

BOB LEMLEY

ADAPTING THE SLOT OFFENSE TO YOUR PERSONNEL

POCA HIGH SCHOOL, WEST VIRGINIA

I appreciate the opportunity to visit with you. I am from Poca, West Virginia. I am not sure if many of you know where Poca is located. We are in the center of the state between Huntington and Charleston. Our team logo is the Poca Dots. Our number one claim to fame is the fact that in the middle 90's, ESPN voted us the number one team nickname in the country. We beat out the Argyle Sox's.

You may have heard about another event that recently happened in West Virginia. A gentleman by the name of Jack Whittaker lives about six or seven miles from Poca High School. A few days ago he won 315 million dollars in the Powerball lottery. I have been trying to become his best friend but I can't find him. I don't know where he disappeared to, but I am still looking for him.

What I wanted to do today is talk about our Double Slot Offense. Let's see a show of hands if you run the double slot? A few of you run the offense and that's good. When I first took over in the 1990-1991 season, we were 0-10 the first year and 2-8 the second year. So we won two games in two years. I was looking for an offense that was flexible and something we could win with. I got this offense from a book written by a guy out on the west coast. It is not my offense, but we have used it and it has worked very well for us the last ten years. We are 93 and 39 since we have been running this offense. We have won three State Championships, and we have been runner-up once. We are 18-5 in playoff

games. So this offense has worked for us. I am not bragging but it's worked for us. You can pass and run equally well from this offense. It depends on your personnel.

First of all we are an AA school. Each year we want to feature our best player in this offense. It could be the tailback, quarterback, splint end, or fullback. You can take this offense and adapt it to your personnel. That is what I'm going to try to get across to you today. At the end of this presentation Coach Reed has a video of our offense. He will go over some of the plays we run. We have a couple of trick plays at the end of the tape if we have time.

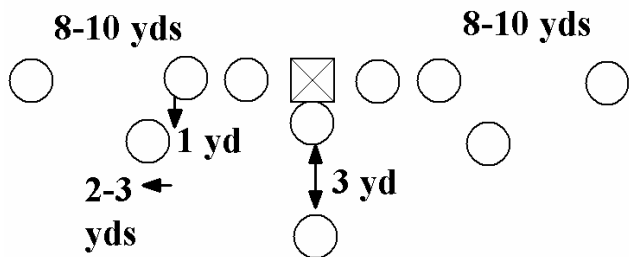
My philosophy is to have a lot of bullets in your gun. Some coaches have four or five plays they run, and they run them exceptionally well. And that's great, but when you come up against somebody that can stop you, what are you going to do? That's happened to us a few times in the playoff games. Two years ago in the state finals we were playing a much stronger team and they were favored to win the game. We held on the first half and were down 7-0. We came back the second half to beat them 21-7. The reason we were able to win the game was because we were able to stop them with what they did best, and that was running the football. They couldn't throw the football on us. They were forced to throw and we came up with the interceptions.

This past year in the state final,

the game was 7-7 going into the fourth quarter. We stopped them running the ball and forced them to throw the ball. We picked off a couple of passes and ended up winning by a score of 35-7. After we stopped them, our offense was good enough to get the ball into the end zone.

I feel this offense is very good for high school. I am sold on it. We have experienced using this offense and we have done very well using it. So what I want to do is to show you our basic look. It is not that different from a lot of the offenses that you might see today.

We line up our fullback at 3 yards from the quarterbacks heels. If he is your best player you can run traps, belly plays, and you can run fullback pitch out plays. Also, we have our screen plays and we can throw to him in the flat.



DOUBLE SLOT 10 FORMATION

We usually put our best running back in the left slot. We put our best receiver on the right side split out wide. If the left slot man is left handed we will line him up on the right side and have him run back to his left side.

We put the fastest player at the split end position. We take the fastest end and make him our split end and we put our big end on the right side. Teams generally run to the right hand side and we do the same. We run to the right most of the time. But he may be your best blocker and he may be your best receiver as well. You must think about

that.

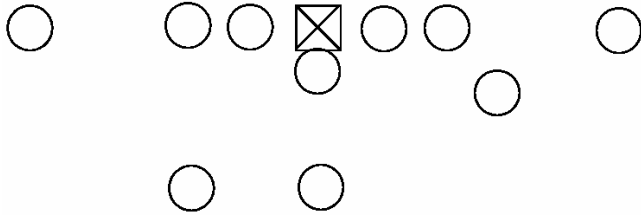
The quarterback is your most important position. You must find a player that is a leader and a guy who can get the job done. We have been fortunate in that we have had a good leader at quarterback for the last two or three years. We worked with him and he did a really good job for us. The quarterback must be able to throw the ball short with touch, and to throw the long ball. He must be able to hand off, and he must also be a good running back. If you have a good option play this player can be a good option type quarterback and you can run him on the different options. We have several option plays that we run quite a bit. We also can run counters going in either direction. Also, we run the scissors play going both ways and we run the trap plays both ways. We run reverses with our split ends. If we have a player that is fast we have plays to take advantage of his speed.

Our basic formation is our 10 formation. "Ten" is our basic formation. And if you notice, it's a Zero-Ten (0-10) formation, Zero means run. We are going to run the ball. This is our base set up. The slot back is back one yard off the line and he lines up two to three yards deep depending on how fast he is. The slot on the opposite side lines up in the same alignment. This is our base offensive formation when we call our "Ten" formation.

We like to run a lot of different formations. This is what I like to do because it is fun to coach. I like to cause the defense as many problems as possible. I want the team we are going to play to work hard in preparing for us each week. Each week we show a lot of different formations. We show a lot of different formations because the next team will have to cover them in practice, even if we don't run them in the

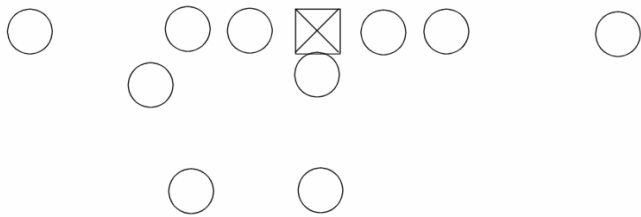
game.

This is our (20) twenty formation. We put the left halfback in the slot on the left and we put the right halfback in the right slot.



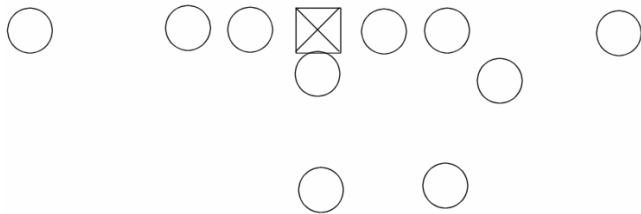
20 FORMATION

In our (30) thirty formation we have all the backs to the left side.



