

# ZONE BLOCKING MANUAL

# Run Blocking Techniques

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**LINE SPLITS--18"**

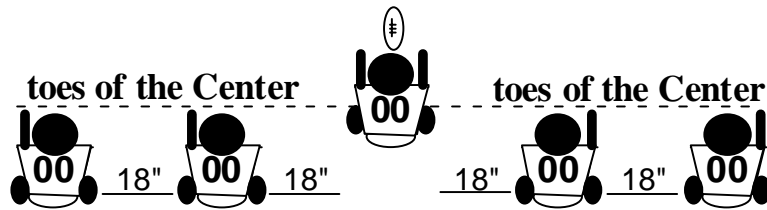
**DEPTH--Down hand on toes of the Center**

**LEFT SIDE OF LINE-Left hand down**

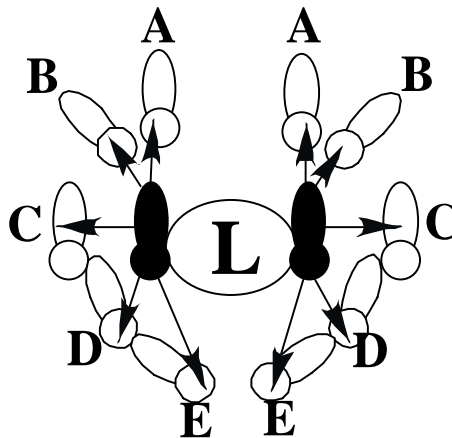
**RIGHT SIDE OF LINE-Right hand down**

**COVERED LINEMAN-Defender head-up or on either shoulder *on the line of scrimmage* in 3 or 4 point stance**

**UNCOVERED LINEMAN-Defender head-up or on either shoulder *on the line of scrimmage* in 3 or 4 point stance**



## STEP CHART



### A. Drive Step

-6 inch directional step toward Aiming Point.  
Usually used for Base block.

### B. Lead Step

-6 inch directional step toward Aiming Point.  
Used for an inside Zone, Down or Chip block

### C. Slide Step

-6 inch directional step toward Aiming Point.  
Used for Outside Zone Blocking when covered with a HEAD UP defender.

### D. Drop Step

-6 inch directional step toward Aiming Point.  
Used for Outside Zone Blocking when covered and facing an OUTSIDE SHADE defender.

### E. Bucket Step

-6 inch directional step toward Aiming Point. Used for Outside Zone Blocking when uncovered.

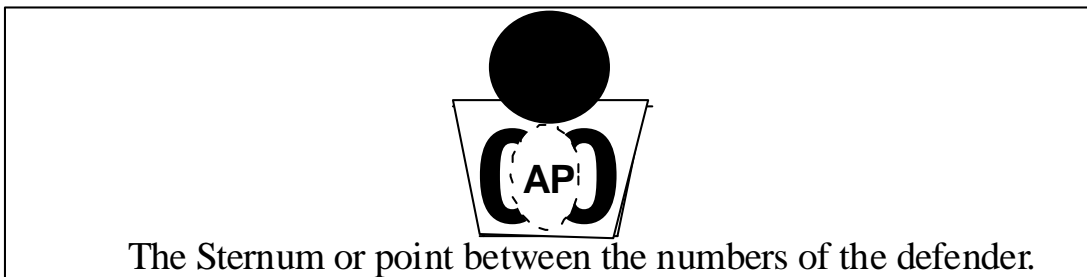
# Run Blocking Techniques

## I. BASE Block

The base block is the heart of any blocking scheme and the most important to master. This technique will be used by linemen MOSTLY on our Inside Zone (Base) play when they are covered and their inside teammate is also covered. It is important to note that our linemen will have the option of blocking the defender any way the defender wishes to go. The most important aspect is to get movement upfield, laterally, or both and to **STAY ENGAGED** (*Be a part of the Tackle*) until the play is over. In our offense the BASE call means that the lineman will not be involved in a combination or Zone block but, instead, he will be working alone.

### A. Aiming Point

On each of our blocks, the linemen will be given an aiming point. The lineman must get his head gear to that aiming point and fight to keep it there through the execution of his block. The aiming point for the Base block is;



All linemen will keep their shoulders parallel to the path of the ball carrier. This will prevent linebacker run throughs by allowing the linemen to see the defensive movement.

