

# DEFENSIVE MASTERY

NATE LONGSHORE  
*NLongshore*

Complete  
Course

# DEFENSIVE MASTERY

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## Defensive Terminology

# DEFENSIVE MASTERY

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## Structures

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## Fronts

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## Coverages

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## Modifiers

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## Attacking Coverages

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## Review & Test

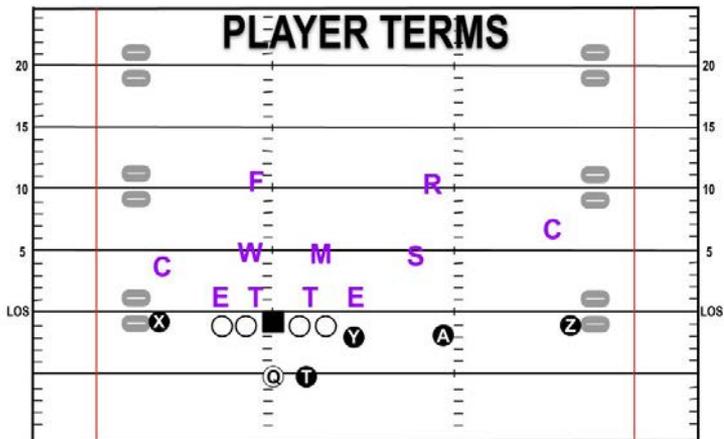
# DEFENSIVE MASTERY

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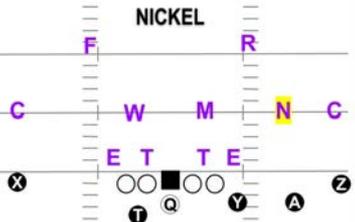
# Defensive Terminology

# PLAYER TERMS

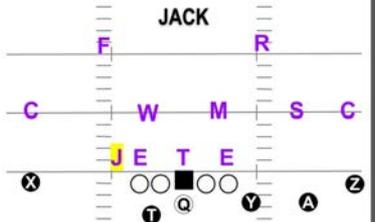


## QB / METHOD

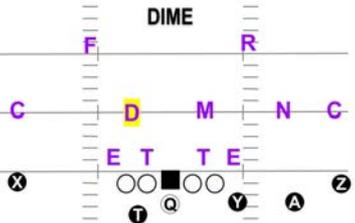
### NICKEL



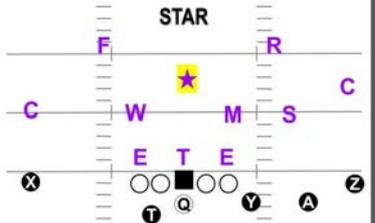
### JACK



### DIME



### STAR



# COACHING POINTS

## PLAYER TERMS

- E - Defensive End
- T - Defensive Tackle
- W - Weakside LB "Will"
- M - Middle LB "Mike"
- S - Strongside LB "Sam"
- C - Cornerback
- F - Free Safety
- R - Rover (Strong Safety)
- N - Nickelback (5th DB)
- D - Dimeback (6th DB)
- J - Jack LB (Edge)
- ★ - Star (Middle Safety 3Hi)

These are generally accepted terms identifying positional players on the field. Most teams will use specific variation vernacular that fits their program or franchise themes, but the concepts are still the same. Teams are now moving specific players mid-game to maximize match-ups, maintain structural identification.

### NICKEL



### FREE SAFETY



### JACK



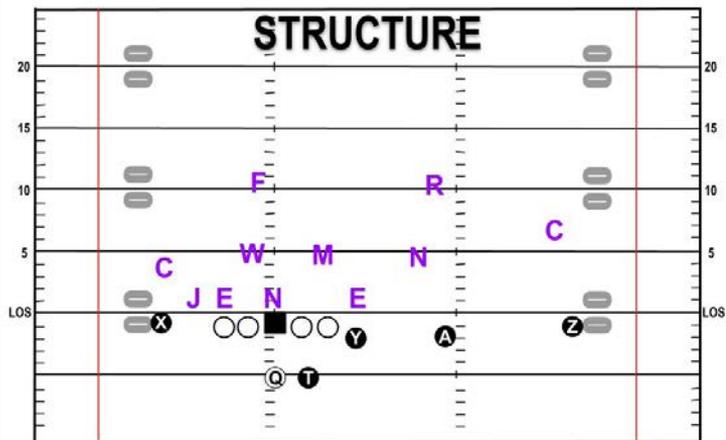
# DEFENSIVE MASTERY

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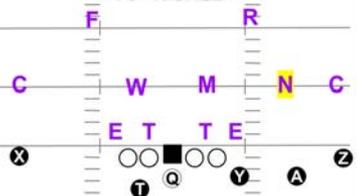
# Structures

# STRUCTURE

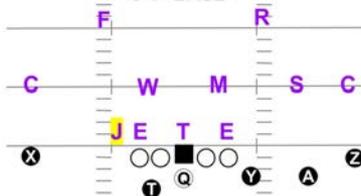


## QB / METHOD

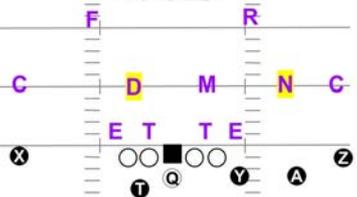
### 4-3 <NICKEL>



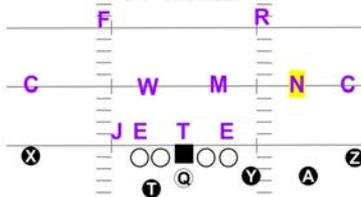
### 3-4 <BASE>



### 4-3 <DIME>



### 3-4 <NICKEL>



# COACHING POINTS

## STRUCTURE

### 4-3 / 3-4 / 3-3

Describes the general body types of defenders on the field and the anticipated general alignments & schemes. The 1st # represents DL type bodies and the second # represents LB bodies, with the remainder of the 11 being DB types.

