



# PLAYBOOK

The Spread Offense



**PHOTO COPY AND CREATE PLAY SHEETS**

# ***Introduction to Offensive Schemes***

It is said that great offense puts people in the stands, but great defense wins championships. To be successful on the field of play you need to be solid in both phases of the game as well as in special teams. It is important to plan how your team is going to approach the game from an offensive point of view. What type of offense will you be; a tough grind it out running team or perhaps a wide open spread team that wants to throw on every down? The key to answering that question is a core understanding of what your strengths and weaknesses are as a coach. Coaches must always be learning and educating themselves on the basic fundamentals of the game. They must always pursue better ways to teach fundamentals and manage practices and games. Therefore, the best offense to run for your team is the offense you can best teach, and most importantly, the offense your players can learn and execute. The best coaches put players in positions conducive to their skill-sets, ensuring the best chances for success. Kids will respond to being successful; they'll enjoy their experience and continue to play this great game.

## **SCHEME**

Offensive schemes have evolved over time and they continue to evolve every fall with new twists and wrinkles to basic schemes. While scheme is important in that it does give your team an approach – a philosophy if you will – the most important element to scheme is being fundamentally sound in your approach. The basic fundamentals of stance, first step, blocking, ball security, and the Center-Quarterback snap exchange must be worked on every day. Never think of these things as the “little things” but rather these are the “important things.” Teams that do those things the best are almost always more successful. For this playbook we have employed the very popular Spread Formation. We understand that some may think a Spread Offense is too advanced for younger players, however, if you teach the basic fundamentals well and your players understand the importance of stance, blocking and ball security, this offense can prove to be successful and extremely fun for kids to play.



# Glossary

**BOX** – *The Box area is generally considered the area from just outside the Tight Ends or Tackle (when an End is split) and about 5 yards beyond the Line of Scrimmage.*

**DIRECTIONAL STEP** – *This is a first step from a stance position where the player aims directly for his assigned location. For instance, on a straight ahead dive play the back receiving the hand off will take a directional step towards the hole called in the huddle.*

**EDGE** – *The edge is the area outside the Tight Ends or Tackle (when an End is split) and out to the sideline on each side of the ball.*

**FLAT SNAP** – *This is the technique we want our Center to use for the shotgun snaps. Have the Center grab the football on the tip that is closest to him. Tilt the ball slightly up from that point and simply throw it through the legs from that grip.*

**GAP** – *The Gap is the area between each Offensive Lineman in any given formation. They are lettered from the Center going out, for example between the Center and each Guard is the “A” Gap and the area between the Guards and the Tackles is the “B” Gap, the area between the Tackles and Ends is the “C” Gap.*

**LOS** – *This stands for Line of Scrimmage and is the imaginary line that runs from the football to each sideline.*

**OPEN PLAY SIDE** – *This describes the direction the Quarterback goes once he has received the snap from the Center. If he Opens playside then he turns in the direction that the ball will end up going.*

**POINT OF ATTACK** – *This describes the specific hole or gap in which the ball is designed to go. If a dive play has been called for the “A” Gap then that spot is the Point of Attack. Offensive Linemen must understand where the Point of Attack is to apply their blocking rules properly.*

**PRE-SNAP** – *Describes the formation and motions that occur prior to the snap of the ball.*

**REVERSE OUT** – *This describes the direction the Quarterback goes once he has received the snap from the Center. If he Reverses Out, he turns in the opposite direction from where the ball will end up going.*

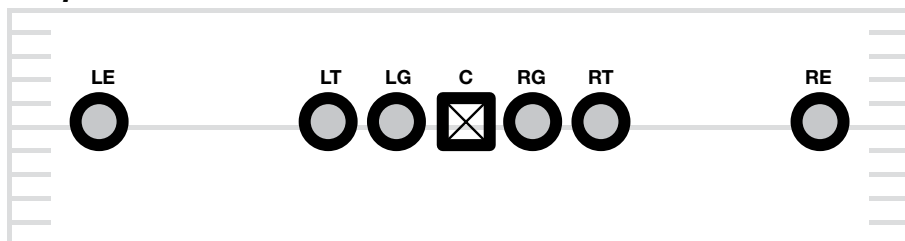
# Introduction to Formations

All offensive plays start from a formation that dictates where all 11 players line up prior to the start of the play. Our playbook will utilize three different line formations, three different backfield formations, and we will utilize motion as well. There are always adjustments and changes a Coach can make to these formations; however, it is important when coaching young players that you focus more on the basic fundamentals of the game and less on multiple formations.

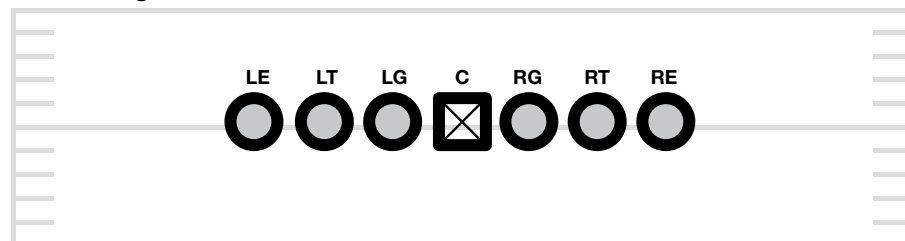
## LINE FORMATION

The basic rules of football require that 7 offensive players must be on the Line of Scrimmage and set for a second before the ball can be snapped. You can have more than 7 on the line however, only the widest player on the LOS on each side of the ball is eligible to go downfield and catch a pass.

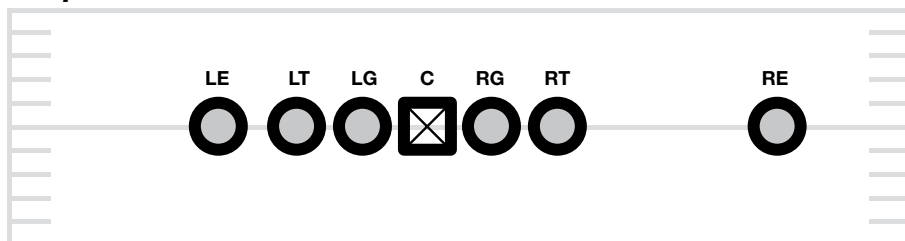
**22 Spread**



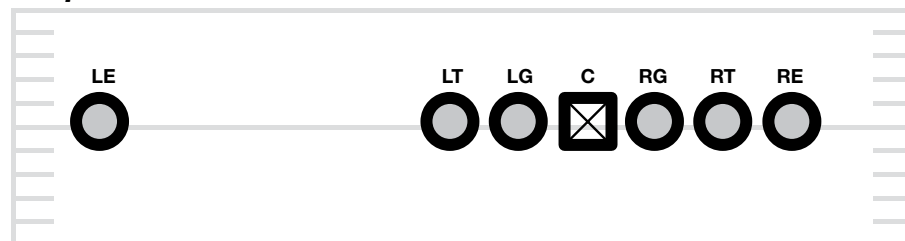
**Double Tight**



**12 Spread**



**21 Spread**



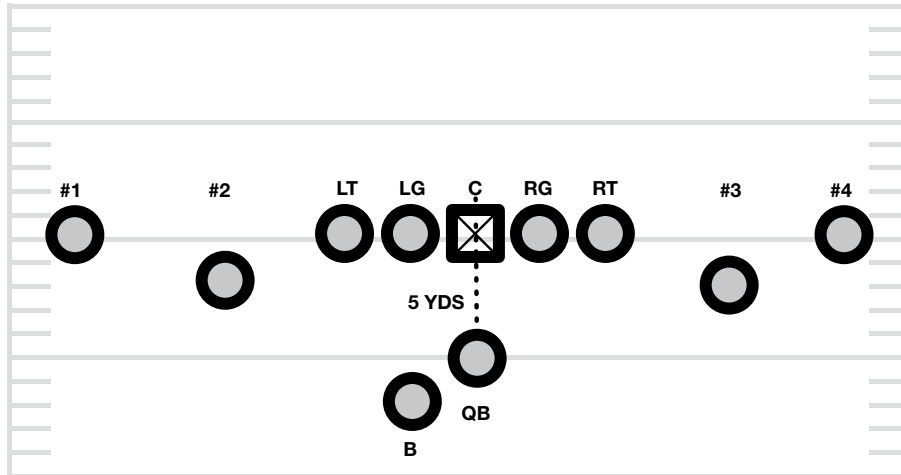
*(Continued on next page).*

# Introduction to Formations *(Cont'd)*

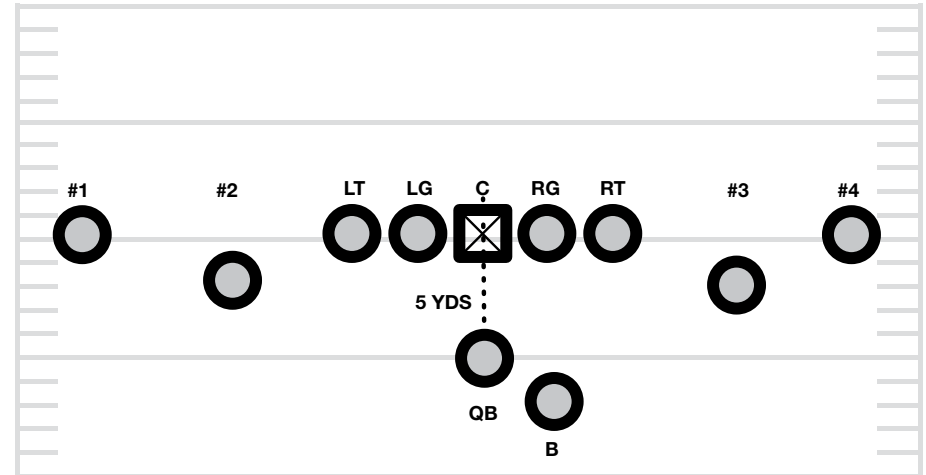
## BACKFIELD FORMATIONS

Since 7 players are required by rule to be on the LOS prior to the start of a play, 4 players can be off of the LOS and rules allow them to move sideways, backwards, and reset. We will always have our Quarterback in a shotgun formation, his heels set at 5 yards from the ball, and the Center will use a flat snap to minimize the rotation on the football. The B Back will be set on the right or left side of the Quarterback, in line with the Guard, and about a yard deeper than the QB. We number the receivers from left to right 1-4. The Left Split End is #1, the Left Slot #2, the Right Slot #3, and the Right Split End is #4. We want to set the Spread formation based on the Quarterback's arm strength. We will set our #1 and #4 receivers as wide as the QB's ability to throw a quick screen to them, then we'll align our Slot receivers by splitting the difference between the Ends and the Tackles.

**Spread 22 Left**



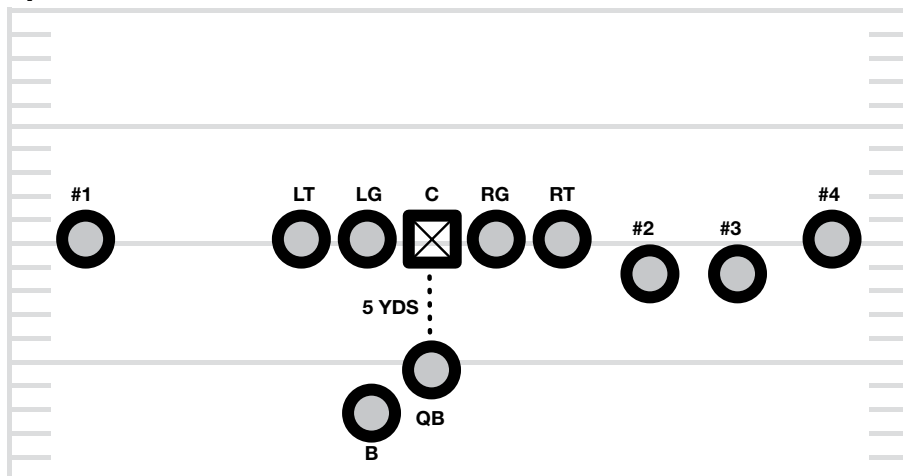
**Spread 22 Right**



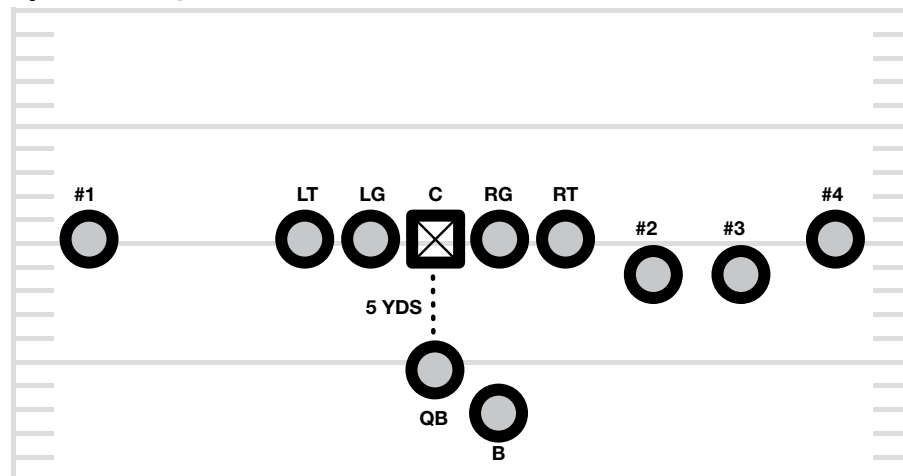
*(Continued on next page).*

# Introduction to Formations (Cont'd)

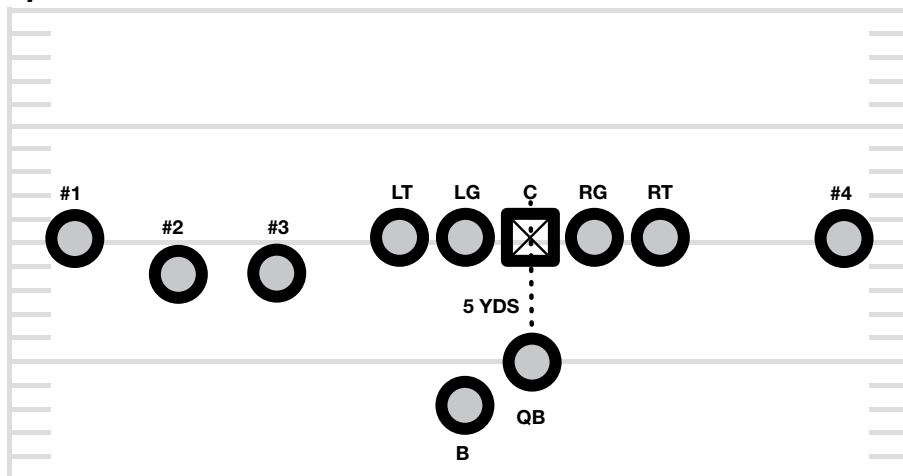
**Spread 13 Left**



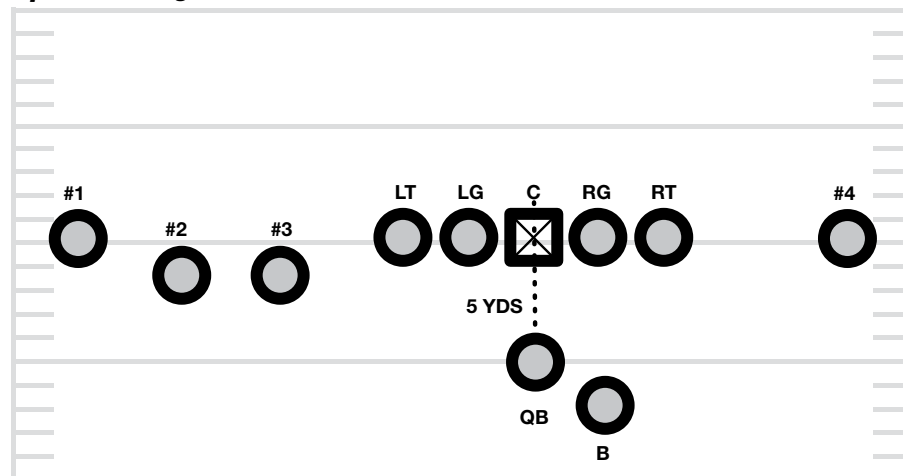
**Spread 13 Right**



**Spread 31 Left**



**Spread 31 Right**



(Continued on next page).

