SIMPLIFIED

AIR RAID OFFENSE

HOW TO SCORE POINTS WITH LESS PLAYS

Ron McKie
Simplified Air Raid Offense: How to Score Points with Less Plays

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Chapter 1: Why You Want to Simplify the Air Raid Offense

Look, we all want to be the next great offensive innovator. We want our names on the Mount Rushmore of Influential Football Coaches.

That's why we do what we do. The clinics, the books, the visiting colleges. We do all of that because we want to have the greatest offense in the world.

But somehow, in the course of becoming the greatest offensive minded coach in the history of football, we've created a massive football playbook. We've caused confusion for our players.

And we've caused our offense to look - and play - like shit. But not anymore.

Today's the day we simplify our play book. Today's the day we cut down the plays that don't work - the ones we installed because we saw some college or NFL team run them - and run the ones that do work. Today is the day we get great at a core group of plays.

Today is the day we run the Simplified Air Raid Offense.

Chapter 2: Communicating the Play, Formation, and Snap Count

How to Signal In The Play

Communication is key in this offense. You can't have a wordy play - Dual Right Y-Stack F-Motion Zelda Key 3 - if you want to go fast.

That's why you have to simplify the communication system. Here's our format: Formation - Motion - Play - RPO(if run)

Now, that might seem a lot. But we fold in our RPO into our play call. That way we only call one play and everyone knows what they are doing. I stole this idea from the amazing James Vint. He put out an RPO book that you must read.

Here is a sample of our play calls. We try to have an L and a R in the words to let our players know which different the play is going:

- Inside Zone - Zelda/Zorro
Formations to Use in the Simplified Air Raid Offense

Look, you can run any formation you want in this offense. The world is your freaking oyster.

But you have to keep in mind - every formation you install takes time away from practicing your base plays. Taking time away from practicing your base plays makes your players play slower. Playing slower makes your offense less effective. Making your offense less effective means scoring less points. Scoring less points mean winning less games.

You get where I’m going with this?

That’s why we use three formations:

- Dual Rt/Lt - 2 x 2 Spread Formation. The Rt/Lt tells which side the Y will line up. The F goes opposite.
- Trio Rt/Lt - 3 x 1 Spread Formation. The Rt/Lt tells which side the Y and F to line up to.
- Green/Blue - Two Back Formation. The Rt/Lt tells which side the Y will line up. The F goes opposite BUT he will be in the backfield.

Why do we use these formations?

Because we know what the defense will give us. If the defense is running an even front then we know we will get two 5-techniques, a shade, and a 3-technique. If the defense is running an odd front then we know we will get two 5-techniques and a nose guard.

That keeps things simple for our offensive linemen. They will rep against those two different fronts every single day in practice.

"But Coach," you say. "I heard that having multiple formations are great for keeping defenses off balanced. Why can’t I have 300 different formations then?"
Because those formations you use will cause the defense to line up in different techniques. When defenses do that then it buts addition stress on your offensive linemen to know the technique and to figure out their blocking assignments.

We don’t want that because we are trying to go as fast as humanly possible. Tempo over everything.

Utilizing three formations allows us to play fast and TO KNOW WHAT THE DEFENSIVE LOOK WILL ALWAYS BE!

That’s a huge plus for us. And that’s why we only use three different formations.

**Keep the Defense On Its Toes**

I get it. You’re afraid if you go fast that the defense will jump the snap count, destroy your quarterback, cause a fumble, and ruin your season.

Don’t be.

Because there are ways to counter that without having to spend a considerable amount of practice time toward different tempo styles.

Remember, we only have one speed - FUCKING FAST AS SHIT SPEED!

If you introduce multiple tempos then the kids will not play at their fastest because they will assume they will be going slow. How do I know that? Because that’s what happened to my kids. I tried to install different types of tempo and it caused us to play slower.

So I said “Screw That” and focused on one speed.

Now, what does that have to do with getting the defense on its toes?

Well, we came up with a key word that told our players to FREEZE.

See, freezing the defense is the BEST WAY to have "multiple" tempos without having multiple tempos. This simple adjustment allows your players to play as fast as they can while making the defense scared about getting a stupid penalty.

*(If there’s one thing that drives defensive coordinators crazy is stupid penalties.)*

That’s great. But how do I do that?

Come up with a code word. A couple of code words in fact. That when you signal in the code word the players will line up as fast as possible and **NOT MOVE A FREAKING MUSCLE!**
You get the idea. Have a couple of code words that tells your players there's no play. Signal in the code word every three to four plays, and enjoy the free five yards.

Chapter 3: How to Run God's Play - The Inside Zone Run Scheme

Why We Run the Inside Zone

Inside Zone is the foundation of the Simplified Air Raid Offense. It is what makes the entire offense go. It is the starting point for attacking the defense and knowing which constraint to call.

Why the Inside Zone and not something more 'Powerful' like Power or Buck or Dive or Counter?

The Inside Zone is the simplest, most diverse running scheme that protects EVERY SINGLE GAP. Every offensive linemen has the same responsibilities - protect your inside gap for three steps before climbing to the next level - so that if a lineman goes down then another one can seamlessly go in.

This means your running game will not miss a beat if you get an injury on the offensive line. That's a big thing for me because it allows us to maximize our practice time by working on the same drills for the offensive linemen - regardless of which position they play.

These Are the Best RPOs to Pair With the Inside Zone

Let's get one thing straight right off the bat. Your quarterback can do this. He isn't stupid. He's arm isn't weak. It's not too many things for him to consider.

So stop making bullshit excuses for WHY your guy/team/offense can’t run these RPOs.

Got it? Good.

Now, these RPOs aren't actually RPOs in the sense that you are reading a linebacker/safety/corner. No, these are all based on what the C-gap defender does.

See, the way we've structured everyone off the Inside Zone is to first do what the C-gap defender does:

Words we have used:
- Weather - Lighting, Thunder, Rain, Snow, Hail
- NFL Teams - Lions, Packers, Falcons, Rams
- NBA Teams - Cavs, Warriors, Nuggets, Lakers
● If the C-gap defender rushes up the field then the quarterback will hand the ball off.
● If the C-gap defender chases the running back then the quarterback will pull the ball and get his eyes on the APEX DEFENDER for the Run/Pass Key.

We will get into what the Run/Pass Key later on in the different videos on blocking the Inside Zone. But trust me - it is super simple and it will increase your effectiveness in running the Inside Zone.

**First RPO Tag**

This tag is for our Inside Zone run out of a normal 2 x 2 formation. We can tag either the outside wide receiver with a quick screen - usually named Key 1, Smoke, Crawfish - and the slot receivers blocking Most Dangerous Man.

You would call this quick screen out of 2 x 2 if your best wide receivers were on the outside. This way the ball is either being handed off to your running back or thrown to your best receiver.
As you can guess, you will call this quick screen out of 2 x 2 if your best wide receivers are your slots.

**Second RPO Tag**
The second RPO we run is out of our 3 x 1 formation. We love to run the quick screen to the number three wide receiver because he is the best wide receiver on our team. Remember, we are trying to structure our offense so that the ball will either be in the running back’s hands or our best wide receiver’s hands.

If your best wide receiver is the number two or number one guy in your 3 x 1 formation then you can run the quick screen to him. I’m just letting you know what we do.

**Third RPO Tag**
The last RPO tag we run is for our two-back push motion formation. We love using this formation because defensive coordinators will put eight, nine, or ten freaking people in the box - thinking we are going to run the ball.

Yeah right.

Why would we run the ball in the box with all of those bodies? We aren't like those hard headed Wing-T coaches. We are going to run or throw the ball where the least amount of people are.
There You Have It
Those are all of the RPOs we use in our Inside Zone Scheme. Is that all that you can use? No. But I would keep it simple.

Don’t try to become the newest RPO guru. Sure, it will look good on Twitter/Facebook/Coaching Forum.

But your players will hate you because that’s too many freaking things to remember. Why? Because each one of those RPO tags is a new play - regardless of if you think it is or not. That expands your playbook and makes you play slower.

Don’t do that. Keep it simple. Let your kids play fast. Enjoy scoring point. And enjoy winning.

How to Run the Inside Zone Against an Even Front

I love running against an even front. Why? Because most Even Fronts don’t slant and twist and do all of that funky shit Odd Front teams do. That makes things simple for your offensive linemen. And we all of that, right? Right.

Now, do not get caught up on which technique to run to. You can run to the 3-technique (defender on the outside shoulder of the guard) or to the 1-technique (defender on the outside shoulder of the center). So don’t be afraid about which direction to call the play when facing an Even Front.

Blocking Inside Zone Against an Over Front
**PST** - He has a defender over him. He takes three steps to the right while asking himself, "Is there a defender in my play side gap?" Most of the time that five technique will stay with him because he is taught not to get reached. So on the third step, the tackle will stay on the block.

**PSG** - He does not have a defender over him, yet he is still taking his three steps toward his play side gap. He is asking himself, "Is there anyone showing up in my gap?" If the five technique doesn't spike inside or a linebacker shoot into the gap then he will work to the second level.

**Center** - He has a shade on him. Doesn't matter. He will still take three steps toward his play side gap. He is asking himself, "Is this shade attacking my gap?" If the answer is yes then he will be pushing the defender to the right. If the shade spikes across his face by the third step then he will work up to the second level.

**BSG** - He has a three-technique on his backside. Doesn't matter because he is asking himself, "Is there someone in my play side gap?" He is taking three steps to make sure no one shows up. If someone shows up within those three steps then he will block him. If no one shows up in three steps then he will work to the second level.

**BST** - He has a defender in his play side gap. Doesn't matter however because he is asking himself "Do I have anyone in my play side gap?" He will take three steps to the right while checking his gap. If that three-technique stays in the B gap then the tackle will wash him out. If that defender does something strange and goes away from the B gap then the tackle will work up to the second level on his fourth step.

**Blocking Inside Zone Scheme Against an Under Front**
**PST** - He has a defender over him. He takes three steps to the right while asking himself, "Is there a defender in my play side gap?" Most of the time that five technique will stay with him because he is taught not to get reached. So on the third step, the tackle will stay on the block.

**PSG** - He has a three-technique in his play side gap. Doesn’t matter because he is asking himself, "Is there someone in my play side gap?" He is taking three steps. If that three-technique stays in his gap then he will block him. If that three-technique spikes into the A gap then he will move to the second level.

**Center** - He doesn’t have a defender in his gap. Doesn’t matter though. He will still take three steps toward his play side gap. He is asking himself, "Is anyone showing up in my gap?" If the answer is yes then he will lock onto that defender. If the answer is no by his third step then he will climb to the second level.

**BSG** - He has a shade on him. Doesn’t matter though. He will still take three steps toward his play side gap. He is asking himself, "Is this shade attacking my gap?" If the answer is yes then he will be pushing the defender to the right. If the shade spikes across his face by the third step then he will work up to the second level.

**BST** - He has a defender on his outside. Doesn’t matter however because he is asking himself "Do I have anyone in my play side gap?" He will take three steps to the right while checking his gap. If no one shows up then the tackle will work up to the second level on his fourth step.

**Running Back's Aiming Point**
The Running Back is aiming for the A-gap defender. That is where he wants to be heading by his third step. So that’s something you have to teach your guy. The way we teach him is by having him ask himself these questions:

1. Is there a fat guy lined up in the first gap to the left of the center?
   1. Yes - then that's my aiming point
   2. No - then I'm asking myself a new question
2. Is there a fat guy lined up in the first gap to the right of the center?
   1. Yes - then that's my aiming point
   2. No - then I'm asking myself a new question
3. Is there a fat guy lined up directly in front of the center?
   1. Yes - then I'm running it up the center's butt
   2. No - then I have no idea what my aiming point is. All I know is the defense fucked up and I'm going to score.

**Quarterback’s Thought Process**

The quarterback is reading the C-gap defender. The C-gap defender can do two things:

- Run up the field
- Chase the running back

Whatever the C-gap defender does dictates what the quarterback will do:

- If the C-gap defender runs up the field then the quarterback will **hand** the ball off to the running back.
- If the C-gap chases the running back then the quarterback **pull** the ball and attack the APEX defender to determine whether he will throw the key screen or run the ball.