### B. Approach (Seek)

Always explode off the line of scrimmage on the correct snap count. This is accomplished by knowing your responsibilities and ALWAYS taking the correct initial step. Your initial step in a Base block will be with the foot nearest the defender you are blocking. After this step you must roll off the takeoff foot aggressively and with your head up. By keeping your head up and your back flat, you will better be able to get under the defender's pads. Aim the "nose" of your helmet (crosshairs) for the proper aiming point. This can only be accomplished with your HEAD AND EYES UP.

*“A man can't hit what his eyes can't see.”*

### C. Contact (Destroy)

Throw your arms back on your first step and POP hands into aiming point with as much force as possible. First contact must be with the HANDS followed by the “nose” of the helmet in order to maintain control and contact with the defender. The lineman’s hands will make contact with the defender at the Aiming Point (Sternum) with the thumbs up. A lifting action (Bench Press) will be utilized to allow the lineman to roll the hips into the defender(LIFT HIM OUT OF HIS SHOES). This hip roll allows the lineman to use the strong leg muscles and to maintain the Power Angles. To finish the block, the lineman will arch the back and “climb the ladder” while driving the feet. Keep a wide base with your feet and take SHORT CHOPPY POWER STEPS to maintain contact.

## II. Inside Zone Principles(Base)

Our Inside Zone blocking principle requires linemen to block a particular man first and to zone if Uncovered. The purpose is to stop penetration, *create movement on the first level*, and seal off the playside or filling linebacker on the second level. All Zone blocks begin as an inside-out double-team. As the linemen begin to get movement, either the outside or the inside lineman will gain control over the down defender allowing the other lineman to come off the block to the second level linebacker. **WE MUST get movement on the first level before sliding to the second level.**

### A. Uncovered Lineman:



### **AIMING POINT-Inside Number of first down defender to the playside**

Take a slide step and catch up with your covered teammate as you READ the near Knee of the down lineman on him. As you work through your playside gap, if the Knee comes toward you, block his INSIDE number & fit him sliding in the direction he is going. (eyeball LB in case he comes inside).

If the Knee doesn’t come towards you, work up on LB. You have only two options and both depend on reading the defender’s reaction:

#### 1. Knee goes away.

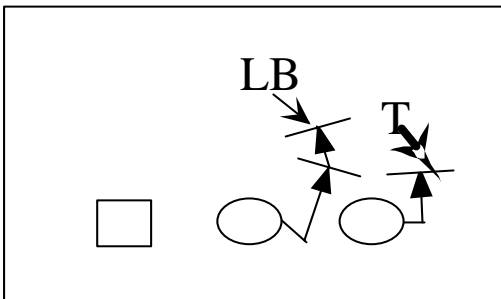
(Diagram 1)

- a. Try to get outside hand on the hip of the down lineman while moving to the linebacker.
- b. Adjust your path to pick up the linebacker.
- c. Engage the linebacker and STAY ON THE BLOCK UNTIL THE WHISTLE.

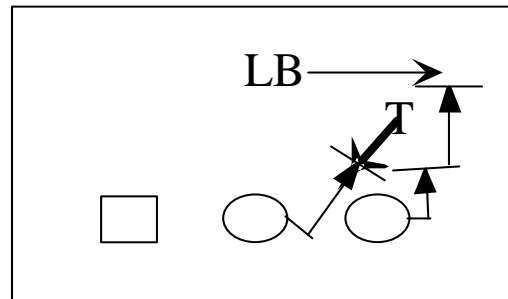
2. Knee comes to you.

(Diagram 2)

- a. Continue to work to your aiming point on the down lineman.
- b. Fight to gain control of the down lineman and push the out-side blocker off of the Down Lineman
- c. **KEEP YOUR FEET MOVING**
- d. Engage the Down lineman and **STAY ON THE BLOCK UNTIL THE WHISTLE.**