# Introduction to Formations *(Cont'd)*

## MOTIONS

We will use motion with our Slot players to gain an advantage in the passing game and to create an extra ball carrier option in the running game. It is important to practice all the motions at full speed, to ensure consistency. Ensuring that the Slot players align themselves away from the football consistently will make it easier to perfect the timing. Please note that players can not begin their motion until all other players have been in a set position for a second.

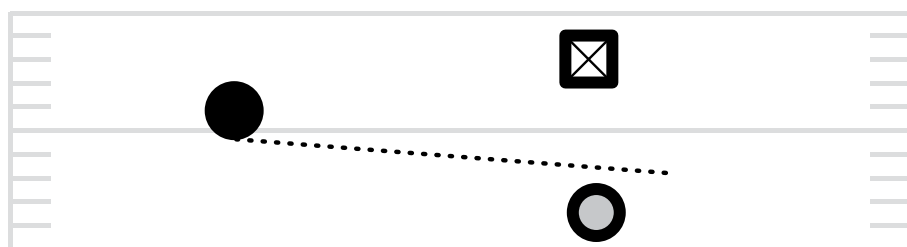
**JET MOTION:** Full speed motion where the Slot player arrives at the QB just after he has received the snap, and passes in front of him.

**FLAT MOTION:** The Slot player turns inside and motions across the formation, we use this for our Quick Screen 2 and 3.

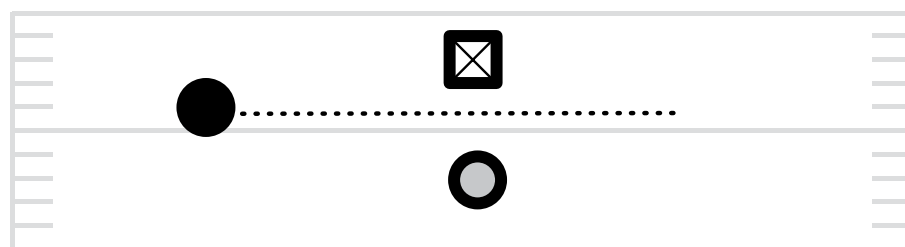
**STOP MOTION:** Slot player motions back and sets in a B Back formation, in line with the Guard and about a yard behind the QB.

**OPTION MOTION:** Slot player motions behind the QB at about 3-4 yards separation, and maintains that distance after the snap.

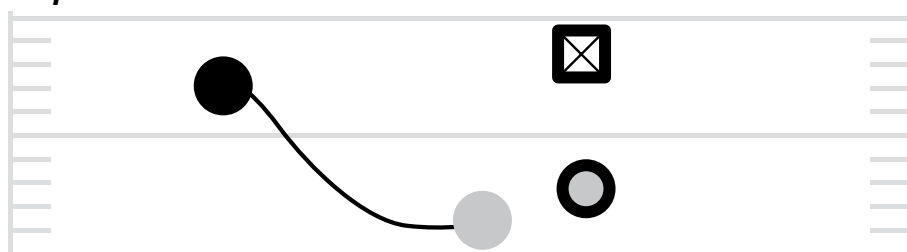
*Jet Motion*



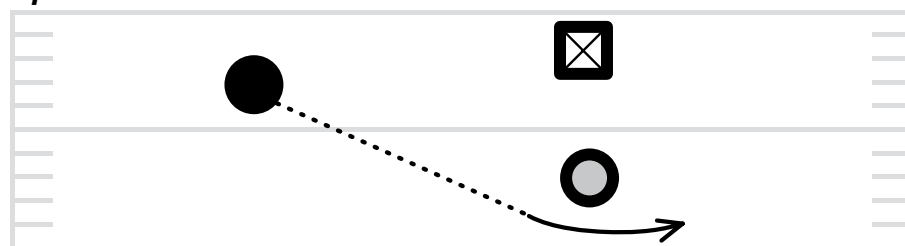
*Flat Motion*



*Stop Motion*



*Option Motion*



*(Continued on next page).*



# Blocking Rules

The most important element to any offensive scheme is blocking. Football games are usually won by the team that wins the battles up front. You want your Offensive Linemen to be quick, aggressive, and fundamentally sound on every snap of the ball. If they are confused as to whom to block on a given play, they will likely lose quickness and aggressiveness because they are confused. The best remedy for this problem is to try to keep your blocking schemes simple, drill them every day in practice, and scout your opponents so you can show your players the defensive alignment they are likely to face from week to week. It is also important that the Offensive Linemen learn to communicate which player each of them is blocking at the LOS. Encourage this, as it does not have to be a secret and will minimize the confusion. In the Spread Offense we will always have our Linemen, except for the Center, get set and start in a 2 point stance.

## BASE BLOCKING RULES

Many of the plays in our playbook call for base blocking rules. Base blocking rules are as follows: #1 Playside gap, #2 Head Up, #3 Back side gap, #4 Linebackers. That means the Offensive Linemen come to the ball and get set and progress through their rules. If we are trying to run the 2 hole between the Center and Right Guard those two players will check the “A” gap first. If there is a defender lined up in that gap they check to see if they have a defender head up on them, if the Center has a Nose Tackle on him, the Right Guard will block the player in the gap and the Center will block the Nose Tackle (FIG. 1). If the Center does not have a Nose Tackle, he will check the back side “A” gap and block that player (FIG. 2). Their final check is for a Linebacker, if the Linebacker is outside the “A” gap defender, the Center will block the gap defender and the Right Guard will block the Linebacker (FIG. 3).

Figure 1

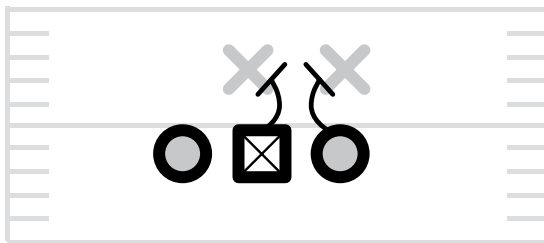


Figure 2

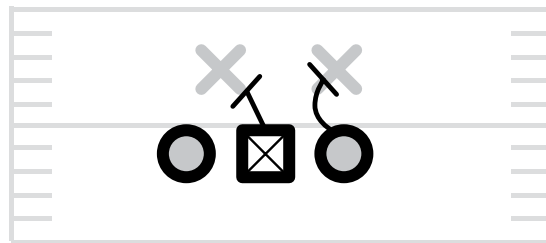
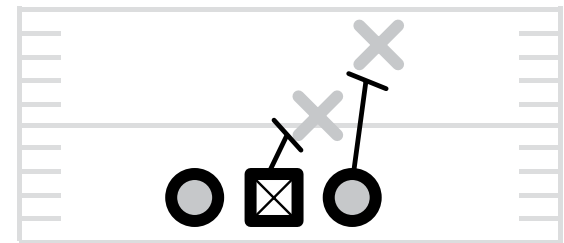


Figure 3



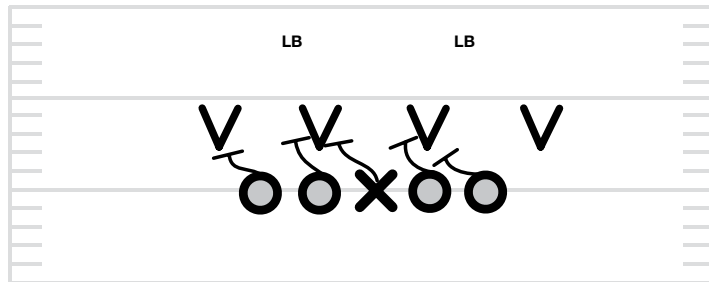
(Continued on next page).

# Blocking Rules *(Cont'd)*

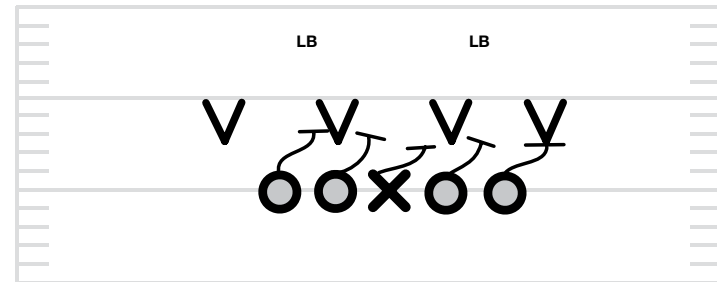
## ZONE BLOCKING

The Zone Blocking technique is designed to get all the Linemen moving in unison in the same direction, gaining double teams on the down Defensive Linemen. All Offensive Linemen will take a short directional step and then a longer power step as they make contact on the defenders. Ideally, the double team blocks across the LOS, drives those defenders into the 2nd Level, and cuts off the pursuit of the Linebackers. Low pad level and a good base with the feet, legs, and hips are always key elements to good blocking technique. We call our Zone Blocking schemes ZULU for zone left and ZORO for zone right.

### Zone Left/Zulu



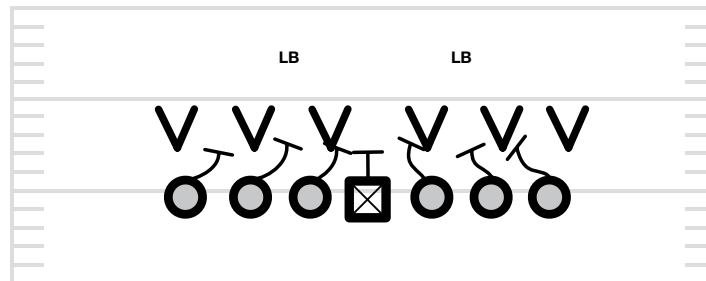
### Zone Right/Zoro



## WEDGE BLOCK

The Wedge Block is a scheme that has both sides of the Offensive Line block down towards their inside gap and drive the defenders off of the LOS. All of the players step with their inside foot, towards the Center, and then follow with a forward power step with their outside foot as they drive the defense off of the ball.

### Wedge Block



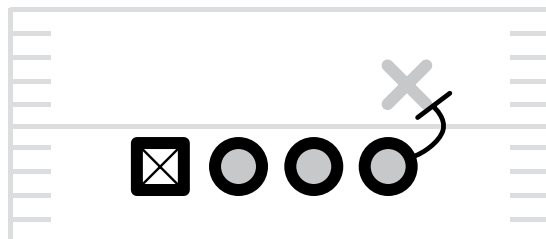
*(Continued on next page).*

# Blocking Rules *(Cont'd)*

## HOOK BLOCK

This block is usually executed by an End trying to run the football out wide, or to the Edge. The offensive player gets his head and shoulders to the outside of a defensive player and then turns him back inside.

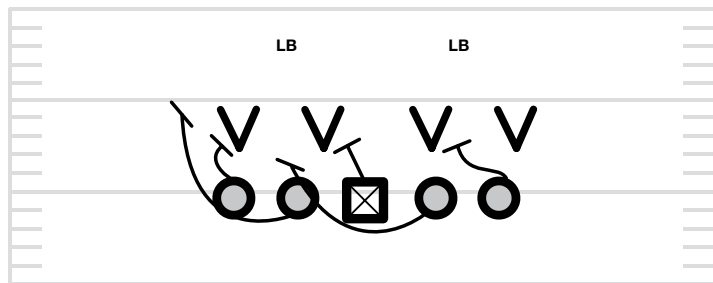
*Hook Block*



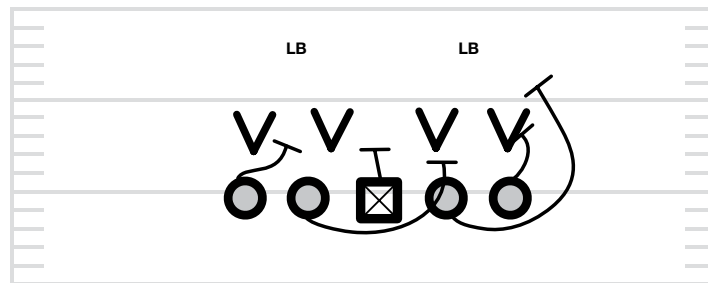
## PULL

On some of our sweep plays we will pull our Guards, so we want the playside Guard to pull around the Tackle or Tight End and then seal inside, while the backside Guard pulls to fill the vacated gap created by the playside Guard and then blocks the first defender that shows.