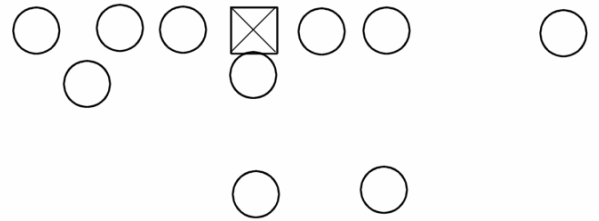
30 FORMATION

In the (40) forty formation we have all the backs to the right side of the formation.



40 FORMATION

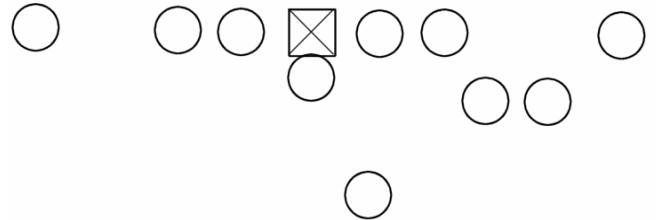
Our (50) fifty formation is just the opposite of our twenty formation. Our tailback is generally the man that is in the backfield. We move the slot back to one side or the other. That determines the difference in the formation.



50 FORMATION

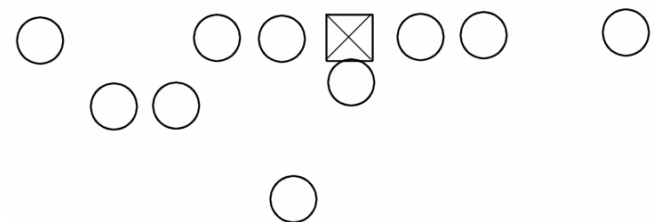
Another reason that I like this offense is because you can overload the offense and you don't have to do it with the linemen. You can overload the offensive set with your backs.

This is our sixty (60) formation. This is an overload to the right side. The fullback lines up behind the guard to the right side. It is like having a guard at fullback. This is a good running formation if you have two big backs and they are pretty good blockers. We can put them both in the slot. We have a series of plays that we run from this formation.



60 FORMATION

If we go to our (70) seventy series we overload it to the left side.

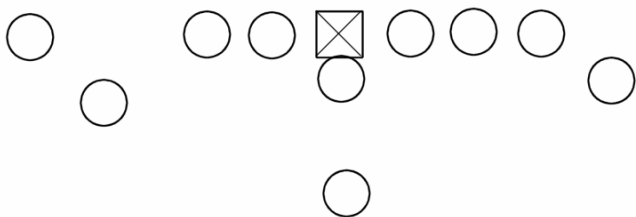


70 FORMATION

We put both slot men over to the left side and off set the fullback

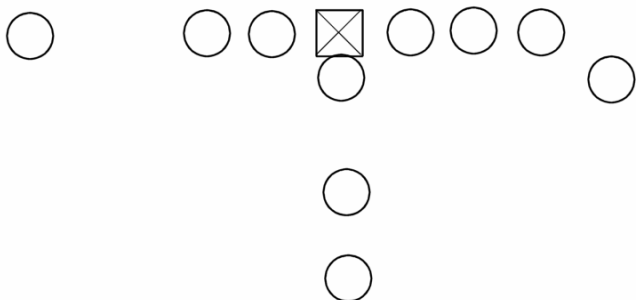
behind the guard. We will take a tailback and put him in the fullback position as well. Sometimes we will put the fullback in the slot and sometimes we line up the tailback in the offset position.

If we want to go to a tight end set, we call a 100 formation. In a 100 set we can line up a couple of ways. We can take our slot back and move him up to the end position. We can bring the split end inside and put him down. We generally move the split end down and move him into the tight end position. We put the wing back on the tight end side and the fullback and the slot on the other side. This is so we have a tight end on one side.



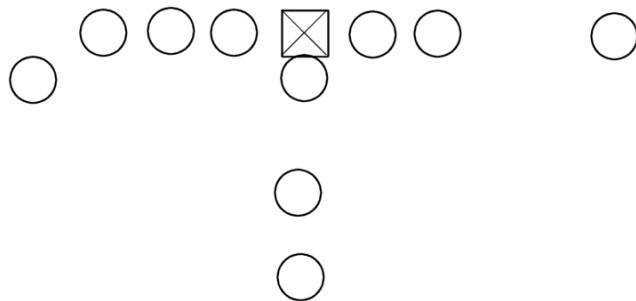
100 FORMATION

We will run the 800 series. We run the I-formation, and we'll do that a lot of the time down inside the 20 yard line. We can run it anywhere on the field, but this is our 800 Formation.



800 FORMATION

The 900 set is the tight end to the left side with the wingback on that side. Those are our basic running formations.



900 FORMATION

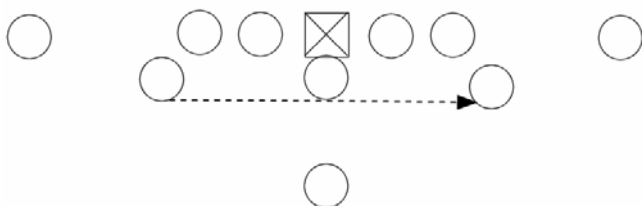
This is what we look for in selecting a quarterback.

- He must have Good Character - He must be a kid that you could take home with you. He must be the type player that you could take to dinner once in a while.
- He must be one of those players with a good attitude, and a good work ethic.
- He must be a player that wants to become better.
- He must have the respect of other players.
- He must have the ability to play on game day.
- He must be a good leader with the following traits: Leadership Ability, Unselfishness, Loyalty, Resiliency, Enthusiasm, Dependable, Courageous, Knowledgeable, and Tactfulness.
- He must have the ability to get the job done.
- He must be willing to work harder than anyone on the team.

I think it is really important for the quarterback to be a leader. I think the kids have to respect the quarterback. He must have a lot of ability. The quarterback in this offense should be a good player and a

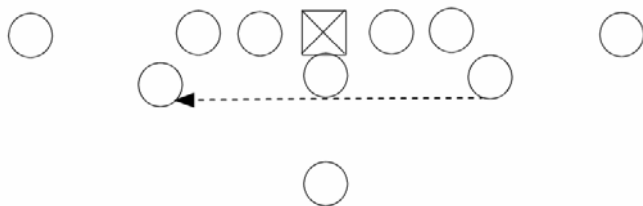
good leader. He doesn't have to be the best, but I think he has to have a lot of things to work with. He doesn't have to be the best player on the team but he must be a player that will work hard.

I have said this is both a running offense and a passing offense. This is the way we do our passes. It can be a little cumbersome sometimes, with the terminology, but these are the motion calls for the left slot man.



MOTION BY THE LEFT SLOT

If we call RIP the motion is to the right. If we call LIZ the motion is to the left.