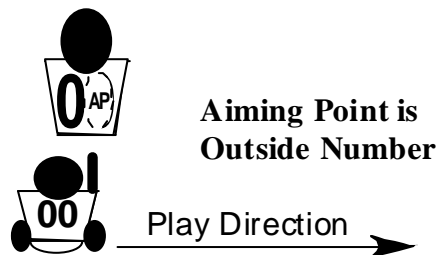


*Diagram 1*



*Diagram 2*

## B. Covered lineman



Take a lead step with your outside foot while eyeballing the outside number of the defender. Throw your second step through the crotch of the Down Lineman. You must think man block and only go to the LB when pushed off the block by your teammate. You have only two options and both depend on reading the defender's reaction:

1. Defensive lineman fights to your playside gap

(Diagram 1)

- a. Maintain contact with the down lineman and work to your aiming point.
- b. Engage the down lineman and **STAY ON THE BLOCK UNTIL THE WHISTLE.**

2. Defensive lineman goes to your inside gap

(Diagram 2)

- a. Extend inside arm on the down lineman.
- b. Push off the down lineman while working to the second level linebacker.
- c. Engage the linebacker and **STAY ON THE BLOCK UNTIL THE WHISTLE.**

# INSIDE ZONE BLOCKING RULES

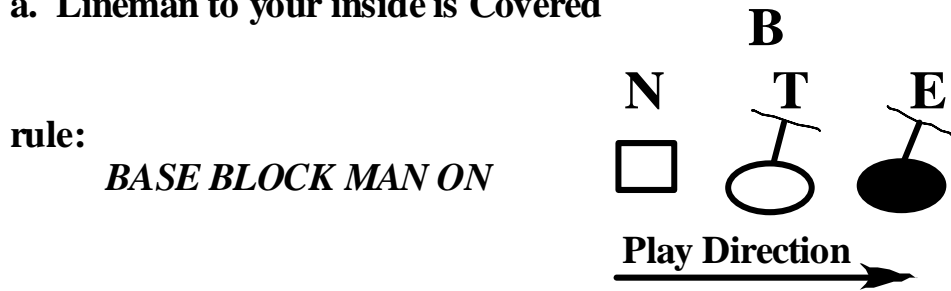
When blocking inside zone, there are THREE question you must answer;

- 1) Am I Playside or Backside?
- 2) Am I covered or uncovered?
- 3) Is my inside team mate covered?

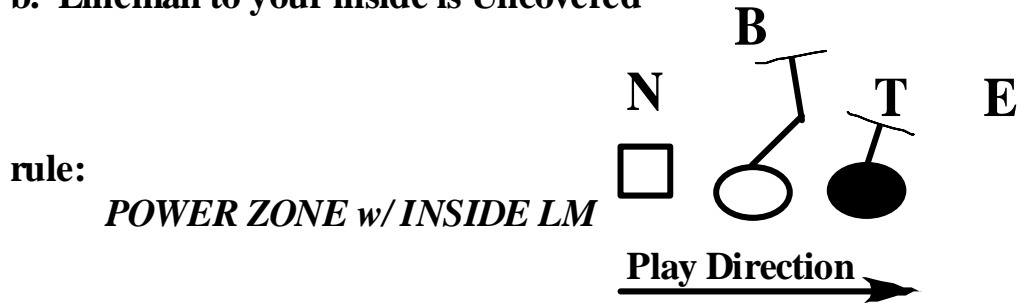
## A. PLAYSIDE (Includes Center)

### 1. Covered (Inside to Outside Shoulder on LOS)

a. Lineman to your inside is Covered

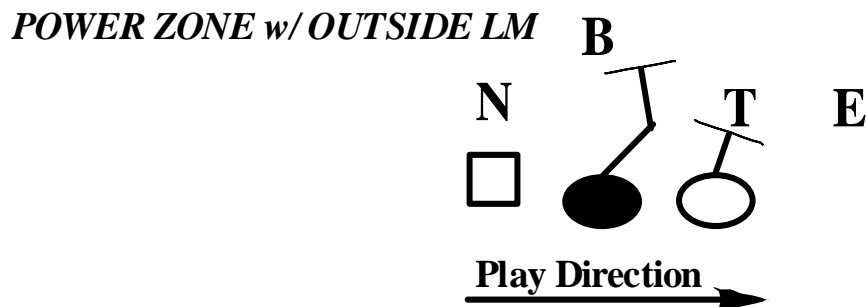


b. Lineman to your inside is Uncovered



### 2. Uncovered (Inside to outside shoulder off the LOS)

rule:

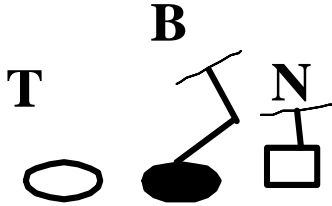


## B. BACKSIDE

### 1. GUARD

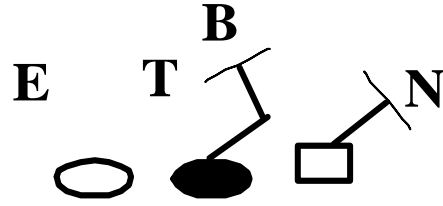
#### a. CENTER COVERED

rule:  
*POWER ZONE w/ CENTER*



#### b. CENTER UNCOVERED

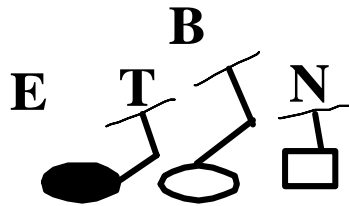
rule:  
*REACH PLAYSIDE GAP TO LB*



### 2. TACKLE

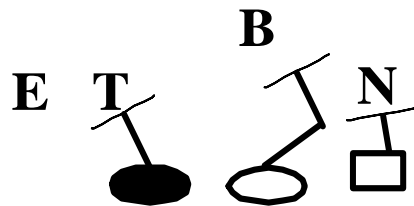
#### a. EMOL is on You

rule:  
*REACH PLAYSIDE GAP TO LB*



#### b. EMOL is outside of you

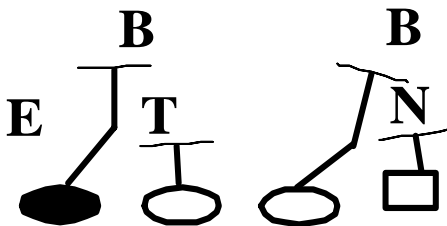
rule:  
*1st DOWN LM HEAD UP TO OUTSIDE OF GUARD*



### 3. TIGHT END

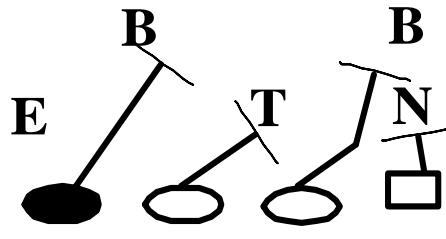
#### a. Tackle is Covered

rule:  
*POWER ZONE w/ TACKLE*



#### b. Tackle is Uncovered

rule:  
*REACH TO LB*



*PLAY DIRECTION FOR ALL EXAMPLES* 

### III. Combination Blocks (Diagram 3)

The following calls can be made to help linemen determine who they are working in combination with.

**A. "ACE"(G-Covered, C-Uncovered)**

Combination block between the Center and the Guard used to handle a 0 technique to a 3 technique playside. Call will be made initially by the Guard. The center will add a "RAM" call if he combos with the right Guard or a "LION" call if he combos with the left Guard.

**B. "DUECE"(T-Covered, G-Uncovered)**

Combination block between the Guard and the Tackle in order to handle a down lineman and a linebacker. Tackle will make the call if the Guard is uncovered and available to help the Tackle.

**C. "TREY" (Y-Covered, T-Uncovered)**

Combination block between the Tackle and the Tight End in order to handle the defensive end and a linebacker or strong safety. Usually called by Tight End on playside versus a 7 technique.