*Pull Left*



*Pull Right*



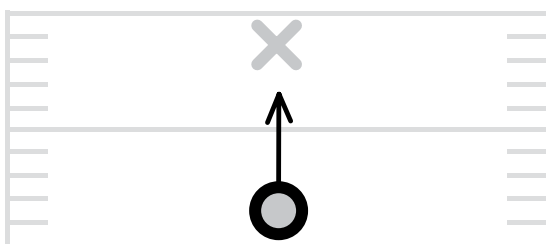
*(Continued on next page).*

# Blocking Rules *(Cont'd)*

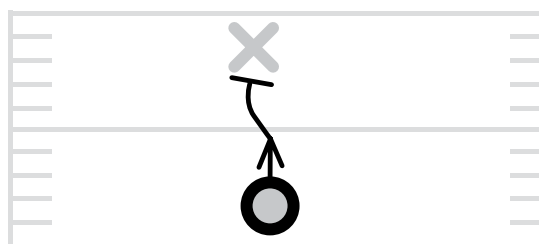
## STALK BLOCK

A Stalk Block is performed by the Split Ends or Slot when they are set outside of the box and trying to advance the ball around the edge. The players take off as if they are running a pass pattern and they attack the defensive player without passing him. Once the defender reads that it is a run play and begins to attack the ball carrier, the offensive players execute their block by staying between the ball carrier and the defender with quick feet and contact.

**Stalk Block Start**



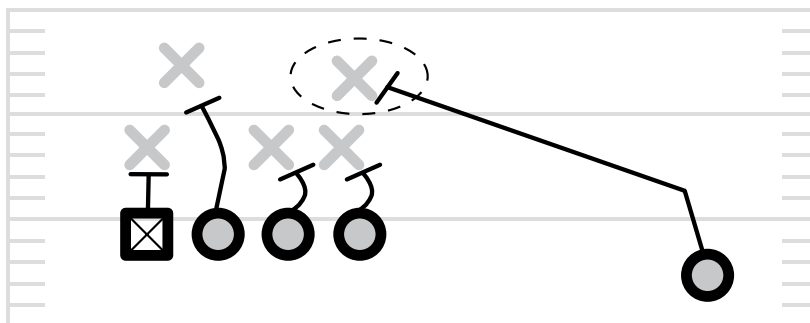
**Stalk Block Finish**



## CRACK BLOCK

We will use a Crack Block when running a sweep play to the outside. The Slot or Split End will come down from the outside to block the first defender he sees coming from the box. It is important to note that the rules of football do not allow a player to come from the outside and into the box area and block a player in the back, the crack block should be under control and contact should be made above the waist and in the chest.

**Crack Block**



*(Continued on next page).*

# ***Blocking Rules*** *(Cont'd)*

## **FINAL POINTS**

To execute during games you must perfect all the fundamentals of blocking in practice. A great block starts with a great stance, great first step, great pad level, and explosion through the defender. Players should block until the referee blows the whistle to stop play and never stop moving their feet. Communication is very important so all Linemen are on the same page.

If you are finding it difficult to run inside try taking bigger splits (the space between each Lineman) and see if the defense will continue to line up wider and wider with the splits.



# Spread Option Run

**The Spread Option Run** is the base play of the Spread running game. It is a very basic read for the QB, which determines whether he hands the ball off to the B Back or keeps the ball and runs with it. If the unblocked backside Defensive End turns his shoulders and comes flat down the line, the QB should pull the ball and attack the area vacated by the defender. However, if the D. End stays square and comes up field the QB should give the ball to B Back.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread formation.

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Zone block to playside, leave Defensive End for option read

**Backside Guard** – Zone block to playside

**Center** – Zone block to playside

**Playside Guard** – Zone block to playside

**Playside Tackle** – Zone block to playside

**#1** – Inside leverage on defender, stalk block to outside.

**#2** – Inside leverage on defender, get positioned between him and the box, turn to outside.

**Quarterback** – Step back for option read handoff, focusing on the backside D. End. If the defender crashes inside, pull the ball and attack the vacated spot. If D. End comes up field, hand the ball off.

**B Back** – Take a playside directional step and create hand off pocket, allow the QB to seed the ball into the pocket and read the defense, do not take the ball until the QB releases his inside hand.

**#3** – Inside leverage on defender, get positioned between him and the box, turn to the outside.

**#4** – Inside leverage on defender, stalk block to outside.

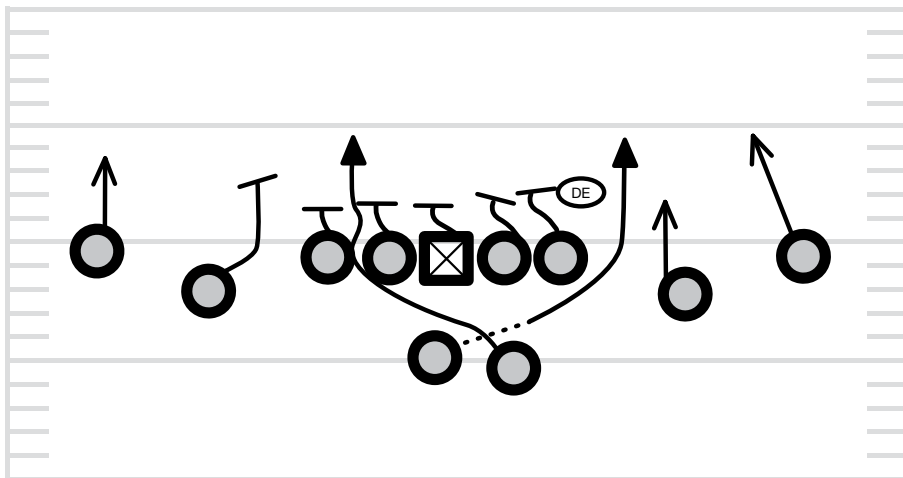
(Continued on next page).

# Spread Option Run (Cont'd)

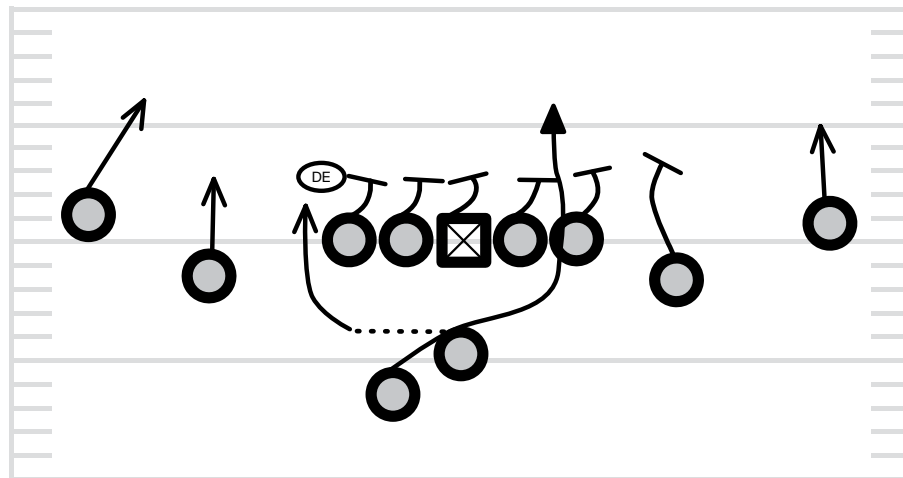
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ If the B Back has the ball he needs to get square and attack the "B" gap looking for cut back lanes as he works through the contact.
- ✓ Do not let the ball carrier attempt to bounce the play outside, keep the play inside to force the defense to load up the box.
- ✓ The QB has to make a quick and decisive read and always attack the backside as if he has the football.
- ✓ The 2 and 3 receivers must maintain their blocks and drive the defenders away from the box.
- ✓ Lineman must apply strong zone principals and drive the down lineman into the Linebacker alley.

*Spread 22 Right Spread Option Left*



*Spread 22 Left Spread Option Right*



# Inside Running Game - DIVE PLAY

**The Dive Play** is a staple of any offensive scheme and the Spread is no different, in the Spread we can run the dive off of various formations and also off of a Jet Sweep fake. The key is a great surge by the Offensive Line and a commitment to the point of attack by the ball carrier. An aggressive running style by the ball carrier with a low pad level and driving legs will almost certainly yield positive yards and force the defense to add defenders to the box, which will open up other runs in the scheme.

## LINE FORMATION:

- ✓ Balanced 22 Spread
- ✓ Single Tight End (12 or 21)
- ✓ Double Tight End

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Base blocking rules

**Backside Guard** – Base blocking rules

**Center** – Base blocking rules

**Playside Guard** – Base blocking rules

**Playside Tackle** – Base blocking rules

**Playside End (1 or 4)** –  
SPLIT: Inside leverage on defender,  
stalk block to outside  
TIGHT: Base blocking rules

**Playside Slot (2 or 3)** – Inside leverage on defender, get positioned between him and the box, turn to outside.

**Quarterback** – Open up playside and handoff the ball to the B back. If executing a Jet Sweep fake, fake the Jet handoff first. Bootleg around the edge after the handoff.

**B Back** – Take handoff from QB and aggressively attack the dive gap. Stay committed to the inside run and do not stop moving the feet.

**Backside Slot (2 or 3)** – If in an unbalanced formation, run fly and stalk block. If balanced inside, leverage on defender. If Jet Dive, carry out Jet Sweep fake.

**Backside End (1 or 4)** – Inside leverage on defender, stalk block to outside.

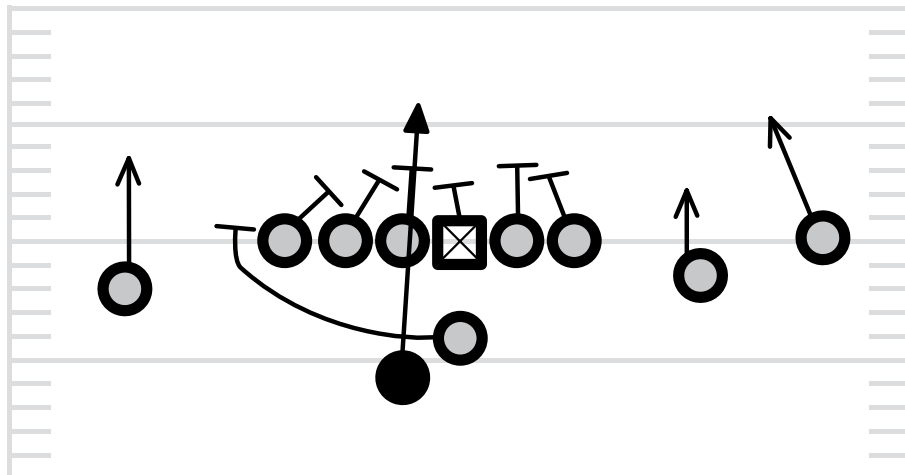
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ The B back can attack the “A” or “B” gap depending on the defensive alignment, but must not try to run the ball wider than the “B” gap.
- ✓ The Offensive Lineman must get off the ball quickly and drive the defense off of the LOS.
- ✓ If running a Jet Sweep fake, it is important that the timing of the Jet Motion creates a seamless handoff fake, and that the fake is carried out to fool the defense.
- ✓ The 2 and 3 receivers must maintain their blocks and drive the defenders away from the box.

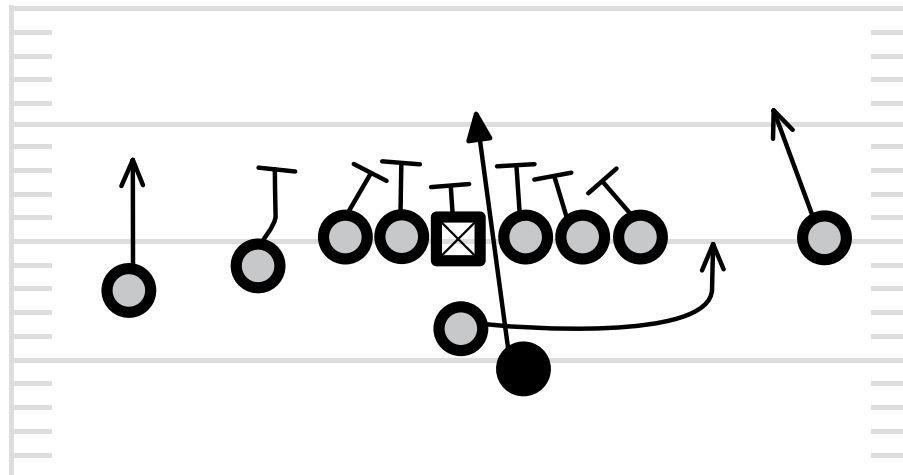
(Continued on next page).

# Inside Running Game - DIVE PLAY (Cont'd)

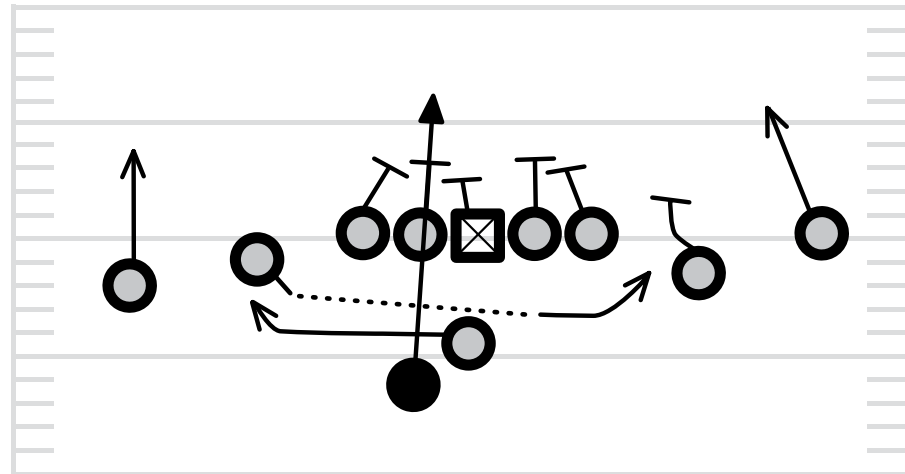
**Spread 12 Left Dive Left**



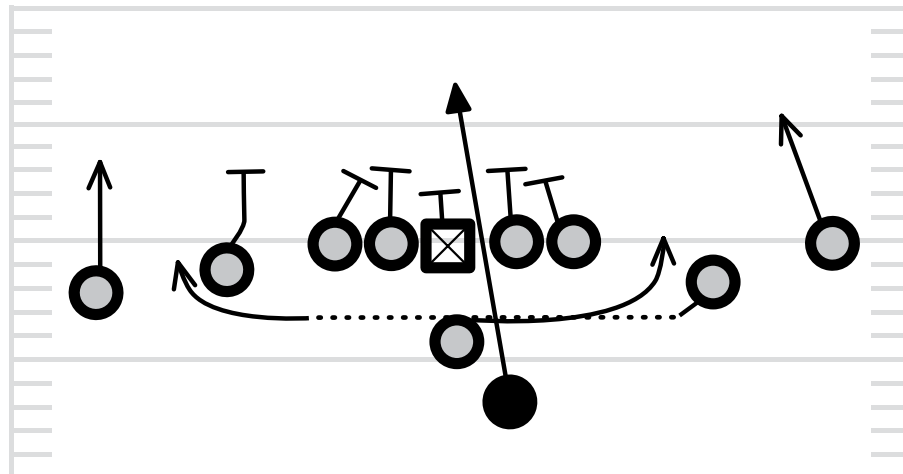
**Spread 21 Right Dive Right**



**Spread 22 Left Jet Dive Left**



**Spread 22 Right Jet Dive Right**



# Inside Running Game - QUARTERBACK BLAST

**The Quarterback Blast Play** is a power running play that allows the QB to pick and choose a point of attack, and requires that he run with a power style of shoulder pads forward and knees high. This is an excellent short yardage play and benefits the offense when the defense maintains an alignment that respects the edge. We will show this play run out of a double Tight End formation, however, you can run this play out of a full 22 Spread Formation if the defense loads up the box and out numbers the offense. A dump pass to one of the Tight Ends is also an option off of this play.

