
SECTION ONE

DEFENSIVE OVERVIEW

1. Philosophies
2. Personnel & Basic Structure



***“IF YOU BELIEVE IN YOURSELF, HAVE DEDICATION, PRIDE, AND NEVER QUIT, YOU’LL
BE A WINNER FOR THE PRICE OF VICTORY IS HIGH, BUT SO ARE THE REWARDS”***

SECTION ONE

PHILOSOPHIES

WHY THE 4-2-5?

THE CHALLENGE

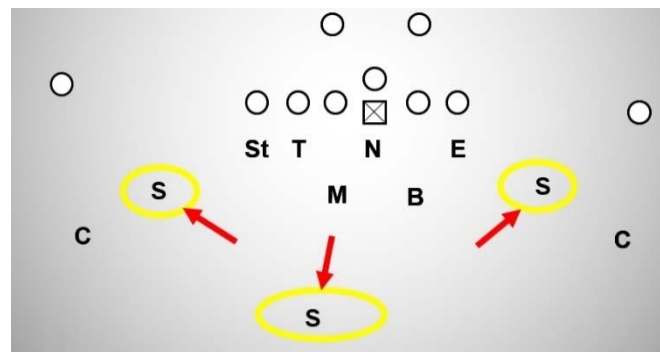
Unlike college, high school defenses face very different offensive attacks week in and week out. In a four week stretch a high school defensive coordinator could face an explosive spread offense, the powerful double wing, the deceptive wing-t, and the flexbone option offense. The challenge is to **not have to change your defense every week** in order to defend pass-happy formations and smashmouth running attacks.

There are numerous defensive schemes out there and no single defense has all the answers. There are:

- The long standing 4-4, which is tough to defend pass in spot dropping Cover 3;
- The 3-5 became popular in the last decade, but only 3 down linemen vs run and again, 1-high safety.
- The 3-4 defense offers 2-safety coverages, but still 3 DL, lots of blitzing requiring coverage checks;
- The 4-3 has 2-safeties vs pass and 4 DL vs run but requires a stud at Middle Linebacker.

So 1-high safety Cover 3 has made the 4-4 obsolete and blitzing every down out of the 3-3 and 3-4 requires a ton of thinking because coverages have to matchup with every blitz call. Great players are needed to run the 3-4 (NG) or 4-3 (DT), and the 4-3 not only requires a great middle linebacker, but you need 4-5 on your roster.

So the obvious answer is to merge the RUN strengths of a 4-man front with the PASS strengths of two safety coverages, that can be ran with the players walking the high school hallway. And due to low football IQ and limited film study time, the high school defense must be easy to learn while being flexible enough to defend virtually every style of offensive play.



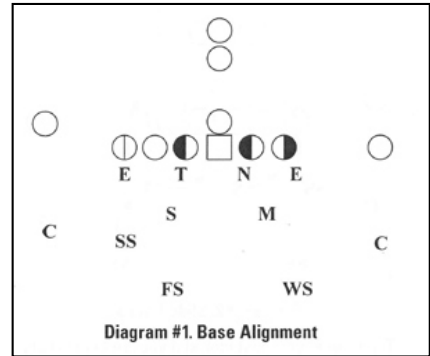
Enter the 4-2-5 defense.

The 4-2-5 scheme utilizes four down-linemen, two inside linebackers, two traditional cornerbacks, a free safety, and two safeties (which serve as hybrid-outside linebackers). The conversion of traditional OLBs to SAFETIES is the strength of the defense because you now have five defensive backs, rather than four to adjust to all the formation and motion changes in today's high school football.

SECTION ONE

These 5 DBs cannot be “pretty boy” DBs only concerned with interceptions and making sure their cleats are spatted. These 3 safeties need to be athletic enough to cover deep quarters, matchup on Tight Ends in the flats, and be physical enough to stay in the box versus run teams. However, every high school has an abundance of 5’9” 180-pound wrestler types who can play these positions.

The 4-2-5 and 4-4 schemes are not terribly different in general. On paper there are many times the 4-2-5 defense looks EXACTLY like the 4-4 defense. There are 4 down linemen to stop the run and confuse blocking schemes. When the hybrid safeties are rolled up, there are 4 Linebackers to blitz or stop the run. When two of the safeties drop back into coverage it looks like the 4-3 defense. Often times the 4-2-5 is referred to as a “nickel” defense.