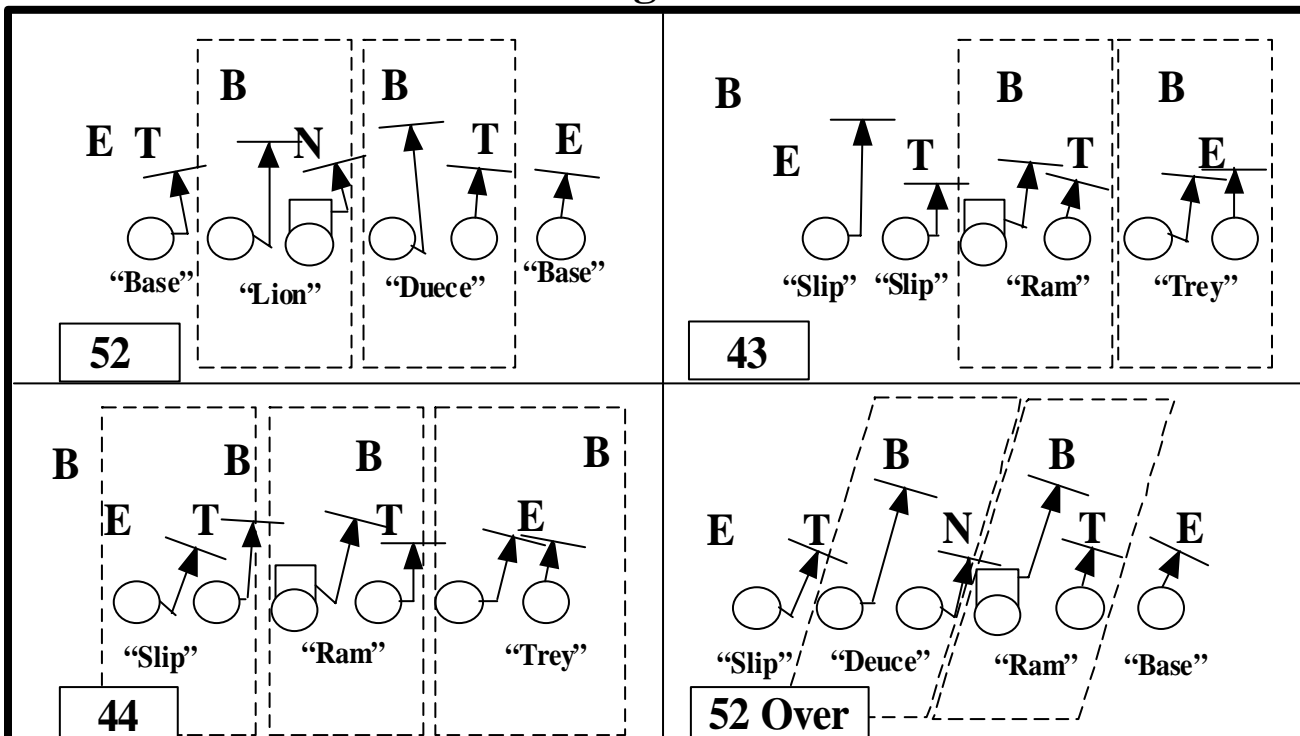
**D. "BASE"(Covered Lineman w/ inside Teammate also Covered)**

Call made by any lineman when he is covered and his inside teammate is also covered. Inside Zone or Base play will most often carry this call.

**E. "SLIP" or "SLIDE"**

Backside call made by lineman not in combination. Tells him to block his backside rule.

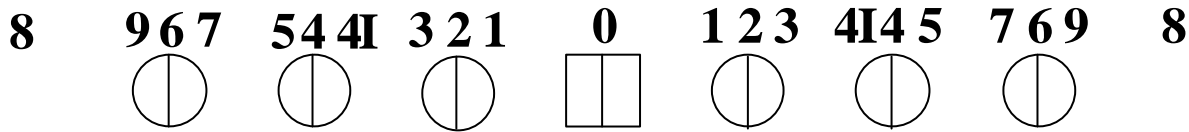
#### Line Calls for "Red Base" (Inside Zone) Diagram 3



# TECHNIQUES AND PRE-SNAP READS

By learning the defensive line techniques, offensive linemen can get a very good idea who they will end up blocking on inside zone plays. If the Offensive lineman can master the 10-50-90 rule, he will make himself a much more effective blocker and will make us a much better team.

## DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES



- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. INSIDE SHADE ON GUARD   | 5. OUTSIDE SHADE ON TACKLE |
| 2. HEAD UP-ON GUARD        | 6. HEAD UP-ON TE           |
| 3. OUTSIDE SHADE ON GUARD  | 7. INSIDE SHADE ON TE      |
| 4I. INSIDE SHADE ON TACKLE | 8. ONE MAN OUTSIDE OF TE   |
| 4. HEAD UP-ON TACKLE       | 9. OUTSIDE SHADE OF TE     |

\*\*ALL EVEN NUMBERS DESIGNATE A HEAD-UP ALIGNMENT

## 10-50-90 RULE

IF THE COVERED LINEMAN HAS AN OUTSIDE SHADE;

-COVERED LINEMAN HAS A **90% PROBABILITY** THAT HE WILL STAY ON THAT MAN.