## LINE FORMATION:

- ✓ Double Tight
- ✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Wedge block to zero

**Backside Guard** – Wedge block to zero

**Center** – Zero block

**Playside Guard** – Wedge block to zero

**Playside Tackle** – Wedge block to zero

**#1** – Wedge block to zero

**Playside Slot (2 or 3)** – Release downfield working inside to block the Safety.

**Quarterback** – Receive the snap and attack the “A” or “B” gap of playside called. Protect the ball, and run with power steps through the line.

**B Back** – Protect the Edge gap off of the Tight End’s outside leg, do not allow any penetration inside or down the line.

**Pitch Slot (2 or 3)** – Begin with pre-snap stop motion. Protect the Edge gap off of the Tight End’s outside leg, do not allow any penetration inside or down the line.

**#4** – Wedge block to zero

## COACHING POINTS:

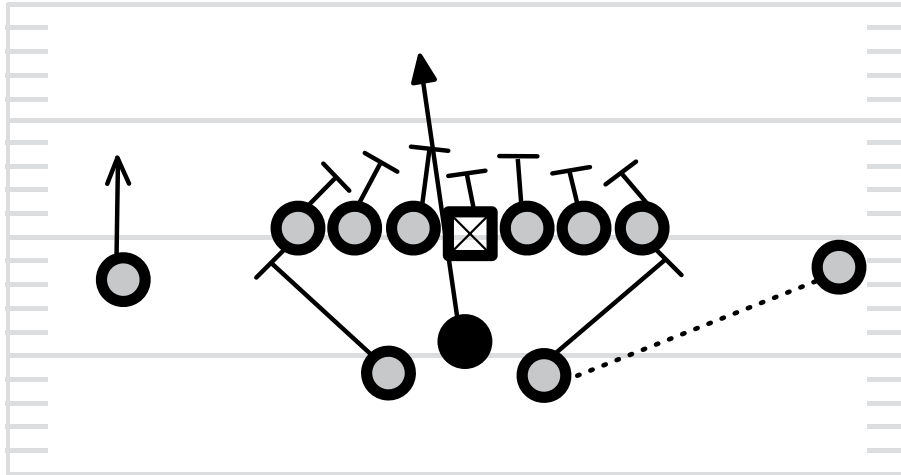
- ✓ The Offensive Line must get off the ball quickly and drive inside gap defenders off the ball.
- ✓ Practice the timing of the wing’s Stop Motion to determine when the player should begin his movement in the snap count. He should get set in a B Back position prior to the snap of the ball.
- ✓ The QB must run hard and stay committed to either the “A” or “B” gap on the side that is called, never string the play outside beyond the “B” gap.

(Continued on next page).

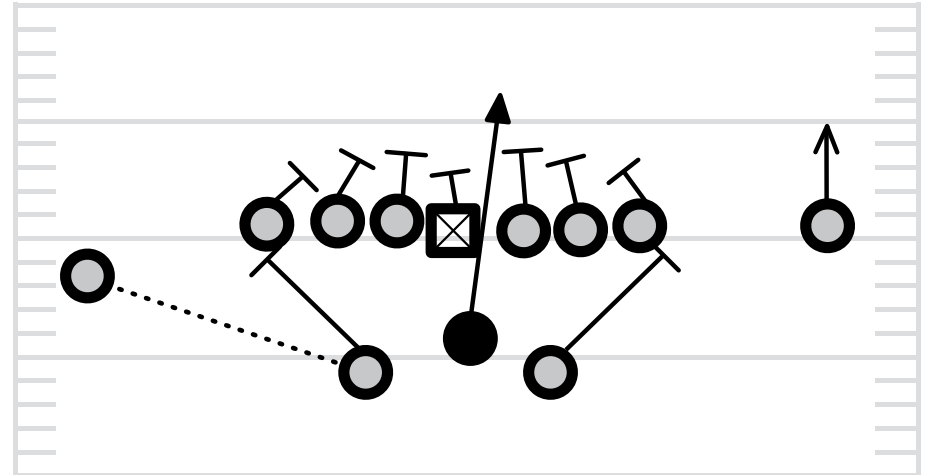


## ***Inside Running Game - QUARTERBACK BLAST (Cont'd)***

***Spread Double Tight Left Stop Motion QB Blast Left***



***Spread Double Tight Right Stop Motion QB Blast Right***



# Outside Running Play - WING OPTION

**The Wing Option Run** creates a great opportunity to get the football to the edge with a pitch option that will apply great pressure to the defense. Many coaches do not like the idea of having a young QB pitch the football in open space, however, just the threat of a pitch will force the defense to respect and defend the possibility of it. To gain more trust in your QB's ability to make a pitch, practice it every day under similar game circumstances. The play begins with the backside slot receiver coming in option motion behind the QB and maintaining a 3-4 yard separation as they attack the edge. The playside slot receiver executes a crack or seal block on the box and the slot defender is the player the QB reads to determine if he will keep the ball or pitch it. If the slot defender comes square the QB should pitch the ball, if he turns to defend the pitch back then the QB should keep the ball and get up field.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Zone block to playside and get to the second level

**Backside Guard** – Zone block to playside and get to the second level

**Center** – Zone block to playside

**Playside Guard** – Zone block to playside

**Playside Tackle** – Zone block to playside

**Playside End (1 or 4)** – Inside leverage on defender, stalk block, drive downfield.

**Playside Slot (2 or 3)** – Release inside and execute a crack block on the box.

**Quarterback** – Fake inside handoff to B Back and then attack the spot where the slot player lined up. Read the unblocked slot defender and either pitch, fake pitch, or keep the ball and get down field.

**Pitch Slot (2 or 3)** – Begin with pre-snap option motion, and maintain 3-4 yard depth separation from the QB as he attacks the edge. Be prepared to receive the pitch and advance the ball.

**Backside End (1 or 4)** – Run a post pattern and work towards blocking the Safety in the center of the field.

**B Back** – Step with inside foot to the backside and fake handoff with QB. While carrying out the fake protect the backside by blocking any pursuing players.

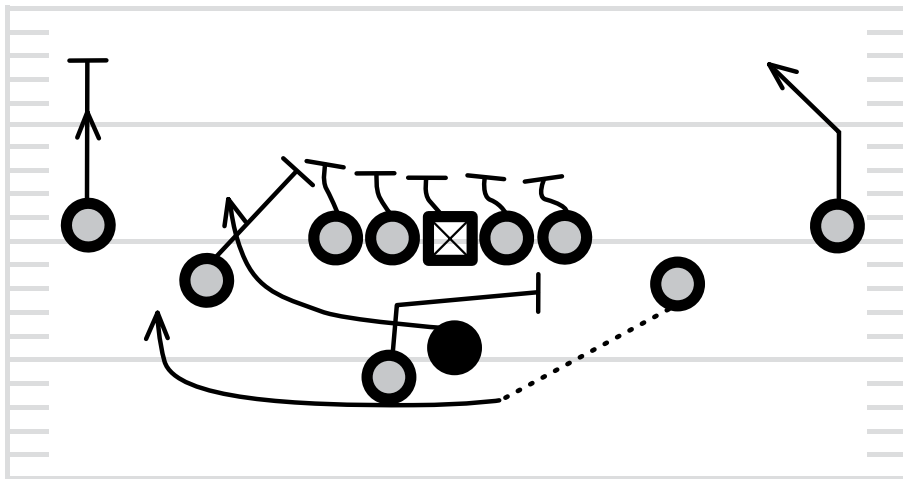
(Continued on next page).

# Outside Running Play - WING OPTION (Cont'd)

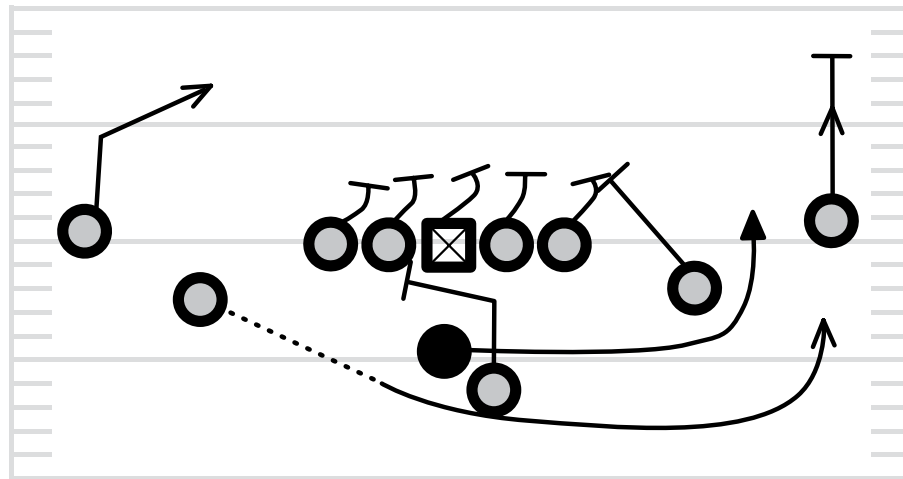
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ If the slot player (2 or 3) that is blocking reads a blitz from his defender he must block him and not work towards his seal block.
- ✓ Practice the timing of the wing's Option Motion to determine when the player should begin his movement in the snap count. He should only be even with the QB after the fake handoff has been executed and the QB has turned to attack the edge.
- ✓ The B Back must protect against any backside pursuit that is chasing the ball.
- ✓ The playside End (1 or 4) must execute a great stalk block technique and maintain inside leverage.
- ✓ A fake pitch to the slot is often all you need to get the slot defender to open up a running lane.

**Spread 22 Left Wing Option Run Left**



**Spread 22 Right Wing Option Run Right**



# Outside Running Game - JET SWEEP

**The Jet Sweep** is a play befitting its name. This play is designed to get the ball into the hands of a ball carrier at top speed and to the edge in a Jet like fashion. The big blocks for this play are the playside Tackle and the playside Slot player (2 or 3), the ball carrier must read those blocks at full speed to determine where to make his cut up field. The B Back must execute a great dive handoff fake with the QB, after the Jet handoff to hold the Linebackers in the box. It is important to practice the Jet Motion at full speed to ensure the seamless transition of the snap and the handoff of the football.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Zone block to playside and get to the second level

**Backside Guard** – Zone block to playside and get to the second level

**Center** – Zone block to playside

**Playside Guard** – Zone block to playside

**Playside Tackle** – Hook Defensive End

**Playside End (1 or 4)** – Inside leverage on defender, seal off from the inside out.

**Playside Slot (2 or 3)** – Attack slot defender and block him wherever he wants to go, maintaining quick feet and staying between him and the ball carrier.

**Quarterback** – Receive the snap and immediately deliver the handoff to the ball carrier, then step and fake handoff with the B Back for a dive, then bootleg out opposite the direction of the sweep.

**B Back** – Once the handoff is made to the ball carrier, execute a great fake handoff for a straight dive and attack the backside “A” gap as if running with the ball.

**Ball Carrier (2 or 3)** – Begin with pre-snap jet motion, and create a pocket for the QB to deliver the handoff, read the blocks of the playside Slot and Tackle and get square and up field as quickly as possible.

**Backside End (1 or 4)** – Run a post pattern and work towards blocking the Safety in the center of the field.

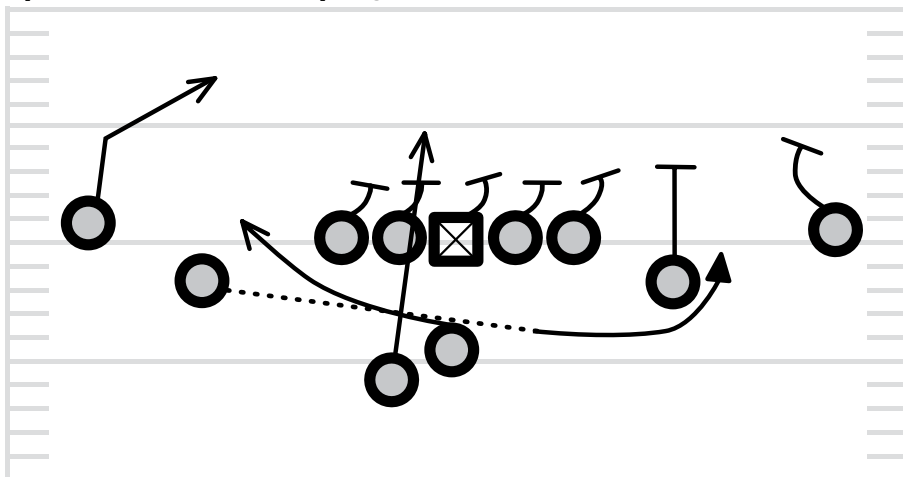
(Continued on next page).

