

FOOTBALL



HELP DESK

'Helping Coaches Helping Kids'

His game plan will reduce to this: He will test the defense through the strong side C-gap and see if it can stop him consistently for less than 4 yards a play. If it can't, he will **CONTINUE TO RUN OFF-TACKLE THROUGH THE STRONG SIDE C-GAP.**

If the defense can only stop the power off-tackle play short of the minimum offensive payoff (3.3+ yards a crack, or 2.5+ in four-down territory) by unbalancing, that is by bringing other defenders over to the C-gap to plug the leak, then the other plays in the series enter into consideration.

For example, if the defense starts crashing the Cornerback and/or outside Linebacker in towards the C-gap to shut off the off-tackle play, the offense will now look at running a sweep or optional running pass to get outside of containment and take the ball to the sideline and/or downfield. If the defense weakens its interior strength to try and shore up the C gap, you can expect the offense to run a trap, wedge or seam buck to take advantage of that new weakness.

There are also 'counter plays' like Sweep, Reverse, Counter Trap or even the Play-action Pass that will try to exploit other defensive over-adjustments to the basic threat of that powerful off-tackle play into the strong side C-gap.

(FYI, Chris Brown's excellent Smart Football Blog talks about complementary plays like Sweep, Wedge, Counter and the Play-action Pass being used to constrain the defense from its ability to over-adjust and shut down the core. Here is the link:

<http://smartfootball.blogspot.com/2008/01/constraint-theory-of-offense.html>

Now, what if the defense can stop him for less than 3.3 yards a play while still staying balanced against his other threats (running to other gaps and/or passing)? It means the defense probably has a personnel advantage.

As a result, the single wing OC will have to reach into his bag of tricks to try and misdirect the defense away from his intended points of attack if he is going to succeed. Now the "constraining" plays gain new importance, as do the other series in the offense, which are predicated more on deception and less on raw power: The fullback full-spin series, the fullback or tailback half-spin series, the buck lateral series, a Jet Sweep series, etc.

These additional play series may even be joined by some out-and-out trickery in an attempt to move the ball and hang some points on the board -- it's all a function of just how overmatched the single wing team is based on personnel.

So -- coaches that don't base their play calling on a series have a different way of looking at things, right? So let's hear from them how their non-series scheme of play calling is the most effective way to use their available talent on the football field.

[CRICKETS CHIRPING]

It's OK, guys, I have all day...

Seriously, unless you have your plays organized into:

Core plays - the ones you want to go to against balanced defenses because you are confident you will gain yards with them.

Counter plays - which you use to sting defenses that are overbalancing in an attempt to slow down your core plays.

Play-action plays - which you use to throw the ball when they expect a run (either core or counter), OR run the ball when the defense is expecting a pass.

Then how can you effectively attack a defense? Unless you make these distinctions among your various classes of plays, how will you know what tool to pull out of the box in a given situation? (This is what we are talking about when we accuse coaches of "grab-bagging" on offense by calling any play that pops into their head.)

And if you ARE dividing your plays into core/counter/play action, you are a series-based offense, whether you call yourself one or not.

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