If the Quarterback gets a **PULL READ**

The Quarterback will now attack the *APEX DEFENDER* for a Run/Pass Option. The APEX defender will do two things:

- Attack the Quarterback – Pass Read
- Attack the Key Screen – Run Read

**Run/Pass Key Attacks the Quarterback**
The Quarterback is attacking the APEX DEFENDER – man head up to inside the Y Receiver. The APEX DEFENDER attacks the quarterback. This is a PASS READ. All the quarterback has to do is THROW A CATCHABLE BALL to the wide receiver.

Seriously, don’t over coach this. All you want is for the quarterback to get the ball there. It won’t look pretty. You shouldn’t care. Remember that.

**Run/Pass Key Attacks the Key Screen**
The Quarterback is attacking the APEX DEFENDER – man head up to inside the Y Receiver. The APEX DEFENDER attacks the key screen. This is a RUN READ. All the quarterback has to do is turn up field and get AT LEAST 4 YARDS.

Honestly, don’t yell at your guy if he doesn’t get more than four yards. That’s all you need for the defensive coordinator to start worrying about you having a “running quarterback”.

**How to Run the Inside Zone against an Odd Front**

Repeat after me: I will not fear the 3-4 defense.

Say it again.

And again.

And again.

And again.

Now, I know you are thinking "Why the hell did I just say that out loud three times in a row by myself?" Because you will not fear the 3-4 defense. That’s why.

Why not?

Because the 3-4 defense is just a fancy 4-2 defense. How? Because they will be slanting one way or the other and bringing an outside line backer. Don’t believe me? Look at the pictures below:

**3-4 Front Slanting Left**
Noticed how the defense ends up with a two 5-technique, a 3-technique, and a shade. Just like the Even Front. So your guys know what they are doing. They know how to block this front since they’ve seen it every single day in practice.

**3-4 Front Slanting Right**
Again, look at how the defense ends up with a two 5-technique, a 3-technique, and a shade.

This is a look your offensive linemen know because you rep the shit out of in practice. There is no new learning for your guys. They still have the same exact thought process on how to block the Inside Zone.

**Blocking Inside Zone Against an Odd Front**

**PST** - He has a defender over him. He takes three steps to the right while asking himself, "Is there a defender in my play side gap?" Most of the time that five technique will slant inside of him if there is a backer on the outside. So if that defensive end slants into the gap then that isn't his responsibility. He will now take the outside linebacker.

**PSG** - He does not have a defender over him, yet he is still taking his three steps toward his play side gap. He is asking himself, "Is there anyone showing up in my gap?" If the five technique doesn’t spike inside or a linebacker shoot into the gap then he will work to the second level.

**Center** - He has a nose on him. Doesn't matter. He will still take three steps toward his play side gap. He is asking himself, "Is this nose attacking my gap?" If the answer is yes then he will be pushing the defender to the left. If the nose spikes across his face by the third step then he will work up to the second level.

**BSG** - He has a nobody in his gap. Doesn't matter because he is asking himself, "Is there someone in my play side gap?" He is taking three steps to make sure no one shows up. If someone shows up within those three steps then he will block him. If no one shows up in three steps then he will work to the second level.
**BST** - He has a defender on his outside shoulder. Doesn't matter however because he is asking himself "Do I have anyone in my play side gap?" He will take three steps to the right while checking his gap. If that 5-technique slants into the B gap then the tackle will wash him out. If that defender does something strange and goes away from the B gap then the tackle will work up to the second level on his fourth step.

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   1. Yes - then that’s my aiming point
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3. Is there a fat guy lined up directly in front of the center?
   1. Yes - then I’m running it up the center’s butt
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Seriously, don’t over coach this. All you want is for the quarterback to get the ball there. It won’t look pretty. You shouldn’t care. Remember that.

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Honestly, don’t yell at your guy if he doesn’t get more than four yards. That’s all you need for the defensive coordinator to start worrying about you having a “running quarterback”.

**How to Run the Inside Zone Against the 3-3 Stack**

Look, I get it. You see a defense that runs the 3-3 stack and your butthole puckers up a little bit. That’s understandable. We’ve been conditioned as offensive football coaches that the 3-3 Stack was the SPREAD BEATER!


Why?

Because they have to account for each gap. So that means that there will always be two 5-techniques, a 3-technique, and a shade. Always.

Sure, there maybe different defensive players occupying those gaps, but those gaps are being occupied. Which is great for us because our offensive linemen know they are blocking their GAPS - not a man.

Therefore they shouldn't give a crap about what the defense lines up in because if they follow their rules then they will have the play blocked.

**Blocking Inside Zone Against a 3-3 Stack**
**PST** - He has a defender over him. He takes three steps to the right while asking himself, "Is there a defender in my play side gap?" If the defender slants to the outside then he will lock on by his third step and drive him to the sideline. If the defender on him slants into his backside gap then he will take his three steps to the left and then climb to the linebackers responsible for the C-gap.

**PSG** - He does not have a defender over him, yet he is still taking his three steps toward his play side gap. He is asking himself, "Is there anyone showing up in my gap?" If the five technique doesn’t spike inside or a linebacker shoot into the gap then he will work to the second level.

**Center** - He has a nose on him. Doesn’t matter. He will still take three steps toward his play side gap. He is asking himself, "Is this nose attacking my gap?" If the answer is yes then he will be pushing the defender to the left. If the nose spikes across his face by the third step then he will work up to the second level.

**BSG** - He has a nobody in his gap. Doesn’t matter because he is asking himself, "Is there someone in my play side gap?" He is taking three steps to make sure no one shows up. If someone shows up within those three steps then he will block him. If no one shows up in three steps then he will work to the second level.
**BST** - He has a defender on his outside shoulder. Doesn't matter however because he is asking himself "Do I have anyone in my play side gap?" He will take three steps to the right while checking his gap. If that 5-technique slants into the B gap then the tackle will wash him out. If that defender does something strange and goes away from the B gap then the tackle will work up to the second level on his fourth step.

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Honestly, don’t yell at your guy if he doesn’t get more than four yards. That’s all you need for the defensive coordinator to start worrying about you having a “running quarterback”.

**How to Turn the Inside Zone into a Second Level RPO**

You see them on TV - the plays where it looks like a run but then the quarterback pulls the ball and throws it to a linebacker five yards down the field.

The plays where it looks like it’s a blown coverage or that every defensive person is dropping back into coverage as if they were at a 7 on 7 tournament.

And you think to yourself, "What the hell is going on? How is that wide receiver so open?"

Run Pass Options is the reason why. It puts a second level defender in conflict because that defender - usually a linebacker - has run and pass responsibilities.

The Run Pass Option - or RPO from here on out - is a FANTASTIC way to mess with his read. Making sure that the linebacker is always wrong.

And you can create this kind of plays while using the Inside Zone Running Scheme. How? By using a simple tag.
This tag only affects the backside guard and tackle in the Inside Zone Scheme. The Center, Play Side Guard, and Play Side Tackle run their normal Inside Zone rules.

How does the blocking scheme change for the backside guard and tackle then? The LOCK TAG tells the backside guard and tackle to lock onto their defenders.

Look, it's super simple: the tackle is always locked on to the man head up to outside of him. The backside guard is only locked on if he has a man head up to outside of him.
**Example 1:** The guard has a guy head up to outside of him. Therefore he locks on.

**Example 2:** Does the guard have a man head up to outside of him? Nope. So he does his normal inside zone steps.
Example 3: Same thing in the odd front. Nobody head up or outside of the backside guard, so he does his normal steps.

This tag is amazing because now you have turned the Inside Zone Scheme into an RPO.

You will have the slot wide receiver run a three-step hitch. The quarterback is reading the backside linebacker. If the linebacker fills, then he will pull the ball and drill the hitch. If the linebacker drops then the quarterback will hand the ball off.

Simple as that.

This little tag lets you become a 'cutting edge' offense, get your players excited because they are running plays they see on Saturday, and pisses off defensive coordinators because they don’t know what the hell is going on.

Chapter 4: Attacking the Outside of the Defense:
Running the Pin and Pull RPO

Look, defensive coordinators aren't stupid. They study the game of football as much as you do. So they are going to know what you love to do in your offense - run the Inside Zone.

That means they are going to do everything they can defensively to take away your Inside Zone. What kind of things will defensive coordinators try to do to stop you? They will:

- Blitz defenders into every gap
Scrape exchange the defensive end and linebacker that’s on the same side of the running back.

- Setting the 3-technique to the running back's side (if the defense runs an Even Front)
- Slanting away from the running back (if the defense runs the 3-4 or 3-3 Stack)

And anything else the defensive coordinator can think of to stop your high powered offense. Does this mean you can’t run the ball? Of course not. It just means you have to utilize a different play. Something to counter their counter.

That’s why you will run the Pin and Pull RPO.

**How to Run the Pin and Pull RPO Against an Even Front**

The Even front is the simplest front in the game of football. It’s the front every defensive coordinator wants to run because it’s ‘Smash Mouth Defensive Football’.

We will crave this front up like a Thanksgiving turkey.

Rules for blocking the Pin and Pull RPO are simple:

- If you have a man head up or outside of you then you will base block the defender.
- If you don’t have a man head up or outside of you then you will block down on the defender in the backside gap.
- If someone is blocking down for you then you will be pulling.

A guard or center will pull when we run the Pin and Pull RPO against an Even front.

**Blocking the Pin and Pull RPO to the 3 Tech:**
**PST:** You will base block anyone head up to outside of you.

**PSG:** You will base block the man head up to outside of you.

**Center:** You will block back on the shade.

**BSG:** You will execute a skip pull. Your eyes will be tracking the Front Side Linebacker as you are skip pulling. This is the man you are going to be blocking.

**BST:** You are base blocking the man head up to outside of you.

**Blocking the Pin and Pull RPO to a shade/1-technique:**
**PST:** You are blocking the man head up to outside of you.

**PSG:** You will be blocking back on the shade.

**Center:** You will execute a skip pull around the play side guard's block. Your eyes will be on the front side linebacker as you skip pull. He is the man you are going to block.

**BSG:** You are blocking the man head up to outside of you.

**BST:** You are blocking the man head up to outside of you.

**Running Back Rules**

The running back will line up with his heels even on the toes of the quarterback. He will line up in the B gap. When the ball is snapped, he will take a little jump hop before turning his shoulders perpendicular to the line of scrimmage. His eyes, while he is sprinting towards the sideline, will be on the play side tackle/tight end.

If the tackle or tight end blocks their man towards the sideline, then the running back will put his foot in the ground and cut up the field. If the tackle or tight end reaches their man and hooks them, then the running back will get to the outside before cutting up the field.
It's that simple. Now, let me answer some quick questions I know you will ask.

1. **Won't the running back's alignment give the play away?**
   ○ Do we care about that? No, we don't. We will be utilizing tempo. That means that if the defense can get their play in, get aligned, notice where the back is lining up, alert the defense to where the back is lining up, and then check to whatever they game planned to stop the Pin and Pull RPO then you aren't going fast enough.

2. **Should the quarterback take a shuffle step as well?**
   ○ The quarterback will take a shuffle step. He does this because it helps influence the Read Defender. We will talk about that later in the Quarterback chapter.

3. **Why is the running back hopping before sprinting towards the side line? Is he a rabbit?**
   ○ I don’t know if your player is a rabbit, but I can tell you why he is going to mini-hop. It helps for the timing of the quarterback read and gives the guards time to pull.

Let's look at some diagrams.

**End Man on Line of Scrimmage Gets Blocked to the Sideline**
As you can tell, the tackle is forcing his defender towards the sideline. The running back should be sticking his foot in the ground and getting North and South as quickly as possible.

**End Man on Line of Scrimmage gets Hooked**

As you can tell, the tackle/tight end has hooked their defender. What point is it for the running back to plant his foot in the ground and get North and South now? There isn’t one. Unless the running back wants to get yelled at and watch the rest of the game from the sideline.