# Outside Running Game - JET SWEEP (Cont'd)

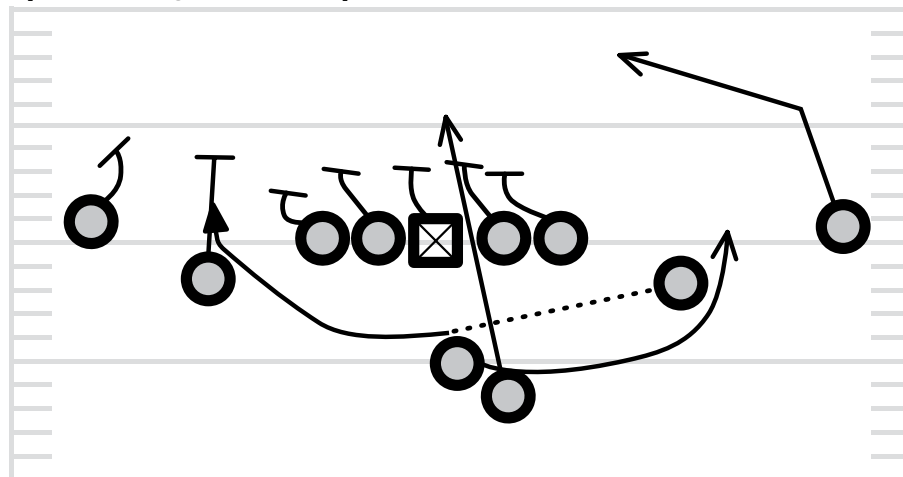
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ The timing of the Jet Motion is the most important element of this play, work it out in practice and ensure that the spacing between the slot player and the placement of the football is always consistent.
- ✓ The block of the playside Tackle does not have to be a traditional hook block, if he can reach across the body of the Defensive End and get him off of his feet that will allow the ball carrier enough of a crease to explode through.
- ✓ The B Back and QB must execute great play fakes to keep the Linebackers honest.
- ✓ If the Jet handoff is missed the QB can always give the ball to the B Back and he should always be prepared for that.
- ✓ The playside End (1 or 4) must keep his defender to the outside.
- ✓ The other offensive linemen must get to the second level and block the linebackers.

*Spread 22 Left Jet Sweep Right*



*Spread 22 Right Jet Sweep Left*





# Outside Running Game - POWER SWEEP

**The Power Sweep** is a time honored football play in which the offense aims to get more players at the point of attack than the defense can account for. Pre-snap, it looks similar to the wing option, which is a play that attacks the edge a little wider than the sweep. A wing option read by the defense may cause them to loosen up a little and create a wider running lane for the sweep. It is important that lead blockers never pass up a defender as they work towards the point of attack, this should ensure minimal losses.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Zone block to playside and get to the second level

**Backside Guard** – Zone block to playside and get to the second level

**Center** – Zone block to playside

**Playside Guard** – Zone block to playside

**Playside Tackle** – Zone block to playside

**Playside End (1 or 4)** – Inside leverage on defender, stalk block drive downfield.

**Playside Slot (2 or 3)** – Execute a crack block on the box area. Block the first defender that appears.

**Quarterback** – Reverse out after receiving the snap and work between the two lead blockers, attacking the Line of Scrimmage with square shoulders.

**B Back** – Lead edge blocker, attacking the #2 defender on the playside and blocking him to the outside.

**Motion Slot (2 or 3)** – Begin with pre-snap option motion, getting ahead of the QB after the snap and blocking the vacated slot area.

**Backside End (1 or 4)** – Run a post pattern and work towards blocking the Safety in the center of the field.

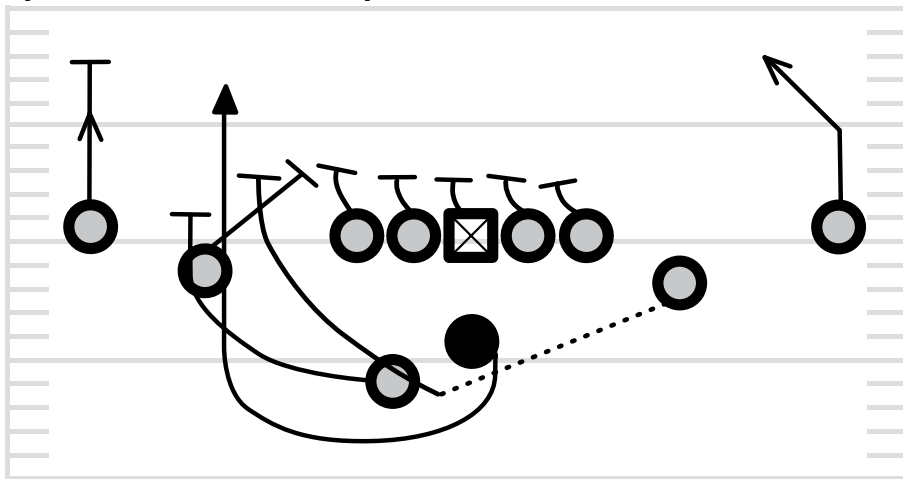
(Continued on next page).

# Outside Running Game - POWER SWEEP (Cont'd)

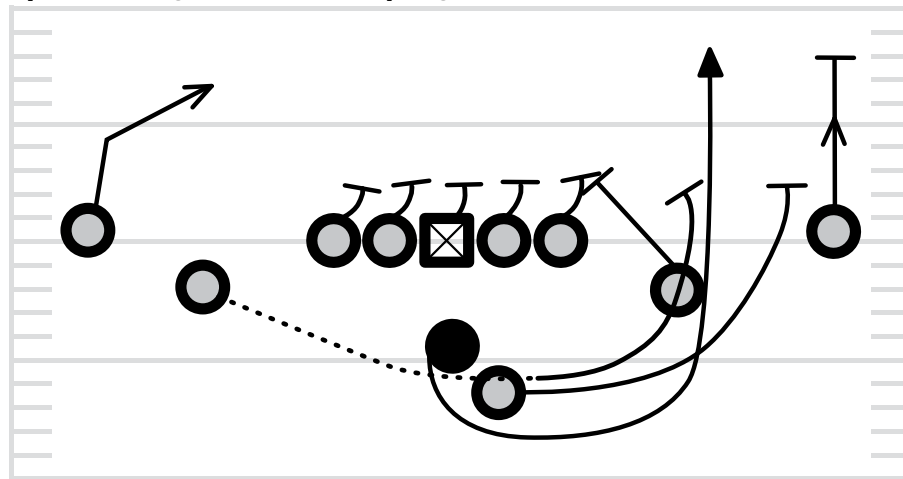
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ As the playside slot (2 or 3) begins to block down on the box area, he must not let a defender cross his face on a blitz. He must block the most dangerous defender that shows.
- ✓ Practice the timing of the wing's Option Motion to determine when the player should begin his movement in the snap count. He should be even with the QB at the snap.
- ✓ The B Back must aim for the second widest defender, but do not chase him if he maintains outside leverage and plays contain.
- ✓ The playside end (1 or 4) must execute great stalk block technique and maintain inside leverage.
- ✓ The offensive line must get across the defense and work downfield, driving the down linemen into the pursuit alley of the Linebackers.

*Spread 22 Left Power Sweep Left*



*Spread 22 Right Power Sweep Right*



# Wing Counter Option

**The Wing Counter Option** is a great misdirection play that allows the Quarterback a simple option to either inside pitch the ball to a slot player or keep the ball and attack the edge. It begins with a Dive Play fake to the B Back, followed by an option route to the edge by the Quarterback with a slot player coming down the line inside looking for an inside pitch. If the Quarterback reads the #2 defender following the slot player inside then the Quarterback should keep the ball and attack the vacated area. If the defender stays home, the Quarterback should deliver an inside pitch to the slot and he should follow his blocks back across the formation.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Block Defensive End, can not allow penetration there

**Backside Guard** – Pull and replace playside guards spot, block inside

**Center** – Block playside gap

**Playside Guard** – Pull around tackle and seal inside

**Playside Tackle** – Reach and hook the Defensive End

**Playside End (1 or 4)** – Take off and stalk block the Cornerback

**Playside Slot (2 or 3)** – Maintain inside leverage and block the #2 defender to the outside.

**Quarterback** – Receive the snap and fake the dive handoff to the B Back. Run option route away from play call and read the #2 defender on the slot player. If he runs with the slot keep the ball and attack the vacated area. If he stays pitch inside to the slot.

**B Back** – Fake Dive Handoff and attack the “B” gap, blocking the first defender that shows in the gap.

**Pitch Slot (2 or 3)** – Step with inside foot and come down across the formation looking for the inside pitch from the QB. Read the block of the playside tackle and slot and turn up inside and get up field.

**Backside End (1 or 4)** – Stalk Block the Cornerback and maintain inside leverage, in case the Quarterback keeps the ball and runs with it.

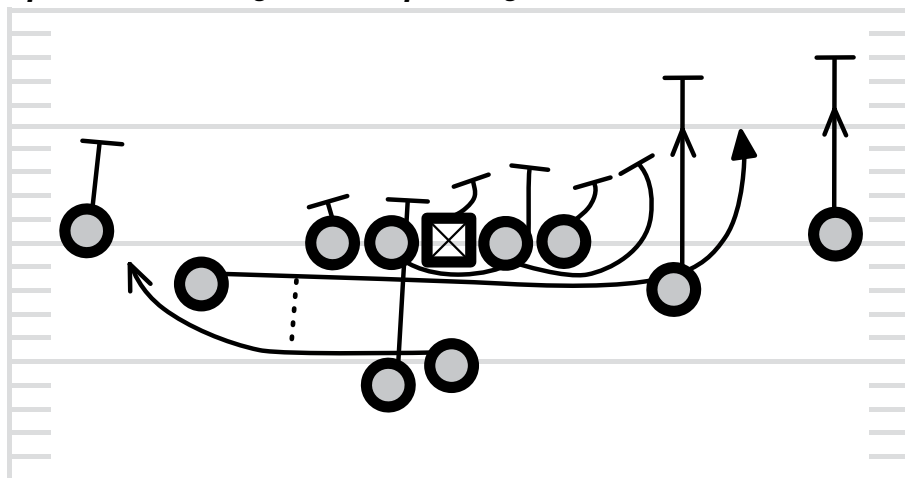
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ The pulling Guards should not step back into the backfield, when they pull they must stay close to the LOS.
- ✓ Practice the inside pitch so the QB gets an understanding on how to lead the slot player coming down the line.
- ✓ If the slot player gets the pitch from the QB, he must get his shoulders square quickly and get the football up field, do not string the ball out to the sideline.

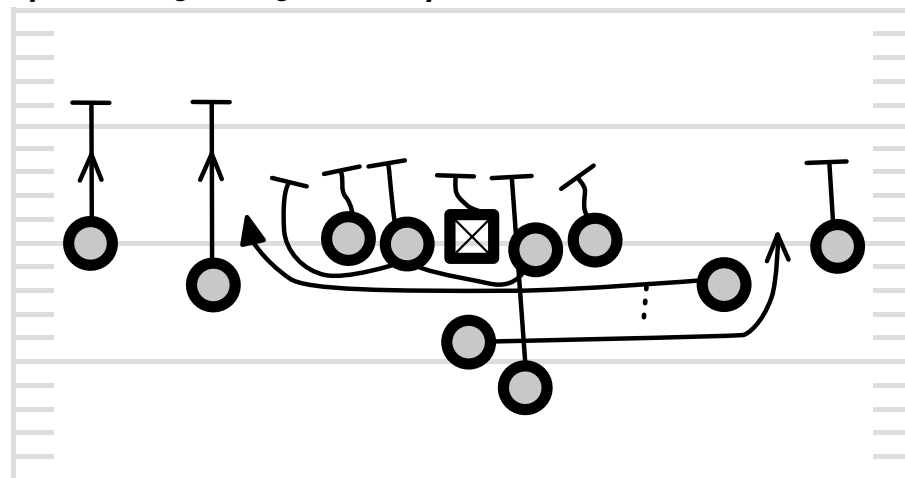
(Continued on next page).

# Wing Counter Option (Cont'd)

*Spread 22 Left Wing Counter Option Right*



*Spread 22 Right Wing Counter Option Left*



# Passing

Coaches should commit to passing the football and implement it into their offensive scheme without fear. Like any other phase of the game it requires practice and coordination to establish proper timing. A solid passing game will involve more players, force the defense to respect the threat and make running the ball easier.

## ROUTES

We use several routes in the playbook and the depth of the routes should be adjusted for the age and skill level of your players. It does not make sense to have a player run a 20 yard post route if the Quarterback can not throw the football that far.

**HITCH:** The receiver sprints up field, stops his movement at 4-8 yards with his outside foot, and turns back inside, moving towards the LOS.

**SLANT:** The receiver sprints up field at 4-8 yards, plants on his outside foot and angles into the center of the field.

**POST:** The receiver sprints up field, at 10 yards he then angles inside and up field towards the goal "post."

**HOOK:** The receiver sprints up field, stops his movement at 9 yards with his outside foot and turns back inside, moving towards the LOS.

**WHEEL ROUTE:** This is executed by the Slot receiver when he has a Split End to his outside. After the snap, the Slot moves down the line and outside where the End lined up and then runs a fly pattern down the field.

## PROTECTION SCHEMES

Pass protection for the Offensive Linemen can be very difficult and often times it is not their fault when things break down. For younger players it is important that the pass plays called are quick hitting plays where the Quarterback gets rid of the ball quickly. Often times coaches teach pass blocking in a retreat manner, where the Offensive Lineman back up and then try to block the defenders as they pursue the Quarterback. Teaching the Offensive Linemen to fire out and attempt to block on the LOS (not getting down field) may prove to be more successful.

*(Continued on next page).*

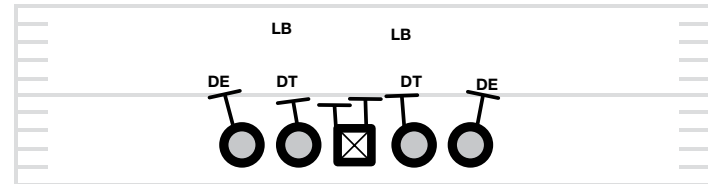


# Passing - PROTECTION SCHEMES (Cont'd)

## OCEAN PROTECTION

This is a pocket style protection, where the Offensive Linemen do not get downfield. It is important to teach them to fire out of their stance and maintain protection on the LOS. Young players have a difficult time understanding and executing a retreat style of pass protection.

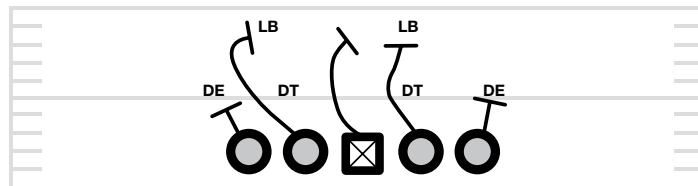
## Ocean Protection



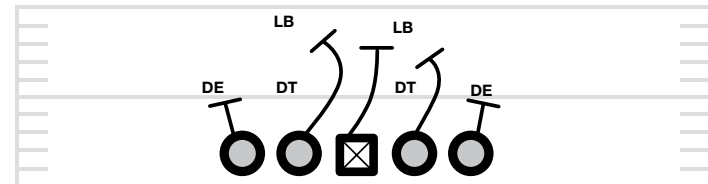
## LAKE AND RIVER PROTECTION

These are our directional screen protections. We want our Center and two Guards to get across the face of any down Linemen in the direction they are going and get to the second level quickly. With the quick timing of our Quick Screen series the interior Defensive Linemen should never be able to disrupt the receivers or catch them from behind.