Easily go from a zone smothering 2-safety pass defense To a smash mouth 9-man run front

The fundamental difference is not in the X’s and O’s, but in the PHILOSOPHY of play calling and installation. Treating those two 4-4 OLB as DEFENSIVE BACKS and not linebackers, is what makes the 4-2-5 an easy to understand, personnel-friendly defense that gives multiple looks.

MULTIPLICITY with SIMPLICITY

Defenses must have different ways to defend offenses without confusing kids. The skilled defensive coordinator creates the illusion of doing alot, while only doing enough to take away what offenses do best. When the team is more talented than you, confusion and attacking from different angles is the answer. When you have the better athletes, now their offense must contend with your athleticism and multiplicity.

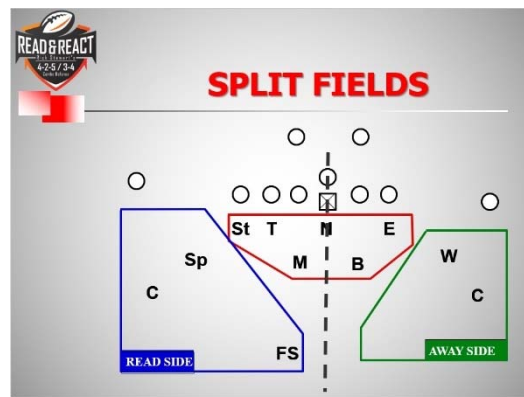
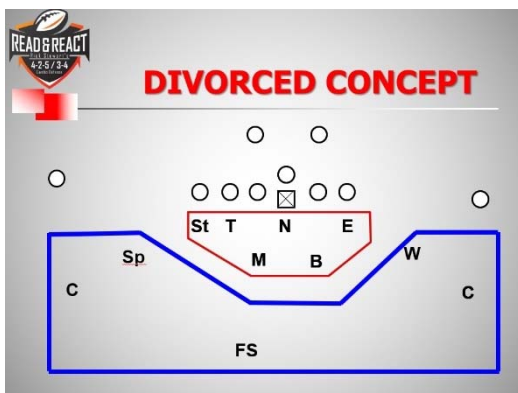
This leads me to our philosophy of, *“Multiple but Simple.”*

**Confident kids play fast
Confused kids play slow**

SIMPLICITY

The biggest benefit of the 4-2-5 is the ease with which it can be understood by a coach and then taught to the players. In the past, coordinators had to coordinate their coverage with the front’s alignment and blitzes. However, the 4-2-5 philosophy basically divides the defense up into THREE separate groups that all work independently of each other.

The first separation occurs by making the FRONT SIX completely DIVORCED from the BACK FIVE. Coverages are totally independent of the front alignment, DB’s do not have to be aware of stunts and blitzes. The second separation occurs by dividing the field in half so that defenders only worry about what happens on their side of the field. In effect, his FS calls the coverage for one side, and the Weak Safety for the opposite side, dividing the offense down the middle. Most teams check off their coverage and make calls based on formations, but the 4-2-5 does not do this.



Gary Patterson, the head coach at TCU and the architect of the defense states:

"We divide our packages into attack groups. The 4 DL & 2 LB's are one segment of our defense. We align the front 6 and they go one direction. The coverage behind them is what we call a double-quarterback system. We have a strong, weak and free safety. The free and weak safeties are going to control both halves of the field. They are the quarterbacks and they will make all the call.

This allows for THREE different defenses on every play: a front call for the LB/DL and a different coverages for each side of the backfield. While this is confusing for the offense and provides the defensive coordinator multiple tools to use, there is the added bonus that it makes learning the defense simpler. Defenders do not need to interpret and apply an entire defensive call, they only learn their part. Secondary players only learn run fits and pass drops based on the offensive players that line up on their side.

DIVORCED FRONT

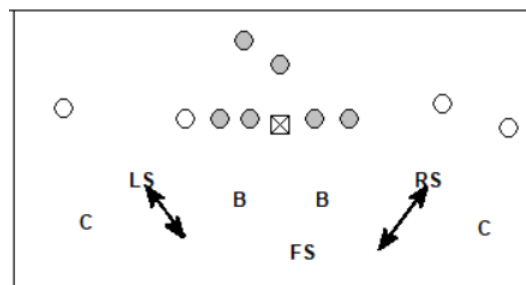
Divorced front simply means the front 6 players and back 5 players work independently of each other. Our fronts and coverages have nothing to do with each other. There is a RUN STRENGTH call for the Front 6 (TE, RB, Field) and a completely independent PASS STRENGTH call for the back 5 which is always based on the receivers. The front gets one call, which could be a stunt or a base call, and the defensive backs don't even need to know what it is.