-UNCOVERED LINEMAN HAS A **10% PROBABILITY** THAT HE WILL BLOCK THE DEFENSIVE LINEMAN. **T**

(10) (90)

IF THE COVERED LINEMAN HAS A HEAD-UP DEFENDER;

-COVERED LINEMAN HAS A **50% PROBABILITY** THAT HE WILL STAY ON THAT MAN.

-UNCOVERED LINEMAN HAS A **50% PROBABILITY** THAT HE WILL BLOCK THE DEFENSIVE LINEMAN. **T**

(50) (50)

IF THE COVERED LINEMAN HAS AN INSIDE SHADE;

-COVERED LINEMAN HAS A **10% PROBABILITY** THAT HE WILL STAY ON THAT MAN.

-UNCOVERED LINEMAN HAS A **90% PROBABILITY** THAT HE WILL BLOCK THE DEFENSIVE LINEMAN. **T**

(90) (10)

## **IV. Outside Zone Principles(Stretch)**

The same rules as Inside Zone but the aiming points and steps will change.

### **A. Uncovered Blocker**

Use a “Bucket Step”, and crossover to Piggyback your covered teammate.(aim for the shoulder pad of your teammate) Uncovered blocker will stay on a down lineman on your covered teammate. **FORCED THE SWITCH.** Don’t block LB unless he is even with your inside shoulder and threatening the gap.

### **B. Covered Blocker**

Use a “Slide Step” to the DLM’s outside shoulder when the defender is head up. Use a “Drop Step” to the DLM’s outside shoulder when the defender is shaded to the outside. Run through the playside shoulder and get on the LBer.

**ALWAYS BECOME  
PART OF THE  
TACKLE!!!**

**stay on your block**

## V. Counter Principles and Rules

Play can be run as a “**Counter**” with the backside Tackle leading through the hole, or as a “**Counter Lead**” with the first backside back leading through the hole. The same concept as Inside Zone except that the rules are opposite. You must still answer the same questions;

- 1) Am I Playside or Backside?
- 2) Am I covered or uncovered?
- 3) Is my inside teammate covered?