**Tackle Gives ‘KICK-KICK’ Call**
This is a situation you need to rep. The running back needs to see that the play side tackle has a defender head-up him and a defender outside of him. The running back needs to know there is going to be a ‘KICK-KICK’ call from the tackle. When the tackle gives a ‘KICK-KICK’ call then the running back knows he will be sticking his foot in the ground and getting North and South as soon as he passes the play side tackle.

What does the running back do when the quarterback pulls the ball? He sees how many defenders he can fake out by pretending he still has the ball.

We call it **Riding the Wave**.

If the quarterback pulls the ball, then the running back kicks it up another gear and **SPRINTS** to the sideline. We want the Academy Awards to nominate him for Best Actor in a Supporting Role.

Why?
The play-action will pull the Read Defender away from the snag route. This will make it easier for the quarterback.

**Wide Receiver Rules**

Here is some advice I wish I knew a long time ago:

*Wide Receivers don’t need to block anyone!*

I know a lot of coaches will baulk at that and say, “If wide receivers don’t block, then they aren’t getting the ROCK!”

I was one of those coaches.

I was stupid.

If I wanted wide receivers to be blockers, then I would line up in the I formation and run the old school power. Receivers here to catch balls and make the quarterback look good. They aren’t here to destroy safeties and corners.

Let them do what they were put onto the field to do.

Score touchdowns.

**Route Rules**
The rules for this play are the same rules as our One Back Power RPO.

Closest wide receiver to the running back will have a snag route. His aiming point is one yard behind the Read Key. Every other wide receiver to the back’s side will be running a five yard in – called a Fin route.

**Wide Receiver Routes Versus Even Front**
Should the Wide Receivers care if this is an Under or an Over front? Nope. Like Happy Gilmore says: “Who Gives a Shit?!"

The only thing the Wide Receivers need to care about is the Read Key. Where’s the read key in an Even front? It is the first linebacker lined up on the running back’s side.

**L Receiver:** If the Corner is five yards or more off you then you will run a three-step hitch. You should expect the ball on your third step. Do not be surprised. If the corner is less than five yards off you then you will run a mandatory outside release vertical. You need to get the corner to turn his hips and run with you. If he doesn’t run with you then you will block him.

**F Receiver:** You will run a Snag route. Your aiming point will be one yard deeper than the Read Key’s initial position. Once you get to this spot you will stick your toe in the ground and show your hands to the quarterback. Do not drift.

**Y Receiver:** You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. If there is a defender over you or slightly inside of you then you will attack his outside shoulder when you release. This opens the Snag route more for the F receiver and makes it easier for the quarterback to throw the ball.

**R Receiver:** You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. You are the ‘Oh Shit’ route. You do not have to burst out of your stance. You need to attack the Corner’s outside shoulder for five yards. Make him turn his shoulders. You do this to open up the first Fin route and make it easy for the Y Receiver and the quarterback.

**Quarterback Rules**

The Quarterback needs to check a couple of things before he gets the play started. The first thing he needs to do is make sure the Running Back is lined up correctly. Now, I know this shouldn’t be his job, but if the running back isn’t lined up correctly with the quarterback then the timing of the play will be off. We don’t want that. This play is like a well-made watch. Everything must be in sync. If the running back isn’t even with the quarterback, then the play won’t work. So the quarterback has to be mindful of that. Yes, the
running back will line up correct the more times he reps the play. However, in the beginning you need to make sure the quarterback helps him out.

Once the quarterback is sure the running back is even with him, then he will look over at the single wide receiver’s side. The quarterback must ask himself this question: Is the Corner playing more than five yards off the receiver? If the answer to that question is a **Yes**, then the quarterback will throw the hitch route all day long.

**ALL DAY LONG!!!!**

You need to train him that you are okay with taking the free five yards every time. As a matter of fact, you need to train yourself that **YOU** are okay with *him* taking the five yards every time.

**REMEMBER: IF IT IS FREE THEN YOU WILL GIVE ME FUCKING THREE!!!!!!**

If the **FREE YARDS** isn’t there, then the quarterback needs to locate the Read Key. The rule for this play is as follows:
- If it is an **EVEN** front, then you are reading the **SECOND** linebacker away from the side the play is going too.
- If it is an **ODD** front, then you are reading the **THIRD** linebacker away from the side the play is going too.

Again, just like the Wide Receivers, the quarterback can use this general rule:

*The Read Key will be the first linebacker on the same side as the running back.*

**Quarterback Thoughts Versus an Even Front**

The Quarterback has already checked to make sure the Running Back is lined up right. He locates the Single Receiver side. The Corner is five yards or more off the Single Receiver. Where’s the Front Side Linebacker? He’s not there. That’s strange. Why isn’t he there?
Oh, dang. The defense is in an Even front.

Does the Quarterback have to wonder if it is an Under or an Over Front?

Nope.

The only thing the Quarterback is worried about right now is if there is a Front Side Linebacker threatening the hitch route.

Is there? Nope. There is nothing but grass out there. The Quarterback now has the green light to throw the hitch.

You must stress to your Quarterback to TAKE THE FREE YARDS!!!!

Okay, so the corner is sick of giving up free yards and takes it personnel. He has decided to get in the Single Wide Receiver’s face and talk about the Receiver’s mother. That’s fine.

The Quarterback knows the Hitch is dead and now locates the Read Key. Does it change? Nope. It’s still the first Linebacker lined up on the same side as the Running Back.

**Quarterback’s Thought Process:**

If the Read Key stays still or drops back to cover the Snag route after the ball is snapped, then I will hand the ball off.
If the Read Key follows the Guard pull and crosses the Center’s face, then I will pull the ball, flip his hips, and throw the Snag route.
If I see color enter the GRASS area where the Snag is at, then I will throw the Fin route.

Simple reads, right?

I know what you are going to say. “Coach McKie, my quarterback has a ton of ‘What-Ifs’ he needs to process. That makes me uncomfortable.”

You’re right. He does. That’s why we drill the play every single day so that the ‘What-Ifs’ become second nature.

**How to Run the Pin and Pull RPO Against an 3-4 Front**

Why is it that the Spread offense gets a bad rap for ‘following’ college football trends, while nobody says anything to defenses that are doing the same thing?

Is it because Defensive coaches wish to be on the offensive side of the ball, and they are lashing out us? Or is it because no one gives a damn about the defensive side of the ball?
Whatever the case, you can bet that most of your teams in your region are going to be running some form of Odd man front.

Don’t freak out. Odd front teams are simple to deal with as long as you know the Pin and Pull RPO blocking scheme.

Blocking the Pin and Pull Against a 3-4 front

Defensive coaches call a 3-4 defense a 50 front. They do this because they want to confuse offensive coaches.

There are three ways defenses will use the 3-4 front:

- Straight 5 man box with no blitzers.
- Bringing a blitz from the front side.
- Bring a blitz off the back side.

I’m going to show you how to block each one.

You ready? Good.

**Blocking Against 3-4 Front Without Any Blitzers**
PST: You will block anyone head up to outside of you. Since you have someone head up to outside of you then you will base block this defender.

PSG: You have no one in your play side B-gap. You have no one in your backside A-gap. You will skip pull around the Right Tackle. Your eyes are on the front side linebacker. This is the defender you are responsible for blocking.

Center: You have someone covering you. You will base block this man. You are responsible for this defender.

BSG: You do not have anyone in your play side A-Gap. You do not have anyone in your backside B-Gap. You will skip pull around the center. Your eyes will be on the backside linebacker. This is the defender you are responsible for blocking.

BST: You are blocking anyone head up to outside of you. Since you have a defender on you then you are base blocking this man. This is the defender you are responsible for.

That’s simple, right? That is the look we love to see.

**REMEMBER: 5 man box means you RUN THE FOOTBALL!!**

Now, defensive coordinators won’t sit back and let you run the ball the entire game. They will bring pressure once scored four rushing touchdowns from the Pin and Pull RPO.

Are you going to get scared?

Hell no.

You’re going to rub your hands together and prepare your nipples for the massive amount of scoring you are going to be doing.

**Blocking Pin and Pull RPO Against 3-4 Front with a Front Side Blitz**
PST: You will block anyone head up to outside of you. Since you have a defender head up to you AND a defender to the outside of you, then you will give a ‘KICK-KICK’ call. This alerts the Right Guard that he will be KICKING out the defender on the outside of you.

PSG: You do not have anyone in your play side B-Gap. You do not have anyone in your backside A-Gap. So that means you will skip pull around the Right Tackle. You heard the ‘KICK-KICK’ call from the Right Tackle. That means you will be kicking out the defender that is on the outside of the Right Tackle.

Center: You have someone covering you. You will base block this man. You are responsible for this defender.

BSG: You do not have anyone in your play side A-Gap. You do not have anyone in your backside B-Gap. You will skip pull around the center. Your eyes will be on the front side linebacker. This is the defender you are responsible for blocking. You are eyeing this defender because of the Right Tackle’s ‘KICK-KICK’ call.

BST: You are blocking anyone head up to outside of you. Since you have a defender on you then you are base blocking this man. This is the defender you are responsible for.

It’s that easy.

Everyone accounted for, and the quarterback knows who to read. The only thing that changes is the back having to cut up sooner.
That’s no big deal, because he’s repped getting North as soon as possible throughout the week.

Besides, what the running back does isn’t your concern right now. All you care about is being able to block the defenders up front.

The last way a 3-4 front team will play you is by bring the blitzer off the backside.

**Blocking the Pin and Pull RPO Against 3-4 Front with Back Side Blitzer**

![Diagram]

**PST:** You will block anyone head up to outside of you. Since you have someone head up to outside of you then you will base block this defender.

**PSG:** You have no one in your play side B-gap. You have no one in your backside A-gap. You will skip pull around the Right Tackle. Your eyes are on the front side linebacker. This is the defender you are responsible for blocking.

**Center:** You have someone covering you. You will base block this man. You are responsible for this defender.

**BSG:** You do not have anyone in your play side A-Gap. You do not have anyone in your backside B-Gap. You will skip pull around the center. Your eyes will be on the backside linebacker. This is the defender you are responsible for blocking.

**BST:** You are blocking anyone head up to outside of you. Since you have a defender on you then you are base blocking this man. This is the defender you are responsible for.
“Wait,” you say. “This is the same way we block the Pin and Pull RPO when the defense doesn’t bring any blitz. How is that possible?”

First, great job on being able to recognize the blocking. You’re learning and that’s freaking amazing. Second, the blitzing defender is the quarterback’s read key. Since the defender is blitzing then the quarterback pulls the ball and throw it to the snag route.

We’re getting ahead of ourselves. Just know if the defense decides to bring pressure off the backside of the play then we will be scoring at will.

**Running Back Rules**

The running back will line up with his heels even on the toes of the quarterback. He will line up in the B gap. When the ball is snapped, he will take a little jump hop before turning his shoulders perpendicular to the line of scrimmage. His eyes, while he is sprinting towards the sideline, will be on the play side tackle/tight end.

If the tackle or tight end blocks their man towards the sideline, then the running back will put his foot in the ground and cut up the field. If the tackle or tight end reaches their man and hooks them, then the running back will get to the outside before cutting up the field.

It’s that simple. Now, let me answer some quick questions I know you will ask.

1. Won’t the running back’s alignment give the play away?
   a. Do we care about that? No, we don’t. We will be utilizing tempo. That means that if the defense can get their play in, get aligned, notice where the back is lining up, alert the defense to where the back is lining up, and then check to whatever they game planned to stop the Pin and Pull RPO then you aren’t going fast enough.

2. Should the quarterback take a shuffle step as well?
   a. The quarterback will take a shuffle step. He does this because it helps influence the Read Defender. We will talk about that later in the Quarterback chapter.

3. Why is the running back hopping before sprinting towards the sideline? Is he a rabbit?
   a. I don’t know if your player is a rabbit, but I can tell you why he is going to mini-hop. It helps for the timing of the quarterback read and gives the guards time to pull.