This divorced front concept is ran by many at the college and pro level, including masterminds Gary Patterson and Bill Belichick. Many teams even have different coaches calling the fronts and coverages, independent of each other. This allows one coach to focus on how to stop the best run play while the secondary coach is focused on stopping their best pass play.

THE FIVE SPOKE SECONDARY

The traditional 4-2-5 defenses play with 3 SAFETIES. The can be a LEFT, RIGHT, and FREE safety, or a STRONG, FREE, and WEAK safety if you prefer to flop to formation strengths. The 425 philosophy is a little different than traditional thinking in that the Corners actually play more deep safety coverage because we do not want our safeties to backpedal. We want them coming up fast on the run. The two outside safeties have to be able to play the edge against run, play in space against the pass, and match up well with inside slot receivers. This five-defensive back system is ideal for high school since there is an abundance of tough 150-190-pound kids on every roster.

This philosophy of safety play allows our defense to be a faster, athletic defensive unit. Additionally, since each of the five DBs work independently of each other, it makes it very easy to disguise coverages. A third advantage of having five safeties is it allows movement of the front six without losing leverage. The fourth and final reason of using the 5-spoke



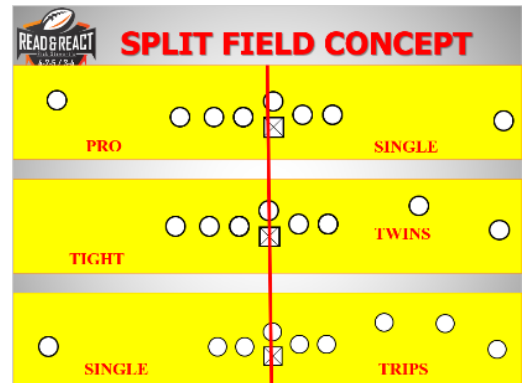
secondary is the mirrored teaching in practice. Teaching half the coverage gives players confidence because they are only in charge of their half of the field!

SPLIT FIELD ALIGNMENT and COVERAGES

In addition to divorcing the fronts from the coverages, there is also the brilliant concept of splitting the secondary down the middle. The safeties make their strength call to the multiple receiver side, which is separate from the front six run strength call. Additionally, the coverage calls on one side is separate from the backside. The free safety (FS) makes a coverage call for the trio of himself, the strong safety (SPUR), and the cornerback (CB). This is called the READ side. The weak safety (WILL, aligned away from the passing strength) makes a call for himself and the other cornerback (CB). This is the AWAY side.

This “split field concept” of recognizing formations allows each pass defender to only worry about their side of the field. This narrows all the offensive formations ran today into SIX basic categories:

1. Single: one receiver;
2. Tight: Just a tight end, no receiver.
3. Pro: A tight end and a wide receiver;
4. Twins: Two receivers, no tight end;
5. Trips: Three receivers (includes TE-Trips)
6. Wing: A player 1x1 off a TE (wing)
7. Slot: A player 1x1 off a tackle (slot).



Unless the offense lines up in a 3-back wishbone or a no-back set, there are only 3 ways the offense can be aligned and still be sound.

The anxiety of the defensive player is drastically reduced as they only learn their coverages and run fits vs those 6 offensive alignments. Players are taught by lining up in each coverage vs those formations. Not only does this simplify their initial learning, but during the season coaches do not have to talk on Monday’s about how to line up that week. Just talk about is what the opponent is going to be doing.

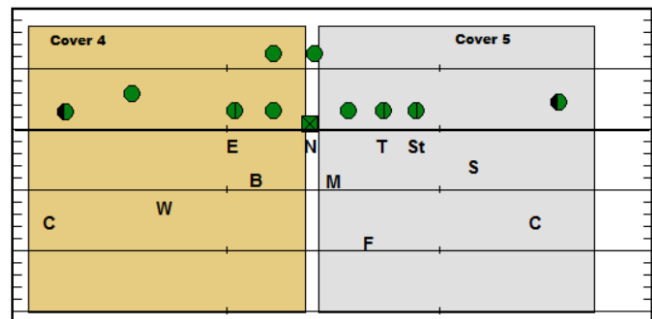
When a hurry up offense is racing down the field and switching up formations, the 425 players can make the calls on the field while maintaining the appearance of complexity. Other defenses rely on coaching direction to get all the different players lined up. This safety-led, split field concept eliminates the extra step of looking to the sideline, allowing the defense to go as fast as the offense.

