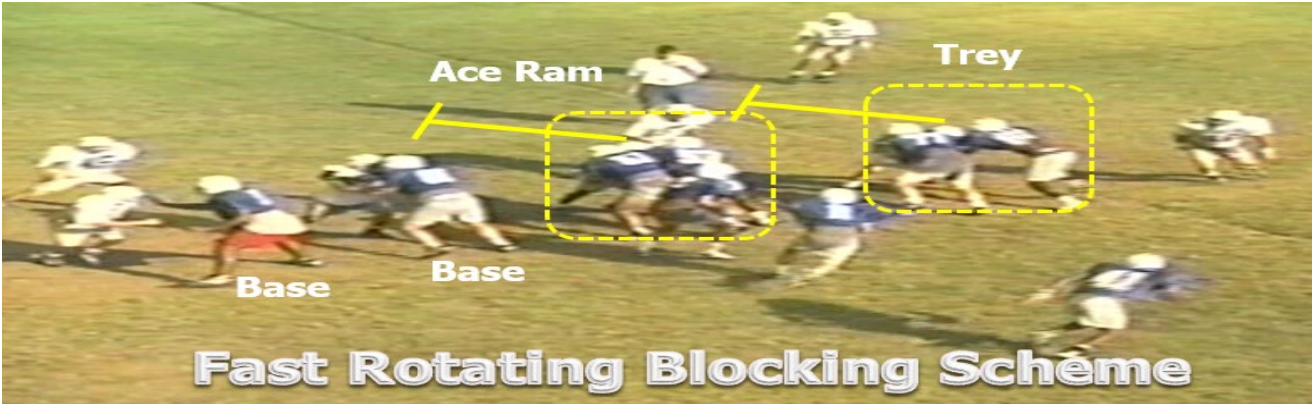


Whenever a digit ends with an 8 or 9 it is considered a fast-rotating zone with the Jet Sweep, Toss and load option schemes or any play called that uses an 8 or 9 digit. What we mean by fast zone is that our offensive linemen want to come around fast with their blocks to compensate for fast flowing linebackers. Numbers used to get play outside or Circle the Wagons: Offensive line on 8 & 9 plays want to get their helmets to the defenders outside ear.



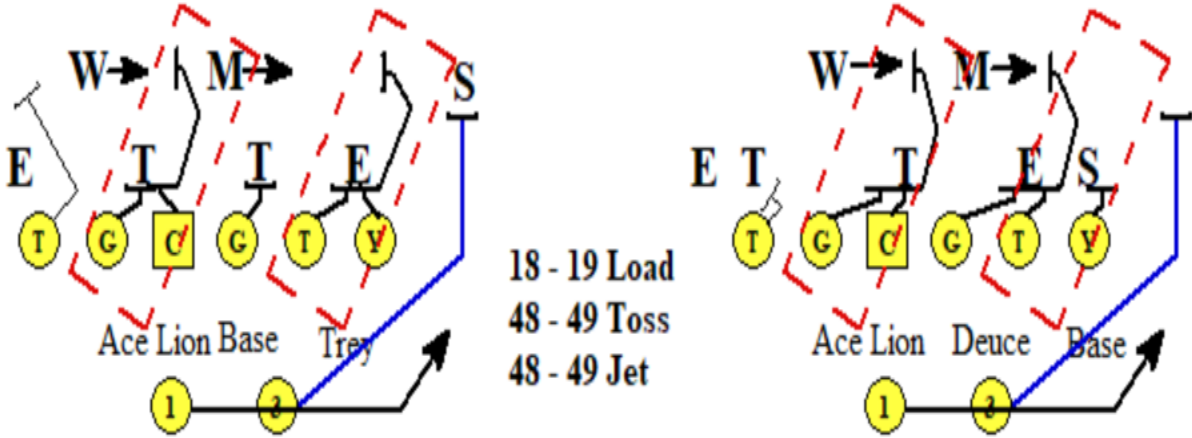


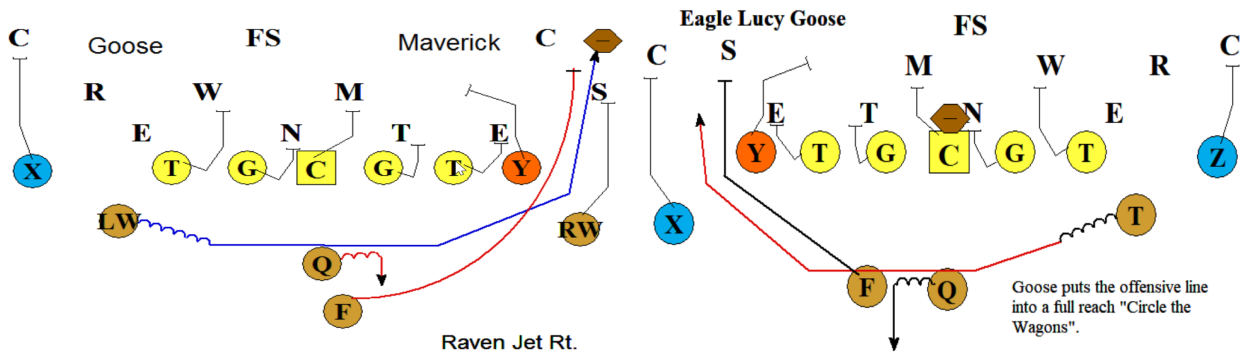
With any zone the type of play called will dictate how we push the zone; fast zones require a dropstep with playside foot and a crossover step with the trail leg followed by a rip through to the playside jersey number of the defender which will assist the lead blocker to come around and assist in keeping the defender from stretching the play outside



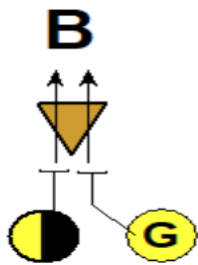
A fast-rotating scheme is predicated by how fast the ball and runner get outside to the perimeter. Linebackers will flow at the same angle the ball is being delivered so therefore when using any digit ending with 8 or 9 becomes a fast-rotating blocking scheme (circle the wagons).

Your offensive line will use a dropstep and crossover technique with their hips and butt rotating fast to the outside to facilitate the flow by the linebackers. As you notice in the above diagrams that the combos are tracking inside linebackers in a counter rotating fashion this will insure for the most part the ability for your offensive line to pick up their linebacker assignment. With this type of counter rotating scheme there is no need to chase the second level linebacker track him by getting your hips around fast working for push on the first level.

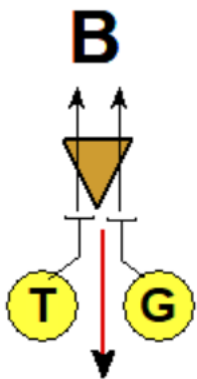




The difference in the blocking scheme using 6-7's vs 8-9's is that when you dropstep using 6-7's you get on a track and stay on it with no hip or butt rotation versus 8 & 9's you are working to bring your hips around for an inside linebacker track.



Two adjacent blockers working a vertical push versus a down defender to a stack linebacker. In the example here the initial steps are dictated by the near ear rule on the down defender. Whenever you have an inside shaded defender the covered linemen will step first with his covered foot and punching up and through the near jersey number with helmet placement through the near ear. The uncovered lineman will step at a 30-degree angle using his near foot to match his adjacent lineman step in order to get Hippo with his partner closing the door to the down defender as the track the stack linebacker. This is 2 hands to two numbers with 4 eyes on the linebacker as they track his movement.



Whenever two adjacent linemen go combo which entails a down gap defender the outside blockers first step will be at a 30-degree angle stepping with his inside foot aiming at the crouch of the defender. The inside blocker will step at a 30-degree angle with his outside foot at the crouch of the defender which will create a combo that closes the door to the down defender as the two adjacent blockers get hippo with each other. This would be two hands to two numbers with 4 eyes tracking the linebacker.

DOWNFIELD BLOCKING (LOOKING FOR A GOOD RELEASE & CHASING LEVEL 2 TO LEVEL 3)

DESIRE, HUSTLE, AND DETERMINATION are the key ingredients in becoming a successful downfield blocker. Locate the defender you are to block on your first two steps and focus your eyes on him all the way. Convince yourself that your block is the key to the success on each and every play. Lay your "ears back" and go all-out till the whistle blows and you will be a GREAT ONE because

when advancing to the next level of football it will be the determination shown here that scouts are most interested in.

BLOCKING OUTSIDE ON SUPPORT - As you start your approach get width and depth as if you are going to "LOG" the defender. Make him think that the play is going outside of him. When you are approximately four to five yards from the defender - get inside-out position on him giving the defender only one way to go. Since most secondary people are smaller than you, they will try and make you miss in order to get you out of position. Once the defender has committed himself, get close enough so you can step on his "toes" and explode up through him and run him to the sidelines.

BLOCKING DEEP SECONDARY - When blocking downfield on deep secondary people, you want the offensive blocker to stay on his feet and run through or over the defender. Never look back for the ball carrier - it is his job to run off the offensive linemen's block. As you approach the defender, step on his "toes" dip slightly at the waist and explode up through the man. Always use good judgment - NEVER CLIP or throw a block when the ball carrier has scored or is about to score.

Chapter 10

Offensive Secondary Blocking Schemes

Thus, our zone blocking schemes will be our primary emphasis as we establish our running game. The following pages will illustrate how we do this through our Ace, Deuce, and Trey combination of blocks.

Secondary blocking schemes for our offense is the fold blocks, trap and counter game. What we mean by secondary schemes is that our zone blocking schemes are primary and traps, counters, Iso and Power schemes are considered secondary. Secondary schemes get secondary time, that is we will not give as much time to those schemes that pull linemen at practice as we will our zone concepts.

When we install our misdirection plays, we like to run them just enough to make our opponent have to practice them or when we get defenders too over eager and want to get too much upfield penetration. Secondary pull schemes are broken down into the following categories 1. Trap 2. Counter 3. Dart (Tackle ISO) 4. Power and 5. Blast.

Our secondary blocking schemes are used so that our opponent must practice against them as they prepare their defensive fronts against our zone concepts. Secondary blocking schemes are used as a complement to our zone run blocking game when defenses get to comfortable defending our zone blocking schemes.

All our combination blocks are designed to zone playside and backside depending on play called. Whenever going to a secondary scheme it puts us normally into a man and zone rule scheme, this is normally what happens when pulling linemen. It should be noted that linemen will make their necessary line calls at the point of attack with all others coming off the initial call. Some plays will have non-verbal communication, but calls can still be used to reinforce any offensive lineman's blocking assignment.

Trap Scheme

A trap is when we pull a backside lineman across the center, trapping the first down defender past him. Any shaded defender aligned on the center is not considered first defender past the center. The first defender past the center can be any down defender aligned over the inside of the guard and out. The following illustration is what we mean by first defender past the center.

Trap schemes are best run whenever you have a defensive scheme that puts three over three. This means three defenders over the top of three offensive linemen. With the illustration shown to the side you get a three over three situation which allows for a good blocking scenario.

Whenever pulling we will use color alerts to let the backside guard know where the person to be trapped is located. We have what we call short (white) and long (black) pulls. Prior to the ball being snapped the playside guard will alert white or black depending upon the location of the down defender, once the guard makes his alert call other linemen can echo the same call to make sure the backside guard hears his alert.

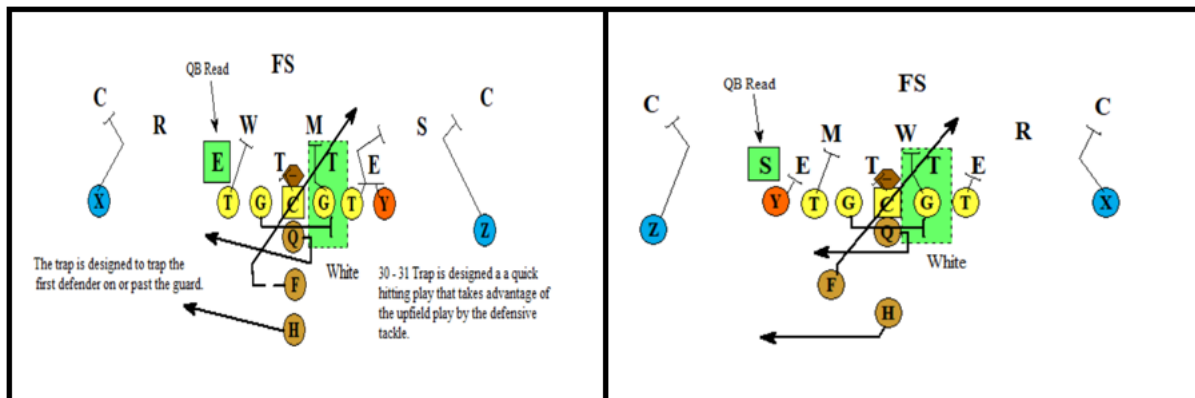
Pulling Techniques

I install several different types of pulling techniques that will basically can be used by your offensive tackles, guards and/or center in order to clear an area preceding a ball carrier. Determining who will pull will be written into the rule for each play. It is extremely important to be in a good stance so as not to tip off your anticipated technique. Speed and quickness are of the utmost importance when pulling but getting your body into the proper position is just as important.

PULLING TO THE RIGHT AND LEFT - This will be called a **DROP WHIP** and **PIVOT**. We want the offensive lineman to push off his extended fingers, whipping the play side arm back rapidly (slap the dog). This is important, as this will help you get your body into the proper position. Upon whipping your arm, you want to pivot on your up foot while taking a short directional step with your right foot. This must be one **CONTINUOUS MOTION**. It is important to stay low and to keep your head-up and eyes focused on the direction you are pulling.

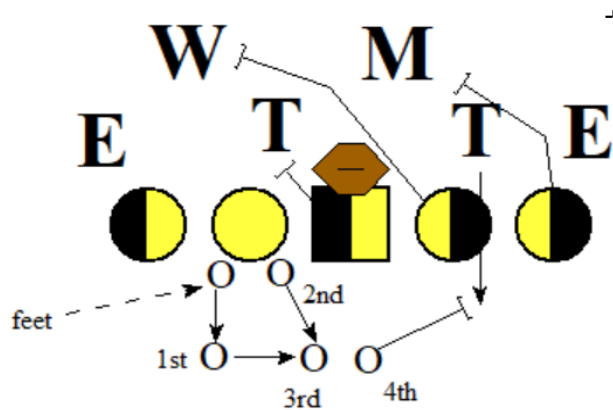
PULL AND LEAD TECHNIQUE - This technique will be used when pulling to block a linebacker or pulling to block support. Use the proper pull technique getting width and some depth. Depth is especially important for the backside tackle when pulling to run the **COUNTER**. The trail blocker must get depth in order to spy and read the location of the **LBer** in order to block of the linebacker.

PULL AND TRAP TECHNIQUE - Use the proper method to pull and take an inside-out approach. This is called a **TRAPPER'S ARC**. Immediately focus your eyes on the defender to be trapped and stay low as you explode towards your target area. Explode up and through the man on contact by whipping your arms and moving your feet like pistons. Drive the defender out of the hole. Don't try and turn him or work your "butt" into the hole until you have established movement, and this is accomplished by getting your base big on contact. Most defenders are taught to play underneath any type of kick-out block, so by allowing your base to get big on contact will eliminate any defender the opportunity to play underneath. Use all the good elements of a **BASE BLOCK** - especially the short power steps, **HELMET ADJUST**.

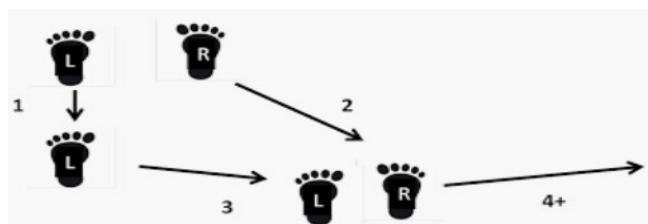


Skip Pull Technique

1. As an offensive lineman our stance can come from either a two point or a three point with our feet in a balance stance with a slight stagger.
2. With skip pull technique; the first step is short backwards step with their outside foot keeping their shoulder square to the L.O.S. and must stay low don't pop up.
3. If pulling right first step is short backwards step with your outside foot followed by your playside foot (inside foot) gaining depth and width towards the pulling side (this is known as a gather step).
4. For the second step, the lineman will step with his inside foot, gaining depth and width towards the pulling side, this is called the "gather" step.
5. For the third step, the lineman will slide his outside towards his inside foot thus forming the "Skip"
6. The fourth step goes to finish. Key Coaching Points:
 - * Keep Shoulders square to the L.O.S., keeping eyes up at all times.
 - * Must take back setup without side foot first.
 - * Emphasize the Finish!!!
 - * Work on steps and progression first, then full movement into bringing it all together.