Let’s look at some diagrams.

**End Man on Line of Scrimmage Gets Blocked to the Sideline**
As you can tell, the tackle is forcing his defender towards the sideline. The running back should be sticking his foot in the ground and getting North and South as quickly as possible.

**End Man on Line of Scrimmage gets Hooked**

As you can tell, the tackle/tight end has hooked their defender. What point is it for the running back to plant his foot in the ground and get North and South now? There isn’t one. Unless the running back wants to get yelled at and watch the rest of the game from the sideline.
Tackle Gives 'KICK-KICK' Call
This is a situation you need to rep. The running back needs to see that the play side tackle has a defender head-up him and a defender outside of him. The running back needs to know there is going to be a 'KICK-KICK' call from the tackle. When the tackle gives a 'KICK-KICK' call then the running back knows he will be sticking his foot in the ground and getting North and South as soon as he passes the play side tackle.

What does the running back do when the quarterback pulls the ball? He sees how many defenders he can fake out by pretending he still has the ball.

We call it **Riding the Wave.**

If the quarterback pulls the ball, then the running back kicks it up another gear and **SPRINTS** to the sideline. We want the Academy Awards to nominate him for Best Actor in a Supporting Role.

Why?

The play-action will pull the Read Defender away from the snag route. This will make it easier for the quarterback.
Wide Receiver Rules

Here is some advice I wish I knew a long time ago:

**Wide Receivers don’t need to block anyone!**

I know a lot of coaches will baulk at that and say, “If wide receivers don’t block, then they aren’t getting the ROCK!”

I was one of those coaches.

I was stupid.

If I wanted wide receivers to be blockers, then I would line up in the I formation and run the old school power. Receivers here to catch balls and make the quarterback look good. They aren’t here to destroy safeties and corners.

Let them do what they were put onto the field to do.

Score touchdowns.

Route Rules

The rules for this play are the same rules as our One Back Power RPO.

Closest wide receiver to the running back will have a snag route. His aiming point is one yard behind the Read Key. Every other wide receiver to the back’s side will be running a five yard in – called a Fin route.

Wide Receiver Routes Versus an 3-4 Front with no Blitzing
The highlighted linebacker is the Read Key. Notice how he is on the same side as the running back. That’s the guy the F Receiver needs to know we are reading.

**L Receiver:** If the Corner is five yards or more off you then you will run a three-step hitch. You should expect the ball on your third step. Do not be surprised. If the corner is less than five yards off you then you will run a mandatory outside release vertical. You need to get the corner to turn his hips and run with you. If he doesn’t run with you then you will block him.

**F Receiver:** You will run a Snag route. Your aiming point will be one yard deeper than the Read Key's initial position. Once you get to this spot you will stick your toe in the ground and show your hands to the quarterback. Do not drift.

**Y Receiver:** You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. If there is a defender over you or slightly inside of you then you will attack his outside shoulder when you release. This opens the Snag route more for the F receiver and makes it easier for the quarterback to throw the ball.

**R Receiver:** You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. You are the ‘Oh Shit’ route. You do not have to burst out of your stance. You need to attack the Corner's outside shoulder for five yards. Make him turn his shoulders. You do this to open up the first Fin route and make it easy for the Y Receiver and the quarterback.

**Wide Receiver Routes Versus an 3-4 Front with Front Side Blitzing**

The defense is bringing front side pressure. Does this change the wide receiver routes? Heck no. Notice how the Read Key is the same defender as before. The wide receivers know the rules. They are the same as before.

**L Receiver:** If the Corner is five yards or more off you then you will run a three-step hitch. You should expect the ball on your third step. Do not be surprised. If the corner is less than five yards off you then you will run a mandatory outside release vertical. You need to get the corner to turn his hips and run with you. If he doesn’t run with you then you will block him.
**F Receiver:** You will run a Snag route. Your aiming point will be one yard deeper than the Read Key's initial position. Once you get to this spot you will stick your toe in the ground and show your hands to the quarterback. Do not drift.

**Y Receiver:** You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. If there is a defender over you or slightly inside of you then you will attack his outside shoulder when you release. This opens the Snag route more for the F receiver and makes it easier for the quarterback to throw the ball.

**R Receiver:** You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. You are the 'Oh Shit' route. You do not have to burst out of your stance. You need to attack the Corner's outside shoulder for five yards. Make him turn his shoulders. You do this to open up the first Fin route and make it easy for the Y Receiver and the quarterback.

**Wide Receiver Routes Versus an 3-4 Front with Backside Blitzer**

This one seems different. Does the Wide Receiver run his Snag route behind the blitzing linebacker? No. That's not the Read Key. Remember, the general rule is the Read Key is the first linebacker lined up on the same side as the running back. Is the blitzing linebacker the first linebacker to the back's side? Nope. Nothing really changes for the wide receivers.

*Note: The F Receiver must be mindful of a fake blitz and drop by the blitzing linebacker.*

**L Receiver:** If the Corner is five yards or more off you then you will run a three-step hitch. You should expect the ball on your third step. Do not be surprised. If the corner is less than five yards off you then you will run a mandatory outside release vertical. You need to get the corner to turn his hips and run with you. If he doesn’t run with you then you will block him.

**F Receiver:** You will run a Snag route. Your aiming point will be one yard deeper than the Read Key's initial position. Once you get to this spot you will stick your toe in the ground and show your hands to the quarterback. Do not drift.
**Y Receiver**: You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. If there is a defender over you or slightly inside of you then you will attack his outside shoulder when you release. This opens the Snag route more for the F receiver and makes it easier for the quarterback to throw the ball.

**R Receiver**: You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. You are the ‘Oh Shit’ route. You do not have to burst out of your stance. You need to attack the Corner’s outside shoulder for five yards. Make him turn his shoulders. You do this to open up the first Fin route and make it easy for the Y Receiver and the quarterback.

**Quarterback Rules**

The Quarterback needs to check a couple of things before he gets the play started.

The first thing he needs to do is make sure the Running Back is lined up correctly. Now, I know this shouldn’t be his job, but if the running back isn’t lined up correctly with the quarterback then the timing of the play will be off. We don’t want that.

This play is like a well-made watch. Everything must be in sync. If the running back isn’t even with the quarterback, then the play won’t work. So the quarterback has to be mindful of that. Yes, the running back will line up correct the more times he reps the play. However, in the beginning you need to make sure the quarterback helps him out.

Once the quarterback is sure the running back is even with him, then he will look over at the single wide receiver’s side. The quarterback must ask himself this question: Is the Corner playing more than five yards off the receiver? If the answer to that question is a Yes, then the quarterback will throw the hitch route all day long.

**ALL DAY LONG!!!!**

You need to train him that you are okay with taking the free five yards every time. As a matter of fact, you need to train yourself that YOU are okay with him taking the five yards every time.

**REMEMBER: IF IT IS FREE THEN YOU WILL GIVE ME FUCKING THREE!!!!!**

If the FREE YARDS isn’t there, then the quarterback needs to locate the Read Key. The rule for this play is as follows:

- If it is an **EVEN** front, then you are reading the **SECOND** linebacker away from the side the play is going too.
- If it is an **ODD** front, then you are reading the **THIRD** linebacker away from the side the play is going too.
Again, just like the Wide Receivers, the quarterback can use this general rule:

*The Read Key will be the first linebacker on the same side as the running back.*

**Quarterback Thoughts Versus a 3-4 Front with no Blitzing**

The quarterback must keep an eye out for that linebacker to the single receiver side. He may undercut the hitch route.

I’ve told our quarterback to never throw that pass because I don’t know what the linebacker will do. Now, you may have a quarterback with a cannon, so you might be okay with your quarterback making that throw. My guy doesn’t have the strongest arm, so I’ve always told him to not throw it.

Since the quarterback has eliminated free five yards, then he turns his attention to the backside. He locates the Read Key. Who is it? The first linebacker lined up on the same side as the running back.

**Quarterback’s Thought Process:**

- If the Read Key stays still or drops back to cover the Snag route after the ball is snapped, then I will hand the ball off.
- If the Read Key follows the Guard pull and crosses the Center’s face, then I will pull the ball, flip his hips, and throw the Snag route.
- If I see color enter the GRASS area where the Snag is at, then I will throw the Fin route.

**Quarterback Thoughts Versus a 3-4 Front Frontside blitzing**
The Quarterback has already checked to make sure the Running Back is lined up right. He locates the Single Receiver side. The Corner is five yards or more off the Single Receiver. Where’s the Front Side Linebacker? He’s blitzing. The Quarterback now has the green light to throw the hitch.

You must stress to your Quarterback to **TAKE THE FREE YARDS!!!**

Okay, so the defense has gotten sick of giving up the free yards, and they have made their corner press the Single Wide Receiver. Now the Quarterback needs to locate the Read Key. Does it change? Nope. It’s still the first Linebacker lined up on the same side as the Running Back.

**Quarterback's Thought Process:**

- If the Read Key stays still or drops back to cover the Snag route after the ball is snapped, then I will hand the ball off.
- If the Read Key follows the Guard pull and crosses the Center’s face, then I will pull the ball, flip his hips, and throw the Snag route.
- If I see color enter the GRASS area where the Snag is at, then I will throw the Fin route.

**Quarterback Thoughts Versus a 3-4 Front with Backside blitzing**
The Quarterback has already checked to make sure the Running Back is lined up right. He locates the Single Receiver side. The Corner is five yards or more off the Single Receiver. Where’s the Front Side Linebacker? He’s not blitzing. The hitch route is dead.

Now, the Quarterback finds the Read Key. Does it change? Nope. It’s still the first Linebacker on the Running Back’s side. BUT, he must be careful about that blitzing linebacker coming off the backside. If the Quarterback gets a pull read, then he needs to be mindful of the linebacker faking the blitz and jumping the Snag route.

**Quarterback’s Thought Process:**

- If the Read Key stays still or drops back to cover the Snag route after the ball is snapped, then I will hand the ball off.
- If the Read Key follows the Guard pull and crosses the Center’s face, then I will pull the ball, flip his hips, and throw the Snag route.
- If I see color enter the GRASS area where the Snag is at, then I will throw the Fin route.

**How to Run the Pin and Pull RPO Against an 3-3 Stack**

Oh geez, the dreaded 3-3 Stack Defense. What in the world are we going to do? We might as well pack it up because there is nooooo way we are going to run on this defense. This is the defense that is designed to stop the Spread Offense.

**BULLSHIT**.
We are going to run on this defense all night long. We are going to score at will on this defense. We are going to make the opposing defensive coordinator look at himself in the mirror after he plays us and ask, "What the shit was I thinking? Why am I running the 3-3 Stack? Have I lost my damn mind? I need to get out of this profession because I'm horrible and suck donkey butt."

Okay, maybe that was a little over the top. But that's how you have to think. There are too many offensive coordinators who tuck tail and RUN when they go up against a 3-3 Stack.

But that's not going to be you. Why? Because you know how to attack it. Especially when you call the Pin and Pull RPO.

**NOTE:** If you are facing a 3-3 Stack team, then it is important to get into some form of 3 x 1. It doesn’t matter how - motioning to 3 x 1, starting out in 3 x 1, shifting to 3 x 1 - just get it done. Why? Because this ‘BREAKS’ the stack and makes it easier for your kids to recognize who to block.

**Blocking the Pin and Pull RPO Against a 3-3 Stack**

**PST:** You will block anyone head up to outside of you. Since you have someone head up to outside of you then you will base block this defender.
**PSG**: You have no one in your play side B-gap. You have no one in your backside A-gap. You will skip pull around the Right Tackle. Your eyes are on the front side linebacker. This is the defender you are responsible for blocking.

**Center**: You have someone covering you. You will base block this man. You are responsible for this defender.

**BSG**: You do not have anyone in your play side A-Gap. You do not have anyone in your backside B-Gap. You will skip pull around the center. Your eyes will be on the backside linebacker. This is the defender you are responsible for blocking.