DISGUISE COVERAGES

The other advantage of the 5-spoke secondary in the 4-2-5 is the ability to disguise coverages. There are always offensive formations that can give four-man secondary’s disguise problems but the fact that all 5 defenders work independently from each other makes it easy to adjust and easier to disguise movements because the defenders do not need to move together.

By keeping the assignments of the right side of the field SEPARATE from the left side of the field, a team can now run mixed coverages. Additionally, the five spoke secondary allows showing blitz on one side and zone on the other side.

The three-safety system ensures that there is always sound run leverage on every blitz. Additionally, the outside blitzes by the safeties makes offenses account for them on all run and pass plays.



PATTERN READING

Texas Christian University (TCU) uses three zone coverages in the secondary: a Robber coverage they call Cover 2; a traditional two-deep zone they call Cover 5; and a Quarters coverage they call Blue. While the READ & REACT's zone coverages are slightly different, we do advocate PATTERN READING instead of spot dropping. Instead of dropping to a spot on the field and then figuring out which receiver to guard, pattern matching has the defenders drop towards the receivers and read the receivers to determine each defender's assignment. It begins like a traditional zone as defenders read the offense, but quickly evolves into what amounts to man-to-man coverage, which is the simplest coverage for a player to learn.

This is the best of both worlds in regards to running zone or man. All 11 eyes are on the football prior to the snap which helps stop the run game. After the ball is snapped it allows the defense to always be right and prevents "guarding grass" because the defender ends up covering the receiver man to man. All pattern matching does is qualify who guards whom after the offense shows what routes they are running.

This leaves very little gray area for the defender to have to deal with. Gray areas are what force your players to play slow, because it makes them think. It also confuses the offense because it is hard to tell whether the defense is running man or zone because there's a lot of matching of routes that goes on that looks like man.

Pattern reading means the safeties rely on reads of the receivers, not linemen, before flying down to stop the run, which makes them less vulnerable to play-action.

Easy to Teach

The five-defensive back system allows mirrored teaching in practice and breaks down teaching pass coverage the same as run progression. The teaching progression starts out with individual, then goes to half field and ends with full pass skeleton. The half field allows routes to be ran along both hash marks, giving players maximum reps. More reps equals a higher confidence level!

STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES

PERSONNEL

The 4-2-5 defense does not require a lot of defensive linemen or linebackers. The only true defensive lineman needed is the defensive tackle because the other defensive linemen can be smaller and quicker guys. Also, a coach only needs 3 LB on his roster to play the two inside spots, as opposed to requiring 5 linebackers to run a 4-3 or 3-3 scheme. These LB do not have to be great players because the 4 down linemen keeps offensive linemen off them and the five defensive backs behind them limits the amount of time and space that linebackers need to cover.

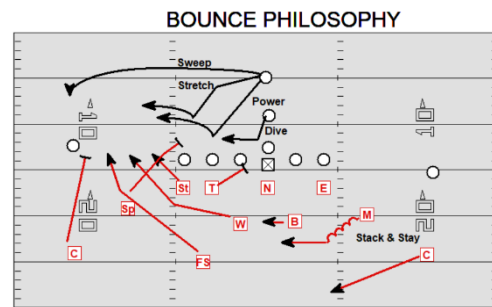
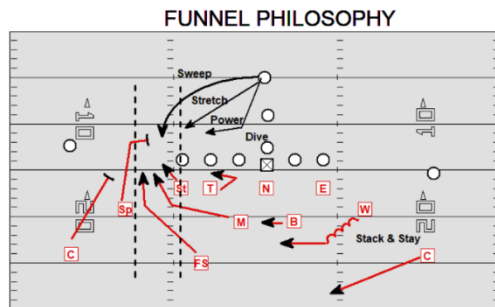
While the 4-2-5 only requires good instead of great linebackers, it is also easy to hide a weak defensive back. Playing with five defensive backs makes it easy to disguise coverages, roll coverages, and exchange responsibilities. This allows players, especially cornerbacks, to play to their strengths and away from their weaknesses. Sky and Cloud coverage variations, along with the Robber scheme, are great ways to mix-up alignment and assignment looks, and hiding weaknesses in the defensive secondary.