MOTION BY THE RIGHT SLOT

On Lucy the motion man runs a deep or arc motion. We have Roar over to the right which is a deep belly to that side. The motion man runs his pattern from those calls.

We have Rip-Away, Red-Away, and Red. We have Rip and we have Road. The other slot has the same basic calls. He runs White-Away, White, Rip-Away, and Lucy. Those are our basic formations. The guys know from whatever we call which one is going to be in each position. With our fullback, we just call half motion right or full motion left. So it's not too diffi-

cult.

Our cadence is "Set - Go - Ready - Hut." And we'll go in motion on GO. We go "Set-Go" and the man goes in motion. If we are going to run the play on Go we snap it then. But we can say Go and send a man into motion. Once he gets by the quarterback we call "Ready - Hut." We can call "Ready - Hut-Hut." The snap count doesn't really matter. But we do try to confuse the defense with the cadence at times.

On pass plays we use the five step drop game. If we call 18 it is a five step drop to the right side. If we call 19 it is a five step drop to the left side. Our quarterback drops back at a 45 degree angle. The quarterback comes back and steps to one side or the other. He should be behind the tackle and he should be about 6-7 yards deep. On our 18 series he drops to the right side. On the 19 he drops to the left side.

If we call a 16 play it is our play action pass to the right side. The 17 is a play action to the left.

If we are in an 800 formation and we call 818-819 or 816-817 it gives us the formation and the play. It is the same play but from the I formation.

These are our split end routes. Lance Alworth developed this Sting route pattern. We should run more of them than we do. The sting pattern is a quick out with a split end. Most of the teams we see line up with the inside foot up. We do it the opposite way. We have the inside foot back. He takes one step, two steps, and three steps. On the third step he is going to start outside on an arc. It is not a sharp cut but a curve on the route. As he is going out he is looking for the quick out route. He goes four, five, six, and as he hits step seven he cuts and goes straight up the field. On that

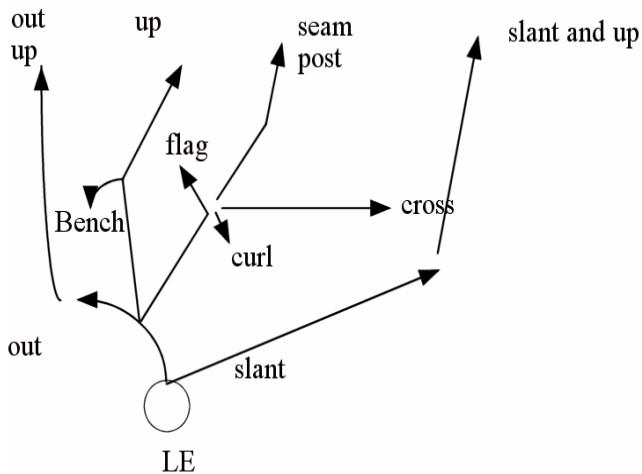
seventh step he is going to sprint up the field. It is not just an out route. It is more like a flood pattern. The left end is going 1-2-3-4, out, and then he's going to go straight up field.



STING ROUTE

The quarterback is going to come down the line. It is 1-2-3 steps and on the third step he is going to throw to the open receiver. If a receiver is not open then he is going to continue to drop back and he is going to try to flip it over the cornerbacks head.

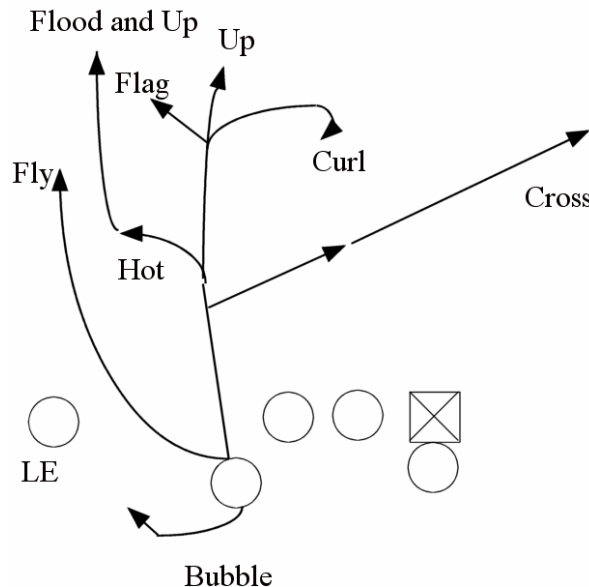
The quarterback does not read specifically the defense. He looks for the first open receiver. I will cover how we do that later. But these are the routes that the split ends run.



SPLIT END ROUTES

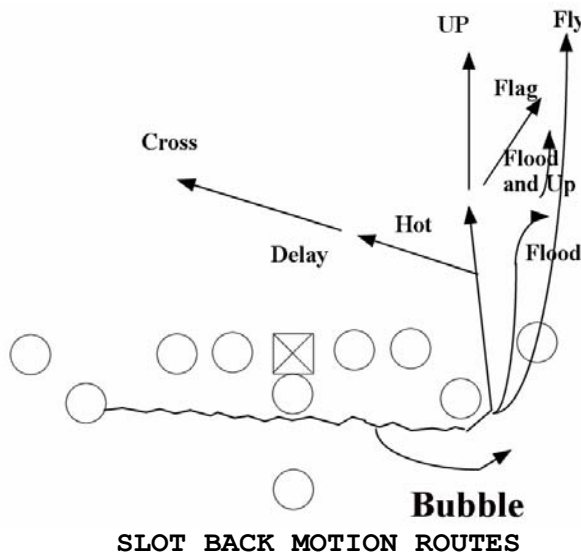
These are our motion routes from the slot back position. We put the guy in motion. Why do we do this? What we are looking for is this. If we see the safety going with him we

have a one-on-one situation on the backside. We can run the sting pattern if they don't go with the motion. We usually get an overload on the right side so we can work with it. We can run a bubble pattern and we can run a flood route. All of these routes are motion routes we use.



SLOT BACK ROUTES

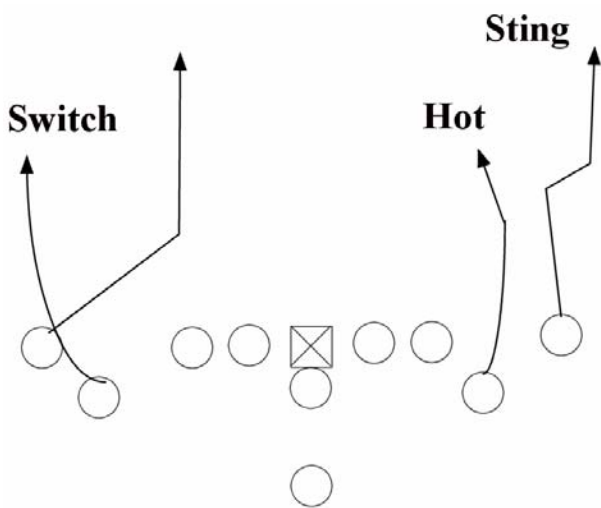
Here are our slot back motion routes. We can run the same basic routes, but now we run them from motion.