### Lake Protection



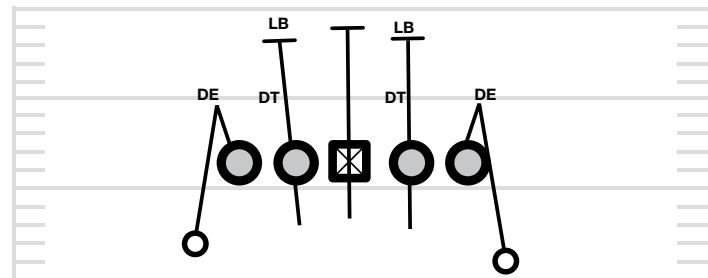
### River Protection



## SEA PROTECTION

This is our middle screen package, where the Tackles drive the Defensive Ends outside and allow them to penetrate as much as they want, without getting to the Quarterback. The Center and two Guards will block the interior Defensive Linemen for a 1-2 count, slowing their pursuit of the QB, and then release to block defensive players in the middle of the field, blocking them in any direction that works, allowing the receiver to read and cut off of those blocks.

## Sea Protection



# Quick Screen 1 or 4

**The Quick Screen 1 / 4 play** is a high percentage pass play that acts almost like a long handoff play, where the football gets into a wide players hands very quickly with a couple of blockers out in front of him. The alignment of the Split Ends (1 & 4) should not be wider than the Quarterback's ability to throw the football out to the side. This is what we call a no-lace pass, which means the Quarterback needs to throw the ball very quickly and thus does not always have time to find the laces. Practice throwing these passes without the fingers on the laces to get comfortable with the feel. The blocks of the playside Slot player and the B Back are the keys to the success of this play.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Backside Guard** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Center** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Playside Guard** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Playside Tackle** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Playside End ( 1 or 4 )** – If being pressed by the defender, run a 2 step take off and come straight back behind the Line of Scrimmage and catch the screen. If not being pressed a 1 step take off will work.

**Playside Slot ( 2 or 3 )** – From the Slot take a directional step and aim for a spot between the defender on the Split End and the LOS and block him from the inside out.

**Quarterback** – Read the coverage on the playside Split End, if being pressed know he will take an extra take off step. As the End comes back across the LOS deliver the football to him, aiming for the numbers.

**B Back** – Take a directional step aiming for the outside shoulder of the playside defender on the Slot player. Block him from the outside, moving him back in towards the box.

**Backside Slot (2 or 3)** – Run a pattern that gains inside leverage on the defender and work him down field, maintaining inside leverage.

**Backside End (1 or 4)** – Run a shallow Post pattern to keep the Safety in the middle of the field and then block him as he reads screen.

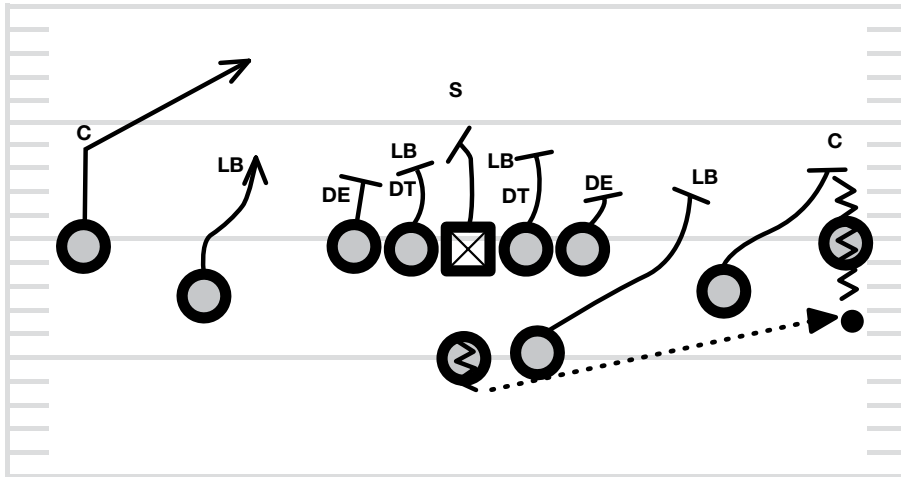
(Continued on next page).

# Quick Screen 1 or 4 (Cont'd)

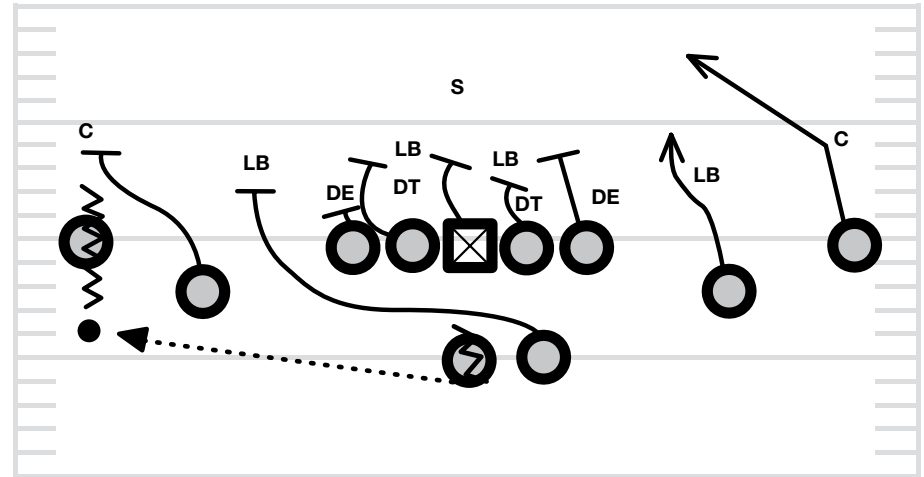
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ The QB always has the option to tuck the ball and run, or throw it over the receiver's head and out of bounds if the receiver is covered. Because we have linemen downfield, we do not have the option of throwing the ball downfield.
- ✓ The Offensive Linemen should get inside leverage on the box defenders and get to the second level on their blocks. Down linemen on defense should not be able to catch the screen.
- ✓ The angle of the blocks by the playside Slot and the B Back needs to anticipate where the defender will be when they get there and not where they are lined up at the snap.
- ✓ The Quarterback should practice receiving the snap and then stepping and throwing in a quick, efficient manner. Footwork is important and his mechanics must be precise.

**Spread 22 Right Quick Screen 4 River**



**Spread 22 Right Quick Screen 1 Lake**



# Quick Screen 2 or 3

**The Quick Screen 2/3 play** is also a high percentage play, like the Quick Screen 1 or 4. We use motion to get the Slot player in position to catch the football with two blockers out in front of him. We also use a fake handoff to the B Back to keep the defense honest and hold pursuing Linebackers. It is important to practice the timing of the motion to ensure the receiver is not too far outside the Quarterback's ability to throw a high percentage screen pass.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Backside Guard** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Center** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Playside Guard** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Playside Tackle** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Playside End (1 or 4)** – Run a take off pattern, with inside leverage and block the defender downfield maintaining inside position.

**Blocking Slot (2 or 3)** – Run a take off pattern with outside leverage and block the defender downfield, maintaining outside position.

**Quarterback** – Receive the snap and execute a fake zone option handoff with the B back, get the feet set to deliver the screen pass to the slot player and deliver the pass.

**B Back** – Execute a fake handoff with the Quarterback and then carry out the fake to the area vacated by the motioning slot player.

**Receiving Slot (2 or 3)** – Run flat screen motion across the formation and turn outside to receive the screen pass from the QB. Read the blocks of the playside end and slot player to get downfield with the ball.

**Backside End (1 or 4)** – Run a shallow Post pattern to keep the Safety in the middle of the field and then block him as he reads screen.

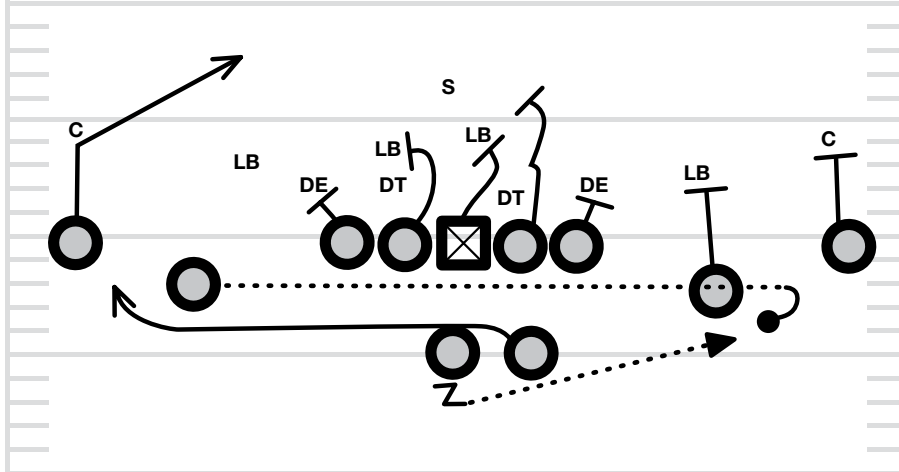
(Continued on next page).

# Quick Screen 2 or 3 (Cont'd)

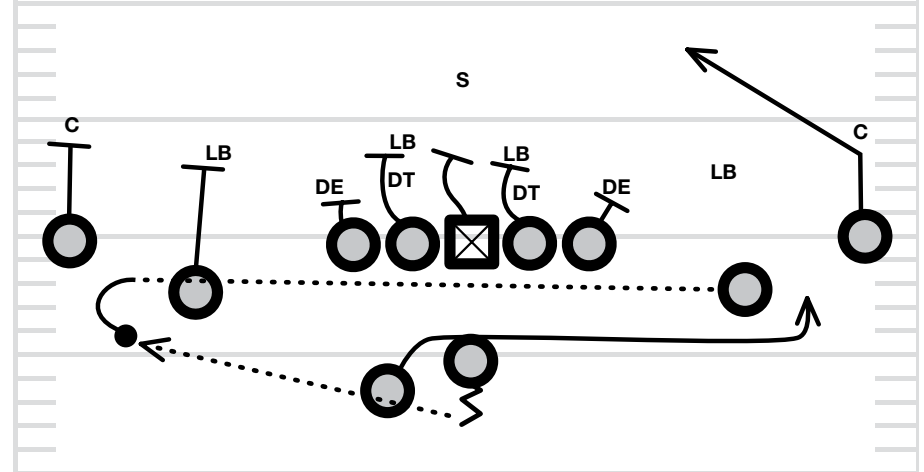
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ The QB always has the option to tuck the ball and run or throw it over the receiver's head and out of bounds if the receiver is covered. Because we have linemen downfield, we do not have the option of throwing the ball downfield.
- ✓ The Offensive Linemen should get inside leverage on the box defenders and get to the second level on their blocks. Down linemen on defense should not be able to catch the screen.
- ✓ The blocks by the playside end and slot player should open up a lane for the receiver however, if the defenders jump inside the blocks the receiver should work outside and get downfield quickly.
- ✓ The Quarterback should practice receiving the snap and then stepping and throwing in a quick, efficient manner. Footwork is important and his mechanics must be precise.

*Spread 22 Right Quick Screen 2 River*



*Spread 22 Left Quick Screen 3 Lake*



# Slip Screens 2 or 3

**The Slip Screen** is a fast break style play that gets the football out quickly to a slot player on the edge with a combination block from the End and the B Back. There is no handoff fake or delay in passing the football. The Quarterback receives the snap, sets his feet, and delivers the pass. This is a no lace pass—the Quarterback does not have time to look for the laces prior to throwing the football. The Offensive Linemen must get off the ball and to the second level quickly to cut off the Linebackers pursuing the screen. After the snap, the Slot receiver turns his back to the Quarterback and makes a quick U-Turn, gaining depth away from the LOS in order to get square, catch the screen and head downfield.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Backside Guard** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Center** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Playside Guard** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Playside Tackle** – Lake or River screen blocking based on play call

**Playside End (1 or 4)** – Run a take off pattern with inside leverage and block the defender downfield, maintaining inside position.

**Receiving Slot (2 or 3)** – After snap turn back to QB, gain depth and get square heading downfield. Catch screen and attack the LOS.

**Quarterback** – Receive the snap, set the feet, and deliver the pass to the Slot. Do not search for the laces, set and throw quickly.

**B Back** – Take a directional step, aiming for the outside shoulder of the playside defender on the Slot player. Block him from the outside, moving him back in towards the box.

**Backside Slot (2 or 3)** – Run a shallow Post pattern to keep the Safety in the middle of the field and then block him as he reads screen.

**Backside End (1 or 4)** – Run a take off pattern and work inside the defender, looking to gain a downfield advantage.

(Continued on next page).