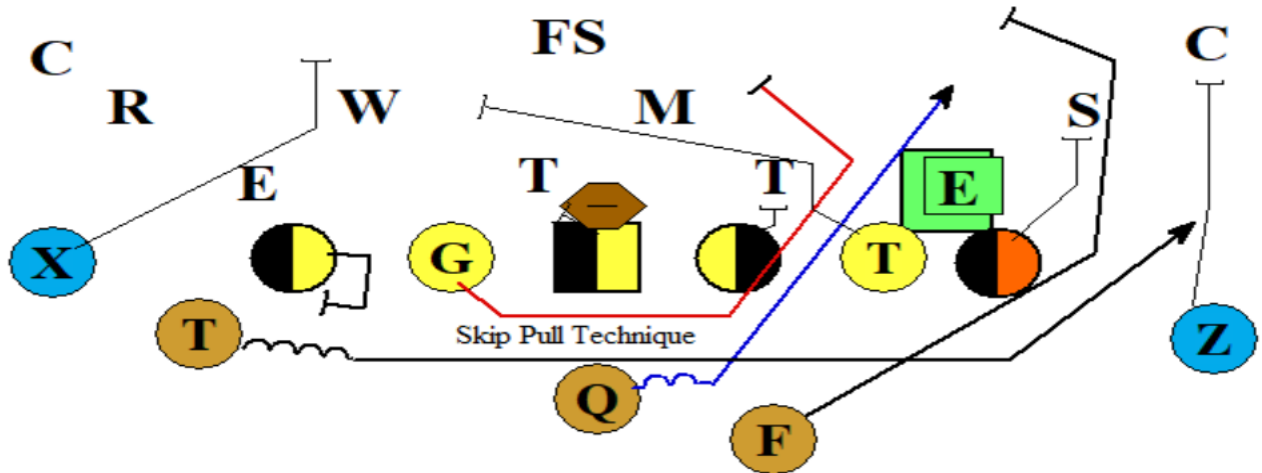


The examples here represent your offensive lineman's footwork when incorporating a skip pull technique. The skip pull allows the pull to get vision on his linebacker when looking to pull up in the hole.



Once the guard gets on track, he wants to make his aiming point the inside hip of the down defender. A key coaching point here is for the guard on contact to allow his base to widen or what we call explode the base, this helps prevent defenders from wrong arming the puller trying to spill the trap outside.

Once the guard gets on track, he wants to make his aiming point the inside hip of the down defender. A key coaching point here is for the guard on contact to allow his base to widen or what we call explode the base, this helps prevent defenders from wrong arming the puller trying to spill the trap outside.

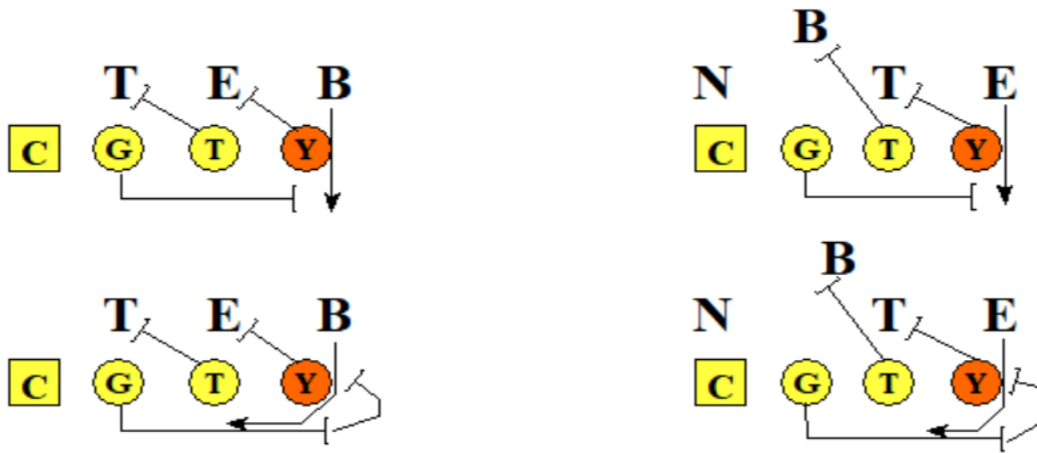


Skip Pull Example

"G" Blocking Scheme

"G" Scheme alerts the playside guard that he is pulling and will kick-out the last defender on the line of scrimmage. The "G" scheme stays consistent with the development of blocking with angles. General rule for installing the "G" scheme is "Down, Down, Kick-out".

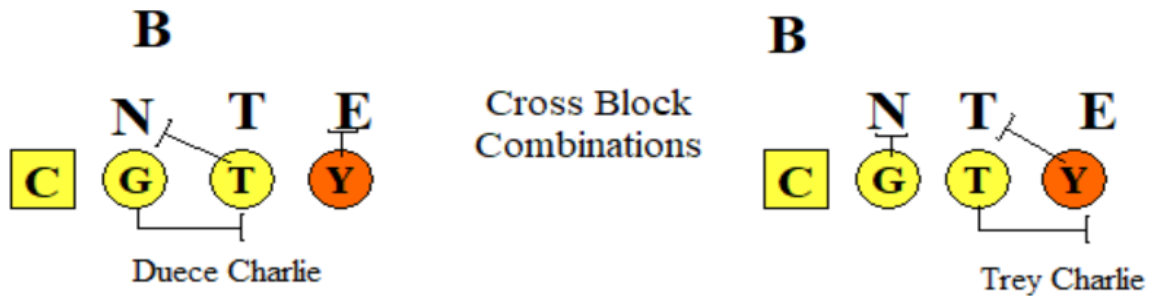
1. "G" scheme talks to the playside guard which dropsteps with playside foot and then takes a track to the inside hip of the E.M.L.O.S.
2. On contact the guard will expand his base which keeps the E.M.L.O.S. from playing underneath the kick-out block.
3. If defender wrong arms the kick-out block by the guard he then should go ahead and log him making the ball go outside instead of inside his kick-out block.



Note: If defender wrong arms the kick-out block the guard should then log block the defender.

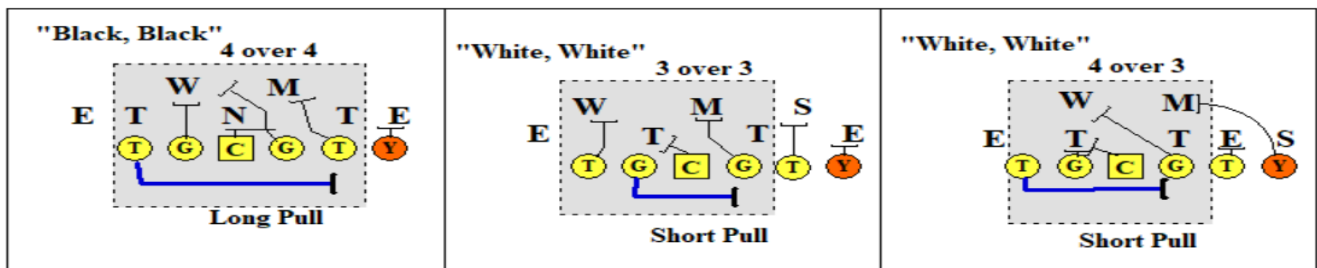
Cross Blocks vs Two Adjacent Down Defenders Using "Charlie"

When cross blocking you will always want the inside blocker to kick out and the outside blocker of the combo to block down. When cross blocking we will still use the alert words Ace, Deuce, and Trey to alert the two down linemen working with each other. The only term we use here to use a cross blocking scheme is the word "Charlie" an example would be "Deuce Charlie" Guard and Tackle.



Trap Scheme

A trap is when we pull a backside lineman across the center, trapping the first down defender on or past the guard. Any shaded defender aligned on the center is not considered first defender past the center. The first defender past the center will be any down defender aligned over the top of the guard and out. The following illustration is what we mean by first defender past the center.



Trap schemes are best run whenever you have a defensive scheme that puts three over three or four over four. This means three defenders over the top of three offensive linemen. With the illustration shown to the side you get a three over three situation which allows for a good blocking scenario.

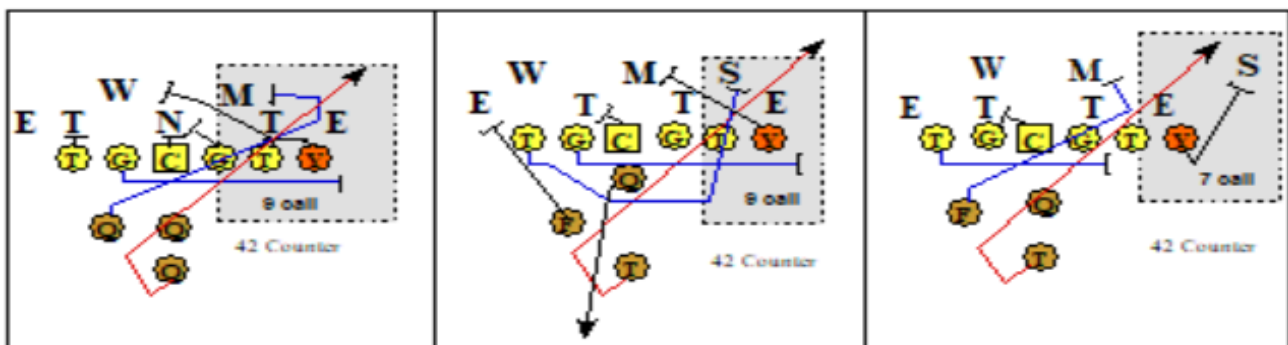
Whenever pulling we will use color alerts to let the backside guard know where the person to be trapped is located. We have what we call short (white) and long (black) pulls. Prior to the ball being snapped the playside guard will alert white or black depending upon the location of the down defender, once the guard makes his alert call other linemen can echo the same call to make sure the backside guard hears his alert.

The technique that the pulling guard uses to accomplish his pull is to dropstep on the snap of the ball with his playside foot, what will keep the guard down and not let him rise when opening up is what we call "Slap The Dog". When the guard dropsteps he will take his playside hand and play as if he is slapping his dog or should I say the wall, this keeps him down. So, take the playside hand and open up by slapping the dog with the back of the hand, don't throw the elbow.

Counter Scheme

The counter scheme can be run from several different formations and backfield sets. The counter takes advantage of defenders who are over running plays. The counter is used to keep defenses honest and to make defenders stay home and defend their assigned areas. The counter actually becomes two plays in one depending upon the end man on the line of scrimmage. If the EMLOS plays up the field the counter turns into trap, if the defender plays down as if to spill the play outside then it turns into counter sweep.

When running 42 or 43 Counter you will get a backside guard pulling along with a fullback as the second blocker on the pull. 42 - 43 GT pulls the guard (G) and tackle (T). When running 42 - 43 we will always have two pullers tracking playside. The two pullers are responsible for EMLOS and the playside linebacker. The following illustrations will demonstrate how to install these schemes.



The rule for blocking the counter schemes on the perimeter goes as follows; take the easiest path, if faced with a nine technique then inside release to middle or backside linebacker. If faced with a seven technique on the inside shade of the Tight End, then arc release to the outside invert.

The initial steps for both the guard and tackle if running (GT). GT stands for guard and tackle, the backside guard will dropstep with his playside foot and then with his backside foot stepping parallel to the line of scrimmage and then begin to gain depth to see how the EMLOS is going to play him as the defender attempts to play the kickout block by the guard. The guard starts to climb to a depth of no more than five yards, this is called gain depth to gain vision. If the EMLOS closes down inside then

the guard will quit climbing and work to log the outside hip and jersey number of the defender, this turns the play into counter sweep.

If the EMLOS starts to climb up the field with the guard this means the defender will take the kickoff block on with his inside shoulder thus turning the play into counter trap. Once again if the EMLOS plays down inside the guard will attempt to log the defender, if the defender plays upfield he then will kick him out and the play runs inside.

The backside tackle on GT will incorporate the same initial footwork as his guard and will determine his path to the playside linebacker by the reaction of his guard. If the guard climbs this tells the tackle to take his path to the linebacker inside because the play will be counter trap. If the guard cuts his path shallow this tells the tackle to take his path outside because the GT is going to turn into counter sweep.

When running the counter into the tight end he will always give an alert of a seven or nine call, this tells the guard of the location of the EMLOS and the probable technique that the defender will use. A seven technique will for the most part always work to spill the counter outside whereas a nine technique will try and contain the play by keeping it inside.

Chapter 11

Drills for Establishing Your Running Game



Proper Technique Using Barrels Barrels Help With Defensive Recognition, Zone Concepts, and Partner Combos



Show your jersey numbers and the barrel will slide



To over extended and the barrel will tip



Easy to use and great for many different purposes.

Hand Placement



Must keep the hips down and show your numbers to the barrel



I have found that the use of 55-gallon plastic drums can serve numerous teaching techniques for your offensive line drills and techniques.

Keep Your Eyes Up
To keep your hips down



Hips are too high



Track Your Lber



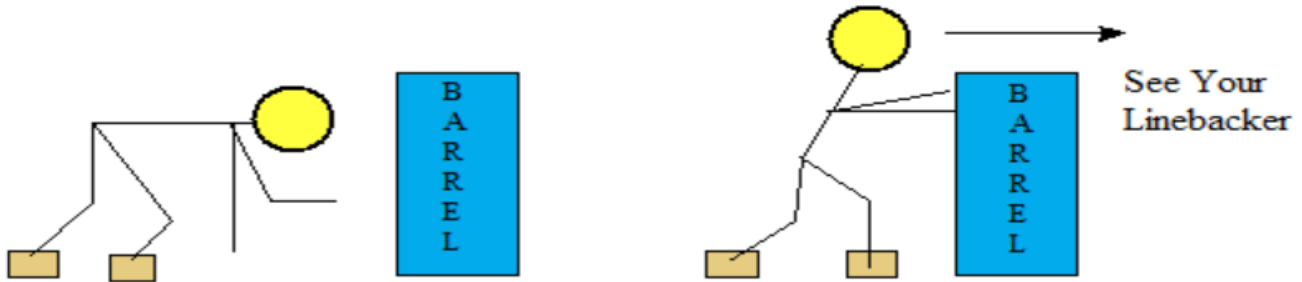
Get Hippo With Your Partner



Get Hippo With Your Partner

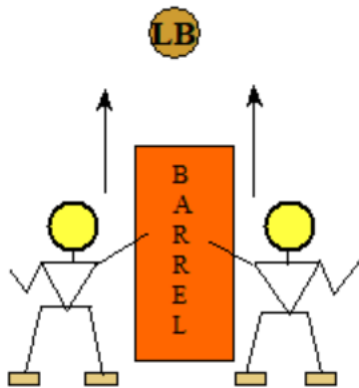
Barrel Drill - Fit

Using 55-gallon plastic industrial drums can be great inexpensive teaching aides when teaching fit and finish both from an individual position to working your combination Ace, Deuce and Trey combinations. If possible, have a booster club member or find a business in your community that might have access to these and ask them if they would provide you with 16 barrels if possible.



1. The fit and finish drill is exactly like the fit drill except you are now going to drive the barrel. Remember if you fit too high on the barrel will tip over so you want it to slide because your offensive lineman will have to move their feet in order to stay up with the barrel. You want the barrel to slide across the grass nice and smoothly which represents a proper fit.
2. Your lineman's center of gravity should be centered directly over the top of his feet with his hips never going out over and past his toes.
3. Your players should drive the barrel until the coach gives him the command to stop. Remember, your player should maintain a good base during the drive portion of the drill. Heels should be turned in and the toes out because this puts your lineman working off the inside of their arches.

Barrel Drill - Fit & Finish - Combo



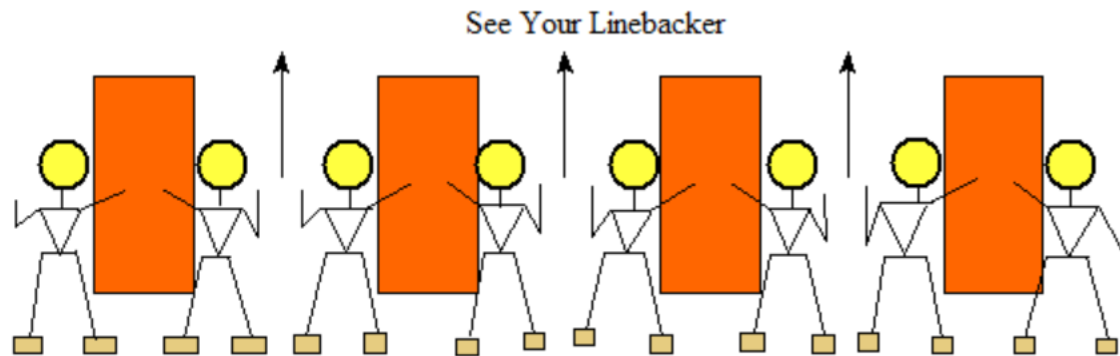
Coaching Point: The use of barrels gives you a good opportunity to work both base, inside and outside blocking schemes.

