

FOOTBALL



HELP DESK

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CUT (COUNTER TRAP)

Before I start explaining the play and the footwork involved, let's get on some common ground. This play was developed over the course of several years running the Double Wing Offense. So if you plan to use it in any other offense, you might need to adjust a couple of things. However, if you already use the following techniques, you won't need to change anything at all.

- Extremely narrow line splits (0-3 inches)
- Align your FB so close to the QB, he can reach out and touch him
- You run a powerful off-tackle play

If you don't have all of the above in your offense already, then you should really consider adding them because in 10 years of coaching youth football, I have found that these things have helped us more than any other offensive characteristic of our team.

The base play of our DW Offense is our TOSS (off-tackle) play. Our QB opens away from the point of attack when we run this play so if we are running TOSS to the right, then our QB opens left and spins as he delivers the ball to the runner so that our QB can lead through the hole. This is of course a very powerful play and I wouldn't be exaggerating at all if I said we run our TOSS play well over 50% of the time. We do this to condition the defense into believing that every time they see motion from a Wingback and the QB opens in the direction of the motion man, then we must be running TOSS to the opposite side. And no matter how well coached the defense is, they will eventually start selling out to stop the dreaded TOSS play. As we call plays on offense, we are watching the defense to see who is selling out or what the defense is doing to stop our TOSS play and we call one of our many 'counters' based on what we see.

I won't go into all of the different things we look for or how we attack each of them, however, I will cover the things we see that tell us to call our CUT play. We keep a written list on our sideline and usually I will assign different coaches to look for different things. Then throughout the course of the game, when a coach sees what I asked him to watch for, he should immediately come to me and say 'the defense is doing X, Y or Z'. If I know this coach is usually right on target then I will call the appropriate 'counter' play immediately. If this coach is new on our staff or if he doesn't always see what he thinks he sees, then I will take a look for myself. If he was correct, then I will call the appropriate 'counter' play.

The following is a list of keys that tell us the defense is doing something unsound and they are ready for us to run our CUT play:

- Defense aligns with no one between the A & C-gaps.
- Backside DT is coming very hard to disrupt our pullers.
- Backside DE is chasing our motion man down from behind.
- Backside LB is flowing to stop our TOSS play based on motion only.

When the defense lines up in our A-gap and our C-gap but they have no one in between, they are just begging for us to call CUT. Usually the defense will do this because they want 2 guys in the A-gaps to slow down our WEDGE play and then they want 2 guys in the C-gaps to give us trouble on our TOSS play. However, this makes it easy for our Guard to block down the A-gap player and our Tackle can easily skip past the DT and go to the LB level allowing us to trap that DT even if he tries to just squat in the hole. If they want to give us the space to work in, we would be silly not to take it.

We see some real stud DTs sometimes and they can give you a lot of trouble if you don't have any kind of TRAP play. For us, DTs that are crashing hard enough to disrupt our pulling linemen are coming so fast they are easy to trap. Just let that guy come up the field and we will smash him from the side like a Greyhound bus hitting an armadillo.

Speed at DE can really cause your offense problems if you aren't prepared to deal with it. Any DE chasing fast enough to catch our motion man cannot possibly be looking for any type of 'counter' coming back in his direction so we show him one to slow him down. Of course if he start chasing even further inside we can run our REVERSE play to get around him into the open field. All Double Wing teams like to play games with the DEs; we just like to play games with both of them at the same time. The playside DE on TOSS will always be wrong no matter what he does and the backside DE will also be wrong no matter what he does.

We talk specifically about overreacting LBs but this rule goes for everyone on the defense. Once they start reacting to motion, they are much easier to run 'counter' plays against because those little false steps that happen when a defender reacts to motion usually put him in the perfect spot for our blockers (we count on this). When a LB reacts to motion instead of reading the play, he will be out of position making him much easier to block. Overreacting Safeties don't even warrant a block. When we see Safeties following our motioning wing, we know that all we have to do is get through the LOS and we will have a great chance to score.