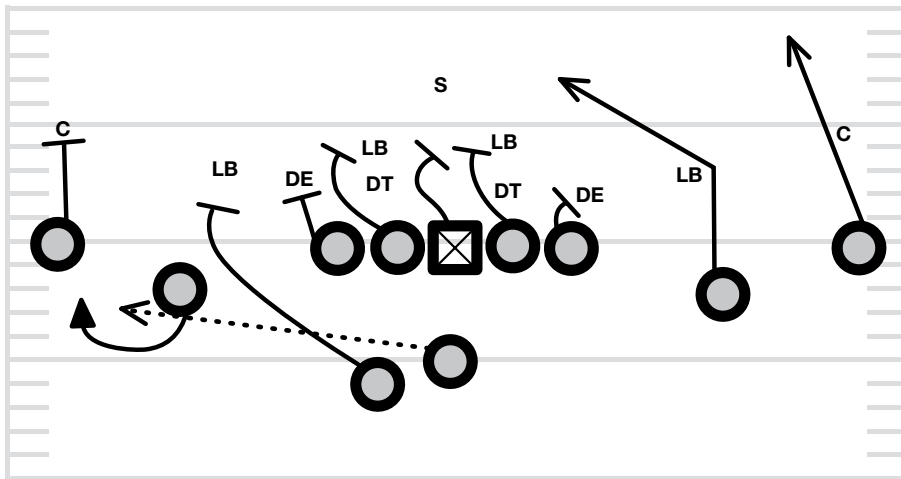


# Slip Screens 2 or 3 (Cont'd)

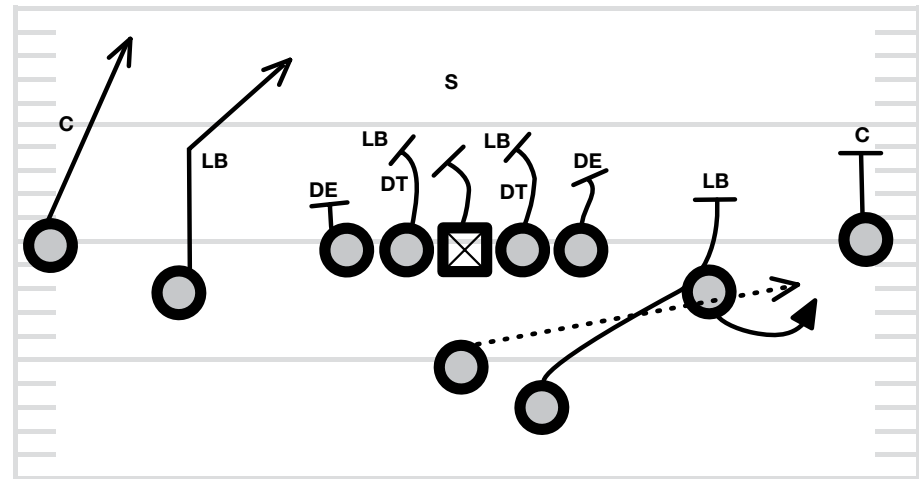
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ The QB always has the option to tuck the ball and run or throw it over the receiver's head and out of bounds if the receiver is covered. Because we have linemen downfield, we do not have the option of throwing the ball down field.
- ✓ The Offensive Linemen should get inside leverage on the box defenders and get to the second level on their blocks. Down linemen on defense should not be able to catch the screen.
- ✓ The blocks by the playside End and B Back player should open up a lane for the receiver, however, if the defenders jump inside the blocks the receiver should work outside and get down field quickly.
- ✓ The Quarterback should practice receiving the snap, and then stepping, and throwing in a quick, efficient manner. Footwork is important and his mechanics must be precise.

*Spread 22 Left Slip Screen 2 Lake*



*Spread 22 Right Slip Screen 3 River*



# Switches

**A Switch play** is designed to take advantage of an overly aggressive defense that has made adjustments to defend against the Quick Screens. From motion to post snap steps, the Switch plays develop just like the Quick Screens, transforming into a Switch play. Since all of the Switch plays are designed to pass the ball downfield, the Offensive Linemen cannot get downfield, however, we want them to stay aggressive and block on the LOS. They should not retreat block. Because of the various Switch options we have circled the read for the Quarterback. It is important that the Quarterback progresses his reads from the fake screen across. For example: If the Switch is coming off of the Quick Screen 1, the Quarterback should read the playside Cornerback first, then the Linebacker, and finally the Safety.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Ocean

**Backside Guard** – Ocean

**Center** – Ocean

**Playside Guard** – Ocean

**Playside Tackle** – Ocean

**#1** – Refer to play diagrams. Assignment is based on the switch that is called.

**#2** – Refer to play diagrams. Assignment is based on the switch that is called.

**Quarterback** – Provide a great pump fake with the football to sell the Quick Screen fake. Set the feet and read the coverage of the defense to determine the best spot to deliver the football.

**B Back** – Refer to play diagrams. Assignment is based on the switch that is called.

**#3** – Refer to play diagrams. Assignment is based on the switch that is called.

**#4** – Refer to play diagrams. Assignment is based on the switch that is called.

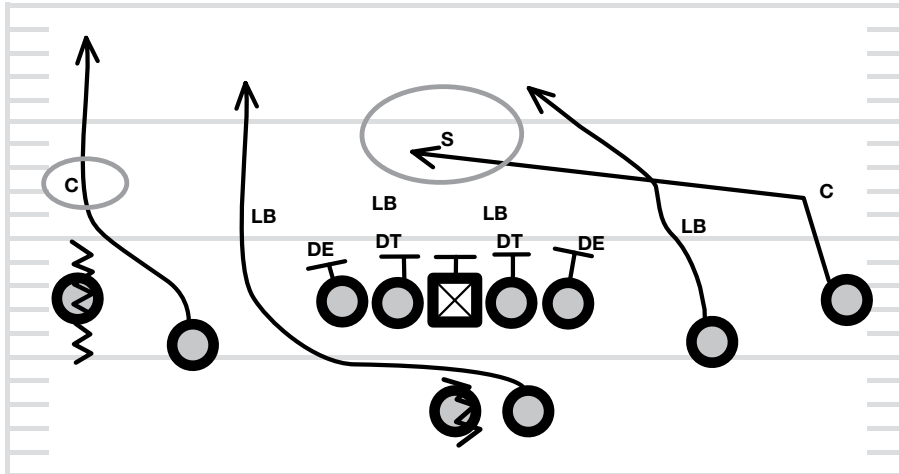
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ Receivers getting downfield must fake that they have missed a screen block. If they take off too quickly the Safety will not come up to defend the screen.
- ✓ The Offensive Linemen need to sell screen blocking without getting downfield, this is best accomplished by staying on the LOS.
- ✓ Ensure that the receivers do not out run the Quarterback's arm strength. Practice these plays at full speed to perfect the timing.

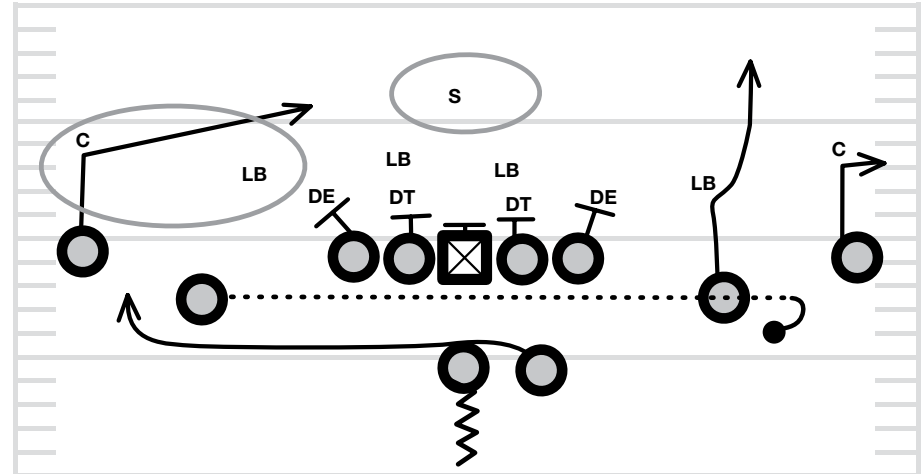
(Continued on next page).

# Switches (Cont'd)

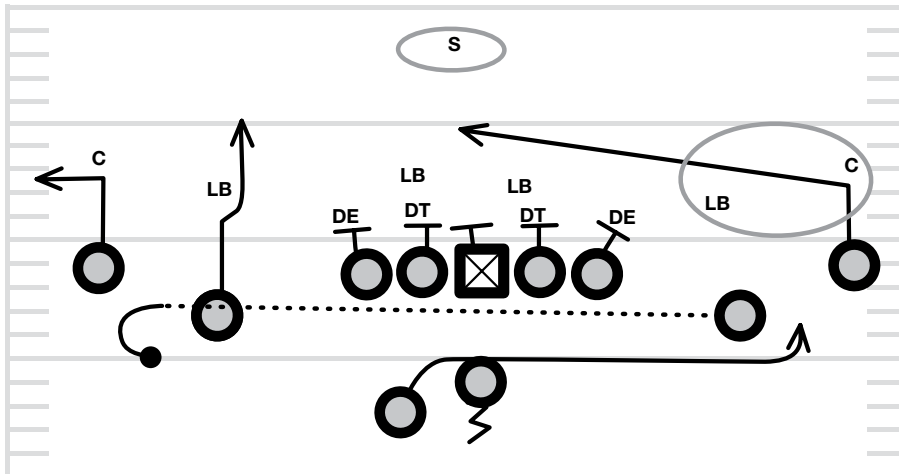
**Spread 22 Right Quick 1 Switch Ocean**



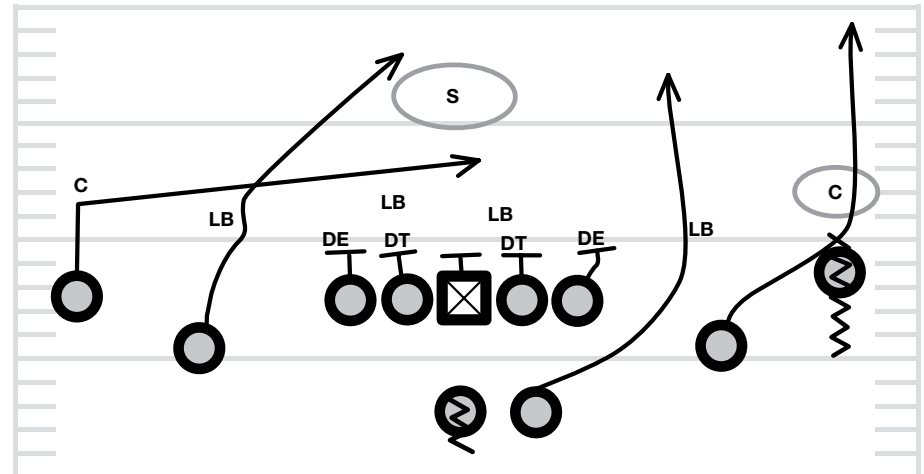
**Spread 22 Right Quick 2 Switch Ocean**



**Spread 22 Left Quick 3 Switch Ocean**



**Spread 22 Right Quick 4 Switch Ocean**



# Middle Screen

**The Middle Screen** is a great play to run against a prevent type defense that is providing a big cushion to the receivers or on a long yardage situation when the defense is expecting a pass downfield. We can run the Middle Screen to three different players; B Back, Slot #3, or Slot #4. It is important that the Quarterback learns to take a lot of pressure from the rushing linemen and create separation between them and the receiver who is working his way behind them to catch the pass. The Screen to the B Back allows the receiver to adjust to the Quarterback and help create a passing lane, while the Screen to the Slot players is more of a timing play, as we're trying to get the ball to the receiver at top speed. The blocks of the Tackles are important as we need them to drive the Defensive Ends outside and up field, keeping them away from the drop of the Quarterback.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Left Tackle** – Sea Protection

**Left Guard** – Sea Protection

**Center** – Sea Protection

**Right Guard** – Sea Protection

**Right Tackle** – Sea Protection

**#1** – Run a deep take off pattern and try and get the defender to turn and run with you. Once he reads screen and comes up field employ stalk block technique.

**Slot Player not a receiver (2 and/or 3)** –

Run a deep take off pattern and try and get the defender to turn and run with you. Once he reads screen and comes up field employ stalk block technique.

**Quarterback** – Take as much pressure as possible, allowing the screen to develop. Find the passing lane and deliver the screen to the assigned receiver.

**B Back** – **RECEIVER:** Set up as if blocking and then circle release inside, creating a passing lane for the QB. Catch and turn downfield. **NON RECEIVER:** Move out of the backfield to the spot vacated by the Slot Receiver and employ rules as noted for 1 and 4.

**Slot Player as a Receiver (2 or 3)** – At the snap run away from the formation as if running a wheel route. Get square and then come back across the formation, behind the LOS, looking for the screen pass from the QB. Catch and turn quickly inside following the blocks.

**#4** – Run a deep take off pattern and try and get the defender to turn and run with you. Once he reads screen and comes up field employ stalk block technique.

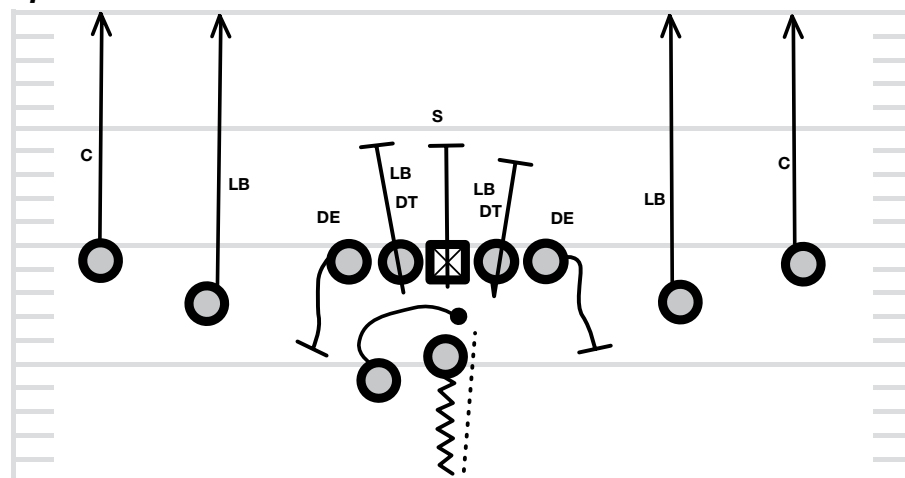
(Continued on next page).

# Middle Screen (Cont'd)

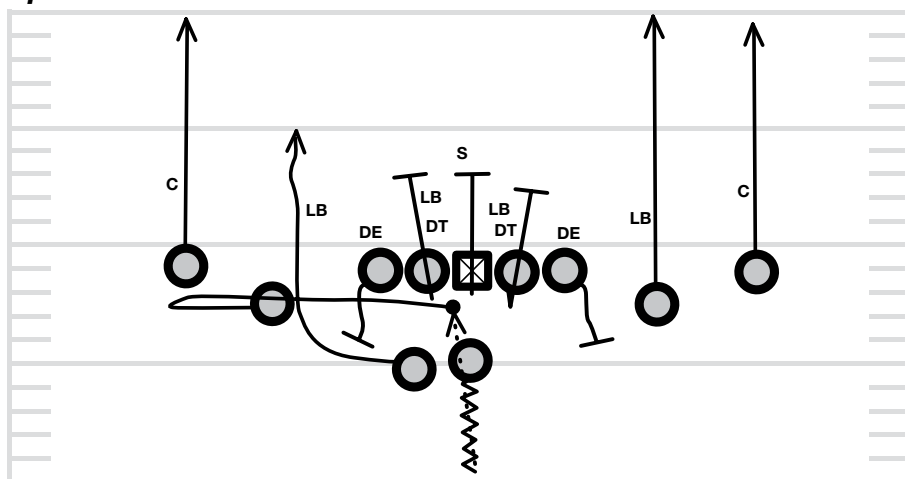
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ Have the Quarterback practice throwing under duress by having defenders harass him and throwing Linebacker shields at his feet. He needs to stay on his toes and bounce as he takes the pressure.
- ✓ Ensure that the Guards and the Center provide some resistance at the LOS to ensure that the Defensive Linemen do not run freely to the QB. They cannot release too quickly.
- ✓ The Middle Screen to the Slot players requires a great deal of timing; this has to be practiced at full speed to perfect the timing. The Slot receiver must receive the pass just outside of where the Offensive Tackle lined up pre-snap.
- ✓ The players running downfield must not pass their defenders as they prepare to set up for stalk blocking technique.