The fit and finish combo drill incorporates two players working together. Remember, combo means two a down defender to a second level linebacker.

Both linemen will fire out of their stances together and fit up on the barrel then drive the barrel until you as the coach blows his whistle which then will alert your offensive linemen to release which we call the "Finish" with a hard 10 yard sprint down field.

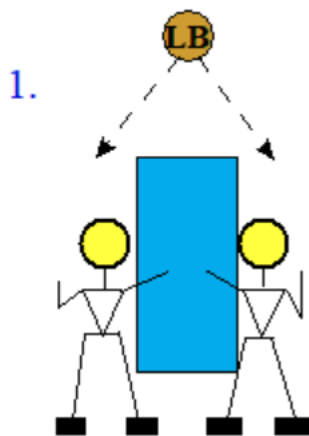
Remember, if the barrel tips over or gets out of the horizontal position your players have fit too high on the barrel. Both players should be able to see over the top of the barrel with their eyes up tracking a linebacker. A coaching point here is to make sure you linemen maintain a great base with them almost stepping on each other's inside foot getting hip to hip with each other which we call "Getting Hippo with Your Partner".

Barrel Drill - Fit and Finish - Multiple Combo



Pair your linemen up for combination fit and finish. Must get hip to hip while maintaining a great base. Keep your eyes up and track your linebacker.

Combo Pick-up Tracking Lber

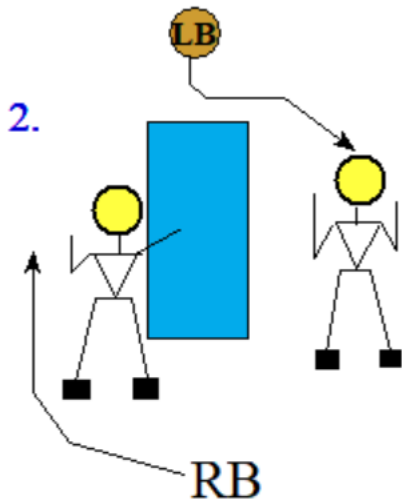


With combo pickup both linemen will incorporate the same technique as the previous illustration. Combination blocking with position step is a drill to help develop your footwork and position.

The key with blocking inside and outside zone schemes is to never chase your second level linebackers let them come to you before exiting from your combo. Your running backs will make their cuts normally opposite the side the linebacker fills.

As both linemen drive the bag or barrel while tracking their linebacker, they need to keep their eyes up getting hip to hip with each other.

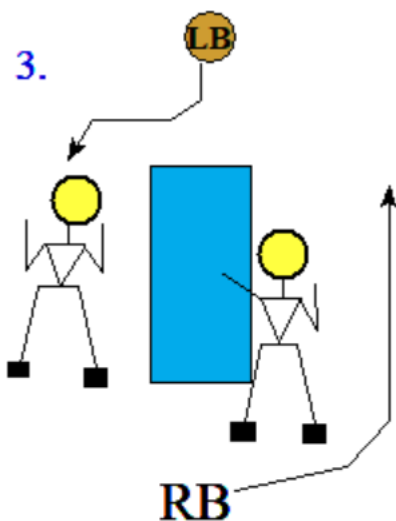
Remember, anytime you go into a combo situation you are working a down defender to a second level linebacker. You must be able to keep your head up and locate the direction the linebacker is scrape and fill.



Once you have completed working your combination drill you then place a linebacker behind the bag or barrel which can scrape to either side of the combo this teaches tracking and fitting on the linebacker as he fills to one side or the other.

Whatever side the linebacker scrapes or fills towards, the lineman to that side will come off the combo and pick the linebacker to his side up, don't exit the combo until the linebacker reaches your level.

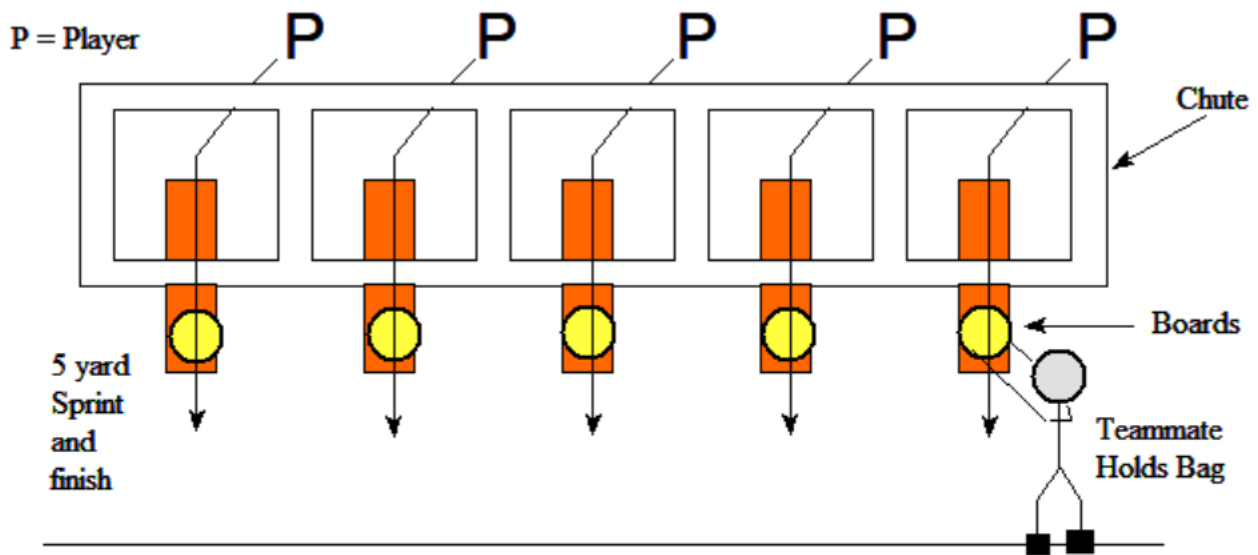
Work combo pickup drill every day. One of the most important coaching points to this drill is never chase the second level linebacker let him come to you. The running back will cut his running lane opposite the scraping linebacker. As you look at the following instructions you will notice that you will always have an offensive lineman between the ball carrier and the defender no matter what direction the linebacker scrapes to.



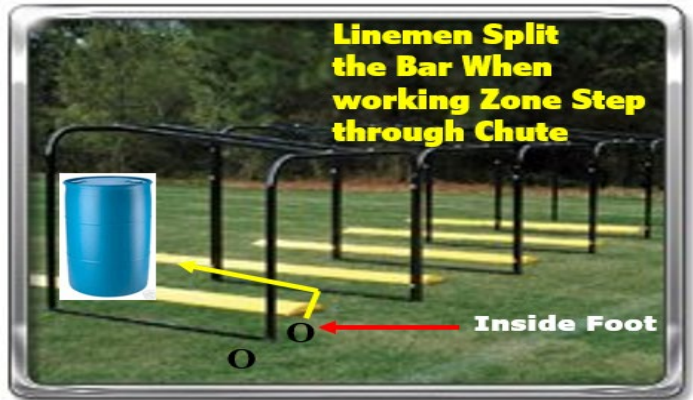
Always take your position step based upon the type of play called towards the lineman that you are going to combo with, this will help pull the defender over. By staying hip to hip (Hippo) with your block the defender can't split the combo.

Note: Your linemen will rotate their block according to type of play called. The lineman opposite the scraping linebacker will take over the down defender when the other lineman exits and picks up the linebacker.

Remember, if the barrel tips over or gets out of the horizontal position your players have to high on the barrel. Both players should be able to see over the top of the barrel with their eyes up tracking a linebacker. A coaching point here is to make sure you linemen maintain a great base with them almost stepping on each other's inside foot getting hip to hip with each other which we call "Getting Hippo with Your Partner".



Linemen Chute Drill



Coaching points for working the chutes is to make sure linemen keep their eyes up, focus eyes on coach standing out front, wide base, short choppy steps. Look for arms pumping, after players reach the end of the chute, they should finish with at least a hard 5-yard sprint.

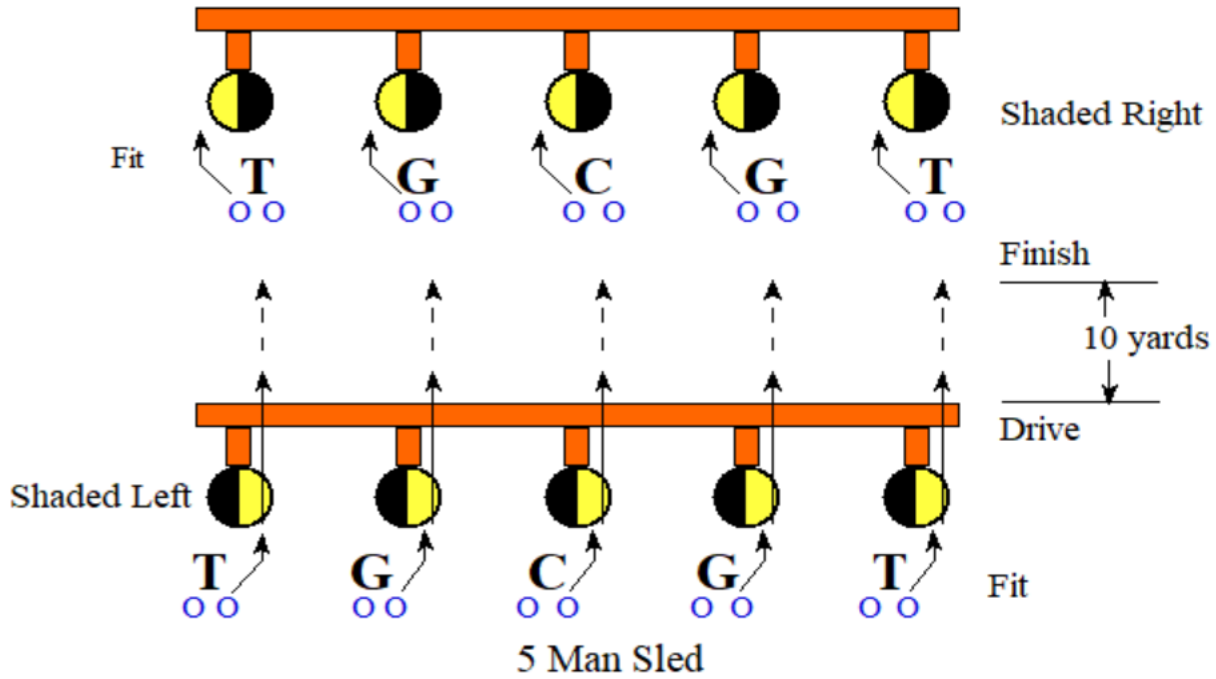
Chute Drills Incorporate Get-offs, Base Fit, Finish

On command from the coach players will position step at a 45-degree angle or with a position step according to the type of play called. You can incorporate boards to make sure your offensive linemen maintain their base throughout the drill.

Players will split the support bar opposite the hole they will be working in. By splitting the bar you can better work your variety of position steps working duck walk and hammer and nail.

As you talk proper base either from a three- or four-point stance you would emphasis prior to the snap of the ball that your lineman slightly turns their heels out with toes point in this will balance their stances and insures a flat back.

As your players travel through the chutes you want to talk hammer and nails. This means keeping tight elbows as you drive, or duck walk through the chute acting as if you are holding a hammer in each hand while pumping the arms, pretend as if you are trying to hammer a nail behind you, this drops the elbows and will assist in keeping your players eyes up instead of down.

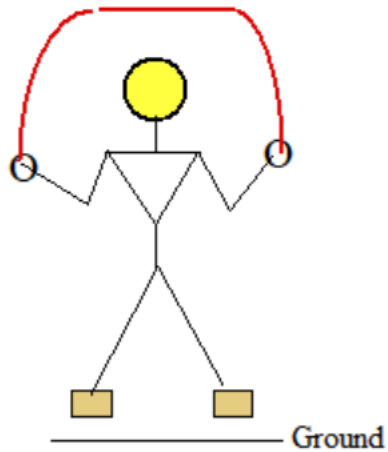


Note: Several sled drills can be incorporated into the fit and finish drills. Since most defenders line up as a shaded defender, I will start our offensive line off by splitting the bag with the foot in the direction I would like them to go then square up on the bag.



When working on the sled hat I look for is a wide base when we drive the sled and after a couple of reps I move to the other side of the sled so I can see their eyes, must learn to keep your eyes up in order to track linebackers.

Jump Rope Progression Drill



Developing Fast feet

This exercise is designed as an aerobic exercise which requires large amounts of oxygen to produce energy.

Ultimate goal for this exercise is to be able to continue jumping without stopping for 18 minutes.

Maintain your base while jumping by never bringing your feet no more than 3 to 4 inches off the ground.

This drill will challenge your players because it is hard but, once this is mastered you will have a lineman with great feet.

Must have patience mastering the ultimate goal of eighteen minutes. Your goal here is to keep the rope and feet going for 18 minutes without the rope ever stopping.

Chapter 12

Understanding and Installing Your Pass Protection



To maintain consistency in your passing offense, you must develop tremendous personal PRIDE in your ability to protect the passer. You must not only work individually, but collectively as one well-coordinated unit. The ability to anticipate each other's moves, must be developed along with being able to make the proper adjustments accordingly without hesitation.

An offensive lineman must be able to anticipate and adjust to any type of defensive move and alignment. To do this with any degree of efficiency requires you to know every possible detail available about you opponents. Pass protection in its simplest form can be reduced to you having more desire to get the job done. Refuse to be beaten.

The first and most significant element of pass protection for a lineman is to "set quickly" in a good position to take the pass rusher out. The manner of the pass set varies depending on the alignment and capabilities of the defender. Getting and then maintaining proper body and head position is the first step in getting the job done. There is a spot from which each pass is thrown, and it is vital that that your offensive blockers know where the passing spot is, in order that they may protect the passing area until the ball is released. For the passer to throw the ball with any degree of accuracy, the quarterback must be free of harassment from any opponent and should be able to see downfield. To accomplish this, your offensive line must give a clear area between them and the pass known as the depth of the pocket. The center and guards are responsible for the depth of the pocket while your tackles push the width of the pocket.

Having pride and understanding that no one is going to touch our Quarterback is the basis for effective pass protection, the fundamentals are as follows:

1. Get set quickly into a good fundamental position with knees bent, flat back, head up, hands inside the framework of the body, elbows in, and your body under control. If you set on the back heels or lead with your head, then the defender has the advantage over you.

2. Depending upon your protection scheme in a dropback passing scheme it will be important that you make contact on or near the line of scrimmage. (Use your hands to deliver an upward punch, keeping your elbows in).
3. Don't let the defender get into your body and force you into an upright position. When in an upright position you lose the ability to control your man. If unable to get away from the defenders control you must be able to kick back and give ground grudgingly and work, your body down low again into a good fundamental position.
4. It is better to give up ground keeping your fundamental pass protection position than to over commit and lose your man too quickly.
5. Always kick and slide or shuffle your feet quickly. Don't pick up and put down your feet, keep them on the ground. The more your feet are in contact with the ground, the better apt you are to maintain contact with your defender.
6. It is important that you keep your knees bent, head up, back flat and your chin in line with your inside knee – this prevents you from overextending. Always work to deliver your punch from a low to high lifting manner.

This section will provide in detail my method for setting the protection scheme. The dropback portion of this section is built off the concept of B.O.B. (Big-on-Big). Protections are set by the alert word "Roger & Louie".

As you review the following protections always remember, your opponent can always bring one more than you can pick-up so, it will be up to you to identify where the "Hot" defender is coming from. The sprint out protection which is our 800 (Rodeo) - 900 (Lasso) scheme is built around a full reach concept which makes the sprint out look like a run play on the snap of the ball.

The dropback protection is determined by Big-On-Big protection using the 1/2-man advantage from an inside out position. With the sprint out protection using a full reach concept will use the outside 1/2. As you review the following protections always remember, your opponent can always bring one more than you can pick-up so, it will be up to you to identify where the "Hot" defender is coming from. The sprint out protection which is our Roger – Louie alerts in which the scheme is built around a full reach concept.

Pass protection is built around pride in the fact that no one touches our quarterback. Pass protection schemes can vary, and I have attached numerous scenarios that take into consideration multiple alerts geared to handle most pressure schemes that an opponent can bring to bear. Remember, your opponent can always bring one more defender than you have blockers to pick them up.

One important aspect for dropback pass protection is where the quarterback sets up. On any 5-step drop series protection, the quarterback will set directly behind the center at a depth of 6 1/2 to 7 yards deep unless you are throwing 3 step which is 4 to 4 1/2 yards deep. It is important to know the quarterback's depth on each protection so that you do not have defenders up in the quarterback's face.