### A. PLAYSIDE LINEMEN (G-T-TE)

#### 1. Covered

- a. Lineman to your inside is Covered

*RULE: Work zone with your **inside** teammate to the backside LB*

- b. Lineman to your inside is Uncovered

*RULE: Work zone with your **outside** teammate to the backside LB*

#### 2. Uncovered

- a. Lineman to your inside is Covered

*RULE: Work Track Zone with your **inside** teammate to the backside LB*

- b. Lineman to your inside is uncovered

*RULE: Work Track Zone from inside gap to Backside LB-build a wall.*

### B. CENTER

1st man on the LOS to the offside

### C. OFFSIDE GUARD

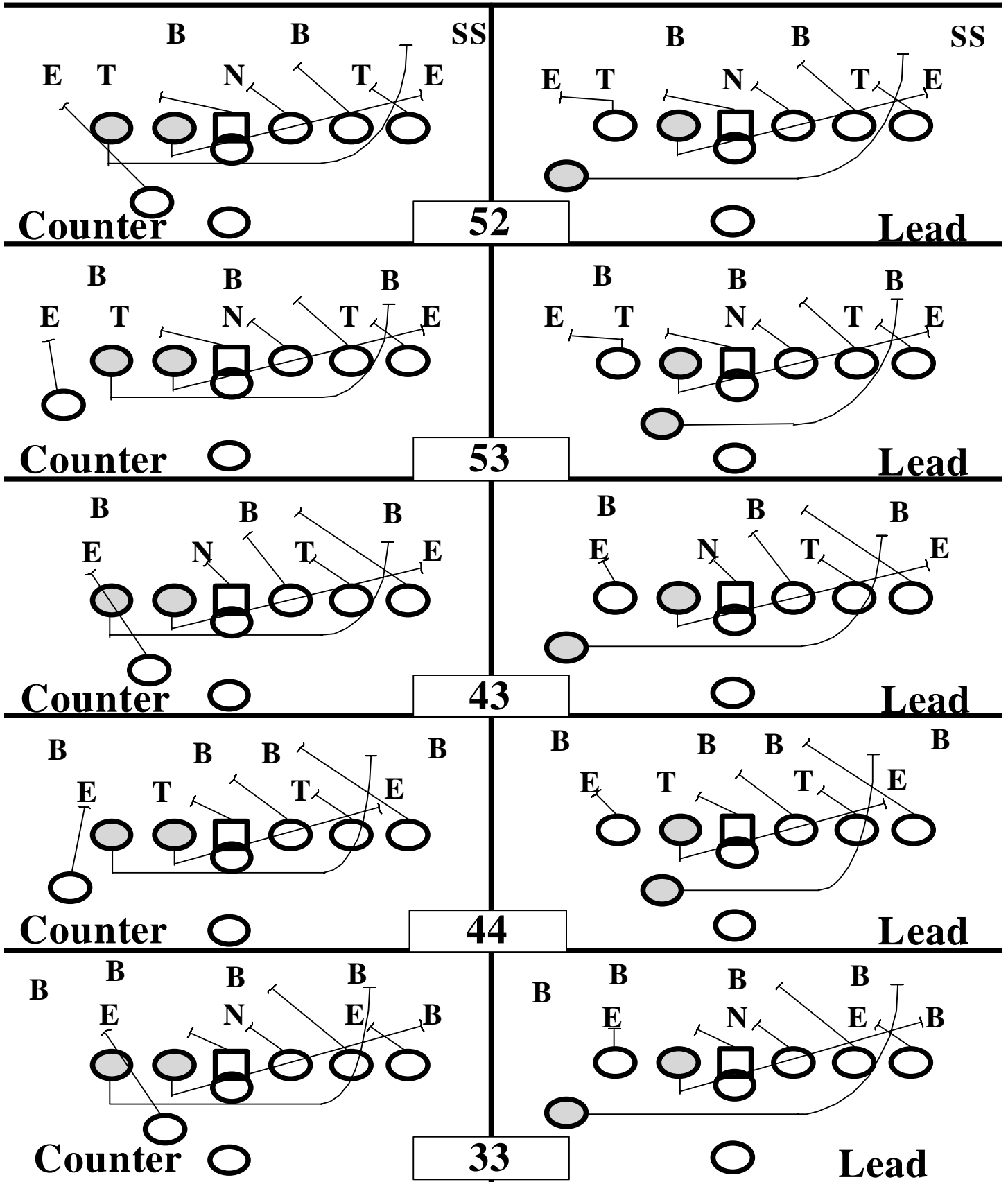
Pull through the football. There is no read---KICK OUT the End Man on the Line(EMOL)

### D. OFFSIDE TACKLE

**COUNTER:** Pull 1 yard deeper and on the hip of the Offside Guard. Dip upfield directly off of the playside double-team and look over your inside shoulder for the playside LB. DON'T SLOW DOWN!! If the LB runs through, Trap him.

**LEAD:** #2 Down lineman to your side

# COUNTER & LEAD

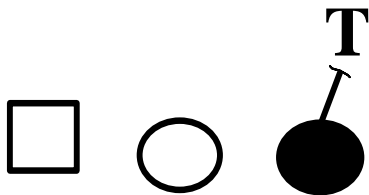


# VI. Man Blocking

Man blocking requires that the lineman memorize a set of **RULES** for each man blocking play. He must also know that those terms need to be followed in the order they occur. The following example should help you to understand how these terms work.

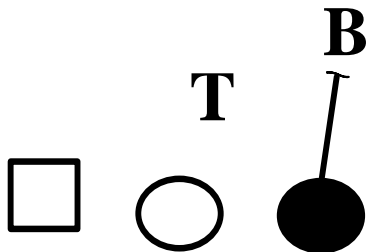
**EXAMPLE:** LINEMAN'S RULE: "*ON-OVER-TRACK ZONE*"

**ON**-If you are **COVERED**, base block man on



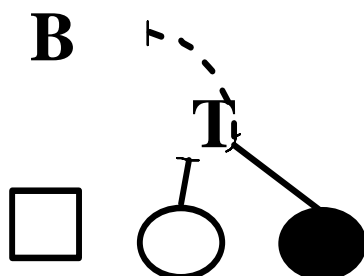
**\*\*If there is no one on you, move to next step**