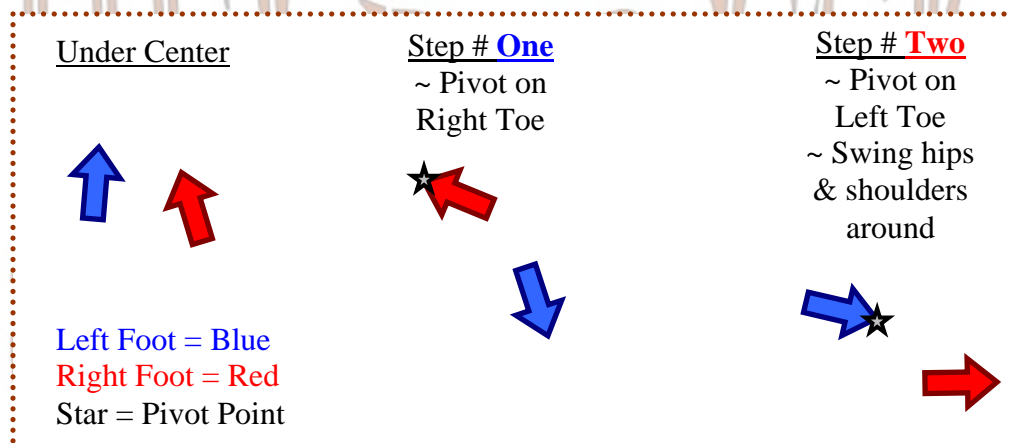
Now that we understand 'why' and 'when' to run the CUT play, I guess we should talk about 'how' to run it.

Lets start with how the QB gets around 270-degrees for our TOSS play and why that technique is perfect for our CUT play also. For the rest of the explanation, lets assume we are opening counter clockwise, pivoting on the Right Foot and turning $\frac{3}{4}$ of a circle to finish facing towards the right.

Our QB always pre-steps his foot back about 3 inches. It is always the foot 'away' from the motion man to facilitate his reverse pivot. He should also be slightly pigeon-toed and raise the heel of his pre-stepped foot. This entire foot placement thing helps our QB *'get around farther, faster!'*

At the snap, the QB pulls the point of the ball to his stomach and open steps with his Left Foot. If he pivots correctly on his right foot, this first step should cause his Left Hip to 'pop' open (think of sitting in your chair spreading your legs open). It should also cause his Left Shoulder to 'pop' open (think of opening a double door with both hands at the same time).

If the QB is at ZERO degrees when he is under Center, that first step should swing him open a little past the 180-degree mark, facing him away from the line of scrimmage. That Left Foot should land on its toes because it will pivot $\frac{1}{4}$ turn during the next step and it is much easier to pivot without having the whole foot on the ground. This second step will bring him around to the 270-degree mark so that he is now facing to the right.



At this point, the QB can simply slip the ball to the Fullback. This happens down low, out of view as the FB passes between the QB and the LOS. In our Double Wing version of the play, the pulling Tackle is also passing through this spot at the same time and he shields the exchange as well. We want the QB to continue on a path away from the play that resembles his path on the play we are faking.

The FBs steps are much easier and usually don't require nearly as many repetitions to get comfortable with them. The toughest part is to move forward enough that you can get between the QB and the O-line without impeding the pulling linemen who are trap blocking to open the hole. We expect the QBs spinning action to move him away from the line as the push of the linemen moves them in the other direction. These two actions help the FB by opening the space where his path should take him.

If all of this fancy footwork is going to work, we have to get started correctly. And for our Double Wing Offense we need to use a crossover step so the FBs first step gets him out from behind the QB. Again I will explain this from the standpoint of faking our off-tackle play to the right.

At the snap the FB will step with his Left Foot, crossing over in front of his Right Foot. If the FB pivots on the toes of his Right Foot, his crossover step will take him much farther out toward the end of our formation. So at the end of the first step the FB's Right Foot is still where it was pre-snap but his Left Foot has crossed his body and has him facing to the right.

The FBs second step is with his Right Foot to gain a little distance and to get him behind the B-gap. This step should get our FB totally clear of the path the QBs footwork is following. The FBs first and second step should be a ½ step ahead of the QB because the QB had to wait on the snap before getting into his steps. As the FB finishes his second step, he should plant his foot and swivel 180-degrees from facing right to facing left.

The FBs third step is again with the Right Foot as the FB swivels so that he can start back in the other direction and get between the QB and the line. We often describe the 2nd and 3rd steps as a 'bounce step' because that Right Foot should sort of 'bounce' as the FB changes direction.

Timing wise the FB should be pretty much shoulder to shoulder with the pulling Tackle in the Double Wing or behind the pulling Guard in offenses that only pull the Guard on TRAP plays. In the Double Wing, the Tackle is hiding our FB from the defense as he receives the handoff. The FB gets the ball and follows the Tackle as they both turn up through the hole created by the Guards trap block. Even though the FB was shoulder to shoulder with the Tackle on the swivel, he will end up behind him as they turn up through the hole. I teach my FB to use the Tackle as a shield as long as he doesn't slow him down. Be ready to explode up the field as the Tackle makes contact.

JJ Lawson

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