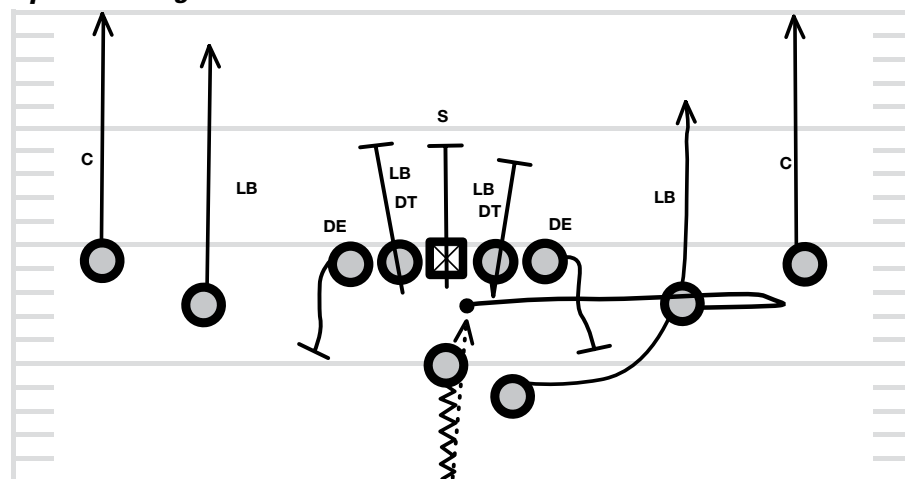
## Spread 22 Left Middle Screen Sea



## Spread 22 Left Middle Screen 2 Sea



## Spread 22 Right Middle Screen 3 Sea



# All Stops

**The All Stops Play** is an excellent opportunity to pass the ball downfield with 5 pass receiving options for the Quarterback. The four receivers across the formation all run inside Hitch patterns while the B Back checks for blitzing players and then runs a Curl inside. The distance of the Hitch pattern should be adjusted based on the Quarterback's arm strength and his ability to throw the ball out to the widest players. The best options on this play are the inside Slot players. Practice the timing and make sure the Quarterback throws the ball a little high so the receiver can go up and catch it above the defender. The Quarterback should read the inside Linebackers and the Safety to reduce the possibility of an interception. The B Back becomes an outlet option for the Quarterback if the Linebackers clear to cover the Slot players.

## LINE FORMATION:

✓ Balanced 22 Spread

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Ocean Protection

**Backside Guard** – Ocean Protection

**Center** – Ocean Protection

**Playside Guard** – Ocean Protection

**Playside Tackle** – Ocean Protection

**#1** – Run an Inside Hitch pattern, adjusting the depth based on the QB's arm strength, always come back to the ball to catch it.

**#2** – Run an Inside Hitch pattern, adjusting the depth based on the QB's arm strength, always come back to the ball to catch it.

**Quarterback** – Take a 3 step drop and read the Inside Linebackers and the Safety to see if they are jumping any of the inside routes. Deliver the ball to most open receiver.

**B Back** – Check for any blitz players or unblocked linemen and block them, if protection is secure, release and run an Inside Curl in the middle of the field. Come back to the ball.

**#3** – Run an Inside Hitch pattern, adjusting the depth based on the QB's arm strength, always come back to the ball to catch it.

**#4** – Run an Inside Hitch pattern, adjusting the depth based on the QB's arm strength, always come back to the ball to catch it.

(Continued on next page).

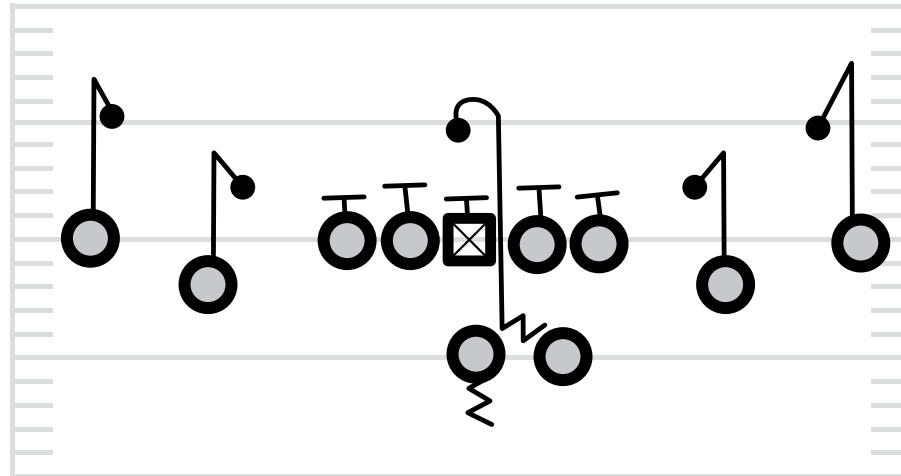


# All Stops (Cont'd)

## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ Practice every step of the receiver's routes as efficient movement of the receivers is important to the timing of the play. The Quarterback has to trust that the receivers will make their breaks and be able to catch a pass he has already thrown.
- ✓ The Offensive Linemen must provide protection at the LOS and not retreat into the Quarterback's line of sight.
- ✓ In practice provide the Quarterback different looks from the inside Linebackers so he learns to read what they are doing and does not become fixated on the receivers.
- ✓ In practice provide the B Back with different looks, including inside and outside blitzes, so he learns to pick-up blocks from various angles before releasing downfield for a pass.

**Spread 22 Right All Stops Ocean**



# Route Passes

**Route Pass Plays** are plays designed to utilize the Quarterback's arm strength and force defenses to defend receivers who are downfield and often moving across the formation. You must set these plays in practice and avoid patterns that will outrun the Quarterback's arm strength or the Offensive Line's ability to protect the pocket. If you like you can use a traditional passing tree and number the routes to make huddle verbiage a little easier, however, if you begin by calling the routes by name you may find this easier for your players to understand. You can also use motion and various formations to force the defense to adjust to your alignment. Taking the widest receivers and bringing them inside the Slots after the snaps almost always creates separation from the defender. Passing routes are always called from left to right across the formation.

## LINE FORMATION:

- ✓ Balanced 22 Spread
- ✓ Unbalanced 13 or 31
- ✓ Double Tight

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Backside Tackle** – Called Protection

**Backside Guard** – Called Protection

**Center** – Called Protection

**Playside Guard** – Called Protection

**Playside Tackle** – Called Protection

**#1** – Execute called pattern with efficient movement.

**#2** – Execute called pattern with efficient movement.

**Quarterback** – Three-step drop and find the open receiver.

*If no receivers are open, back out of the backfield as a safety valve.*

**B Back** – Check for any blitz players or unblocked linemen and block them, if protection is secure, release and run swing pattern out of the backfield.

**#3** – Execute called pattern with efficient movement.

**#4** – Execute called pattern with efficient movement.

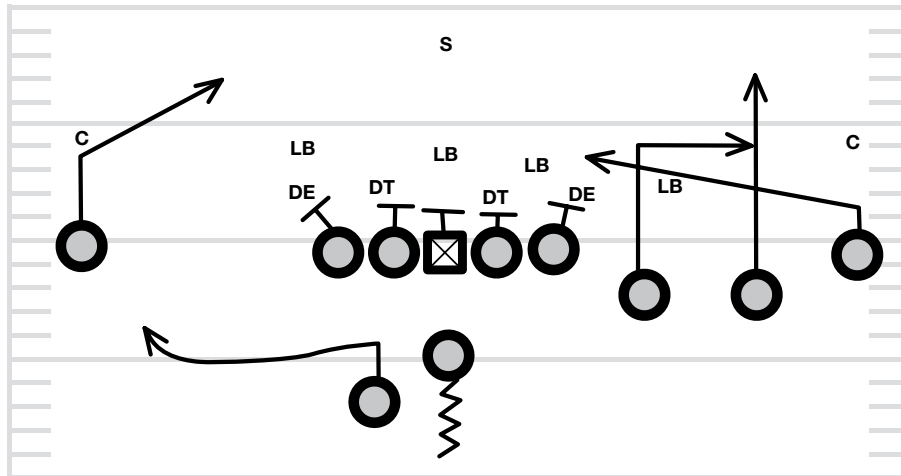
## COACHING POINTS:

- ✓ Practice every step of the receiver's routes, efficient movement of the receivers is important to the timing of the play. Practice at full speed.
- ✓ The Offensive Linemen must provide protection at the LOS and not retreat into the Quarterback's line of sight.
- ✓ In practice provide the Quarterback different defensive looks: man, zone, and blitzes.
- ✓ In practice provide the B Back with different looks, including inside and outside blitzes so he learns to pick up blocks from various angles before releasing downfield for a pass.

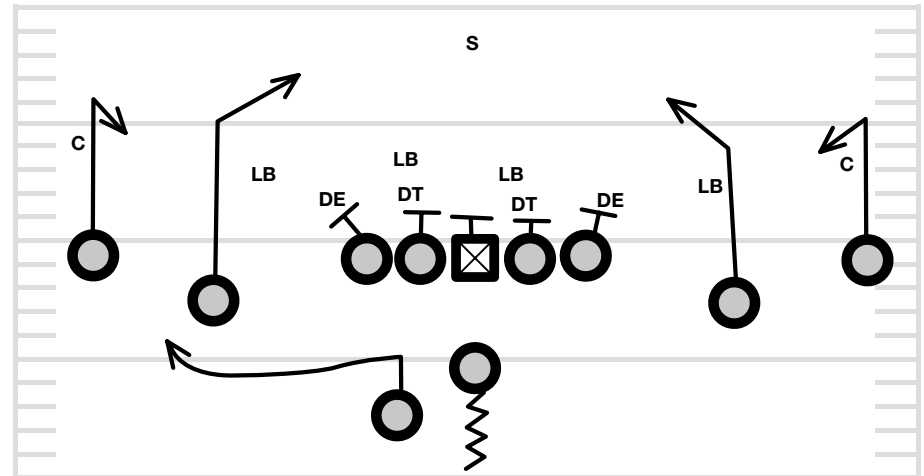
*(Continued on next page).*

# Route Passes *(Cont'd)*

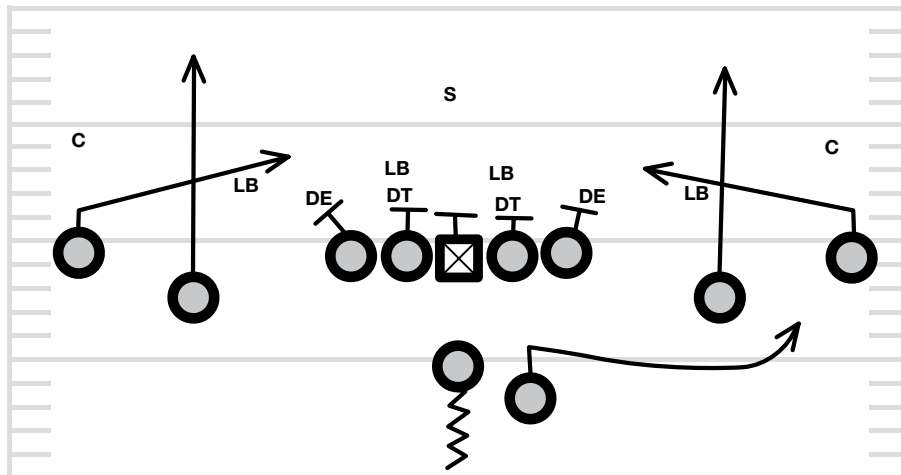
**Spread 13 Left Post-Out-Fly-Slant Ocean**



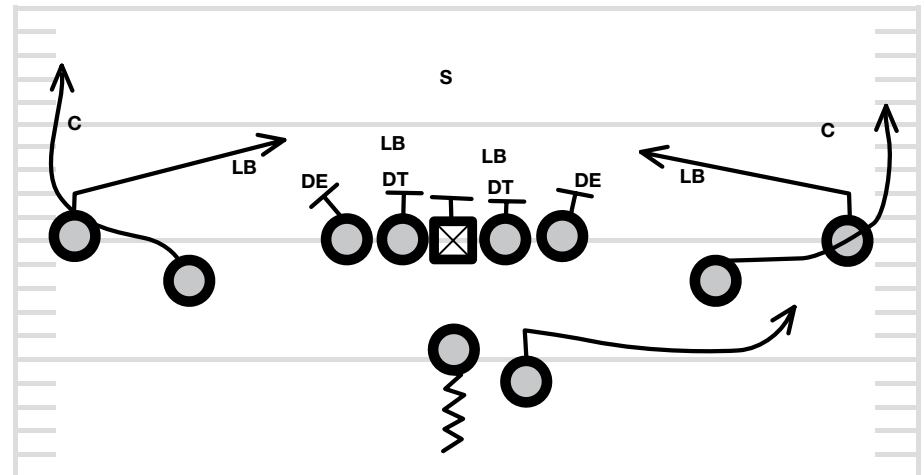
**Spread 22 Left Hitch-Post-Post-Hitch Ocean**



**Spread 22 Right Slant-Fly-Fly-Slant Ocean**



**Spread 22 Right Slant-Wheel-Wheel-Slant Ocean**







**COPYRIGHT © 2009 BY USA FOOTBALL ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.** The information in this publication has been compiled to aid youth football coaches. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without prior permission of USA Football, 8300 Boone Boulevard, Suite 625, Vienna, VA 22182. None of the activities depicted in this publication should be performed without qualified adult supervision. Use discretion, place safety above all other goals and always make certain that players are wearing proper safety gear. Writing, technical editing and diagrams by Larry Canard. Cover and layout by HeadRush Creative. Printed in the United States of America. A USA FOOTBALL BOOK.