**BST**: You are blocking anyone head up to outside of you. Since you have a defender on you then you are base blocking this man. This is the defender you are responsible for.

### Running Back Rules

The running back will line up with his heels even on the toes of the quarterback. He will line up in the B gap. When the ball is snapped, he will take a little jump hop before turning his shoulders perpendicular to the line of scrimmage. His eyes, while he is sprinting towards the sideline, will be on the play side tackle/tight end.

If the tackle or tight end blocks their man towards the sideline, then the running back will put his foot in the ground and cut up the field. If the tackle or tight end reaches their man and hooks them, then the running back will get to the outside before cutting up the field.

It's that simple. Now, let me answer some quick questions I know you will ask.

1. **Won't the running back's alignment give the play away?**
   - Do we care about that? No, we don't. We will be utilizing tempo. That means that if the defense can get their play in, get aligned, notice where the back is lining up, alert the defense to where the back is lining up, and then check to whatever they game planned to stop the Pin and Pull RPO then you aren't going fast enough.

2. **Should the quarterback take a shuffle step as well?**
   - The quarterback will take a shuffle step. He does this because it helps influence the Read Defender. We will talk about that later in the Quarterback chapter.

3. **Why is the running back hopping before sprinting towards the side line? Is he a rabbit?**
   - I don't know if your player is a rabbit, but I can tell you why he is going to mini-hop. It helps for the timing of the quarterback read and gives the guards time to pull.

Let's look at some diagrams.

**End Man on Line of Scrimmage Gets Blocked to the Sideline**
As you can tell, the tackle is forcing his defender towards the sideline. The running back should be sticking his foot in the ground and getting North and South as quickly as possible.

**End Man on Line of Scrimmage gets Hooked**

As you can tell, the tackle/tight end has hooked their defender. What point is it for the running back to plant his foot in the ground and get North and South now? There isn't one. Unless the running back wants to get yelled at and watch the rest of the game from the sideline.
Tackle Gives 'KICK-KICK' Call
This is a situation you need to rep. The running back needs to see that the play side tackle has a defender head-up him and a defender outside of him. The running back needs to know there is going to be a 'KICK-KICK' call from the tackle. When the tackle gives a 'KICK-KICK' call then the running back knows he will be sticking his foot in the ground and getting North and South as soon as he passes the play side tackle.

What does the running back do when the quarterback pulls the ball? He sees how many defenders he can fake out by pretending he still has the ball.

We call it **Riding the Wave**.

If the quarterback pulls the ball, then the running back kicks it up another gear and **SPRINTS** to the sideline. We want the Academy Awards to nominate him for Best Actor in a Supporting Role.

Why?

The play-action will pull the Read Defender away from the snag route. This will make it easier for the quarterback.
Wide Receiver Rules

Here is some advice I wish I knew a long time ago:

Wide Receivers don’t need to block anyone!

I know a lot of coaches will baulk at that and say, “If wide receivers don’t block, then they aren’t getting the ROCK!”

I was one of those coaches.

I was stupid.

If I wanted wide receivers to be blockers, then I would line up in the I formation and run the old school power. Receivers here to catch balls and make the quarterback look good. They aren’t here to destroy safeties and corners.

Let them do what they were put onto the field to do.

Score touchdowns.

Route Rules

The rules for this play are the same rules as our One Back Power RPO.

Closest wide receiver to the running back will have a snag route. His aiming point is one yard behind the Read Key. Every other wide receiver to the back’s side will be running a five yard in – called a Fin route.

Wide Receiver Routes Versus 3-3 Stack
Do the Wide Receivers care that the defense is in a 3-3 Stack? Nope. The only thing they care about is if the Read Key changed. Does it? Nope. Nothing changes for the wide receivers. This is simple, isn’t it?

**L Receiver:** If the Corner is five yards or more off you then you will run a three-step hitch. You should expect the ball on your third step. Do not be surprised. If the corner is less than five yards off you then you will run a mandatory outside release vertical. You need to get the corner to turn his hips and run with you. If he doesn’t run with you then you will block him.

**F Receiver:** You will run a Snag route. Your aiming point will be one yard deeper than the Read Key’s initial position. Once you get to this spot you will stick your toe in the ground and show your hands to the quarterback. Do not drift.

**Y Receiver:** You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. If there is a defender over you or slightly inside of you then you will attack his outside shoulder when you release. This opens the Snag route more for the F receiver and makes it easier for the quarterback to throw the ball.

**R Receiver:** You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. You are the ‘Oh Shit’ route. You do not have to burst out of your stance. You need to attack the Corner’s outside shoulder for five yards. Make him turn his shoulders. You do this to open up the first Fin route and make it easy for the Y Receiver and the quarterback.

**Quarterback Rules**

The Quarterback needs to check a couple of things before he gets the play started.

The first thing he needs to do is make sure the Running Back is lined up correctly. Now, I know this shouldn’t be his job, but if the running back isn’t lined up correctly with the quarterback then the timing of the play will be off. We don’t want that.

This play is like a well-made watch. Everything must be in sync. If the running back isn’t even with the quarterback, then the play won’t work. So the quarterback has to be mindful of that. Yes, the running back will line up correct the more times he reps the play. However, in the beginning you need to make sure the quarterback helps him out.

Once the quarterback is sure the running back is even with him, then he will look over at the single wide receiver’s side. The quarterback must ask himself this question: Is the Corner playing more than five yards off the receiver? If the answer to that question is a Yes, then the quarterback will throw the hitch route all day long.

**ALL DAY LONG!!!!**
You need to train him that you are okay with taking the free five yards every time. As a matter of fact, you need to train yourself that *YOU* are okay with *him* taking the five yards every time.

**REMEMBER: IF IT IS FREE THEN YOU WILL GIVE ME FUCKING THREE!!!!**

If the FREE YARDS isn’t there, then the quarterback needs to locate the Read Key. The rule for this play is as follows:

- If it is an **EVEN** front, then you are reading the **SECOND** linebacker away from the side the play is going too.
- If it is an **ODD** front, then you are reading the **THIRD** linebacker away from the side the play is going too.

Again, just like the Wide Receivers, the quarterback can use this general rule:

*The Read Key will be the first linebacker on the same side as the running back.*

**Quarterback Thoughts Versus a 3-3 Stack**

The Quarterback has already checked to make sure the Running Back is lined up right. He locates the Single Receiver side. The Corner is five yards or more off the Single Receiver. Where’s the Front Side Linebacker? He’s a part of the 3-3 Stack. There is nothing but grass out there. The Quarterback now has the green light to throw the hitch.

You must stress to your Quarterback to **TAKE THE FREE YARDS!!!!**

Okay, so the defense has gotten sick of giving up the free yards and they have made their corner in the Single Wide Receiver’s face. Now the Quarterback needs to locate the Read Key. Does it change? Nope. It’s still the first Linebacker lined up on the same side as the Running Back.

**Quarterback’s Thought Process:**
If the Read Key stays still or drops back to cover the Snag route after the ball is snapped, then I will hand the ball off.

If the Read Key follows the Guard pull and crosses the Center's face, then I will pull the ball, flip his hips, and throw the Snag route.

If I see color enter the GRASS area where the Snag is at, then I will throw the Fin route.

**How to Run the Pin and Pull RPO When the Defense Goes Man to Man**

Let's get this out of the way right now:

YOU NEED TO BE EXCITED WHEN TEAMS GO MAN TO MAN!!!!

When defenses go man to man then that means you are doing something right. It means you have been gashing them, destroying them, making their defense look like a small time middle school program just starting a football program.

STOP BEING A WUSS ABOUT MAN TO MAN DEFENSE AND EMBRACE THE SCORING OPPORTUNITY!!!

Okay, I'm glad we got that out of the way. Let's get down to the main point of this lesson.

**You Can Run the Pin and Pull RPO When the Defense Goes Man to Man.**

How?

By running the good 'ol fashion PICK ROUTE.

Couple of things about the Pick Route:

1. It is a great concept against man to man.
2. You are not cheating if you use it.
3. You've got to teach your players to *not* set a pick like they would in basketball.
4. You may get called for PI - but it's worth it.

**Y-Pick Tag**
You will be using the defense’s rules against them. Most high school defenses are taught to follow THEIR MAN and to not switch off.

Great. Because we are going to be using that rule against them.

**Wide Receiver Rules**

They are running a ‘Rub’ route. Or what the defense likes to call a ‘Pick’ route. It is important that the receivers make it look like they are trying to run a route. The Receivers cannot make it look obvious they are running a ‘Pick’ route.

*Note: If you think this is cheating then you do not have to run the route. I promise you though. It isn’t cheating. Stop being a baby.*

**L Receiver**: If the Corner is five yards or more off you then you will run a three-step hitch. You should expect the ball on your third step. Do not be surprised. If the corner is less than five yards off you then you will run a mandatory outside release vertical. You need to get the corner to turn his hips and run with you. If he doesn’t run with you then you will block him.

**F Receiver**: You will release with your eyes on the defender over the Y Receiver. You will aim for the shoulder closest to you. You will run a yard behind your aiming point, plant, then come back across. It is important for you to either make the defender over the Y Receiver to run through you or around you.

**Y Receiver**: You will run a Snag route. Your aiming point will be one yard deeper than the Read Key’s initial position. Once you get to this spot you will stick your toe in the ground and show your hands to the quarterback. Do not drift because you do not want to make it easy for the middle linebacker. The Quarterback may throw it to you while you are moving. That is okay. The route then turns into a Slant Route.
**R Receiver**: You will run a five yard In route – called a Fin route. You are the ‘Oh Shit’ route. You do not have to burst out of your stance. You need to attack the Corner’s outside shoulder for five yards. Make him turn his shoulders. You will do this to open up the first Fin route and make it easy for the Y Receiver and the quarterback.

**Quarterback’s Thought Process**

The defense is in Man. This could be a big play. If the Key Read gives you a pull read, then you need to get the ball out fast. You want to hit the Y Receiver in stride.

- If the Read Key stays still or drops back to cover the Snag route after the ball is snapped, then I will hand the ball off.
- If the Read Key follows the Guard pull and crosses the Center’s face then I will pull the ball, flip his hips, and throw the Snag route.
- If I see color enter the GRASS area where the Snag is at then I will throw the Fin route.

**L/R Pick Tag**

This is a great tag to run when setting the formation into the boundary. I love running this is I have a **DUDE** at the L or R wide receiver spot.

**Wide Receiver Rules**
They are running a ‘Rub’ route. Or what the defense likes to call a ‘Pick’ route. It is important that the receivers make it look like they are trying to run a route. The Receivers cannot make it look obvious they are running a ‘Pick’ route.

*Note: If you think this is cheating then you do not have to run the route. I promise you though. It isn’t cheating. Stop being a baby.*

**L Receiver:** If the Corner is five yards or more off you then you will run a three-step hitch. You should expect the ball on your third step. Do not be surprised. If the corner is less than five yards off you then you will run a mandatory outside release vertical. You need to get the corner to turn his hips and run with you. If he doesn’t run with you then you will block him.

**F Receiver:** You will release with your eyes on the defender over the Y Receiver. You will aim for the shoulder closest to you. You will run a yard behind your aiming point. You will SPRINT up the field the moment you pass behind the defender over the Y Receiver. It is important for you to either make the defender over the Y Receiver to run through you or around you.

**Y Receiver:** You will release with your eyes on the defender over the R/L Receiver. You will aim for the shoulder closest to you. You will run a yard behind your aiming point. You will SPRINT up the field the moment you pass behind the defender over the R/L Receiver. It is important for you to either make the defender over the R/L Receiver to run through you or around you.

**R Receiver:** You will run a Snag route. Your aiming point will be one yard deeper than the Read Key’s initial position. Once you get to this spot you will stick your toe in the ground and show your hands to the quarterback. Do not drift because you do not want to make it easy for the middle linebacker. The Quarterback may throw it to you while you are moving. That is okay. The route then turns into a Slant Route.

**Quarterback’s Thought Process**

The defense is in Man. This could be a big play. If the Key Read gives you a pull read, then you need to get the ball out fast. You want to hit the R/L Receiver in stride.