SLOT BACK MOTION ROUTES

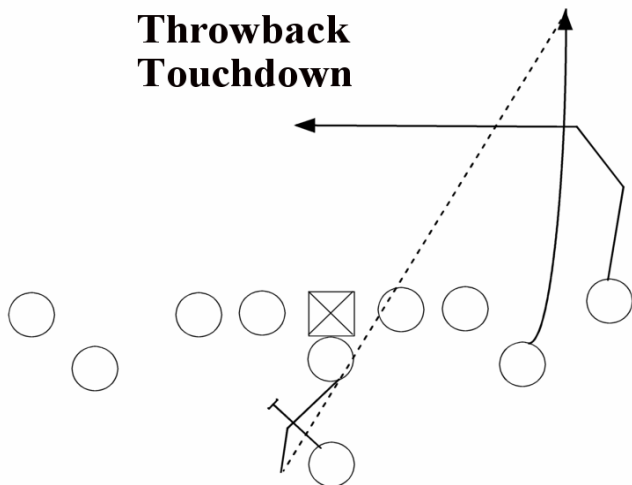
Now we go to our pass patterns. Our patterns are generally combination

patterns. We may call a switch on the routes. If we call a 19 switch route the left end is going to run a slant route at 5 to 6 yards, and then he is going to run straight up the field at the hash mark. The slot back is coming out right behind him. He is going down the sideline. You must get separation here. We do not want the two receivers too close together. We want separation. That is our switch pattern on the left side. You can have a switch pattern on the right side. That is our 18 Switch Route.



19 SWITCH PATTERN

Our next play is called Throwback Touchdown. It is a combination pattern.

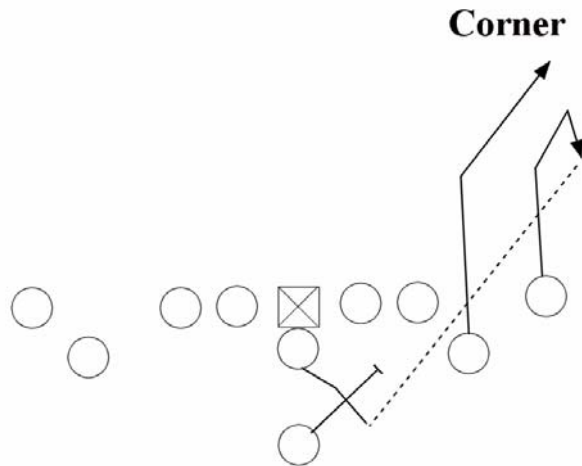


18 THROWBACK TOUCHDOWN

The slot man knows he's going to run a bingo pattern straight down the field. He just releases and goes straight down the field. The back side end runs 5 to 6 yards and then he slants and comes across the field. He comes behind the bingo man and gets down the field. That is a combination pattern.

If we call 19 Switch - Throwback Touchdown the backside knows they are going to run the Throwback Touchdown pattern. They know that the backside is the Throwback Touchdown route. The front side guys are going to run a Switch pattern on the left side.

We also run a corner route on the other side. This has been a real good pattern for us. If you need 5, 6, or 7 yards this is a good play to run. The end has to run a route that is deeper than what is needed to pick up the first down. You want to run the 5 to 6 yard route but you want to run off about 2 more yards, and then curl back, and face the quarterback.

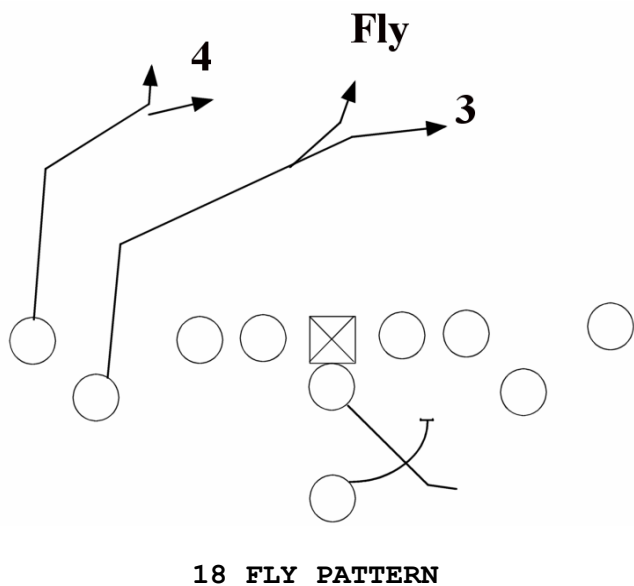


18 CORNER ROUTE

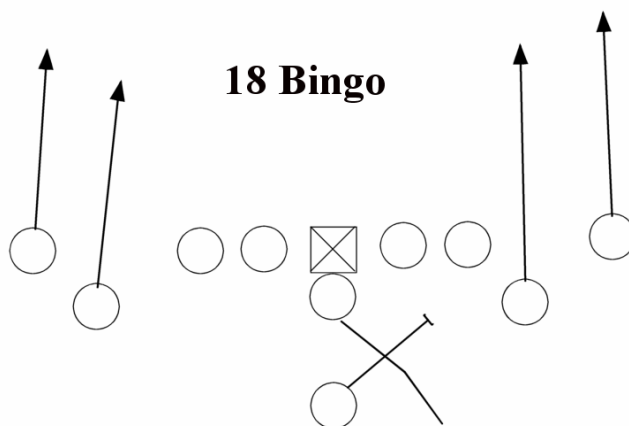
We have a sprint out play off this play and a 5 step drop pass from this action. Here is the situation with the slot back. He is going to run right beside the end and run parallel with him. He is going to make a move to the corner. The de-

fensive backs have to make a decision. If the cornerback is off too far the end is going to be wide open most of the time. That is the man we throw the ball to eight out of ten times. But if the defender jumps the end or if he doesn't recognize the play, the receiver is going to be wide open back in the corner. It puts a little pressure back there on the defense. Normally, we are looking for that first down throw when we do run the play.

Here are a couple of more patterns we run. First is what we call 18 Fly. The Fly comes with a slot-back. On the Fly pattern everybody is going to run five yards straight down the field. This is the same for all receivers. They are going to make their move five or six yards down the field.