STOPPING THE RUN

Hall of Fame coach Lou Holtz used the phrase: "Inside and in front" when talking about defending the run. We believe that a 4-man front is the best way to stop the run and every great run defense wants 8 or 9 defenders committed to stopping the run. The easiest way to do this is to line up in an 8-man front, or 4-4 defense which is very easy to do in the 4-2-5. The robber concepts used by all 3 safeties allows them to be aggressive vs the run so we are confident that we will always have 9 defenders committed to the run, whether we are in a 1 or 2-safety look.

There two basic beliefs in regards to leverage and angles when stopping the run:

- Push the running back to the sideline (“bounce”) so he is not gaining yards even though he is running full speed. This requires wrong shoulder vs kickout blocks.
- Funneling the running back into the teeth of the defense which minimizes 1on1 open field tackles. This requires near shoulder vs kickout blocks.



Both philosophies will work with the READ & REACT 4-2-5 defense, however, I have always subscribed to the FUNNEL PHILOSOPHY and near shouldered our blocks. The reasons will be explained in later chapters.

Regardless of your run philosophies, it is very important that your defensive back coaches buy into stopping the run. They have been taught to not get beat deep and be safe, which are very important, but the secondary players must provide run support. This means dedicating practice time and energy to teaching secondary players how to tackle, how to run read, and their run fits.

DEFENDING THE PASS

Common sense and simple math tells you that having 5 defensive backs instead of 4 makes is a better way to defend the pass. There is also more speed on the field and the divorced concept opens up a myriad of coverages and blitz possibilities. Zone coverages 2, 3, and 4 are all easy to install and playing man is easier since there are 5 DBs to line up to their 5 eligible receivers. This allows a defense to play press and jam, sky and cloud, 2-safety quarters, and squat cover 2 versus perimeter zone. The result: more incompletions, more interceptions, more sacks, more turnovers, more 3-and-out’s. And, most importantly, fewer points.

Compensating for the Weaknesses of the 4-2-5

The 4-2-5 defense is not the best defense ever made. No defense is. However, every year there is an undefeated championship team running every scheme. Why? Those coaches made their defense fit their personnel, and they had answers to problems. They were honest about the weaknesses of their schemes and had solutions when an offense exploited that weakness.

Despite its many advantages, the 4-2-5 scheme does have some inherent weaknesses, in terms of both alignment and overall structure. Due to its flexibility and design, however, these weaknesses can be easily compensated for. They can effectively be covered up to a large degree.

- susceptible to weak-side running plays, particularly the speed-option and QB read-counter plays.
- Can be hurt with the 3-step and quick passing games.
- Tough to defend crossing routes.
- Two-tight end sets exploit size advantages against smaller defensive backs.

Speed is the solution to the weak-side running plays and the weak safety must be very good at attacking with correct leverage from safety depth. The speed of the defense also makes guarding crossing routes better, but every defense has a tough time defending these routes when the QB has enough time. Speed and extra bodies are the answer versus the double TE run schemes and these tight ends should not be able to get open versus the 5 quicker defensive backs. The quick passing game is defeated with varying coverages, especially bump and run, press, and cover 2.

READ & REACT PHILOSOPHY

Every young head coach and inexperienced defensive coordinator has asked what defense to run: 4-3, 3-4, 4-2-5, 3-3-5, 3-5-3, or 52-monster? Man-blitz or Zone blitz? Box or Spill? So they go to clinics and search the internet to come up with the perfect scheme. These coaches will have a defense of the week, coverage of the week, and blitz of the week. They will tell people that they play the under front, the over front, the double eagle front and the okie front. Cover 2, cover 3, cover 4, cover 6, cover 8 and man free. Their kids will have no chance to play fast because the assignments are always changing, and more time was spent installing than practicing.

However, every veteran coach will tell them that the perfect scheme is the one that they can teach the best, and more importantly their kids can play the best. The best coaches then break that information down into what can their kids learn, and what can their kids play.