The Center and Guards are responsible for maintaining the depth of the pocket which is the area between the line of scrimmage and the depth the quarterback sets up. Tackle's responsibility is to keep the width of the pocket. With any type of protection, you teach it becomes very important to keep the stance consistent so that you never tip off your anticipated technique. In certain passing situations when it is obvious that you have to throw the football you can play from a two-point stance (up position). When working from a two-point stance this allows you vision, balance, and the ability to crowd the football. The two-point stance gives your tackles the ability to set quicker as well for a wide-rush defender, it also gives you vision to see more of the overall defensive alignment.

1. The Set

The first and one of the most important elements in pass protection is being able to set quickly and properly in a good hitting position. A good hitting position is feet spread shoulder width apart with a bend in the knees and ankles not at the waist. Keep your elbows in close to your body and pointed down this, allows you to fully extend and leverage your punch. When pass setting it is important to get you head back as fast as possible with your chin point down through your inside knee. By keeping your chin located on your inside knee will assist in keeping your shoulder lean inside which will assist in stopping the inside rush move. How your linemen will pass set will be according upon the alignment of the defender. Remember, explosion and quickness are the keys to a good pass set.

2. Foot Placement

The first step in protecting your inside is your base. In a drop back scheme you always want the defender to take his pass rush alley outside. Foot placement always works from the 1/2-man advantage position which means maintain an inside out position with your outside foot splitting the crouch of you defender aligned on you. When working for your 1/2-man advantage make sure you slightly stagger your base with you outside foot which, we call the anchor. Your anchor is the inside arch of your outside foot which allows you to have more of your foot planted in the ground to stop any bull rush by your defender. Whenever stepping to the 1/2 man you must full your initial step with a replacement step with your second foot, this helps in keeping your base intact and you never get over extended. Whenever your base gets over elongated it sets you up for the bull rush.

3. The Punch

In order to slow down your defender, first deliver your punch up through the top of the defenders numbers by first punching with the pad of your hands and then rolling your thumbs up which will allow your fingers to rotate underneath the peck plates of the defenders shoulder pads (This allows holding inside the framework of the body). If possible, once you have delivered the punch keep your hands on the defender and work hard not to bring them off. Never allow the rusher to get into your body and force you into an upright position.

4. The Finish

Always work to finish the defender once you get your hands on him until the ball is thrown. Once the ball has been thrown you should release down field looking for the first opposite colored jersey to block. Once again, to finish off a defender requires you keeping your hands on him and applying hard pressure because this keeps him from playing off of you and not allowing him to make a counter move. It's when you play soft that a defender can jump and get his hands up when he sees the quarterback throw the ball.

The Pass Set:

The first and one of the most important elements in pass protection is being able to set quickly and properly in a good hitting position. A good hitting position is feet spread shoulder width apart with a bend in the knees and ankles not at the waist. Keep your elbows in close to your body and pointed down this, allows you to fully extend and leverage your punch. When pass setting it is important to get you head back as fast as possible with your chin point down through your inside knee.

By keeping your chin located on your inside knee this will assist in keeping your shoulder lean inside which will assist in stopping the inside rush move. How your linemen will pass set will be according upon the alignment of the defender. Remember, explosion and quickness are the keys to a good pass set.

Stance (Base) - Feet Parallel to Slight Stagger: Because of the base being close to parallel enables the offensive line to set their outside foot as an anchor, this stops any potential bull rush and forces the defender to pass rush outside.

Hand Down - Paint the Grass: To help assist an offensive lineman to set his stance properly we ask them to paint the grass with their down hand. Paint the grass with the down hand is a back and forth movement of the fingers, this sets the weight on the feet.

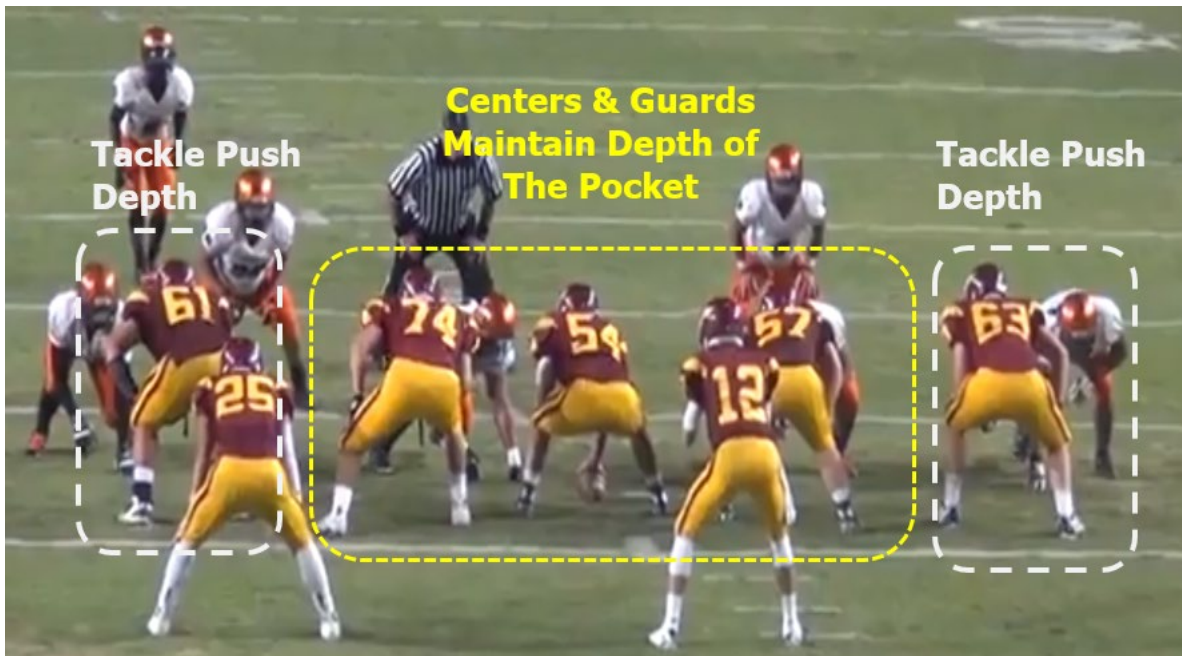
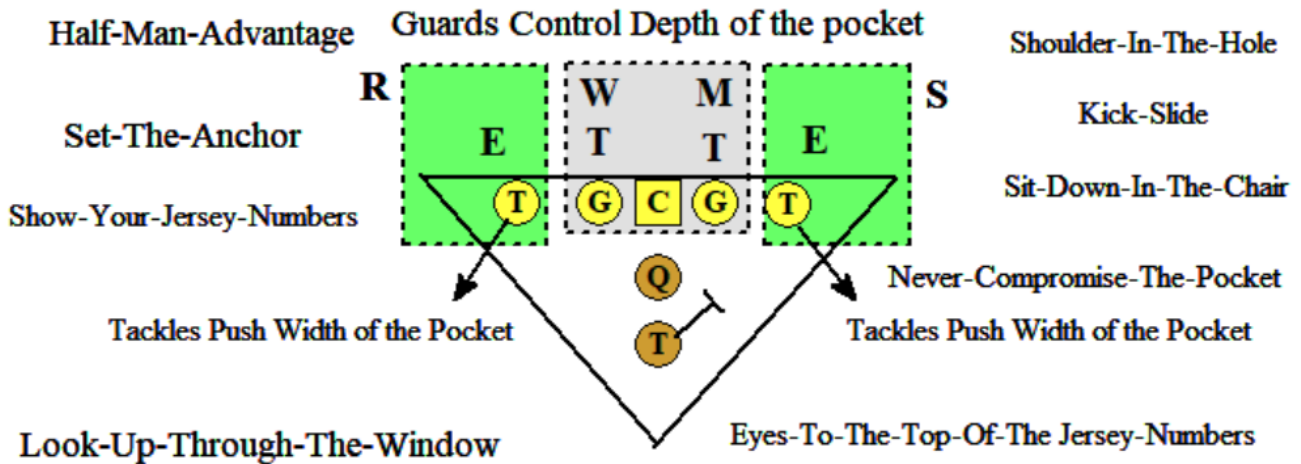
Helmet - Hammer the Nail: To help with your linemen to get into their pass set quickly we ask them to hammer the nail with the back of their helmet. When you hammer the nail make sure you drop your chin so not to get bull rushed off the back off your heels.

Show Your Jersey Numbers: To set your hips underneath you we ask our linemen to show their jersey numbers to the defender this will help them from getting over extended and will also set them down in the chair.

Shoulders Opposite the Punch: When pass setting, we incorporate the term shoulders opposite your punch. Shoulders opposite your punch occurs as you hammer the nail and show your numbers to the defender. By forcing the shoulders opposite the punch, it helps from keeping the defender making moves off shoulders that follow the punch which creates a waste bender.

Chapter 13

The Triangle Approach to Dropback Pocket Protection



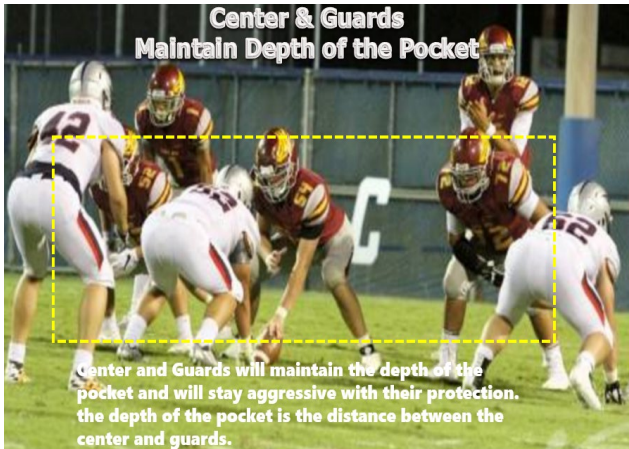
Center and Guards Maintain Depth of the Pocket:

Guards/Centers

Guards and Center in dropback protection are responsible for the depth of the pocket which is the space between a defender and the quarterback, since they deal with interior rushers in a smaller space. Guards and Centers should possess good lateral movement, strength and awareness for the different games and twists that down defenders can bring with the ability to track blitzing linebackers. Interior linemen have to anchor, yield, and re-anchor repeatedly in pass blocking. Guards generally take on

defensive linemen while the center assists where needed. Some centers can even kick out while double reading a down defender to an outside pass rusher in order to take care of overload blitzes.

The Center and Guards are responsible for the depth of the pocket which means they will aggressive pass set trying to keep their defenders as close and near to the line of scrimmage as possible. A strong pocket will allow the quarterback to avoid pressure from the edges by moving into space in the middle.



Center and Guards Maintain the Depth of The Pocket: The depth of the straight dropback protection schemes put your center and guards more aggressive with their pass set in order to assist with the depth between the defender and the quarterback.

Tackles Push the Width of The Pocket:

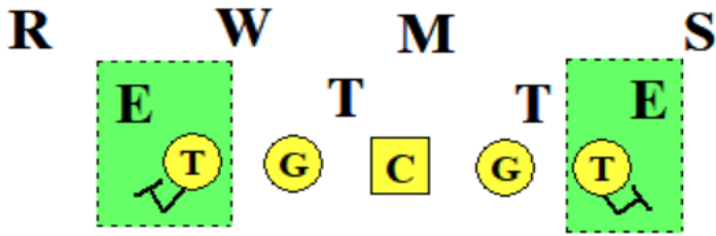
Tackles

Offensive tackles protect the perimeter and will push the width of the pocket, usually against the defense's most threatening rushers. Defensive ends and outside linebackers are elite athletes—rare combinations of size, strength, and speed. In order to keep the quarterback clean, offensive tackles must have fantastic footwork, lateral movement, and tenaciousness.

Tackles generally move backward at the snap, opening a cushion of space between them and the edge rushers. They do this by kick-stepping, which allows them to keep their heads on a swivel and keep aware. Since this involves giving a momentum advantage over to rushers, tackles must be able to plant their feet and commit to a block quickly.

Good tackle pass blocking requires a smooth kick-step and playing on a whole foot instead of either heels or toes. This allows the tackle to deliver a punch without losing control of momentum. Tackles should possess good footwork, with the ability to deliver a good first punch.

One common failure for tackles is that they play on either toes or heels instead of a whole foot. This allows edge rushers to set them up with speed and then bowl them over with a power rush. Elite rushers can knock a tackle to the ground with this strategy.



Tackles will kick slide according to the "V" of the neck.



Offensive Tackles will read the "V" of the neck of their defender in order to determine their proper footwork for any wide rusher. No matter what offensive line position, each offensive lineman will use the 1/2-man advantage to determine his inside out position on his potential rush defender.



Tackles Push the Width of The Pocket: Your tackles in a dropback scheme are responsible for the width of the pocket by forcing their defender outside, this is where they can give some ground in order to force the defender upfield and outside.



1/2 Man Advantage - (Outside): With the sprint out schemes you ask your offensive linemen to work the outside 1/2. This is accomplished by using a dropstep and rip through defenders playside jersey number as you try and attempt to work your hips and shoulders around so the quarterback can get outside.

Never Compromise Your Base: As I last mentioned in regard to your offensive linemen, never allow as your feet to come together this will compromise the base. Your linemen should always work to keep their feet shoulder width apart.

In dropback protection the Center is responsible for the direction the slide will go based off the ROGER (Rt.) and LOUIE (Lt.) alert. Roger and Louie protection is always set opposite the single back who is left inside to assist in protection. The Single Back who is left inside will be alerted with a Ricky or Lucy alignment. If the back hears Lucy that means he will protect to his left with the offensive line using Roger protection to the right.

Chapter 14

Understanding the Half Man Advantage Rule With Big-On-Big Protection

Section 2: Offensive Techniques for The Passing Game

Offensive Pass Blocking Techniques

Dropback Pass Protections

How to Set Your Pass Protections

Building Your Dropback Protections Around Big-On-Big Principals

Using Tuff and Soft Alerts

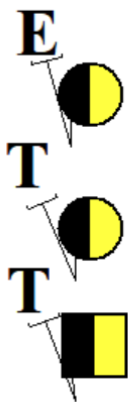
Using Nasty Call

Sprint out Protection Concept: Circle the Wagons

This section will provide in detail our method for setting the protection scheme. The dropback portion of this section is built off the concept of B.O.B. (Big-on-Big). Protections are set by the alert word "Roger (Rt.) & Louie (Lt.)".

As you review the following protections always remember, your opponent can always bring one more than you can pick-up so, it will be up to you to identify where the "Hot" defender is coming from. The sprint out protection which is our Roger - Louie scheme is built around a full reach concept, his makes the sprint out look like a run play on the snap of the ball.

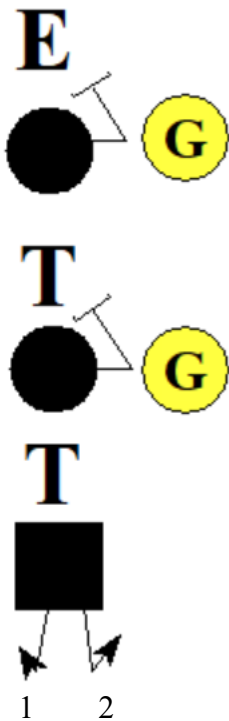
The dropback protection is determined by Big-On-Big protection using the 1/2-man advantage from an inside out position. With the sprint out protection using a full reach concept will use the outside 1/2.



Shaded 1/2 man - Set The Anchor

Whenever covered by an outside shaded defender the general rule for your offensive linemen should be "Set the Anchor to the 1/2 Man". The 1/2-man advantage rule with straight dropback protection is worked from an inside out position. The correct terminology with a defender aligned as a 1/2 defender is to "Pick It Up and Put It Down" By picking up the outside foot and setting the anchor, this will help in bracing vs any potential bull rush.

Since the 1/2 man exists then all that is required by your offensive lineman is a pick-up put down.

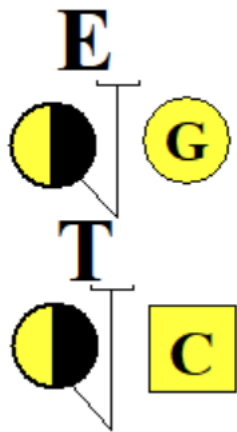


Head-up Defender
Step Inside To the 1/2 Man

Whenever faced with a head-up defender your offensive line will step inside with their inside foot and then replace with the outside foot (Step Replace). Thus, the procedure for a head up defender is step inside, replace and set the anchor with the outside foot closing the door to the inside rush.

Whenever stepping inside your lineman should keep a good shoulder lean inside. The inside shoulder should be kept over the inside knee, this is called "Shoulder in The Hole".

The center when faced with a head-up defender will step back with a one, two step in order to anchor himself to the bull rush.