**OVER**-If there is a **LB** over you, base block him



**\*\*If there is no one on or over you, move to next step**

**TRACK ZONE:** Track Zone is an outside-in zone block which takes the blocker to the backside LB



# LINE TERMS

## **ACE (G-Covered, C-Uncovered)**

Combination block between the Center and the Guard used to handle a 0 to 3 technique lineman on the playside. Initial call will be made by the Guard. The Center will add a "RAM" call if he combos with the right Guard, or a "LION" call if he combos with the left Guard.(see page 20)

## **LION**

Call associated with ACE. LION will tell the Left Guard that he will be working in tandem with the Center on an ACE zone block. Call will be made by the Center or Guard.(see page 20)

## **RAM**

Call associated with ACE. RAM will tell the Right Guard that he will be working in tandem with the Center on an ACE zone block. Call will be made by the Center or Guard.(see page 20)

## **DUECE (T-Covered, G-Uncovered)**

Combination block between the Guard and the Tackle in order to handle a down lineman and a linebacker. Tackle will make the call if the Guard is uncovered and available to help the Tackle.(see page 20)

## **TREY (Y-Covered, T-Uncovered)**

Combination block between the Tackle and the Tight End in order to handle the defensive end and a linebacker or strong safety. Usually called by the Tight End on playside versus a 7 technique.(see page 20)

## **BASE (Covered Lineman w/ inside Teammate also Covered)**

Called made by any lineman when he has a defender shaded to his outside and the play is going inside. Inside zone or Base play will most often carry this call. BASE is also our call for the inside zone play.(see page 20)

## **COUNTER**

Blocking scheme in which both the backside Guard and the backside Tackle pull to the called side. The Guard will trap block the first defender to show and the Tackle will lead on the first linebacker. All playside linemen will block Zone Counter rules.(see page 23) . COUNTER is not only the blocking scheme, it is also the play name.

**TAIL (Tackle Lead)**

Backside Tackle leads through the playside hole to a linebacker. This call will usually occur on a Wrap Play when the Guard is covered.

**GULL (Guard Lead)**

Backside Guard leads through the playside hole to a linebacker. This call will usually occur on a Wrap Play when the Guard is uncovered.

**GUT (Guard Trap)**

Backside Guard traps the first down lineman past the PS guard. GUT is not only the blocking scheme, it is also the play name. If the play call is preceded by a letter, it will designate that someone other than the H back will carry the ball, it will not change the blocking. Ex; Q GUT, A GUT, Z GUT, etc.

**GUS (G-Block)**

Playside Guard will pull and kick out the EMOL(end man on line)

**LOG**

Block executed by a pulling lineman to seal the EMOL(end man on line) to the inside.

**COVERED**

Alignment of a defensive linemen head-up or on either shoulder of the Offensive lineman on the Line of Scrimmage. Defender is usually in a 3 or 4 point stance.(see pages 18-19)

**UNCOVERED**

Indicates the same as COVERED except the defender is off the Line of Scrimmage by 1 or more yards. Defender is usually standing up.(see pages 18-19)

**TRACK ZONE**

Counter and Lead Zone blocking AWAY from the play side. Same covered and uncovered rules are applied, but the uncovered man helps the next teammate away from playside. This is an outside-in Zone. (see page 23)

**SLIP**

Backside zone blocking technique. Tells the backside linemen they are blocking their backside rules. (see page 19)

**LEAD**

Counter blocking scheme in which the Backside back will lead through hole on linebacker instead of the backside Tackle. Backside Tackle blocks the #2 lineman to the Backside. (see page 24)

**ON**

Base block on a down defender. Offensive lineman is covered.

**OVER**

Base block on a LB who is playing off ball from inside to outside shoulder of the offensive lineman.

**FRED**

Fold block in which the outside man blocks down and the inside man folds to the outside. The down blocker always goes first.

**WILMA**

Fold block in which the inside man blocks out and the outside man folds to the inside. The out blocker always goes first.

**REACH**

Block on a defensive lineman who is shaded to your playside. A drop or bucket step is used depending on how far the defender is shaded. OLM should attempt to REACH the playside shoulder of the defender and maintain contact.