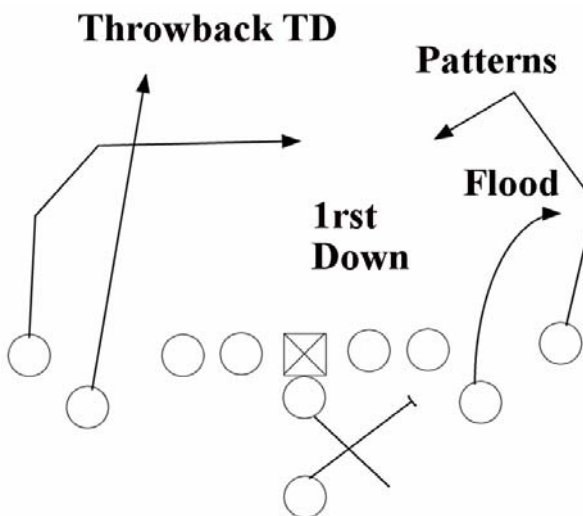


The next route is a straight bingo route down the field. Here all receivers go straight down the field. We try to spread the receivers out equal distance apart.



We can call 18 Switch - Bingo. We run the Switch on the backside and the Bingo on the frontside. We can run a Switch pattern on the backside and run a Bingo on the frontside.

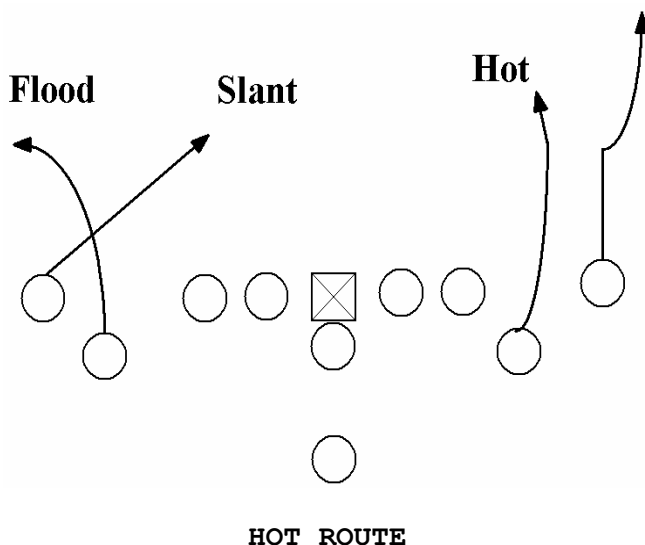
We can run our Throwback Touchdown on the left side, and on the front side we are going to run a flood route and a first down route. The first down route is an inside curl route for the split end on the right side. We call 18 First Down - Flood, Throwback Touchdown.



Anytime we want to call maximum blocking protection the quarterback calls the left slot mans name or he calls out 119. If he sees a blitz coming he wants to keep the slot man

in to block. He calls out 119 or 118. If he calls 118 his right slot will stay in and block. That will give him a little more protection.

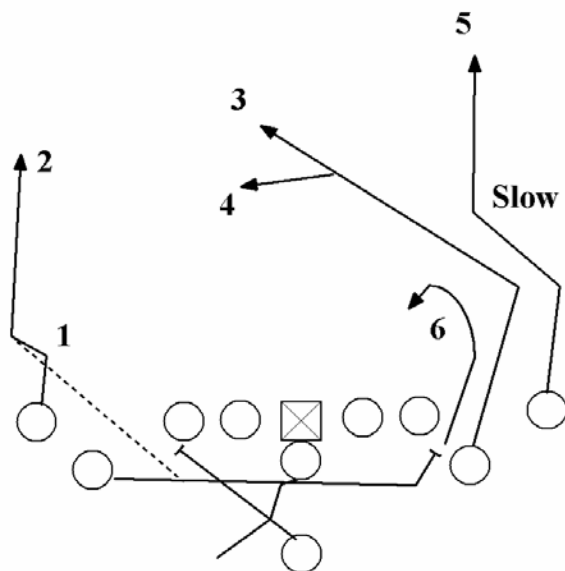
You have to work with the quarterbacks to pick that stuff up. Also we must be able to throw the hot passes. This is a big part of the passing offense. If they are bringing guys you have to use the hot pass. Our quarterback had a little trouble with that this year. We finally were able to get him to do it at times, but he had to recognize the safety or corner is coming. He has to be ready for that and he must hit the hot route.



For the quarterback it is just a two step drop and he is going to throw it up and over the head of the defender coming on the rush. He wants to get the ball to the hot receiver. If you can connect on a couple of those routes, the defense is not going to be so quick to rush all the time. On the backside we run a slant and a flood route.

This is our base play. This is the one play that I want to cover. I think anybody can run this play. I will show you the drill we use in practice that makes this play effective. The play is our 19 Rip Sting. This is a 3 step drop to the left

for the quarterback. The left end is going to run the Sting pattern. He runs 1-2-3-out, 4-5-6-7 and down the field. This is the number one receiver the quarterback is looking for.



19 RIP STING

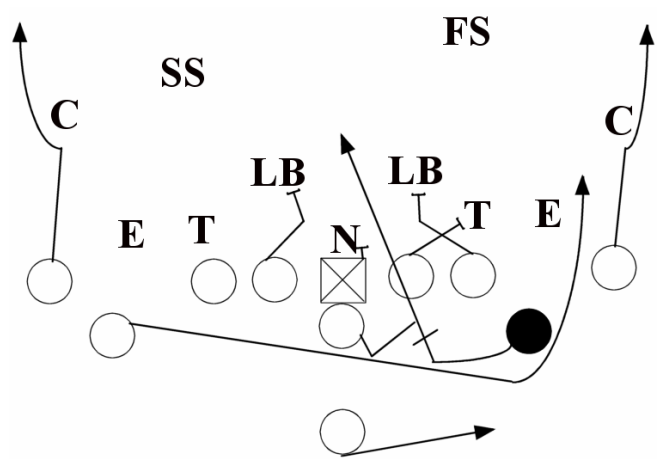
When the quarterback comes up to the line he is looking for the split end first. He is looking down the field second. If he doesn't come open on the first look, he continues back and looks for him on the second move. Now if the end is not open the quarterback continues back.

Here is the good part on the play. We have the slot man who is reading what the defense is doing. If they are in 2 or 3 deep, he is either going to run a crossing route or he is going to go straight down to the goal post. This is the one receiver that can run the route slow. I hate to tell a kid to loaf but you tell him to run the route slow. He goes 5 or 6 yards on a jog and then he puts it in another gear and turns on the speed. The route should be 20-25 yards deep. Since the quarterback is coming out 1-2-3, he does not throw the ball to the slot man early. He must read the defender on the backside first.

We actually have six options on the play. Here is the other option. We send a guy in motion on the play. He blocks for three counts and then he goes out 4 to 6 yards on the curl as a safety valve. So we actually have six different options on this one play. You can run the play to the right side with the motion coming back to the left. This gives you 12 possibilities on one play. We like the play a lot. If you can run it 6 to 8 times a game it is great. I do not think we run the play enough.