Inside Shaded Defender -
Step Hard to The Inside to The 1/2 Man

With any defender aligned on the inside shade of an offensive lineman it will require a "Hard" technique while working to their inside 1/2-man position. The Hard technique is a pass set to the inside 1/2-man advantage which puts the offensive lineman working hard across the face of the defender.

Because your offensive line is working hard to their inside 1/2 man it usually will put them washing their defender down and to the outside.

Sit Down in The Chair: Sit down in the chair is a descriptive term used to help keep your offensive linemen hips down and their weight underneath them.

Chin Over the Inside Knee: Whenever your offensive line pass sets you would want them to set with their chin over their inside knee, this gives them an inside body lean and will assist in stopping a defender from pass rushing inside.

Shoulder in The Hole - (Inside): With your chin over the inside of your knee we will take it one step further with an inside shoulder lean, this too will help in closing the door to the inside pass rush with a straight drop back scheme.

Set the Outside Anchor - (Outside Foot):



When pass setting in a drop back scheme we ask our offensive linemen to drop and anchor their outside foot, this forces the defender to pass rush to the outside. Offensive Tackle must understand while setting his anchor that he pushes from an inside out position.

Anchor - Term used for the drop step placement of the outside foot in pass protections on straight drop back passing schemes. Set the anchor helps to slow any type of up field bull rushes by defenders. Setting the anchor in pass protection creates the stagger in the base of offensive linemen.



Set the Outside Anchor - (Outside Foot): When pass setting in a drop back scheme we ask our offensive linemen to drop and anchor their outside foot with inside shoulder lean, this forces the defender to pass rush to the outside.

Shoulders Opposite the Punch: When pass setting, we incorporate the term shoulders opposite your punch. Shoulders opposite your punch occurs as you hammer the nail and show your numbers to the defender. By forcing the shoulders opposite the punch, helps from keeping the defender making moves off shoulders that follow the punch which creates a waste bender.

Punch Up Through the Window: When your linemen set their punch, you dont want them punching out this is where a defender will make is move. So, we ask our linemen to punch up instead of out. When they punch up it sets their hips underneath them. Ask your linemen to punch up to the top of the numbers of the down defender.

Create The "W" (Show Me It's OK): In order to keep your offensive linemen elbows down instead of out we ask them to so me it's OK, this is done by bringing the thumbs together and turning them up. This technique will also assist in the fingers of your offensive linemen rotating underneath the peck plates of the down defender.

1/2 Man Advantage - (Inside Position Dropback Passes):



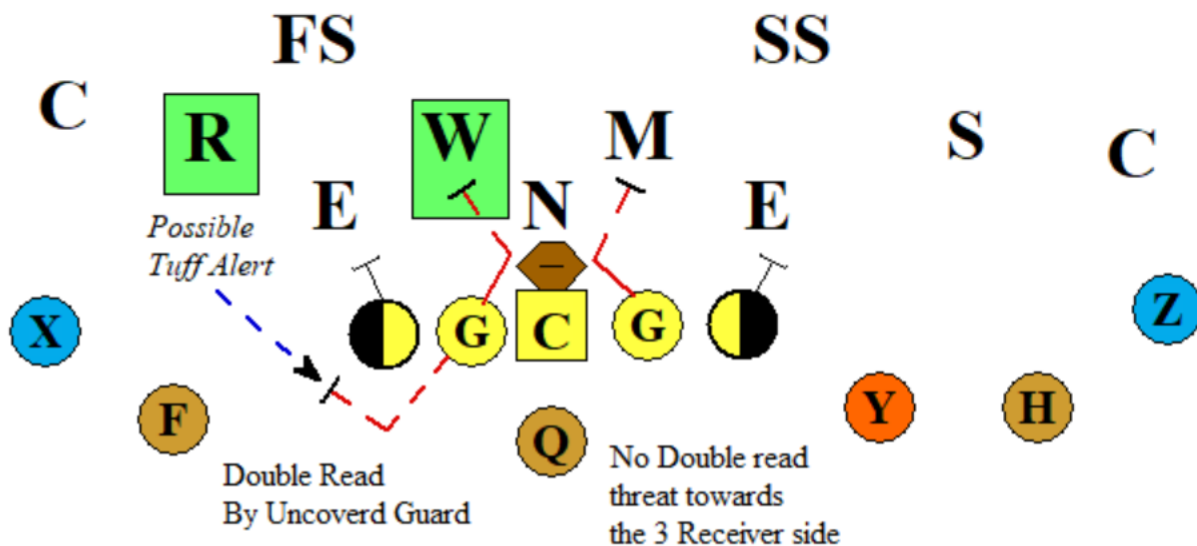
1/2 Man Advantage - (Inside Position dropback passes):
 The 1/2-man advantage puts your offensive pass set on the inside ear of the down defender. The outside foot of your offensive lineman should split the crouch of the defender, this creates the 1/2-man advantage and assists in a pocket protection scheme.

1/2 Man Advantage - (Outside Position Dropback Passes):



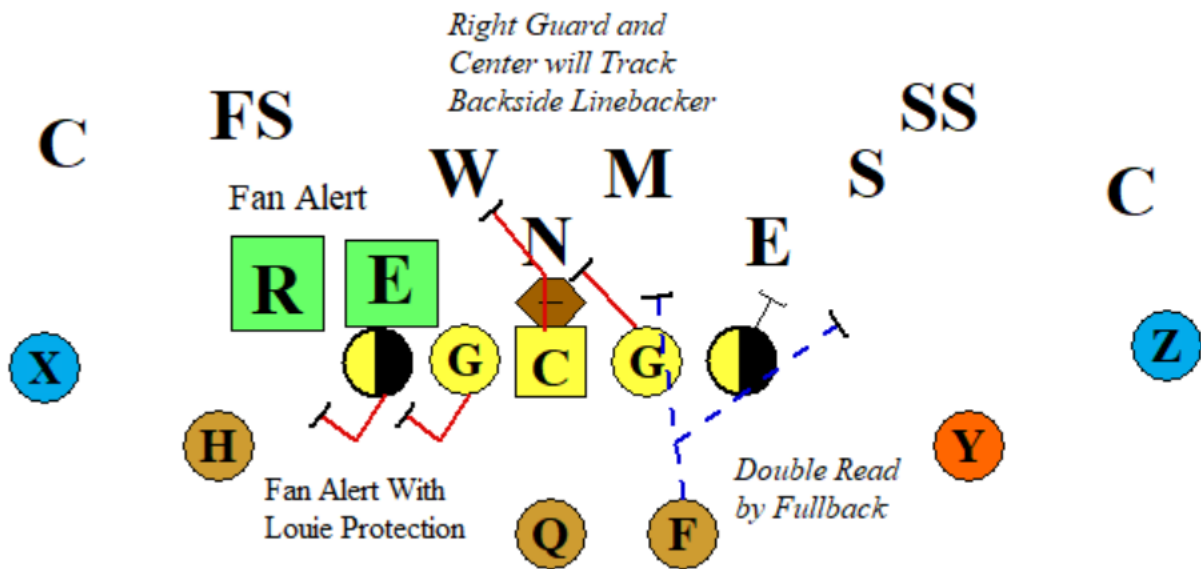
1/2 Man Advantage - (Outside): With the sprint out schemes you ask your offensive linemen to work the outside 1/2. This is accomplished by using a dropstep and rip through defenders playside jersey number as you try and attempt to work your hips and shoulders around so the quarterback can get outside.

5 Man No Back Protection Versus Odd

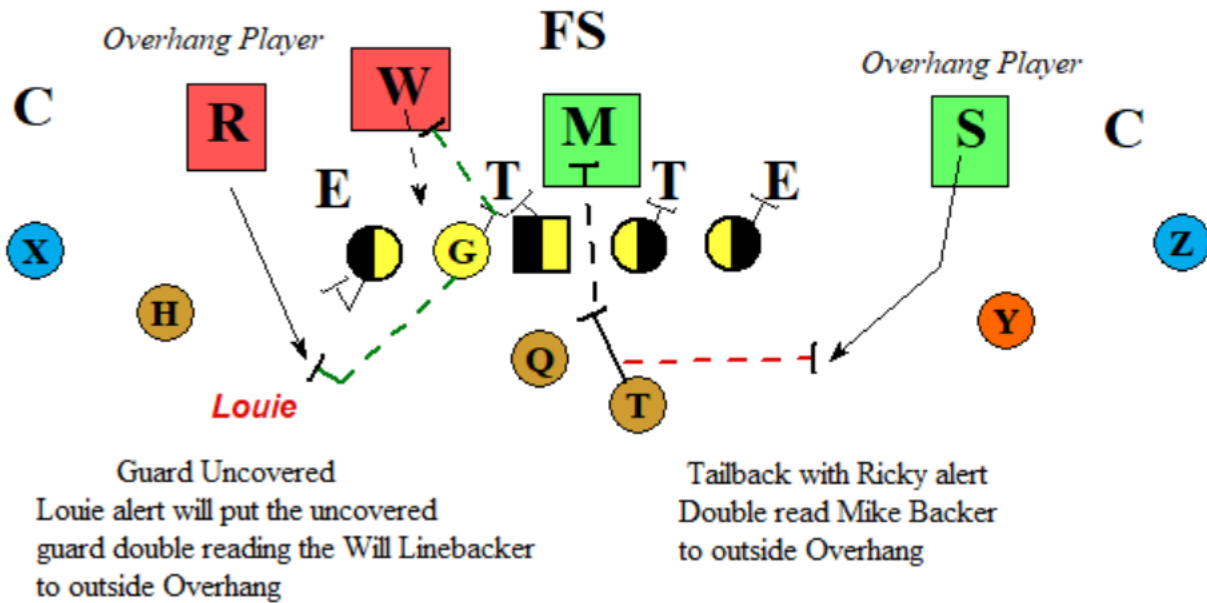


Whenever faced with an odd front using an empty formation and your guards are uncovered, you will have the ability to double read with both guards. Guards will be responsible for a hand check with the center as they track linebackers to their side. If no Linebacker threat the uncovered guard will look for pressure off the edge to his side, to assist the uncovered guard the Tackle to his side will alert a “Tuff” call to help him with seeing potential threat off the edge.

6-man Protection vs an Odd Front with a Fan Alert

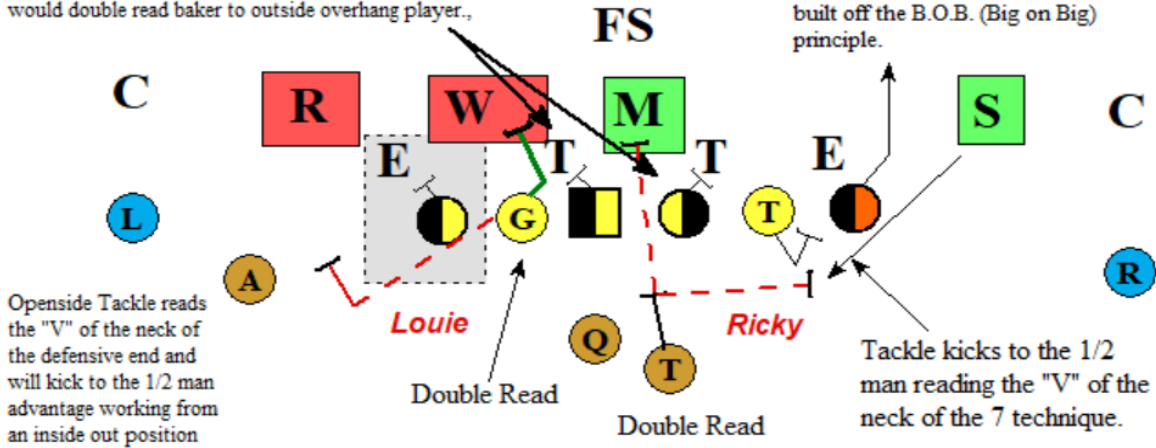


6 Man Half Slide Protection

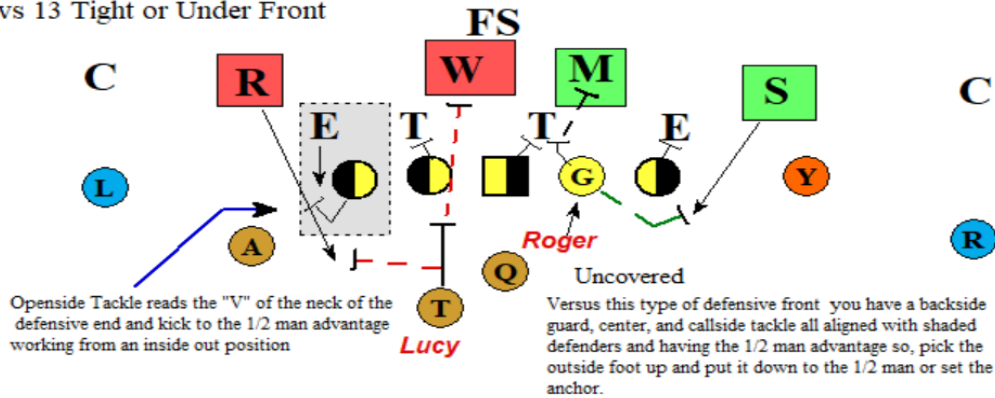


Both the center and the guard have the 1/2 man advantage. In this situation the uncovered guard to the Louie protection would double read baker to outside overhang player.,

The 1/2 man advantage for straight dropback protection as mentioned is built off the B.O.B. (Big on Big) principle.