- If the Read Key stays still or drops back to cover the Snag route after the ball is snapped, then I will hand the ball off.
- If the Read Key follows the Guard pull and crosses the Center’s face then I will pull the ball, flip his hips, and throw the Snag route.
- If I see color enter the GRASS area where the Snag is at then I will throw the ball away.
Chapter 5: Let's Go Deep: Drop Back Game in the Simplified Air Raid Offense

How to Cross Up the Defense with the Shallow Cross Concept

The longer I coach the more I realize defenses can't defend crossing routes.

At all.

Like - the players really suck at it.

And you would think they wouldn't since every single defensive guru swears up and down how Saban's match coverage stops the Shallow Cross concept.

Bullshit.

Kids don't know how to defend the Shallow Cross because most teams don't see it that often throughout the course of the season. True, defenses may stop it in 7 on 7. But this isn't 7 on 7.

Only Run the Shallow Cross Concept With the Slot Receivers.

"But Coach McKie," you say. "I thought you can run the Shallow Cross concept with any receiver on the field."

You are correct in thinking that. But you won't get great at the Shallow Cross concept. Remember, if you want to get great at anything then you need to practice it. Therefore, if you want to be able to run the Shallow Cross concept with all four wide receivers then you better devote practice time to all four wide receivers running the shallow route.

But that takes away precious practice time from other things.

So keep it simple. Work on the F and Y wide receiver running the shallow/dig combination. Use some tags to get the R and L wide receivers involved in the play. And destroy defenses in the process.

Shallow Cross with the F Receiver
**L Receiver** - You are running a MANDATORY OUTSIDE RELEASE VERTICAL! You will not slow down. You have a job to do and that job is for you to blow the top off the coverage.

**F Receiver** - You are running the shallow concept. Once the ball is snapped, you will run THROUGH the heels of the defensive linemen. You will not stop and settle up in grass. Your job is to see how fast you can get to the opposite side of the field. You can expect the ball any time after you pass the center's face.

**Y Receiver** - You are running the dig/hunt route. You will outside release the defender head up to inside of you. YOU WILL NOT GO INSIDE THIS MAN! You will run 10 yards before speed cutting into the dig/hunt. You will STOP in the first available window - grass area - and show hands to the quarterback.

**R Receiver** - You are running a MANDATORY OUTSIDE RELEASE VERTICAL! You will not slow down. You have a job to do and that job is for you to blow the top off the coverage.

**Running Back** - You are running a swing route to the side of the shallow concept. If you get to the sideline without getting the ball then you will sit down and turn your numbers to the quarterback.

**Shallow Cross with the Y Receiver**
**L Receiver** - You are running a MANDATORY OUTSIDE RELEASE VERTICAL! You will not slow down. You have a job to do and that job is for you to blow the top off the coverage.

**F Receiver** - You are running the dig/hunt route. You will outside release the defender head up to inside of you. YOU WILL NOT GO INSIDE THIS MAN! You will run 10 yards before speed cutting into the dig/hunt. You will STOP in the first available window - grass area - and show hands to the quarterback.

**Y Receiver** - You are running the shallow concept. Once the ball is snapped, you will run THROUGH the heels of the defensive linemen. You will not stop and settle up in grass. Your job is to see how fast you can get to the opposite side of the field. You can expect the ball any time after you pass the center's face.

**R Receiver** - You are running a MANDATORY OUTSIDE RELEASE VERTICAL! You will not slow down. You have a job to do and that job is for you to blow the top off the coverage.

**Running Back** - You are running a swing route to the side of the shallow concept. If you get to the sideline without getting the ball then you will sit down and turn your numbers to the quarterback.

**Quarterback's Progression**

The quarterback has a simple progression. It’s a simple Yes/No system. Here’s his progression:

1. Is there color in the shallow cross area?
   - No - Throw the shallow cross
   - Yes - Hitch up and look for the dig/hunt route
2. Is there color in the dig/hunt route?
- No - Throw the Dig/Hunt route.
- Yes - Hitch up and look for the swing route by the running back

3. Throw the Swing Route because no one will be covering the Running Back.

**Tag the Shallow Cross to Make the Defense Pay**

I've got a confession. I don't run many tags for the Shallow Cross concept. I know you can. Many coaches do. But I feel adding tags expands the playbook. Expanding the playbook means you are asking your players to remember more plays. When they are asked to remember more plays then they are going to play slow. When players play slow then we aren't successful on offense. When we aren't successful on offense then we will lose games.

We don't lose games. Therefore we don't run too many tags.

Love my freaking logic right there, don't you?

**The Post Tag**

The post tag is the only tag we use in the Shallow Cross concept. Why? Because it is a simple one to execute and use in the course of the game.

It's so simple that you are going to think I'm pulling your leg. (I promise. I'm not.)

This is what you do. You or the coach in the box is looking for the safety that jumps the dig/hunt route on the Shallow Cross concept. When he or you sees that safety jumping the dig/hunt then you will tag either the L or R receiver who's post route attacks that safety's area.

That's it.

Now, I know some coaches are always tagging the post to be over top of the receiver running the dig/hunt route. They like doing that because it gives them the 'Mills Concept' that Coach Steve Spurrier perfected while at Florida.

And that's cool if you want too.

But I don't like it because I've noticed the backside safety jumping the dig/hunt route. So why would I want to have the post running into the safety who isn't jumping the dig/hunt?

That's just freaking stupid.
Y Shallow R Post

Here’s an example.

We are running the Y Shallow Cross concept. I’ve noticed that the right safety is jumping the dig/hunt route. That let’s me know that the next time I call the Y Shallow Cross concept to tag the R Receiver because the safety is giving up all of that grass area he is supposed to be defending.
See? Notice how the R-Receiver is attacking the grass area the safety is giving up. If I tagged the L Receiver to run the post then he would be running it right into the left safety who is doing his job. That would have been a waste of a play and tag.

Don’t have to tell you that wasting plays is a horrible idea.

**Quarterback's Progression**

The quarterback has a simple progression for the tag. It's a simple 'If/Then' progression:

1. **Is there color in the Receiver who was tagged for the post’s area?**
   - No - Throw the Post
   - Yes - Hitch up and look for the Shallow Cross route
2. **Is there color in the Shallow Cross area?**
   - No - Throw the Shallow Cross
   - Yes - Hitch up and look for the running back
3. **Throw it to the running back because he WILL BE WIDE OPEN!**

**Punish the Defense with the Y-Cross Concept**

If you are running the ball correctly - killing the defense with the Inside Zone and Pin and Pull RPO - then defensive coordinators will start to get aggressive.

They will try all of those fancy blitzes they see on Saturday nights. They will tell their players to get more aggressive on the run game. They will do anything they can to stop you from embarrassing them in front of their fans.

And that’s when you will punish their aggression with the greatest pass play in the history of football - the Y Cross Concept.

The Y-Cross Concept can be ran as a standard drop back or as a play-action pass. The decision is up to you. For us, we've used the Y-Cross concept as a play-action pass more than a drop back pass. The reason behind that is it pairs up well with our RPO game. When defenses sell out to stopping the RPO game then we hit them up with the Y-Cross.

Most of the time it is for 6.

We run the Y-Cross concept out of every formation we have. However, we’ve found that the two best formations to run the Y-Cross concept from is the Two-Back formation and the 3 x 1 formation.
There is something about Two-Back Push Motion that makes me tickle in the private region. I think it has to do with the defensive coordinators thinking we are going to run the ball so they pack everyone into the box - making it sure easy to air it out.

If you are a defensive coordinator that does this then let me tell you to your face THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

**When We Call Y-Cross From the Two-Back Formation**

We the defense is starting to jump your RPO game. Once you notice the linebacker and/or safety reacting hard to the snag route by your slot receiver then you **MUST CALL THE Y-CROSS CONCEPT.**

**Why You Should Use Y-Cross With Push Motion**

The Push Motion creates confusion with among the defensive players. Remember, they are kids ranging from 15-18 years old. They have a bunch of other shit going on outside of football - school work, girlfriends, family issues, video games - and they are being asked to defend your **POTENT HIGH SPEED OFFENSE.** Now, add in some motion and their heads will be spinning.
Wide Receiver Routes

**L Receiver** – Mandatory Outside Release Vertical (MOR). You must blow the top off the coverage. You will not slow down. If you do then you will be picking splinters out your ass.

**Y Receiver** – Crossing route 18-22 yards to the opposite hash. You must go under the Sam and over top the Mike. You can stop in grass and show hands after you go over the top of the Mike linebacker.

**R Receiver** – 15-yard dig. Sit in grass. Keep going if it is man.

**F Receiver** – You are running the Push Motion Swing Route - aka the 'Comet Route'. You are the ‘Oh Shit’ route. If no defender is around you and you can guarantee 10 yards then give a ‘Ball’ call.

**Quarterback's Progression**

L to Y to R to F. Unless he hears a ‘Ball’ call from the F. Then that’s an automatic throw. If the ball gets picked off then it isn’t the quarterback’s fault. It’s the F’s fault.

**Y-Cross from 3 x 1 Formation**

The Y-Cross concept from a 3 x 1 formation has been money for us in the past two years. That’s because defenses love to have the backside safety man up the Y Receiver coming across the field.
Why?

Because that’s what all the defenses do in college so defensive coordinators do it in high school. *(Of course, defensive coaches don’t get shit for this like offensive coaches do when they run the spread.)*

Now, when the backside safety man’s up the Y Receiver coming across the field he gives up inside leverage. This allows the quarterback to *drill the ball to the Y Receiver* off the play-action.

**Wide Receiver Routes**

**L Receiver** – 10-yard post. Your angle of departure is behind the safety. If the safety is bailing then you are still trying to get behind him.

**Y Receiver** – Crossing route 18-22 yards to the opposite hash. You must go under the Sam and over top the Mike. You can stop in grass and show hands after you go over the top of the Mike linebacker.

**F Receiver** – Bubble Screen. You are taking two steps forward then back pedaling towards the sideline.

**R Receiver** – 15-yard dig. Sit in grass. Keep going if it is man.

**Quarterback’s Progression**

L to Y to R to F. Unless he hears a ‘Ball’ call from the F. Then that’s an automatic throw. If the ball gets picked off then it isn’t the quarterback’s fault. It’s the F’s fault.

**Tagging the Y-Cross Concept**

Sometimes defensive coordinators do a good job of finding out what your favorite play is and then doing everything they can to stop it.

So for us, they will know that our favorite drop back pass will be the Y-Cross concept. And they will try to take it away.

That’s okay, because we are prepared for this. We know that our core plays need to have one tag to it. We know when to call it. And we know it will piss off defensive coordinators.

**Flood the Field with the Y-Sail Concept**

Is the defense playing a soft zone? Are they over compensating for the Y-Cross concept? Are they sitting in a two-high read coverage and daring you to do something about it?
If you answered 'YES' to any of those questions then you need to run the Y-Sail concept. It is the best Air Raid concept to take advantage against:

1. Two-High Structures: This is because it FLOODS one side of the field. Stretching the defense and making the play a 3-0n-2 concept where the defense is never right.
2. A Weak Safety. If your best play is the Y Receiver - and it should be - then you are creating a match-up of your best player going against their worst player. That's a match-up we dream about.
3. Teams that Man #1 and Zone Up #2 and #3: Teams are starting to do this type of defensive coverage to counter act teams going 3 x 1. That's alright because you are running off the corner - which opens a ton of grass for an easy completion for your quarterback.

Just like the Y-Cross concept, we love to run the Y-Sail from two formations: Two-Back Push Motion and 3 x 1.

**Y-Sail from the Two-Back Push Motion Formation**

![Diagram of Y-Sail from Two-Back Push Motion Formation](image)

Like I’ve said before, the Two-Back Push Motion Formation is freaking unbelievable. It forces defensive coordinators to put 6, 7, or 8 people in the box by preying on their fear of stopping the run.

Which is great for us since more people in the box means less people to stop the pass.