This is how we practice the Sting play. We get four quarterbacks, and you do not have to have a center, but you can have a center. We send a man in motion and he stays at the blocking position after he goes in motion. Everybody runs around him. The left end will run his Sting pattern. Everyone runs their pattern. The quarterbacks take their drops and look for the open receivers.

The quarterbacks take their drop, and they look and then they throw the ball. The first quarterback throws the ball to the left side. The second quarterback throws the ball to the receiver in the middle on the crossing pattern. The third quarterback throws to the seam post route. The fourth quarterback throws the little safety valve to the motion back.



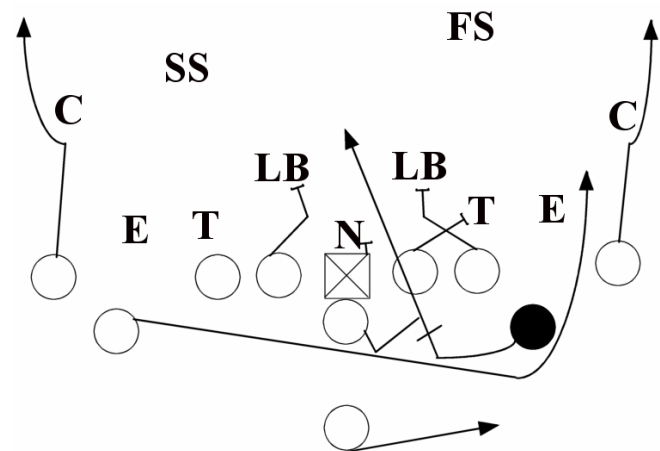
PRACTICE STING ROUTE

Diagram #24

We run this thing about 10 minutes a day in practice. When we rotate the quarterbacks will take two turns calling cadence. They rotate after two plays. It is a real quick drill and you can get it done real fast. We go to both sides of the formation. It takes us about 10 minutes to run the drill. This is one of our best plays.

If you do not have this play in your repertoire I think you need to take a look at it. It is a great play, and it is a very simple play to run. We call it 10 Roar Drive Right. A Roar Motion is a deep belly action by the motion man. We are in a 10 formation. We have the fullback running as if he were on an option play.

The quarterback takes two steps back to show pass. He really wants to show pass so he can get the linebackers to drop back. Then he runs at the inside shoulder of the defensive end. Here is what happens. The slot back is going to make a little "J" move. He comes up the gap between the center and guard on his side of the line.



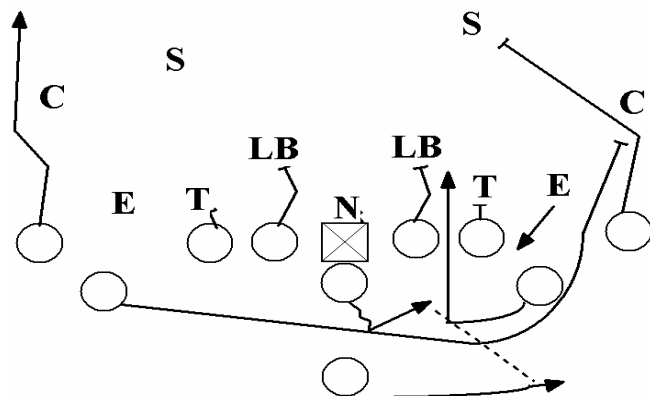
10 ROAR DIVE RIGHT

Let me mention this point. Our line coaches do a great job. I do not

fool with the line that much, I just tell them what the play is and I tell them to work out the blocking. They do a great job. If we face a 5 man front they block it a certain way. If it is a 4 man front they block it another way. But the back has to square his shoulders and go up in the hole. He is not running a scissors play. He is not coming across on a scissors action. He has to come across in a little "J" move. If he runs the "J" move and comes into the line with his shoulders straight he can go straight ahead.

We do not even fake to him when we are going to run the option. If we are going to give it to him, we hand it to him behind the guard. The rest of the backs run their option fakes. We are running Roar Motion. You may think this play is too simple. You may think it will not work. I am telling you that we won two state championships running this play. We ran the play to both sides.

Here is the compliment to that play. This is the option off of that play. We call it 10 Roar Dive Option Right. The reason I like this play is because it is hard to defend. We run the slot back on the same motion. He runs just like he is going to get the ball on the Drive Motion. The quarterback steps back, but he does not fake it. The linebacker should still honor that running back coming back up inside.

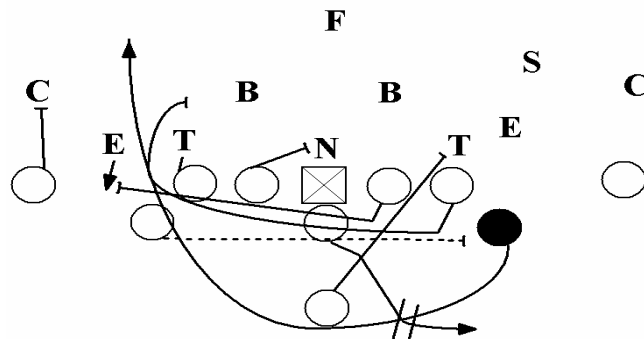


10 ROAR DRIVE OPTION RIGHT

The motion man should be a good running back. The right slot man should be a good blocker. We are going to pitch it to the tailback.

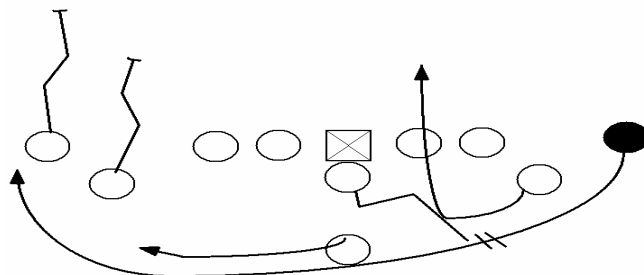
We don't want to give away any secrets but the tailback should be a fast scat back type runner. These two plays are two great combination plays that we really like. We run them every game and we run them 5 or 6 times each game.

Here is another play off the same action. This play keeps them honest. This is a reverse play that we run with the same action. My step-son came up with the idea to run the reverse. His name is Barney. He said, "Let's run the reverse play off that same action." I said, "Let's try it". It worked so we called it Barney Left and Barney Right. Now we call it 10 Drive Right Reverse Left. This is a good 2 point play also.



10 DRIVE RIGHT REVERSE LEFT

There are a couple of things you can do with the fullback. He can go with the play or he can run to the other side so it looks like the option.