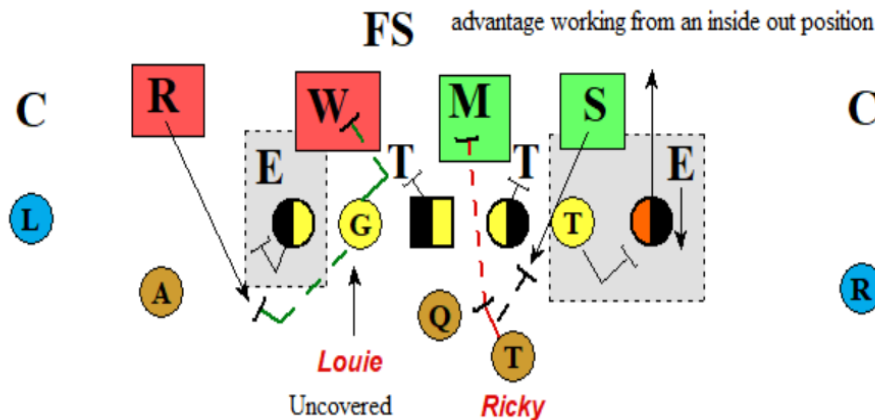


vs 13 Tight or Under Front

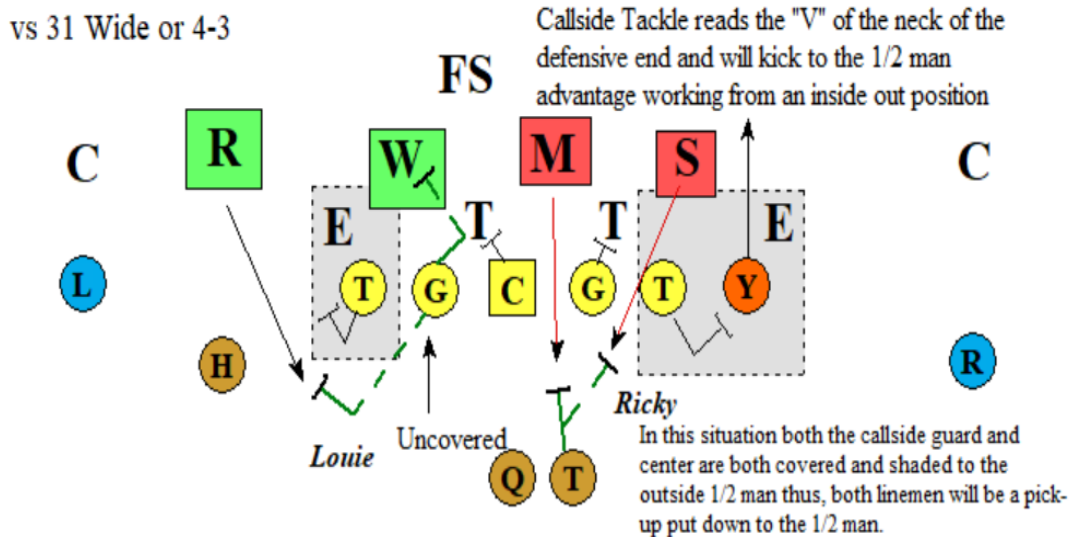
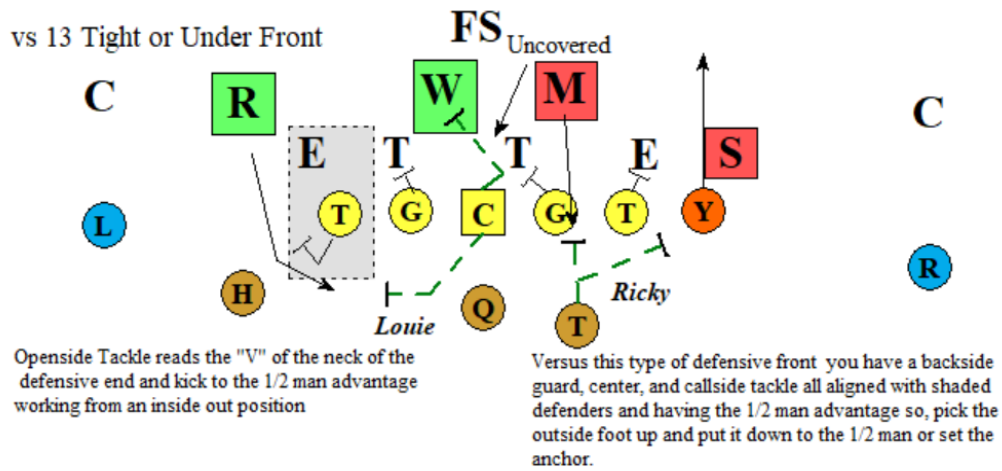
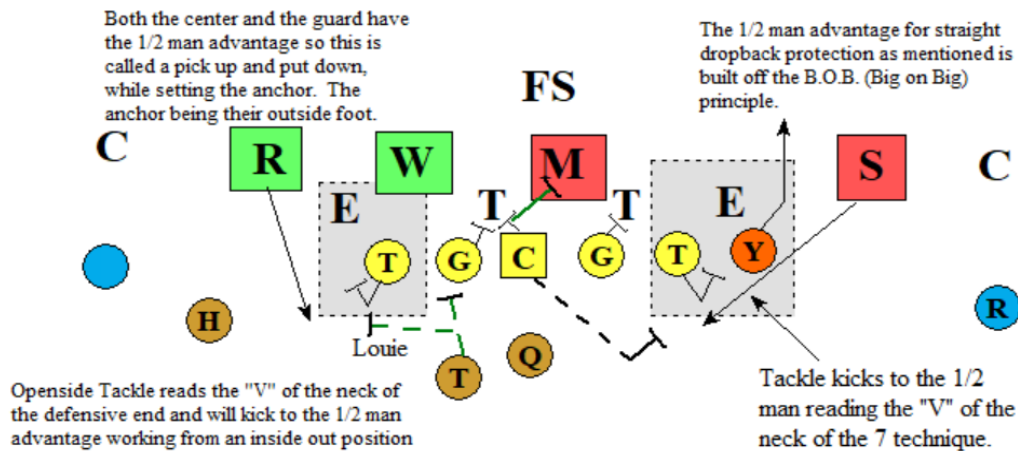


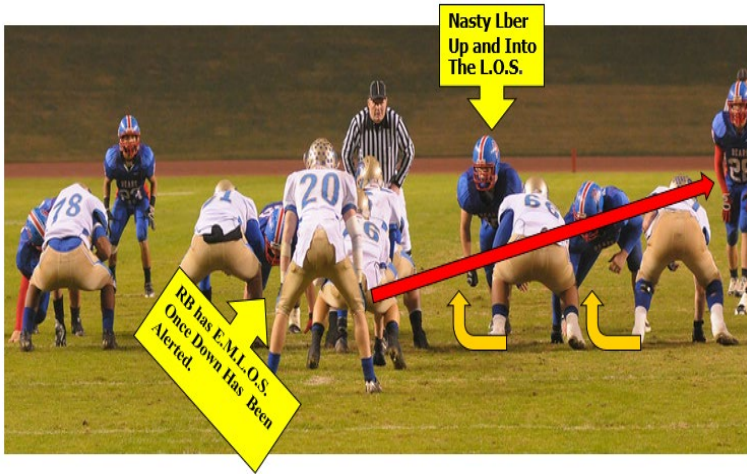
vs 31 Wide or 4-3

Callside Tackle reads the "V" of the neck of the defensive end and will kick to the 1/2 man advantage working from an inside out position



Remember the protection slides go opposite the Ricky and Lucy backfield alert. The center and possible the quarterback can be used to alert the "Mike" linebacker as he is called to assist in sliding your offensive line protections





The "Down, Down" alert is only made towards the right and left call made in the huddle side. Any offensive lineman callside that gets a linebacker walked up inside of him is responsible for making the down call. The "Down, Down" alert tells the next adjacent lineman his side to block down. The "Down" alert tells the running back now that he has no double read and that he now will block End Man on The Line of Scrimmage (EMLOS)

Chapter 15

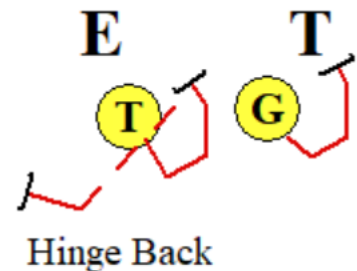
Implementing Sprint Out Protection

Rodeo & Lasso Passing game is built off the quarterback sprinting outside feeling the block of his offensive tackle. I also use Rodeo and Lasso for code words with sprint out Rodeo (Rt.) Lasso (Lt.) Whenever the quarterback sprints out, he will feel for the reach block by his tackle on the defensive end. When sprinting out and the quarterback sees that his tackle can reach the defensive end then he continues outside. If the quarterback sees the defensive end widens and the offensive tackle can't get him reached, then the quarterback will pull up inside of the tackles reach block.

The offensive line will implement their blocking scheme based upon Rodeo and Lasso which means circle the wagons. By going full reach with the offensive line, it looks like an outside run play on the outset for the inverts reading through the offensive tackles.

The fullback is responsible for the playside linebacker on the snap of the ball. Whatever lineman or fullback that comes uncovered he will peel back and look to pick up pressure off the backside.

The difference in the run vs pass technique with the full reach concept is that in the running game and a linemen comes uncovered he will climb to the next level chasing a linebacker with, the passing game and a linemen comes uncovered he will hinge back checking for an edge rusher off the back side.



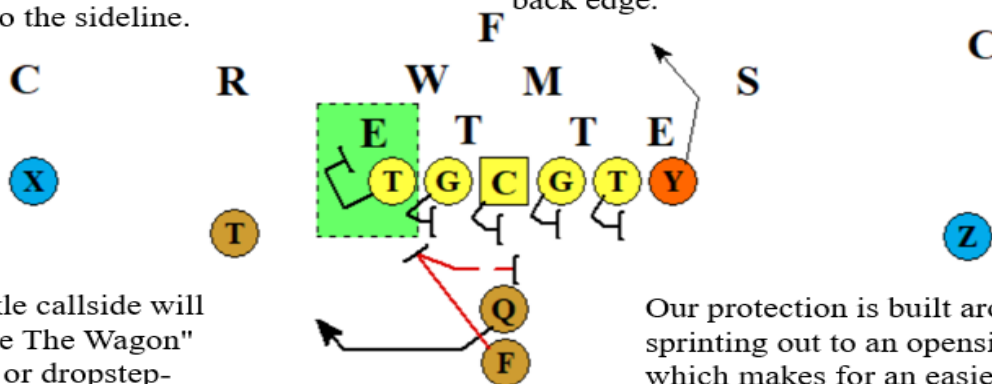
When teaching the full reach to the sprintout game you will see you have a lot of carry over with the repetition because it mimics the same technique you would teach for the full reach or outside zone scheme.

The actual terminology for the sprintout scheme is dropstep, crossover, reach through and hinge back if uncovered. Whichever linemen or fullback that comes uncovered on their full reach will want to hinge back looking for any defender coming off the back edge chasing your quarterback.

The picture below shows what the initial steps would be when sprinting out to the right. One the offensive line steps reach they then want to hinge back working to pin the defenders inside. Any offensive lineman that comes uncovered will kickout away from the L.O.S. tracking any defender coming off the back edge.

The Tackle in this illustration will be instructed to reach his defender and if he can get to his outside jersey number, he will then go ahead and reach him. If the defender stretches with the reach block then run the defender to the sideline.

With sprint out protection you are asking your offensive linemen to reach the first defender playside. If any linemen comes uncovered, he then should hinge back looking for any defender off the back edge.



Your Tackle callside will use "Circle The Wagon" technique or dropstep-crossover-rip-through trying to reach the 5 technique his side.

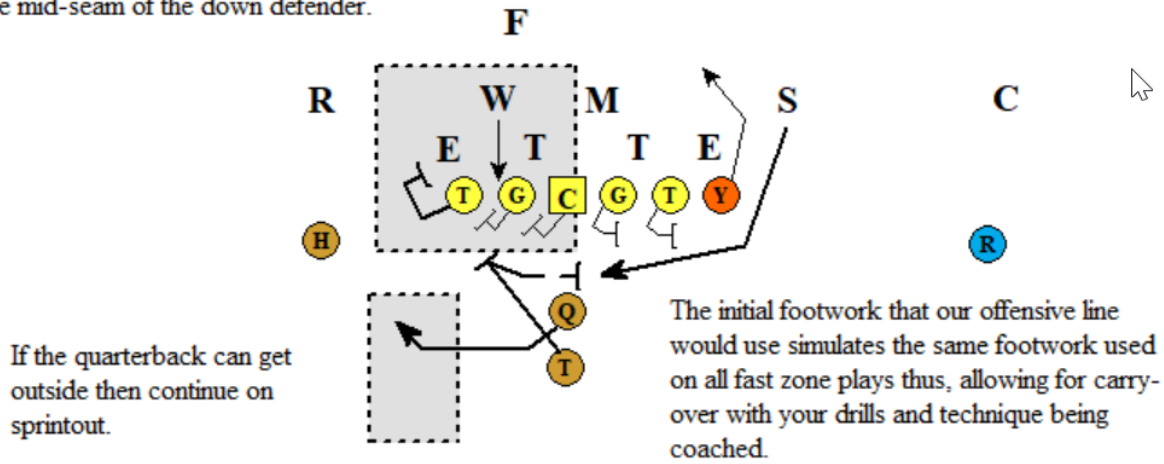
Our protection is built around sprinting out to an openside which makes for an easier read and reach for the playside offensive tackle.



Circle the Wagons - (Sprint Out Protection): Circle the wagons in the passing game pertains to the sprint out game. As the quarterback starts his sprint out action, we ask our offensive line to hard reach the outside jersey number of the down defender. On the outset of this play it will look like a run play.

With sprintout protection you want to teach the outside half-man advantage. Your offensive linemen should work to get their inside foot to the mid-seam of the defender where as in straight dropback protection puts the outside foot to the mid-seam of the down defender.

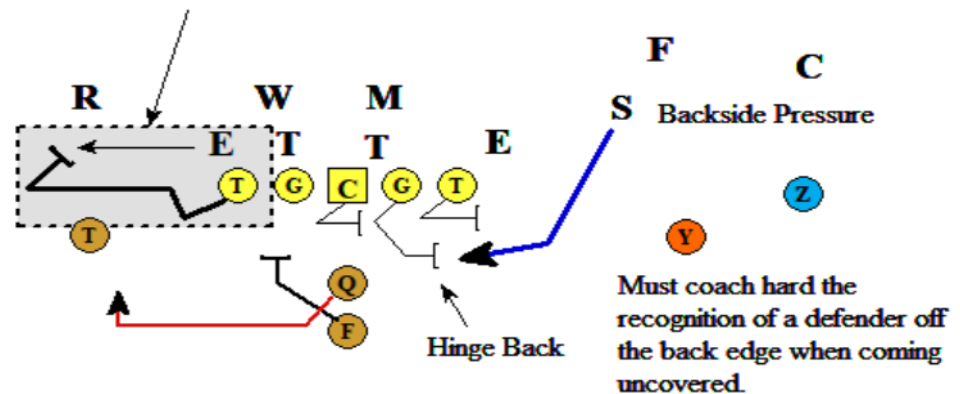
The playside guard vs the 31 front would be responsible for picking up the linebacker on a blitz, this would then free the "Tailback" Back to hinge back because he then would become uncovered.



When teaching a full read concept for your protection you should be able to see the back of the jersey numbers of your offensive linemen. Quarterback will feel the reach by his callside tackle if he is to continue sprinting out or pulling up inside his tackle.

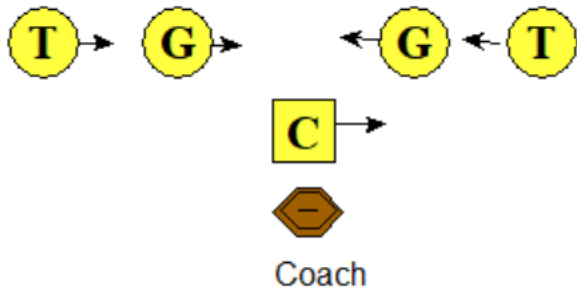
If the end stretches from the reach block by the offensive tackle then the quarterback will pull-up inside.

Quarterback must feel the block of the tackle while looking for open receivers. If the quarterback feels no pressure off the edge this means that he has run option available because defenders are either playing man or have dropped into their zone coverages.



Pass Set Drills

Inside Step and Replace Set the Anchor Drill

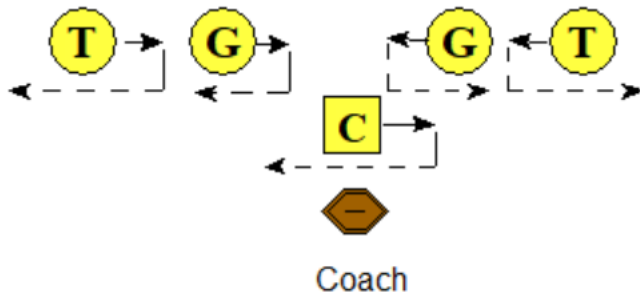


Step replace drill simulates the inside move by a defender. Thus, your offensive linemen will step inside to the 1/2 man and set the anchor. The anchor is the outside foot.

Before going to the next drill, you want to repeat this drill twice.

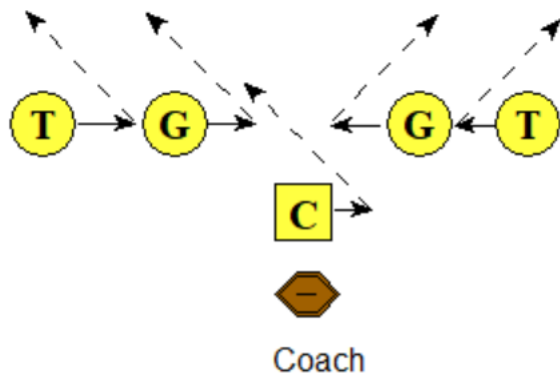
The purpose of setting you center out front is so that he can work his steps without running into the blocker next to him.

Inside Step to the 1/2 Man, Then 3 Steps Flat with Shoulder in The Hole Drill



Drill number 2 simulates an inside step to a replace with 3 steps flat and to the outside. As the offensive blockers move to their outside emphasize the shoulder in the hole. This puts the blockers chin over the inside knee as they kick flat for 3 steps.

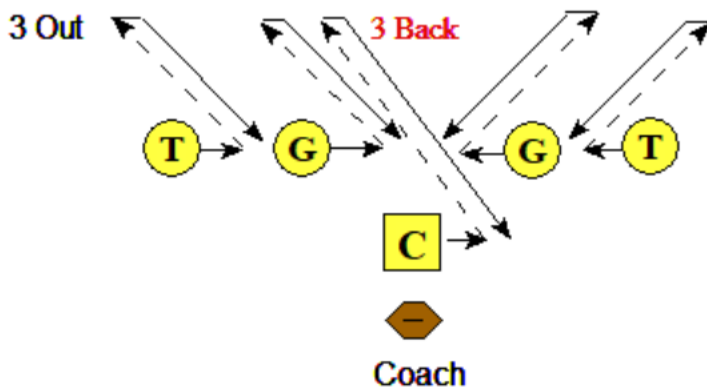
Inside Step to the 1/2 Man, Take 3 Steps Back At 45 Degree Angle with Shoulder in The Hole



Drill number 3 simulates an inside cut-off to an outside and upfield push on a defender. Must emphasize the inside shoulder in the hole.