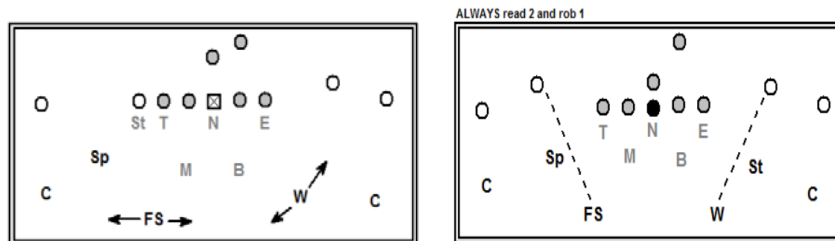
A high school defense must have the flexibility to make adjustments because of the vast spectrum of offenses it will face. However, this cannot require a lot of thinking, players will react to the offensive movement and the reaction will be mastered because we will practice Stimulus-Response everyday.

“So simple that you have to be BRAIN DEAD to not be able to run it”

Every great defense has a base defense that all the adjustments are based upon. At the root of every great defense are players that execute great fundamentals by reacting, not thinking. They also have great effort and know how to tackle. This is a reflection of a coaching staff that is very good at making sure these three things happen ALL the time because as the saying goes:

**What you see on film is
what you taught or allowed**

Our base defense will be a 4-man front that can easily switch to a 3-4. We will run zone coverages behind it with pattern matching drops and safeties using robber concepts. We will be a BEND but DON'T BREAK defense believing that most high school teams will make mistakes as they drive down the field. This doesn't mean we will play soft...we will ATTACK after we read our keys. We will have stunt and blitz package but will not play a guessing game.



First and foremost, we will take away what the offense does best, however, at the high school level we believe in stopping the run first. Therefore, anytime we look at an adjustment or change to anything in our package, we are always going to ask how sound is it versus run and how easy will be for our players to learn. Everything we do on defense follows two basic premises: STOP THE RUN and SIMPLE ADJUSTMENTS.

Our coaching staff breaks down the teaching of our players into four categories:

1. ALIGNMENT: Know how to line up
2. ASSIGNMENT: Know what to do after you are in the right spot (technique)
3. EFFORT: Have intense hustle after the ball is snapped
4. TACKLING: Know what to do when you get there

ALIGNMENT – Know Where to Line Up

Getting players lined up properly is half the battle. We want our players to know exactly where to align at all times and we want them to do it quickly because the sooner they get lined up is the sooner that they can start focusing on what the offense might do and how they are going to stop it.

The most important thing you can do when selecting a defense is to make a commitment to one defensive alignment. Your players must have confidence that they can stop any offensive formation or play out of their base defense. You must teach the base defense to each individual position, then to smaller units, and finally to the entire team. Do not move on to other fronts, stunts, blitzes, or coverages until everyone completely understands their alignments, keys, and assignments in the base defense.

When we prepare for an opponent, we always prep with our base defense. The few times that we lost sight of this foundation and changed our base defense was when we got beat. It is easy to fall into this trap when preparing for the double wing or wing T offenses. We run the Wing T and the teams that give us the most problems are the ones that defend us with their base defense. My good friend and double wing guru, Tim Murphy agrees. What message and how much confidence are you instilling in your players when introducing a new defense, the Monday before the game? Our defense will never be smoke-and-mirrors or “flavor of the week”.

The base defense is also our “island in a storm” when things are going badly and what we go back to if the opponent is on a roll. Our players play their best when they go back to what they know best in the face of adversity.



There are times that adjustments are necessary in certain situations and this flexibility is the mark of a great defensive package. However, the most important thing about adjustments is to do them seamlessly off the base defense. Finally, all variations are installed and ran based on our opponents’ tendencies. We will not blitz, or stunt based off gut feelings or to try to change the momentum.

Our defense is ultra-simple. Adjustments to different formations are all done with SIMPLICITY in mind. In other words: “*how can we defend a formation with*

the least number of guys changing”. Practice time is not spent learning schemes, but instead spent on mastering the skills which are repeated over and over, which gives our players CONFIDENCE. This repetition builds muscle memory which reacts to offensive stimuli and allows our defense to be INTENSE and have great EFFORT.

Our sole objective is to have our defenders REACTING, not thinking.

ASSIGNMENT – Know What to Do: Read & React

Once the players know where to line up, they then need to know what to do. They need to know what their job is on that play. While it is not a 100% steadfast rule, we try to not change a player’s technique or job when we move him around.

ALIGNMENT DOESN’ T CHANGE ASSIGNMENT.