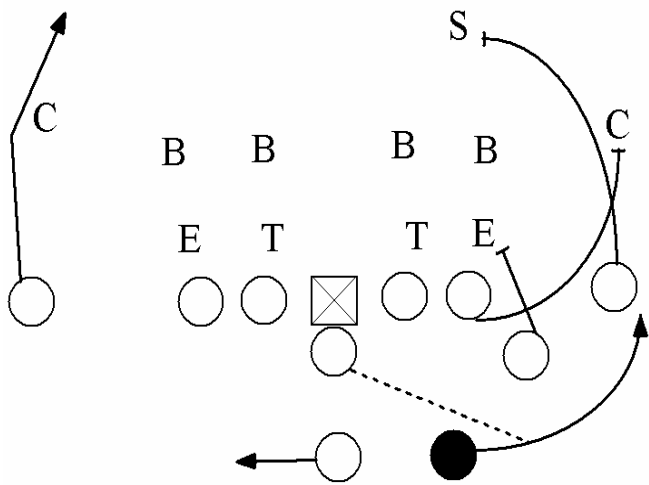


13 FULLBACK OPTION REVERSE LEFT

The quarterback steps back just like he is going to run the Drive play. He gives the ball to the end on the reverse back to the left side.

In this offense you can take the offense and fit it to your personnel. Whatever type players you have, you can take some of these plays and work special plays with them.

This is our pitch play. We call it the Poca Pitch. It is actually a 40 Quick Pitch. Our slot back blocks down on the play. We pull our tackle to lead on the play. The split end blocks down on the safety. The quarterback reverses out and pitches the ball outside. The halfback takes the pitch and gets outside.

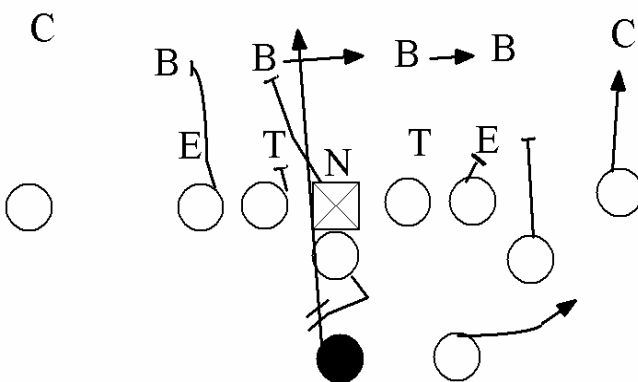


"POCA PITCH" - 40 QUICK PITCH

The thing that can hurt this play is if the cornerback plays up. If that happens the split end has to block the corner. If he is within 3 yards of the split end we tell him to block him. Otherwise he comes down inside. We tell the tackle to lead on the play. The tailback just follows his blockers.

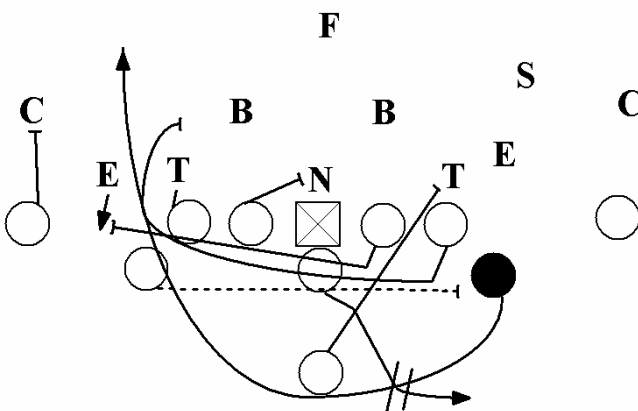
When we get those linebackers flying outside to stop the play we run another play. Teams are determined to get outside to stop the play. Now, we are going to fake the quick pitch and give it straight up the middle

to the fullback in the 1 hole. We call Quick Pitch Right - Fullback at One. This keeps those linebackers honest. The fullback should stay set for one count and let the quarterback make his fake. We have found that teams will chase the pitch on this play. Late in the game is the best time to use this play after the defense has seen the quick pitch.



POCA PITCH - FULLBACK AT ONE

We like to run the counter plays. We call this our 10 Counter Left. We have been fortunate to have some good tailbacks. This is a great play for the tailbacks. The key to this play is this.



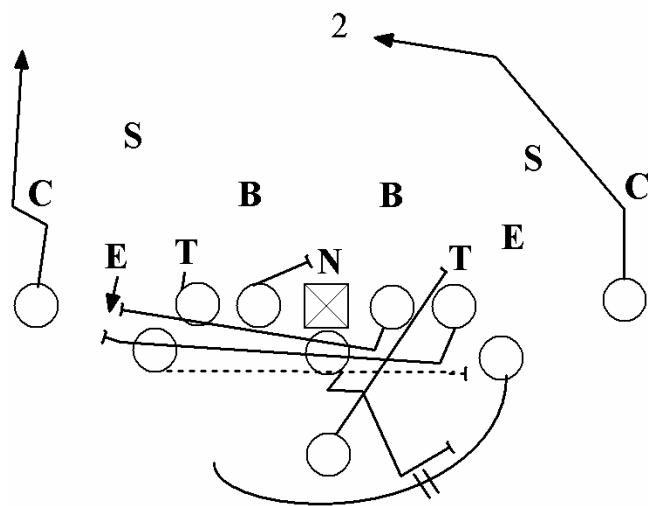
10 COUNTER

We have the guard kicking out on the end. The tackle is pulling and going down to seal inside. Everyone else is blocking down. The key is for the slot back not to come inside too shallow. If he does he is going to get caught up in the guard and tackles blocks. The fullback is going

to fill block on the tackle. We have a hard time getting the fullback to block this guy. You really have to work on the fullbacks block. They get lazy and don't want to block that tackle.

We do have a ride on the fullback. The quarterback steps, rides the fullback, and hands the ball to the slot back. The slot back has to read the two blocks by the guard and tackle. He may end up going outside. He has to get deep enough to read those blocks. It is a great play and it has worked well for us.

Next is a play off the 10 Counter. If you run one play a lot you have to have a play to come back that looks the same. This is the pass play off of the 10 Counter. We call it 16 Rip Counter Pass Left.