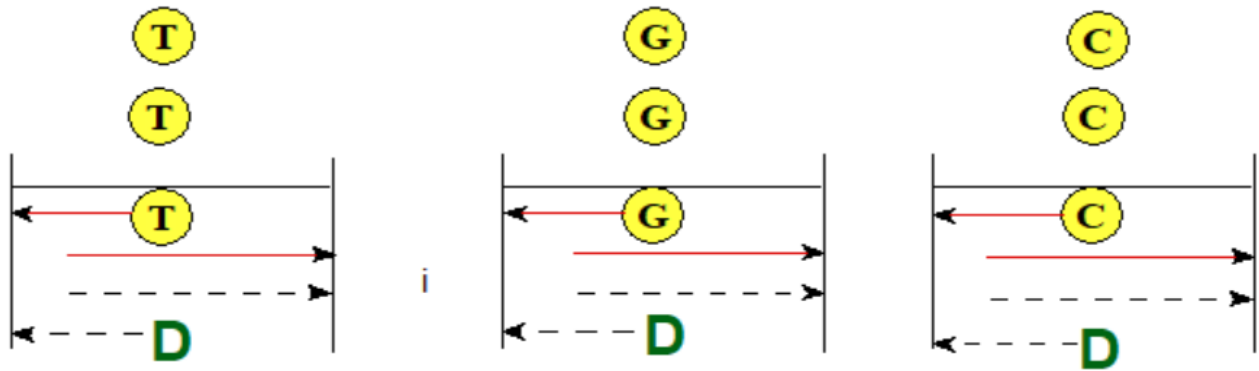
All pass set drills should be done twice before moving onto the next drill.

Inside Step to the 1/2 Man, Then Kick 3 Out and 3 Back with Shoulder in The Hole



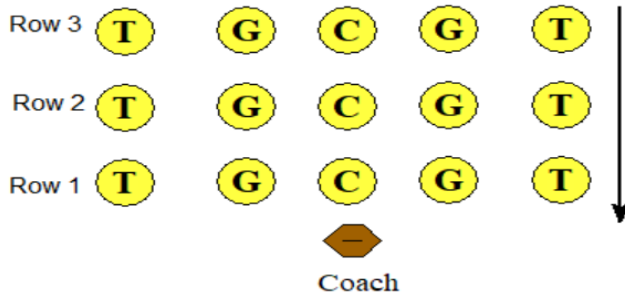
With this drill you will be simulating an inside cut-off to an outside push to an inside cut-off.

Mirror Drill with Flat Kick Slide



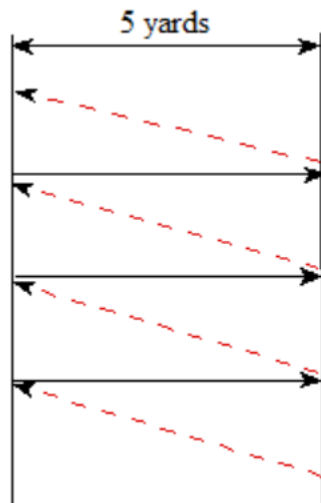
1. Offensive player will set and mirror the movement of the defender.
2. Offensive player must keep his base with feet shoulder width apart.
3. The back heels of the offensive linemen must stay on the back line while mirroring the defender.
4. Don't allow the offensive players to chase the defender they are mirroring. Must keep heels on the line.

Quick Set and Punch



1. Start from a playing stance, 2 or 3 point.
2. Snap into a good pass set on command from coach.
3. Pound the nail with the back of the helmet, show your jersey numbers to the defender.
4. Shoulders opposite the punch, look up through the window.
5. Arms at 3/4 extension.
6. Keep the chin over the top of the belt buckle.

Kick Slide - Angle / Flat Drill



1. This drill works outside kick slide to an inside flat step. Keep a shoulder lean to the inside.
2. Must be able to maintain a good base while changing from an outside rush to an inside move.
3. This drill illustrates a right sided progression, once the right-side kick has been completed then move line to other side to do a left side kick and slide.

Player

Mirror-Dodge

The purpose of the Mirror-Dodge drill is to get the feet moving while also working on good pass setting demeanor. Each player that is up will put a post foot on a line and try to keep that post foot there for the duration of the drill. We will work both feet as post feet as we rotate through. This helps players be more comfortable setting both ways. We also start with the players hands behind their back,

emphasizing a big chest. The defensive player should move, changing directions, forcing the offensive player to mirror that movement with quick feet, staying in front of the defender.

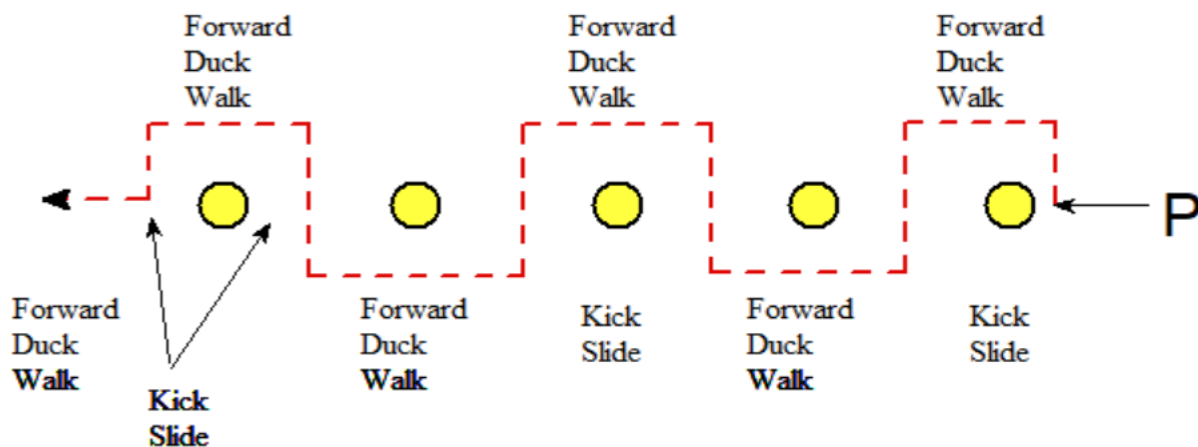
A punch component can be added easily to this drill, working on timing of the punch as well.

Coaching points:

- Quick, short steps
- No hopping, keep feet in the ground as much as possible
- Stay square to the line
- Big chest, slight arc in the back
- Work on being able to react quickly to change of direction, don't get caught off balance
- Should stay in a good demeanor the whole time
- Upper body should have minimal movement



Duck Walk and Kick Slide Through the Barrels Forward



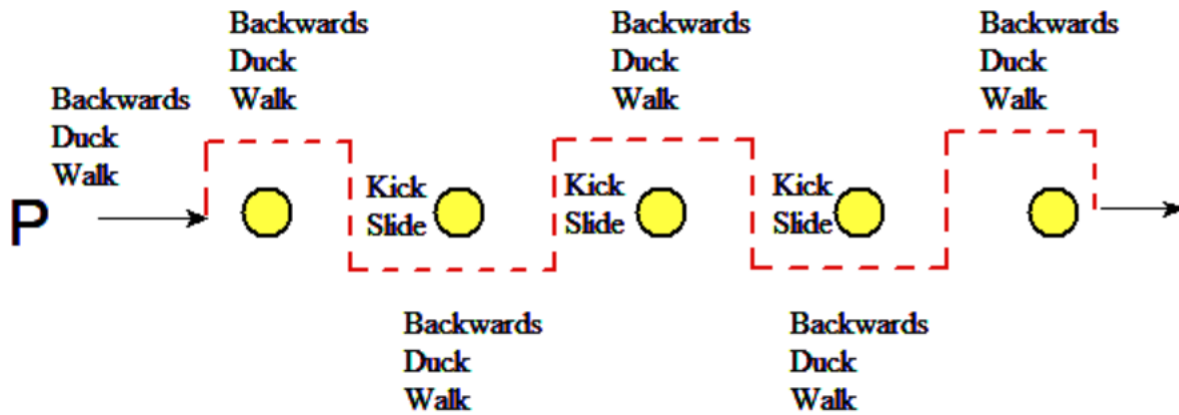
Duck Walk and Kick Slide through the barrels. This drill is a weave between the barrels, just another drill that you can use with the 50-gallon plastic industrial barrels.

Step 1: Start by duck walking towards the first barrel forward maintaining a good base with a "Z" in the knees.

Step 2: Look for heels in and toes out. Use hammer and nails with the hands and arms when duck walking for run simulation.

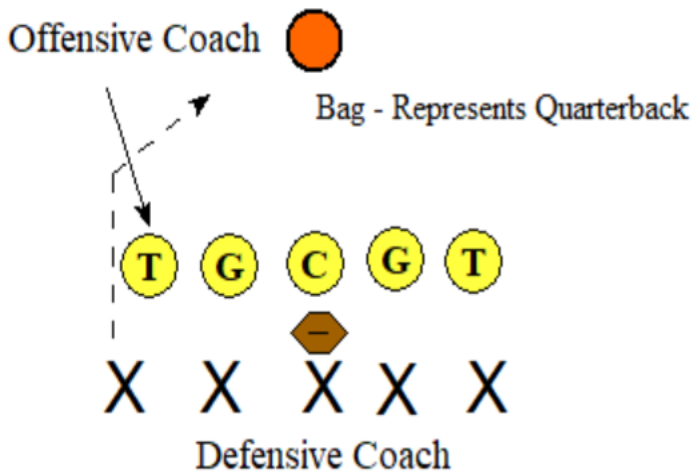
Step 3: Keep your feet tight to the ground with an emphasis on getting your feet into the ground as fast as possible.

Duck Walk and Kick Slide Through the Barrels Backward



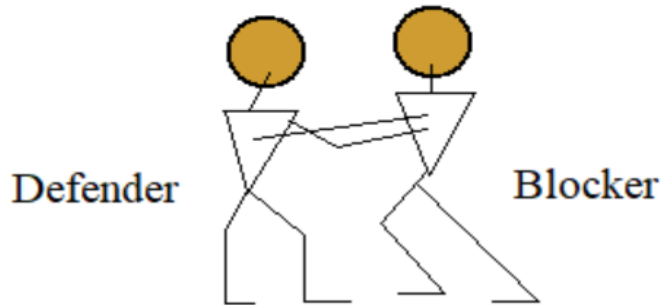
Duck Walk and Kick Slide backwards simulates pass protection. As your offensive linemen finishes the drill have him turn and run at the end (balls gone your gone). Look for quick feet and base with your offensive lineman never bringing his feet together. As each lineman masters this drill push them to move their feet faster each time that they go through the drill.

Pass Rush Drill / Random



1. Have on the snap command by the offensive coach all linemen pass set anticipating a potential rusher over them.
2. Defensive coach will point to one of the down defenders to pass rush.
3. Only one rusher allowed to rush.
4. 3.5 seconds to get to the bag located 7 yards behind the offensive line.
5. On each command the entire offensive line will be required to pass set.

Wax on Wax Off - Hand Combatives Drill



Have blocker and defender face off with each other with the blocker in a pass set position.

2. The blocker should have both his hands inside the framework of the defender in a snatched position (Hold).

3. The defender will start by setting both his hands on the top of the blockers shoulder pads. Both participants will wait for the coach's command to start.

3. The defender on the command by his coach will attempt to replace his hands by getting them inside the snatch by the blocker. Once the defender gets his hands inside to the numbers of the blocker the blocker will duplicate the same technique that the defender used (wax on wax off).

4. Once you as the coach feel comfortable that your athletes are starting to master the wax-on-wax off technique then proceed doing the same drill with the defender forcing the blocker to kick slide in order to mirror the defender.

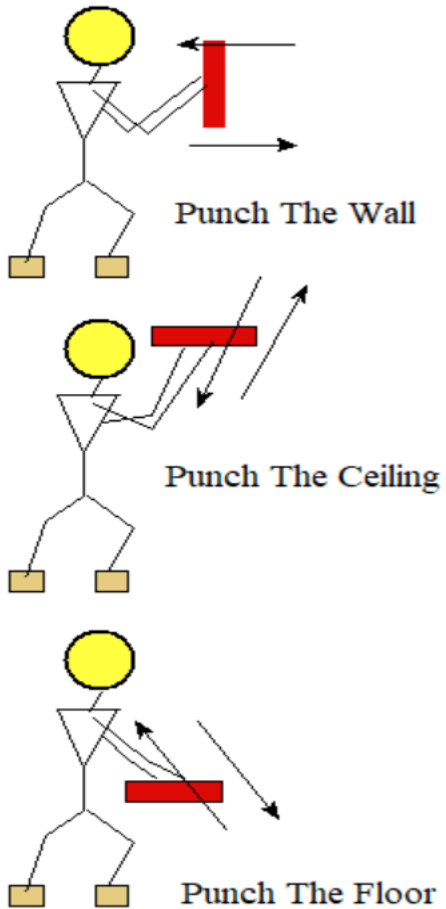
5. This drill must be considered a priority and one of the most important drills that your offensive line tries to master, especially in the off-season because proper leverage and punch is the key to an offensive lineman's success.

Fit and Finish: Show Me It's OK



Fit and finish is a drill that facilitates the punch up through the numbers turning thumbs up which drops the elbows and rolls the hips forward and up through the block

Punch and Set - Weight Press Punch Drill

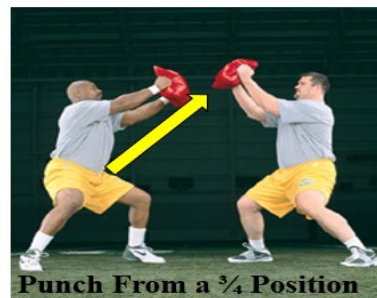


1. From a good pass pro set with a good base work strength and punch by using weight plates from your weight room.
2. Depending upon the strength level of your athletes begin your progression using 25 lb., 35 lb., or 45 lb. plates.
3. Work punching the wall, punching upwards towards the ceiling, and then working punch towards the floor while maintaining a good base.
4. This drill builds strength and punch power.
5. Doing a slow burn have your players work with a full extension of the arms for 15 seconds, 30 seconds etc.
6. The plate punch should be used every other day with the off day using medicine balls if available.
7. Make sure to look for a 3/4 punch never retract your punch back to your chest.



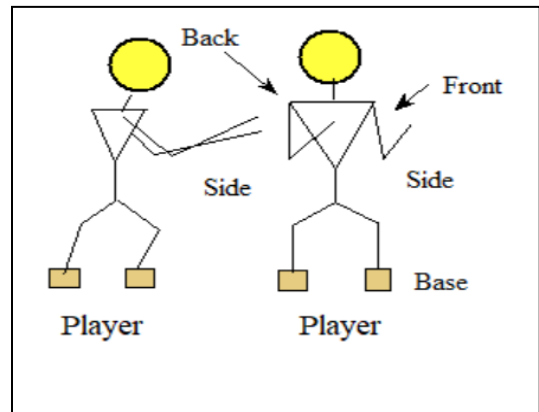
Weight Plates

Medicine Balls



Punch Up Through The Window

Different coaching aides can be used To develop a proper punch. Weight plates, medicine balls, etc.



The base check drill is a great way to see how well your offensive linemen have mastered their understanding of body control and base while pass setting. The following information will explain the base check drill:

4 points of emphasis Front, Side, Back, Side

1. Coach will approach to administer the base check by starting from the front pulling on his athlete hands to see if he loses his base (feet coming together) and his arms getting over extended and over the front of his toes.

What you want to look for here is when you pull on your lineman's arms that his shoulder is moving opposite his punch and not following his punch because this will get him over extended, we call this "Shoulders Opposite the Punch". As a coach you will also look for your players chin pointed down through the inside knee with his shoulder in the hole.

2. Coach will move to the side of his athlete pushing hard on his shoulder to see if he feels his shoulder pushing back towards the coach. Then the coach looks to see if his athlete lost his base by either bringing his feet together or crossing his feet losing his base.

When Pushing from the side you are looking for good shoulder lean back into and towards your partner or coach. The lean is known as "Shoulder in the Hole". The lean with shoulder in the hole gives understanding for cutting of the inside rush and making the defender redirect outside in a drop back scheme.

3. Coach will move to the back of his athlete giving a hard push to the back of his player to check to see if he loses his balance and ends up compromising his base by falling forward.

In this situation you are checking to make sure your player has his chin inside and point down through his inside knee as well has anchored himself down and not falling over the front of his feet.

Drills Hips & Hands

Implementation of the Hips & Hands drill should be done almost every day. Hips and Hands is series of movements to emphasize both the movement of the hips as well as the pass protection strike and body position. The only movement we will get the hip all the way through is the first phase which is the actual punch. In this phase, you would be coaching your Offensive Line to explode through the bag and drive his belt buckle to the turf. While there is a slight hip roll that accompanies the pass protection strike in the second and third phase, the emphasis is more on a violent hand strike while keeping tight hands which is accomplished by bringing the thumbs together to create the “W” which in turn drops the elbows down which will assist in more of a stronger punch.

How Fast Can You Pass Set? And create “W”

The first drill we will use, especially during spring practice is Resisted Sets. This drill is designed to help increase the Offensive Lineman’s set speed. The Offensive Lineman will take a variety of sets against a resistance band. We will generally have the Offensive Line take 4 – 6 steps into his progression but will never allow the drill to go long enough that the resistance forces poor mechanics in the set. Regardless of the set we are having the Offensive Line take, we are looking for low pad level and a second step that matches the length of the first. As a line coach you are looking for a hand carry with the thumbs slightly below the chest plate. We will also include assisted sets in the progression. We always finish with sets vs. air (no assistance or resistance) when we incorporate this drill into our workout.