The player's job becomes very important after the ball is snapped. I have seen many coaches who are great at drawing up a scheme and getting their players to know what gap to stunt or blitz into. They can make it crystal clear where the defensive back is supposed to drop or who he is supposed to guard. However, the MISTAKE they make is that they don't spend enough time teaching the TECHNIQUE that is required to accomplish what they are asking the player to do.

What good is it if all of the defensive linemen memorize their twists and stunts, but they still get blocked because they don't have the TECHNIQUE to defeat the block as they twist through their gap? The DC sends linebackers blitzing from all over the place, but they never reach the Quarterback because they have not mastered how to rip / punch / drive the blocker who is in their rush lane? It doesn't matter whether the DC runs man or zone because ultimately the defensive back is going to end up guarding somebody 1on1. But did the defensive back coach drill into that DB how to stay in phase versus the approximately 9 pass routes he will face?

The point here is after the players get lined up, they then need to know what to do. And the READ & REACT philosophy is to be very careful about changing players jobs and techniques when we ask them to line up somewhere else. In some cases it is unavoidable, but our question we always ask when we ask 'lil Johnny to move to another shade or to another spot on the field is: DOES JOHNNY HAVE TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT.



A classic example of this is our WILL hybrid OLB/S and our STUD end. If we call Cover 3 on the weak AWAY side, we ask our Will to play like an outside linebacker with sky responsibilities. If we call Cover 4 or 5 on that side, our Will backs up to 8yards and plays a quarters safety. Our Stud End plays in the face of tight ends, but can rush off the edge vs air in our storm call and might be asked to play outside linebacker in our 3-4 alignment. Moving these two players around means different reads and techniques have to be taught and it always comes back to the question of TIME. When will this be taught?

PURSUIT – Hustle to the Ball

PURSUIT is our TRADE MARK. We are known for our pursuit by our opponents and take great pride in it. This is developed by demanding it all the time in practice and giving it great emphasis during film review. A team cannot just talk about having great pursuit and practice it only during team or at the end of practice. It must be in every conversation and every drill. Our players love the line by Will Patton in the movie, Remember the Titans:

“You make sure they remember, forever, the night they played the Titans! “

The READ & REACT defense will have great pursuit. We will condition using a “double whistle” during practice and ending every practice with pursuit drills. The double whistle is a 2nd whistle blown 2-3 seconds after the scout RB is wrapped up. All 11 players have to be arms length from the RB.



11 Helmets...ONE Poor Soul !!!

TACKLE – Know What To Do When You Get There

This will be taught everyday, even in shorts starting in spring, continuing all summer, and during the season. Tackling will be taught during team, in circuits, or by position. We will master open field, shedding a blocker, and turnovers. The helmet will never be used as a weapon, tackling will be done with chest plate, arms, and legs.

Although I am a huge fan of Pete Carroll, we do not teach his “Hawk-Rugby” style of tackling exclusively. We do teach the technique at one of our tackling stations and believe there are certain situations in which it should be used, however, we prescribe mostly to the “Heads Up” technique taught by USA Football. Our tackling & pursuit drills are diagramed in Chapter 18.

Play with Great Leverage

Every good defensive team that I have ever watched play had one distinct characteristic about them, they played with great leverage. Everyone of the 11 players must keep the ball inside and in front of them no matter where they are on the field. Another way to present the theory behind playing great leverage is telling your players once the ball declares inside or outside of you,

NEVER ALLOW BALL TO CROSS BACK ACROSS YOUR FACE.

Doing this causes the ball carrier to be surrounded. The 4-2-5 defense has natural leverage alignments, which happens because of the 3-SAFETY system and SPLIT FIELD teaching. This split allows the safety coach to work on leverage as a priority along with coverage. The corners can just work on playing coverage. The natural leverage of the 4-2-5 allows five points to give us a better chance to play great defense.

1. Great alignments to run to the football.
2. Great leverage tackling angles.
3. Great angles to help eliminate the big play.
4. Establishing the eight-man front
5. Natural alignments to play assignment option football

PLAY FAST, PHYSICAL, SMART

This defense teaches each position a few simple alignments that apply to ALL formations and every player has a stimulus reaction to the 4 or 5 things that the offensive player can do. This simplicity allows the players to REACT instead of THINK, so now they are playing fast and swarming to the football.

The other advantage of understanding their responsibilities with the use of a few simple rules is it allows MORE PRACTICE time to be spent on tackling and pursuit drills. Tackling and pursuit are the cornerstone of any CHAMPIONSHIP defense and must be practiced every day.