**Wide Receiver Rules**

**L Receiver** - You are running a 15-yard dig. You will stop in grass after you come out of your break.
**F Receiver** - You are running the Push Motion flat route - aka the 'Comet' screen. If there is one around you then you will give a "BALL!" call. This tells the quarterback to throw it to you NOW! If you do not get 10 yards on a BALL call then you are coming out.

**Y Receiver** - You are running a 10-yard out/sail out. This is a **SPEED OUT**! You will not pound your feet and try to make a cut so perfect it will give Jerry Rice an erection. No. We want you to come out of the break FAST!

**F Receiver** - You are running the Push Motion flat route - aka the 'Comet' screen. If there is one around you then you will give a "BALL!" call. This tells the quarterback to throw it to you NOW! If you do not get 10 yards on a BALL call then you are coming out.

**R Receiver** - You are running a 'Mandatory Outside Release' vertical (MOR). Your job is to blow the top off the coverage. You will not slow down. If you do then you will be sitting with mommy and daddy in the stands because you won't be playing for me again.

**Quarterback’s Progression**

The quarterback will take a quick three step drop/flash fake and drop stop and is looking at:

1. Vertical
2. Sail
3. Comet
4. Backside Dig

**Y-Sail from the 3 x 1 Formation**
I love running Y-Sail from the 3 x 1 formation because that backside safety is screwed. He isn't anywhere in the play since most defensive coordinators have him worried about #3 running a vertical.

That's fine. Because now we run a play-action fake to hold the front side safety and play the 2-on-1 game off the APEX linebacker. He can never be right. If the APEX defender takes the Sail route - turns his hips and runs with him - then the quarterback will throw the flat route. If the APEX defender bites on the play-action then the quarterback will throw the Sail route.

Wide Receiver Rules

**L Receiver** - You are running a 15-yard dig. You will stop in grass after you come out of your break.

**F Receiver** - You are running the Push Motion flat route - aka the 'Comet' screen. If there is on one around you then you will give a "BALL!" call. This tells the quarterback to throw it to you NOW! If you do not get 10 yards on a BALL call then you are coming out.

**Y Receiver** - You are running a 10-yard out/sail out. This is a SPEED OUT! You will not pound your feet and try to make a cut so perfect it will give Jerry Rice an erection. No. We want you to come out of the break FAST!

**F Receiver** - You are running the flat route - usually a key screen type route. If there is on one around you then you will give a "BALL!" call. This tells the quarterback to throw it to you NOW! If you do not get 10 yards on a BALL call then you are coming out.

**R Receiver** - You are running a 'Mandatory Outside Release' vertical (MOR). Your job is to blow the top off the coverage. You will not slow down. If you do then you will be sitting with mommy and daddy in the stands because you won't be playing for me again.

Quarterback’s Progression

The quarterback will take a quick three step drop/flash fake and drop stop and is looking at:

1. Vertical
2. Sail
3. Flat
4. Backside Dig

**Improve the Y-Sail Concept with This Simple Tag**
Sometimes the safety will jump the Sail route by the Y Receiver and make the Y-Sail concept difficult to complete. But don't worry. There's a simple tag you can give the R/L Receiver that results in a HUGE gain for your offense.

You ready for it?

It's the POST tag.

This simple tag will DESTROY defenses who get over-aggressive about stopping the Sail route.

**Chapter 6: Pass Blocking: Protection Up Front So You Can Throw It Down The Field**

**Why We Use Two Pass Protections**

I'm a huge believer in "Keeping Things Simple". It's the driving force behind everything I do - marriage, parenting, teaching, and coaching. It helps me keep calm, keep focused, and keep from losing my shit when things don't go the way I planned them to go.

(Don't lie. We've all been there.)

So why would I want to make things complicated for my offensive linemen? Why would I want to have three different drop back protections, one quick game protection, three play-action protections, and a sprint out protection?

That's FREAKING CRAZY!!!!

Yet, coaches want their offenses to have all of that shit in them. Why? So the coaches can brag to their coaching buddies about all of the different plays they can run?

Well, not me. I don't want my offensive linemen to have to think. I want the pass protection to be so simple, so easy, and have all the answers that my players can protect my quarterback in their sleep.

That's why we only use one protection for both drop back, quick game, and play-action:

Half Slide Protection.

**Why The Half Slide?**
Because it is simple. It lets your players know what gaps they are going to block and which men they will block.

And it lets you make the call and not your quarterback or running back.

Remember, we want things simple for our offensive linemen. The half slide is what makes it simple.

Don’t over think this.

**Block Every Front Using the Five Man Protection**

This is an important rule to pass blocking if you are going to be sending the back into the route:

**THE QUARTERBACK IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SIXTH DEFENDER!**

Sorry, had to get that off my chest. I’m sick of defensive coaches on Twitter, Facebook, Coach Huey, and every bar at a coaching clinic talking about sending six defenders when the offense is sending a back out into the route.

No shit Sherlock. I’d do that too if I knew five offensive linemen where staying in to block without the back’s help.

But that doesn't matter to us because we are always having our quarterback responsible for the sixth defender. So he knows that if that defender blitzes then he needs to get the ball off RIGHT NOW!

But how? How do we train our quarterback to know who the sixth defender is? By always sliding the line *OPPOSITE* his first progression. So he knows that his backside is covered - it's safe and he can relax his butthole - and the only possibility of a sack is from the direction he is looking at.

That’s as simple as you can get it.
Pass Blocking a 3-3 Stack Front

Nothing changes for the offensive linemen. The slide side is responsible for their gaps. The man side is responsible for their man. *(Note: In this example we are sliding to the left - Lou call.)*

**Offensive Line Responsibilities**

**PST** - You are responsible for the play side C gap. You will kick slide and protect that gap at all cost.

**PSG** - You are responsible for the play side B gap. You will kick slide and protect that gap at all cost.

**Center** - You are responsible for the play side A gap. You will kick slide and protect that gap at all cost.

**BSG** - You don’t have anyone to man up on. So you will kick slide and protect your inside Gap. If the nose guard slants in your direction then you will be blocking him. If he doesn’t come then you will help the center while keeping your eyes on the middle stack backer.

**BST** - You are locking onto the five-technique. He is yours. If he goes home to eat a bowl of cereal then you better be there to knock the spoon from his mouth.
Quarterback’s Responsibilities

You are responsible for the backer on the same side as the running back. (*Note: we are using the same rules we use for the Pin and Pull RPO. We do this because it keeps things consistent for our kids.*)

If that linebacker blitzes then you know you have to get rid of the ball in a hurry. If that linebacker sits there then you have enough time to go through your progressions.

**Simple But Effective Play-Action Protection**

Play-action is a huge part of the offense. Since we run the ball as much as possible - using the Inside Zone or the Pin and Pull RPO - then defenses are going to try and stop our rushing attack.

Don’t worry about them. In fact, we encourage defenses to sell out to stopping the run. Why? Because that means we can sling the ball all over the field. And really, isn’t that what we want?

**Play-Action Blocking Against a 3-4 Front**
You shouldn’t be afraid of teams that run the 3-4 defense. Remember, it will end up as a four man front after they slant. *(Note: If the defense you are going up against is a true two-gap 3-4 defense then that team has DUDES. Hopefully you have some dudes as well.)*

The pass blocking is the same as the five man protection, but the running back is responsible for the linebacker on the same side as he is instead of being in the route.

**Offensive Line Responsibilities**

**PST** - You are responsible for the play side C gap. You will kick slide and protect that gap at all cost

**PSG** - You are responsible for the play side B gap. You will kick slide and protect that gap at all cost

**Center** - You are responsible for the play side A gap. You will kick slide and protect that gap at all cost.

**BSG** - You don’t have anyone to man up on. So you will kick slide and protect your inside Gap. If the nose guard slants in your direction then you will be blocking him. If he doesn't come then you will help the center while keeping your eyes on the middle stack backer.

**BST** - You are locking onto the five-technique. He is yours. If he goes home to eat a bowl of cereal then you better be there to knock the spoon from his mouth.

**Running Back** - You are responsible for the linebacker on the same side of you and the outside linebacker to your side. If both of them blitz then you will block the inside linebacker since he is closest to the quarterback.

**Pass Blocking a 3-3 Stack Front**
Nothing changes for the offensive linemen. The slide side is responsible for their gaps. The man side is responsible for their man. *(Note: In this example we are sliding to the left - Lou call.)*

**Offensive Line Responsibilities**

**PST** - You are responsible for the play side C gap. You will kick slide and protect that gap at all cost.

**PSG** - You are responsible for the play side B gap. You will kick slide and protect that gap at all cost.

**Center** - You are responsible for the play side A gap. You will kick slide and protect that gap at all cost.

**BSG** - You don't have anyone to man up on. So you will kick slide and protect your inside Gap. If the nose guard slants in your direction then you will be blocking him. If he doesn't come then you will help the center while keeping your eyes on the middle stack backer.
BST - You are locking onto the five-technique. He is yours. If he goes home to eat a bowl of cereal then you better be there to knock the spoon from his mouth.

Running Back - You are responsible for the linebacker on the same side of you and the outside linebacker to your side. If both of them blitz then you will block the inside linebacker since he is closest to the quarterback.

Chapter 7: Simplified Screen Game: Make the Defense Defend the Entire Width of the Field

Why You We Run These Screens

The main principals of running the Spread Offense is to have the defense defend the entire length and width of the football field. We have the defense worried about defending the entire length of the field with our Y-Cross, Y-Sail, and Shallow Cross concepts. So the question is, "How do you get the defense to defend the entire width of the field?"

Screens.

Screens forces the defense to run sideline to sideline as well as make them tackle in space.

In this module we are going to talk about three screens we are going to run:

1. Quick Wide Receiver Screens
2. Slow Running Back Screens
3. Tunnel Screens

With these three screens you will have defensive coordinators crying in frustration by the end of the game.
Why?

Because screens make the big guys – the defensive linemen and linebackers – run sideline to sideline. This makes them tired. And when the big, fat, ugly defensive linemen and linebackers get tired then we will score at will.

So don’t be afraid to call screens early in the game. Even when you aren’t getting any yards. Because those no gains in the first and second quarter become 30, 40, 50 yard gains in the third and fourth quarter.

**Tire Out the Defense with Quick Wide Receiver Screens**

What’s a simple way to get your play makers the ball while forcing the defense to sprint sideline to sideline? That’s right, quick wide receiver screens. They are simple. Easy to install. And you can fold them into your running game so you can make the playbook look large when in reality you’re keeping it simple.

A couple of things you need to know about the quick screen game:

1. **You Wide Receivers Must Block.** That’s a huge part of this play. So the question that’s always asked is "How do you make wide receivers block?" Easy. Take them to the sleds. Force them to block the sleds for 10 minutes a day and I PROMISE YOU they will become better blockers.

2. **You Must Be Okay With a Few Dropped Balls.** For some reason coaches are okay with a toss sweep getting stopped for no gain but get PISSED OFF if a wide receiver drops a quick screen. Aren’t those two things the same? So then why are you going to get mad about it? Don’t. Because even though your wide receiver dropped the ball, the defense had to sprint to the sideline. Isn’t that want we want anyways?

3. **Mix Up Who You Throw the Ball To.** Get everyone involved - even if it means you have to throw the ball to the weakest of the four wide receivers. Why? Because it forces the defense to prepare for every one. AND it keeps your guys in the action. If they know they are never going to get the ball then they won’t block. So toss them the ball every once in a while and give them something to look forward to.

4. **Must Fake the Screen and Go Deep Once a Quarter.** We will talk about this in the next video, but faking the quick screen and going deep will force defensive to not fly to the quick screen. And if they do then you can destroy them on easy throws deep down the field because the wide receiver will be wide open.

**Depants the Defense by Faking the Quick Wide Receiver Screen**

Defensive coordinators love to tell people that they will let the opposing offenses to nickle and dime them down the field. Their reasoning is offenses will make a mistake and the defense will take advantage.
But defensive coordinators are full of shit.