This drill is designed to work on creating separation and snapping the upper body back out of a stance. Out of a three-point stance, have a bag close to touching the head of the player that is up. On the go signal, the player will get a big chest while punching the bag and creating separation without moving their feet. Your linemen should feel their weight transition from the front to foot to the back foot. We work both right-handed and left-handed stances as well as our two-point stance with all our linemen rotating after every third punch.

Coaching Points:

- Feet should stay in the ground as much as possible.
- Punch with palm of the hands, thumbs pointing up.
- Punch at a slightly upward angle
 - If the punch angle is down, there's most likely too much forward lean. If the angle is up too far, it is most likely due to too much bend in the knees. This is not in a good position to be able to move.
- Back should be straight with a slight arc back and weight balanced with all cleats in the ground.

- Bag should be closer to guys with shorter arms (adjust position accordingly).

Mirror-Dodge

The purpose of the Mirror-Dodge drill is to get the feet moving while also working on good pass setting demeanor. Each player that is up will put a post foot on a line and try to keep that post foot there for the duration of the drill. We will work both feet as post feet as we rotate through. This helps players be more comfortable setting both ways. We also start with the players hands behind their back, emphasizing a big chest. The defensive player should move, changing directions, forcing the offensive player to mirror that movement with quick feet, staying in front of the defender.

A punch component can be added easily to this drill, working on timing of the punch as well.

Coaching points:

- Quick, short steps
- No hopping, keep feet in the ground as much as possible
- Stay square to the line
- Big chest, slight arc in the back
- Work on being able to react quickly to change of direction, don't get caught off balance
- Should stay in a good demeanor the whole time
- Upper body should have minimal movement



While there is a slight hip roll that accompanies the pass protection strike in the second and third phase, the emphasis is more on a violent hand strike while keeping tight hands which is accomplished by bringing the thumbs together to create the “W” which in turn drops the elbows down which will assist in more of a stronger punch.

Chapter 16

So, you want to Play College football

The following information is how offensive linemen are ranked going into College football

Bowl Championship Series Offensive Line

Physical Measurables:

Height: 6'5" Weight: 280 lbs.

Stats: 40 yd: 5.0 Bench: 320 lbs. Squat: 450 lbs.

Coach Keys:

Dominates the LOS and puts HS players on their backs. Can move the line of scrimmage by 5 yards at will. Gets to the second level with ease and wins in space. Displays great balance, rarely on the ground. Plays with excellent pad level by demonstrating great knee bend. Plays with a great natural wide base. Shows the ability to naturally pass set, slide and mirror with ease. Can maintain balance running and can hit moving targets downfield. All-State, All Area/District type player with national attention from recruiting media. Typically, a multiple-time All-Conference selection.

Non-BCS and / or High FCS Offensive Line

Physical Measurables:

Height: 6'3" Weight: 270 lbs.

Stats: 40 yd: 5.2 Bench: 305 lbs. Squat: 425 lbs.

Coach Keys:

May have not shown the consistent dominance of an elite BCS caliber recruit, but coaches at this level will still scholarship athletic high school offensive linemen as they believe they can develop them with a redshirt year and a good strength and conditioning program. Flashes the ability to dominate the LOS and knock HS players on the ground. Can get to the second level regularly. Flashes the ability to move the line of scrimmage. Flashes the ability to finish blocks. Displays good balance, rarely on the ground. Plays with great pad level by demonstrating good knee bend. Plays with a good natural wide base. Shows the ability to pass set, slide and mirror. Can hit moving targets downfield. All Area/District type player. Typically, a multiple-time All-Conference selection.

Low FCS / High NCAA Division 2 / High NAIA Offensive Line

Physical Measurables:

Height: 6'2" Weight: 260 lbs.

Stats: 40 yd.: 5.3 Bench: 300 lbs. Squat: 410 lbs.

Coach Keys:

Flashes the ability to dominate the LOS and knock HS players on the ground. Can get to the second level regularly. Flashes the ability to move the line of scrimmage. Displays good balance, rarely on the ground. Plays with great pad level by demonstrating good knee bend. Plays with a good natural wide base. Shows the ability to pass set, slide and mirror. Can hit moving targets downfield. All Area/District type player. Typically, a multiple-time All-Conference selection.

Low NCAA Division 2 /NAIA/All NCAA Division 3 Offensive Line

Physical Measurables:

Height: 6'1" Weight: 240 lbs.

Stats: 40 yd: 5.4 Bench: 295 lbs. Squat: 405 lbs.

Coach Keys:

Flashes the ability to move the LOS. Can get to the second level. Displays good balance, stays off the ground. Plays with solid pad level by demonstrating decent knee bend. Can pass set and move his feet. Hustles to the ball. Typically, All Conference selection or a Varsity Starter.

Low NCAA D2 / NAIA /All NCAA Division 3 Offensive Line

Physical Measurables:

Height: 6'1" Weight: 240 lbs.

Stats: 40 yd: 5.4 Bench: 295 lbs. Squat: 405 lbs.

Coach Keys:

Can show you have the ability to move the LOS. Can get to the second level. Displays good balance, stays off the ground. Plays with solid pad level by demonstrating decent knee bend. Can pass set and move his feet. Hustles to the ball. Typically, All Conference selection or a Varsity Starter.

The following information is provided by numerous offensive line coaches from around the country which are recommendations for an offensive lineman interested in playing college football developing an effective highlight film that displays the ability to:

- Play with a low pad level. Be sure every clip displays your ability to bend at the hips, knees and ankles to keep your pad level below the defender.
- Play with balance. Pick plays where you utilize leg drive and effective technique, rather than plays where you lean on a defender and push.
- Block on the second and third levels. Include plays that reveal your ability to block a defender in the open field and that you possess the speed to get there.

- Finish the play. Go from snap to whistle. If a play shows you stopping early, you don't want to include it.
- Ability to pass-protect. Coaches realize you might not pass a lot in your offense, so if that's the case, don't worry. Find a few good clips of you one-on-one stopping a pass rusher.
- Try to include various types of blocks. For example, a combo block, a trap block, a pull, lead block, etc. Again, coaches understand that offenses vary, so don't worry if you don't have a wealth of options.

Chapter 17

Chronology of Rule Changes in Collegiate Football 1869 to Present Day

The following chronology of rule changes in collegiate football concerns the use of hands, arms, and body from 1869 to 2015.

1879: Interference legalized.

1869-1870: At the beginning of intercollegiate football, the rules of football were made individually by each college.

1873: (October 19) Standardization of rules was first attempted at a meeting held in New York City, at which time delegates from Yale, Princeton, Columbia, and Rutgers attended. Harvard declines invitation. For the sake of historical interest, and as a basis for comparing these with the rules as they exist today, 12 rules are established.

1876: Holding, carrying, and backward passing of the ball permitted; this led to rushing as opposed to soccer.

1876: Next change in rules plus additions was made in Springfield, Massachusetts. At this session, the Rugby Unions rules were considered. A new code consisting of 61 rules were considered. A new code consisting of 61 rules was drawn up. 1876--Holding and carrying the ball permitted

1880: (three & four) Eleven players on a side and a scrimmage line established; the latter change eliminated the rugby scrum and aligned the teams on either side of the ball.

1882: Downs and yards to gain. A team had to gain five yards in three downs or forfeit possession.

1883: Four current methods of scoring were written into the book—touchdown, point after, field goal, and safety.

1888: Tackling permitted below the waist but not below the knees; previously, all tackling had to be above the waist.

1888: Helping runner and using body. Blocking with extended arms prohibited.

1888: Use of hands and arms. Holding on offense constitutes loss of ball to opponent.

1889: Helping runner and using body. Offensive team may, with body only, obstruct opponents.

1895: Seven players must be on the line of scrimmage until ball is snapped.

1896: Helping runner and using body. After ball is put into play, player of offensive team, except player who runs with the ball, may with body only, obstruct opponent. Motion limited to one player, eliminating brutal momentum plays.

- 1896:** Rule changed stating at least five players shall be on the line of scrimmage when ball is snapped.
- 1898:** Hands and arms. A player of team in possession of the ball holds, loss of ball to opponent.
- 1902:** Hands and arms. Loss of ball to the opponent, if player holds on offense.
- 1903:** Rule changed. Now the number of players on the line of scrimmage could be either seven or five under certain conditions.
- 1904:** Rule. At least six men of the side holding the football must be on the line of scrimmage.
- 1906:** Hands and arms. Holding or unlawful obstruction with hands or arms by offensive team includes:
- a) grasping opponent with hands or arms
 - b) placing hands or arms upon opponent to push him away from play
 - c) with arm circling in any degree any part of the opponent.
- 1906:** Forward pass legalized. This was the most important of all rule changes since 1876. It gave football the balance between offense and defense and reduced the importance of kicking and rushing. " One of the primary reasons that the forward pass was legalized was intended to reduce deaths and brutal injuries in football.
- 1906 and 1912:** Ten yards for a first down, plus a fourth down to make it. The change to 10 yards came in 1906, the fourth down in 1912, to encourage the offensive game
- 1908:** Hands and arms. All holding and use of hands and arms in obstructing opponents is, except with arms closed to body, prohibited. Such holding and use of hands and arms includes:
- a) grasping opponent with hands and arms
 - b) placing hands upon opponent to push him away from play
 - c) with arm encircling in any degree any part of the opponent
 - d) in blocking, using arms in any way to lift opponent.
- 1910:** Helping runner and using body. Offensive players may not use hands, arms, or body to push, pull, or hold feet of player carrying ball.
- 1910:** Rule. Number of players on the line of scrimmage must be seven.
- 1911:** Helping runner and using body. Offensive player may use his body to push opponent.
- 1930:** Hands and arms. Illegal use of hands and arms by team with possession of the ball is prohibited. Such holding and use of hands and arms includes:
- a) grasping an opponent with hands and arms
 - b) placing hands upon an opponent to push him away from play
 - c) with arm encircling in any degree any part of the opponent

- d) in blocking, using arms in any way to lift opponent.

1931: Helping runner and using body. No player of the team in possession of the ball may help the runner except by interfering for him, and there shall be no interlocked interference.

1932: Most far-reaching changes in a quarter of a century set up safeguards against hazards of game:

1) Ball declared dead when any portion of player other than hands or feet touch the ground; 2) Use of flying block and flying tackle barred under penalty of 5 yds.; 3) Players on defense forbidden to strike opponents on head, neck, or face; 4) Hard or dangerous equipment must be covered with padding.

1946: Hands and arms. Use of locked hands, regardless of position of hands, is illegal if used in blocking by player of team with possession of ball. Note: Legal use of hands and arms by team in possession of ball:

- a) in shoulder and upper-arm blocking, player, after making legal initial blocking contact may allow his hand or hands to leave his body if defensive man retreats.
- b) in passive block for protection of kicker or passer, player may shield his head with his arms, but in no case in such action may he use his hands or arms to strike or push opponent.
- c) inside body or crab blocks, arms or hands to not have to be close to body

1949: Helping runner and using body. While blocking, player's feet may leave ground the instant he makes contact with opponent.

1949: Hands and arms. Penalty for illegal use of hands and arms, for offensive player, loss of 15 yards from spot of foul. If, to supplement shoulder or chest block, teammate of runner uses hand or forearm in blocking:

- a) hand must be in contact with body during entire block
- b) with crab or body block hands do not have to be in contact with body
- c) hands may not be locked during any block.

1950: Hands and arms. Hand must be in contact with body, and hand and arm must be kept below shoulders of opponent during entire block by teammate of runner. Note: If hand or arm of player of offensive team in legal blocking position contacts opponent above shoulder before opponent squats, ducks, or submarines, such contact is not violation if hands and arms are otherwise used legally.

1952: Hands and arms. Penalty for illegal use of hands or arms, for offensive player, loss of 15 yards from spot of foul.

1976: Helping runner and using body. Teammates of the runner or passer may interfere for him by blocking but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner. Scrimmage line redefined second time and pass blocking further facilitated.

1976: Hands and arms. When a teammate of a runner or a passer uses a hand(s) or arm(s) in blocking or to supplement a shoulder block:

- a) The hand(s) shall be in advance of the elbow.
- b) The hand(s) shall be inside the frame of the blocker's body.
- c) The hand(s) and arm(s) shall be parallel to the ground.

- d) The arm(s) shall not be extended more than one-half of a full extension.
- e) The hand(s) shall be cupped or closed with the palm(s) not facing the opponent.
- f) The hand(s) and arm(s) shall not be used to deliver a blow.
- g) The hand(s) and arm(s) shall not be used to grasp, pull, encircle or lift an opponent.
- h) The hand(s) or arm(s) shall not be used to hook, lock or clamp an opponent.
- i) During no block shall the hands be locked.

1980: Helping runner and using, body. Teammates of the runner or passer may interfere for him by blocking but shall not use interlocked interference for him by grasping or encircling one another in any manner.

1980: (A) Hands and arms. When a teammate of a runner or a passer uses a hand(s) or arm(s) in blocking or to supplement a shoulder block:

- a) The hand(s) shall be in advance of the elbow(s) and the elbow(s) shall be entirely outside the shoulder(s) of the blocker.
- b) The hand(s) and arm(s) shall be parallel to the ground.
- c) The hand(s) and arm(s) shall be parallel to the ground.
- d) The arm(s) shall not be extended more than one-half of a full extension.
- e) The hand(s) shall be cupped or closed with the palm(s) not facing the opponent.

1980: (B) Hands and arms. When a teammate of a runner or a passer is blocking behind the neutral zone while retreating, he may legally block under the following conditions:

- a) The hand(s) shall be in advance of the elbow(s) and the elbow(s) shall be entirely outside the shoulder(s) of the blocker.
- b) The hand(s) shall be:
 1. Inside the frame of the blocker's body.
 2. Inside the frame of the opponent's body.
 3. Below the shoulder(s) of the blocker and the opponent.
- c) The hand(s) shall be cupped or closed, and the palm(s) may face the frame of the opponent.

1980: (C) Hands and arms. Holding or illegal obstruction by a teammate of the runner or passer applies to:

- a) The hand(s) or arm(s) shall not be used to deliver a blow.
- b) The hand(s) and arm(s) shall not be used to grasp, pull, or encircle or lift opponent.
- c) The hand(s) or arm(s) shall not be used to hook, lock, clamp or otherwise obstruct an opponent.
- d) During no block shall the hands be locked.

1980: Chop block prohibited.

1980: Retreat block added with full arm extension to assist pass blocking and illegal use of the hands reduced to five yards.

1981: Hands must be open on a retreat block and holding reduced to ten yards.

1983: Illegal use of the hands added to exception for enforcement from previous spot to assist pass blocking.

1984: Delay chop block defined as one second.

1985: Retreat block deleted, and open hands and extended arms permitted anywhere on the field.

1991: Hands and arms: A teammate of a runner or a passer legally may block with his shoulders, his hands, the outer surface of his arms or any part of his body under the following provisions. Their hands shall be:

- a) In advance of the elbow.
- b) Inside the frame of the opponent' s body. (Exception: When the opponent turns his back to the blocker).
- c) At or below the shoulder(s) of the blocker and the opponent. (Exception: When the opponent squats, ducks, or submarines).
- d) The hand(s) shall be open with the palm(s) not facing the opponent. Summary

2015: Use of Hands and Arms

A teammate of a ball carrier or a passer legally may block with his shoulders, his hands, the outer surface of his arms or any other part of his body under the following provisions.

1. The hand(s) shall be:

- (a) In advance of the elbow.
- (b) Inside the frame of the opponent's body (Exception: When the opponent turns his back to the blocker) (A.R. 9-3-3-VI and VII).
- (c) At or below the shoulder(s) of the blocker and the opponent (Exception: When the opponent squats, ducks or submarines).
- (d) Apart and never in a locked position.

2. The hand(s) shall be open with the palm(s) facing the frame of the opponent or closed or cupped with the palms not facing the opponent (A.R. 9-3-3-I-IV and VI-VIII). RULE 9 / CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND OTHERS SUBJECT TO THE RULES FR-97

b. Holding

The hand(s) and arm(s) shall not be used to grasp, pull, hook, clamp or encircle in any way that illegally impedes or illegally obstructs an opponent. PENALTY—10 yards Penalties for Team A fouls behind the neutral zone are enforced from the previous spot. Safety if the foul occurs behind Team A's goal line [S42].

SUMMARY

The playing rules of the game have always determined the theories, systems, and philosophies of offensive play to a far greater degree than those of defensive play. The fact that the offense possesses the ball and knows what it is going to do with it, where and when, necessitates the rule concept placing restrictions on the offense not imposed on the defense. The doctrine of the dead ball, allowing only 25 seconds to put in play, keeping ten men motionless at the snap, and requiring seven men on the line are the laws regulating football and limiting

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