Play with extreme confidence adjusting to any offensive set they see

DEFENSIVE OBJECTIVES

Don't Give Up Points or Yards. PERIOD.

OBJECTIVES

1. DON'T LET THEM SCORE. *Our Goal Line defense has to be the best in the valley.*
2. NO YARDAGE. *Do not give the other team anything! Not a 1st down, a yard, or an inch.
This means we have to practice tackling every play of practice.*
3. STOP THE RUN FIRST. *Stop their Best Plays. Make them Pass.
We cannot lose contain. INSIDE & IN FRONT.
Keep the ball out of their best player's hands.*
4. GET THE BALL BACK. *We want 3 turnovers per game. Gang tackling will accomplish this.
Therefore, we must create 12 turnovers every week in practice.
A Punt is like a turnover. Win the 3rd Down Conversions.*
5. SCORE ON DEFENSE. *Pick Six, Scoop & Score, Safety, Blocked Kicks, Punt Returns.*

**WHEN THEY WAKE UP ON SATURDAY,
THEY ARE GOING TO REMEMBER
WHEN THEY PLAYED THE PANTHERS.**

GOALS

1. ALIGNMENT. *We have to know how to lineup. Split Field Formations.*
2. ASSIGNMENT *Divorce the Front Six from the Back Five.*
 1. *We have to know what to do.
Take away what the offense does best.
Short Yardage, Goal Line, Victory. Know Your Assignment!!!
We will play zone coverage to prevent the Big Play
We will play man coverage (blitz) to create the Big Play*
3. FLY TO THE BALL *Hustle covers up a lot of mistakes. Maintain Great Leverage*
4. TACKLE *We have to take the ball carrier down when we get there.*
5. DELIVER PUNISHMENT *Let him know that he is in for a l-o-n-g night.*

DEFENSIVE GOALS

No Runs over 10 yards	Shutout
No Running Back over 100 yards	Shutout in 4th Quarter
No Passes over 20 yards	No Penalties
Entire team under 200 yards	3 Takeaways
Zero Missed Tackles	KO's: Three & Outs
10 tackles for loss every game	

PRACTICE GOAL: No Pushups and No Conditioning

We want their Back Up Quarterback

WHAT KIND OF DEFENSE WILL WE HAVE

Alignment – Know where to line up

- MULTIPLICITY with SIMPLICITY

Assignment – Know what to do

- READ & REACT Stimulus-Response: How does the player see things and react?
- DISCIPLINE Do your job.

Pursuit – Get to the ball

The most important part of defensive football

- PURSUIT WILL: Eliminates Big Play; Discourages opponents; Cover up mistakes
- TO PURSUE: Desire, Be in shape, Be Fast, Think Fast, Get Off Blocks
- HOW TO PURSUE: Do Your Job; Get Off Blocks; Take Correct Angle
We will do a pursuit drill every day & double whistle every play

Tackle – Know what to do when you get there

DEFINITION: A collision between the defensive man and the ball carrier in which you must win

OBJECTIVE: To stop the ball carrier for no gain.

94% success rate on 70 tackles means 5 missed tackles, or 30 points.

Every Player On Our Team Has to Be Great Tacklers

We will do a tackling drill every day

Intangibles.

- MORALE: Pride is generated from TEAM accomplishments, NOT individual
- INCENTIVES: Goal boards, big plays, big hits. "Recognize the great effort"
- FIELD POSITION: Don't beat yourself
- SUDDEN CHANGE: Don't panic. have a plan and believe in it

Successful Practice

FUNDAMENTALS - the best system in the world will fail without fundamentals

TEMPO – Lots of reps, build stamina, increase capacity to process information quickly

REPETITION – Must be muscle memory.

GAME SITUATIONS – Place players in situations they will see on Friday night.

HAVE A PLAN – Script, Practice Segments, Improve Scout Squads

Practice will be very repetitious and sometimes monotonous, but a CHAMPIONSHIP football player must mentally prepare to work hard every day.

IF WE SCORE, WE MAY WIN

IF THEY SCORE, WE MAY LOSE

IF THEY NEVER SCORE, WE WILL NEVER LOSE

To be a good football team, you must place special emphasis on FUNDAMENTALS. You must work on them every day in practice. It will be very repetitious and sometimes monotonous, but a CHAMPIONSHIP football player must mentally prepare to work hard every day.