Because they can’t handle an offense that gets three to four yards a throw on simple key screens. Pretty soon the defensive coordinator will yell at his kids about flying up to the key screens and soon...

...you will be faking the screen and going deep.

**Some of My Favorite Locks**

**Two-Back Push Motion Formation**

You knew I was going to show you the fake wide receiver screen from the Two-Back Push Motion formation, didn't you? Of course you did. You know how much I love this formation. And you know how crazy it drives defensive coordinators. That's why it is the perfect formation for the Fake Quick Screen.

Why?

To answer that question let's put ourselves in the shoes of the defensive coordinator. You are playing against us. You see us come out in this formation and run the Inside Zone with the Comet Screen. We are killing you. Throwing and running the ball at will. Fine. So you start to play games on the back side of the play. You start scrape exchanging and all of that shit you hear Saban do.

That's cool. We run the Pin and Pull RPO against you.

Then you decide to bring the pressure and lock everyone up man-to-man.
Fine. We run our play-action game against you. And are scoring at will.

And that’s driving you crazy. So you call a time out. You are screaming and yelling at your players to be more aggressive. To make a play and be an athlete. You break the huddle and your kids are fired up. They come out and stop the offense for a loss on a bubble screen.

Fantastic.

Now the kids are feeling it. They are juiced. They are ready to TEAR SOMEONE’S HEAD OFF. And you know what happens the VERY NEXT PLAY?

Your kids are so aggressive they jump the pump fake to the quick screen and let their man free down the field.

TOUCHDOWN!

Wide Receiver Rules

**L Receiver** - You are running the gift route. Your job is to be the 'Oh Shit' route in case something happens.

**F Receiver** - You are running the Push Motion Comet Screen. When the quarterback pump fakes towards you you will throw up your hands as if you are catching the ball. You are trying to get every defensive back’s eyes on you. You will stop at the bottom of the numbers after you fake the catch and show your hands to the quarterback. You are an 'Oh Shit' route in case something goes wrong.

**Y Receiver** - You are fake blocking the Comet Screen. You must **SELL THE BLOCK!** Pound your feet and show your hands. When the defender tries to engage you then you will slip by him - either inside or outside - and get on the hash.

**R Receiver** - You are fake blocking the Comet Screen. You must **SELL THE BLOCK!** Pound your feet and show your hands. When the defender tries to engage you then you will slip by him - either inside or outside - and get on the bottom of the numbers.

Quarterback's Thought Process

You will pump fake the Comet Screen to the F Receiver. **YOU WILL MAKE SURE YOUR HAND COMES OFF THE BALL TO SELL THE FAKE!** You will then reset your feet and go through your progression:

1. Numbers - If you have no defender in the grass area of the numbers route then you will throw him the ball. If you do then you will hitch up and go to your second progression.
2. **Hash** - If you have no defender in the grass area of the hash route then you will throw him the ball. If you do then you will hitch up and go to your second progression.

3. **Comet Route** - You will check the ball down to the F receiver running the Comet route.

### 3 x 1 Formation

You should be in some form of 3 x 1 over sixty percent of the time. That means you should be running a key screen for a good amount of time in this formation.

Defenses can only stay two-high for so long. Once they start to spin down to take away the key screen then you *NEED TO GO TO THE FAKE QUICK SCREEN FOR THE TOUCHDOWN!*

### Wide Receiver Rules

- **L Receiver** - You are running the gift route. Your job is to be the 'Oh Shit' route in case something happens.

- **F Receiver** - You are running the Key 3 screen. When the quarterback pump fakes towards you you will throw up your hands as if you are catching the ball. You are trying to get every defensive back's eyes on you. You will stop at the bottom of the numbers after you fake the catch and show your hands to the quarterback. You are an 'Oh Shit' route in case something goes wrong.

- **Y Receiver** - You are fake blocking for the Key 3 screen. You must *SELL THE BLOCK!* Pound your feet and show your hands. When the defender tries to engage you then you will slip by him - either inside or outside - and get on the hash.
**R Receiver** - You are fake blocking the Key 3 screen. You must *SELL THE BLOCK!* Pound your feet and show your hands. When the defender tries to engage you then you will slip by him - either inside or outside - and get on the bottom of the numbers.

**Quarterback’s Thought Process**

You will pump fake the Key 3 screen to the F Receiver. **YOU WILL MAKE SURE YOUR HAND COMES OFF THE BALL TO SELL THE FAKE!** You will then reset your feet and go through your progression:

1. Numbers - If you have no defender in the grass area of the numbers route then you will throw him the ball. If you do then you will hitch up and go to your second progression.
2. Hash - If you have no defender in the grass area of the hash route then you will throw him the ball. If you do then you will hitch up and go to your second progression.
3. Key 3 screen - You will check the ball down to the F receiver running the Key 3 screen.

**Get Mileage Out of Your Playbook With the Slow Running Back Screen**

The Slow Running Back Screen is one of the most versatile screens in the playbook. You can mix and match any quick game, drop back pass or run with the Slow Running Back Screen. The only thing holding you back is your own mind. Here are a couple of plays I like to combine with the Slow Running Back Screen.

**Shallow Cross + Slow Running Back Screen = Defensive Tears**
If your Quarterback having a hard time remembering to throw the ball to the running back on Shallow Cross? Do you want to make it easier for him? Then you can pair the Slow Running Back Screen with the Shallow Cross concept. This forces your Quarterback to either throw the ball to the Shallow Cross route or dump the ball off to your Running Back. Easy, right?

**Wide Receiver Rules**

The Wide Receivers are executing their normal Shallow Crossing concept.

**Offensive Line Rules**

**PST** - Pass set. Your job is to make sure the 5-technique runs up the field. **YOU CANNOT GET BEAT INSIDE!!!!**

**PSG** - You are pass setting for a quick two count before releasing towards the bottom of the numbers. You are blocking any different color jersey that’s in the alley way - the bottom of the numbers to the sideline.

**Center** - You are pass setting for a quick two count before releasing to the hash. You are blocking the first colored jersey you see in the sidewalk - the area of the field inside the hash mark.

**BSG** - You are pass setting for a quick two count before releasing for a step. After you first step you will whip around and **DE-CLEAT** the first colored jersey you see. This is called being the Rat Kill.

**BST** - Pass set. Your job is to make sure the 5-technique runs up the field. **YOU CANNOT GET BEAT INSIDE!!!!**

**Running Back Rules**

You will step up inside the block for a quick two count. Then you will drift to the side of the Slow Running Back Screen - if it is called to the left then you will drift to the left/if it is called to the right then you will drift to the right. You must be able to see the quarterback’s eyes. Remember, if you can’t see the quarterback’s eyes then he cannot see yours. Once you catch the ball you will get behind the big guys and **RUN HASH TO NUMBERS TO SIDELINE TO TOUCHDOWN!**
Quarterback Rules

You will take a quick three step drop and you are looking in the grass area of the Shallow Cross route. You are asking yourself this question: Is there a different colored jersey in the Shallow Cross area?

1. No - You will throw the shallow cross to the tagged receiver running across the formation.
2. Yes - You will pump fake the shallow cross and come back to the Slow Running Back screen. All you need to do is throw a catchable ball. The running back will do the rest.

Stick + Slow Running Back Screen = One Pissed Off Defensive Coordinator

The Y-Stick concept is one of the greatest passing concepts every invented. It is a simple pitch and catch to your best wide receiver. It is something that the Air Raid is built upon.

So that means defensive coordinators will game plan ways to take it away from you. Don't fret though. Because you have the perfect counter to it. Tagging the Slow Running Back screen to the Y-Stick Concept.

Wide Receiver Rules

The Wide Receivers are executing their normal Y-Stick concept.
Offensive Line Rules

**PST** - Pass set. Your job is to make sure the 5-technique runs up the field. **YOU CANNOT GET BEAT INSIDE!!!!**

**PSG** - You are pass setting for a quick two count before releasing towards the bottom of the numbers. You are blocking any different color jersey that’s in the alley way - the bottom of the numbers to the sideline.

**Center** - You are pass setting for a quick two count before releasing to the hash. You are blocking the first colored jersey you see in the sidewalk - the area of the field inside the hash mark.

**BSG** - You are pass setting for a quick two count before releasing for a step. After you first step you will whip around and **DE-CLEAT** the first colored jersey you see. This is called being the Rat Kill.

**BST** - Pass set. Your job is to make sure the 5-technique runs up the field. **YOU CANNOT GET BEAT INSIDE!!!!**

Running Back Rules

You will step up inside the block for a quick two count. Then you will drift to the side of the Slow Running Back Screen - if it is called to the left then you will drift to the left/if it is called to the right then you will drift to the right. You must be able to see the quarterback’s eyes. Remember, if you can’t see the quarterback’s eyes then he cannot see yours. Once you catch the ball you will get behind the big guys and **RUN HASH TO NUMBERS TO SIDELINE TO TOUCHDOWN!**

Quarterback Rules

You will take a quick three step drop and you are looking in the grass area of the Y-Stick route. You are asking yourself this question: Is there a different colored jersey in the Y-Stick area?

1. No - You will throw the Y-Stick to the Y Receiver.
2. Yes - You will pump fake Y-Stick route and come back to the Slow Running Back screen. All you need to do is throw a catchable ball. The running back will do the rest.
Two-Back Push Motion + Slow Running Back Screen = A Quitting Head Coach

I don't think I have to tell you how freaking pissed off the head coach will be if you come out in the Two-Back Push Motion formation and *MURDER IS DEFENSE* by running a Slow Running Back screen.

So I'm not. All I'm going to say is enjoy the look on his face when he cusses his defensive coordinator out, cusses his kids out, and then quits in the middle of the game.

**Wide Receiver Rules**

The Wide Receivers are executing their normal Comet Quick Wide Receiver Screen.

**Offensive Line Rules**

**PST** - Pass set. Your job is to make sure the 5-technique runs up the field. **YOU CANNOT GET BEAT INSIDE!!!!**

**PSG** - You are pass setting for a quick two count before releasing towards the bottom of the numbers. You are blocking any different color jersey that’s in the alley way - the bottom of the numbers to the sideline.
**Center** - You are pass setting for a quick two count before releasing to the hash. You are blocking the first colored jersey you see in the sidewalk - the area of the field inside the hash mark.

**BSG** - You are pass setting for a quick two count before releasing for a step. After you first step you will whip around and DE-CLEAT the first colored jersey you see. This is called being the Rat Kill.

**BST** - Pass set. Your job is to make sure the 5-technique runs up the field. **YOU CANNOT GET BEAT INSIDE!!!!**

**Running Back Rules**

You will step up inside the block for a quick two count. Then you will drift to the side of the Slow Running Back Screen - if it is called to the left then you will drift to the left/if it is called to the right then you will drift to the right. You must be able to see the quarterback's eyes. Remember, if you can't see the quarterback's eyes then he cannot see yours. Once you catch the ball you will get behind the big guys and **RUN HASH TO NUMBERS TO SIDELINE TO TOUCHDOWN!**

**Quarterback Rules**

You are seeing if anyone goes with the Push Motion and you are asking yourself this question: Did anyone react to the Push Motion?

1. No - You will throw the Comet screen to the F receiver.
2. Yes - You will pump fake the Comet screen and come back to the Slow Running Back screen. All you need to do is throw a catchable ball. The running back will do the rest.

**Tunnel Your Way Into the Opposing Team's Endzone**

The Tunnel Screen as been around as long as the Air Raid Offense. It was **THE SCREEN** Coach Hal Mumme hung his hat on. And with good reason. It was a quick and simple way for you to get the ball to your best wide receiver and to get him behind your offensive line.

How simple of a play can you make that does that?

**Chapter 8: That's a Wrap.**

**That's It!**
That's it. That's the entire course.

Thank you so much for being apart of this course. I know you are going to apply everything you learned here to your offense and freaking murder defenses. If you need any help - questions, how to install, do I have any other tags - then please feel free to email me.

Until next Game Plan, let's continue to Master the Spread, Score Points, and Have Fun!