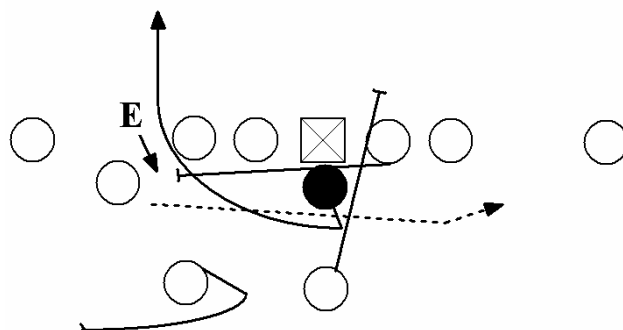


16 RIP COUNTER PASS LEFT

After we have run the Counter play we run the Counter Pass. The linemen know it is a pass play so they can't go downfield. They pass block on the play. We ride the fullback and give the ball to the slot back. You must have someone who can throw the ball from the slot back position. He must stay in the pocket. The left end has to be good actor. He has to fool the cornerback. We want to make it look like the run play. The backside slot does a crossing pattern. This is a

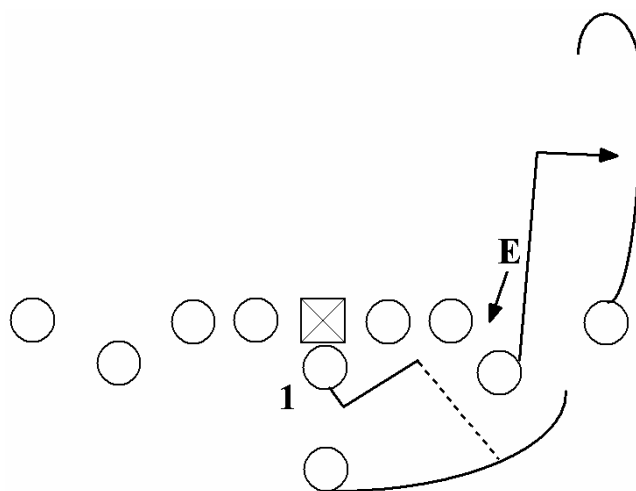
good play at the beginning of the game.

If you have a good running quarterback, you can run the Counter Option. The guard kicks out the end. The quarterback rides the fullback up in there and comes down the line. We have motion coming in the same direction. I like this play versus a four man front. Normally we will not get to pitch the ball to the slot back. But we still run it in practice. If he does pitch the ball it will be off the safety down the field.



RIP COUNTER OPTION LEFT

This is our 10 Fullback Option Right. We don't block the end. We step back and run to the inside shoulder of the end. This is a straight option. We run this down close on the goal line.

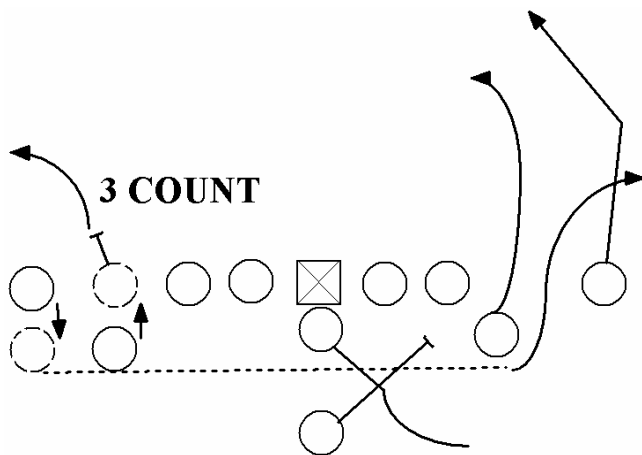


10 FULLBACK OPTION RIGHT

We have a pass off this play as well. It is a halfback pass. We give it to the back and let him throw it from the tailback position.

We copied this play from East Bank High School after they beat us with the play. They ran it against us in the championship game. They ran it awful. It was just an ugly play. The halfback threw a jump pass like a basketball jump shot. They scored on it twice against us. We knew it was coming and still we could not stop it.

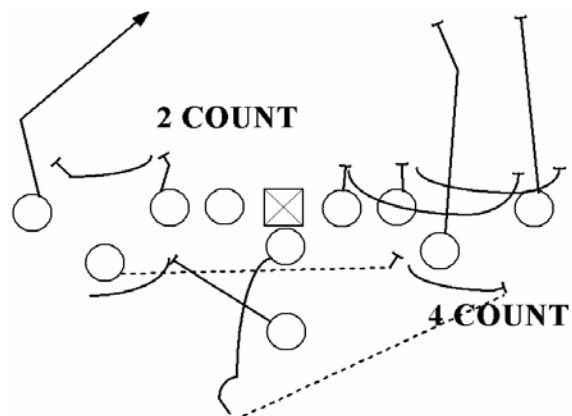
This is a play we ran in the championship game that really broke the game wide open for us. We shifted the split end in the backfield. Then we ran him in motion. That slot back has to move up on the line of scrimmage to give us seven men on the line.



118 "CHANGE" RIP FLOOD

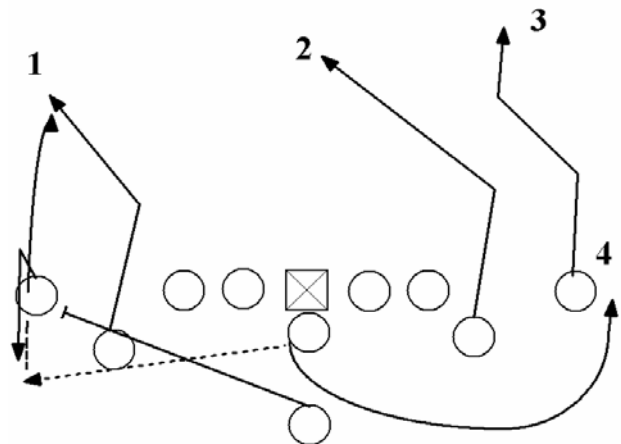
We run a 5 step drop pass to the right side. The slot that moved up on the line is going to run the hot route. The end runs to the post. We ran the motion man outside into the flat and he was wide open and we scored a touchdown. The backside end waits 3 counts before he runs the hot route. If the play is not open on the frontside the quarterback looks to the backside end. A lot of times the backside end is wide open. This is a very good 2 point play.

This is our Double Screen Right. The quarterback has the option of throwing to the fullback or the motion man. The fullback comes over to the left side and sets up for two counts. Then he goes outside. The motion man blocks four counts and then he slips outside. The tackle and guard pull outside to the motion mans side. On the backside we have a tackle pulling outside. The quarterback runs a 5 step drop to the left. Then he rolls to the right side to the slot back. If teams start to chase on the play we can throw a middle screen to keep them honest.



DOUBLE SCREEN RIGHT

Here is our Double Pass. You must have a guy that can throw the ball. The split end backs up 2 steps. The quarterback throws it outside. The fullback is to protect the split end.



DOUBLE PASS

We can use motion to get him there if we want to get him outside. The left slot runs a post flag. The right slot back runs a post. The backside end runs a seam route. You can have the quarterback go outside on a pattern as well. We have completed this play to every one of those receivers.

I want to show a video that we have used for the last two years. Coach Reed has worked very hard on this tape and I appreciate him doing it. I hope some of these plays will help you in some way. I will be here for the entire clinic if you have any questions I will be glad to visit with you. Thank you.