*Example* - The 4-3 Defense features 4 down lineman, 3 linebackers, and 4 defensive backs.

## <PERSONNEL>

### BASE, NICKEL, DIME

Describes any variations in substitutions that may adjust the Structure.

*Example* - Nickel personnel adds a 5th defensive back as a substitute for the strongside linebacker.



### 4-3 <NICKEL>



### 3-4 <BASE>



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## Fronts

## COACHING POINTS

### FRONT

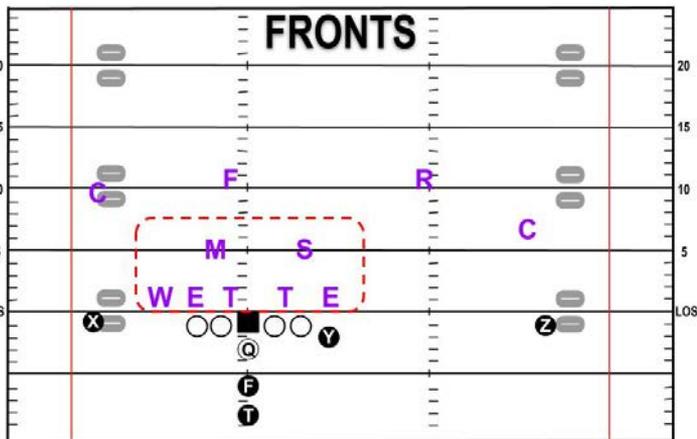
OVER / UNDER / EVEN /  
ODD / BEAR

The **FRONT** is a term that identifies the alignment of the defensive line and the linebackers as they relate to the strength of the offensive players.

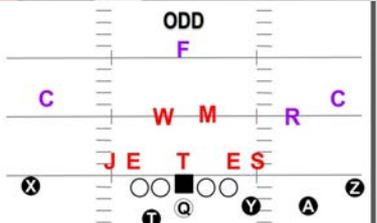
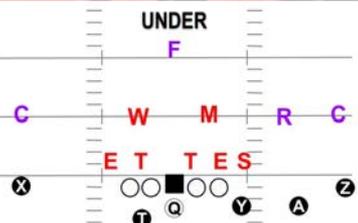
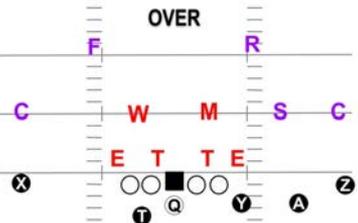
These terms are a starting point for identifying gap occupation and uncovered offensive linemen.

As we drill down to understand what attributes contribute to various fronts, our goal is to become split-second experts in identifying and communicating fronts. We must master the basic *home* alignments in this section.

Additionally, front identification can significantly narrow down the possibilities of pressure and coverage, especially when you start to consider tendencies and personnel.



### QB / METHOD

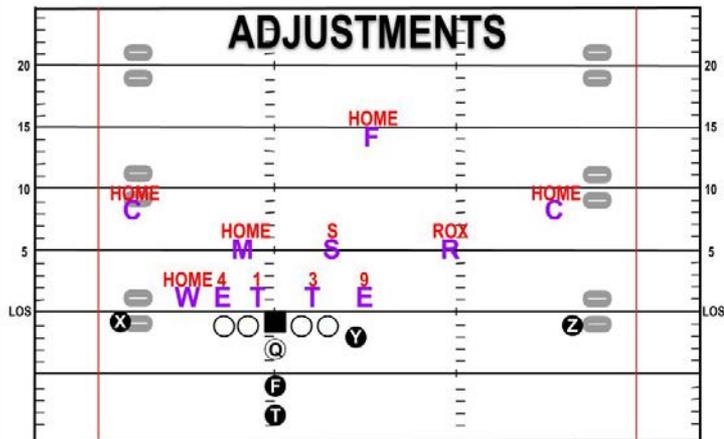


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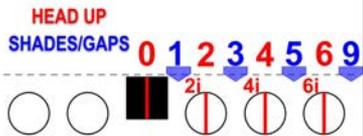
# Adjustments

# ADJUSTMENTS

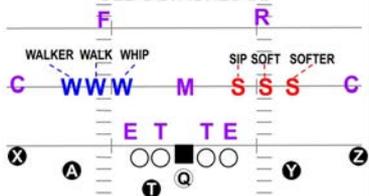


## QB / METHOD

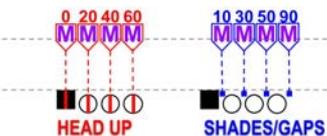
### DL TECHNIQUES



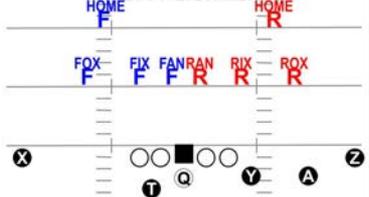
### OLB DETACHED #2



### LB TECHNIQUES



### SAFETY ALIGNMENTS



# COACHING POINTS

## ADJUSTMENTS

Similar to the offense, defenders have specific alignments that are designed to help them execute their responsibilities. These alignments will tell you a lot, especially if specific defenders are adjusted out of their **home** alignments.

Defensive linemen alignments are referred to as **techniques**. These numerical values designate whether to align head up on the offensive line or in some variation of a gap.

Individually, linebacker alignments can be identified using the same system and merely adding a zero to designate a LB depth alignment. When linebackers start adjusting as a unit, specific terms will apply, more details to follow.

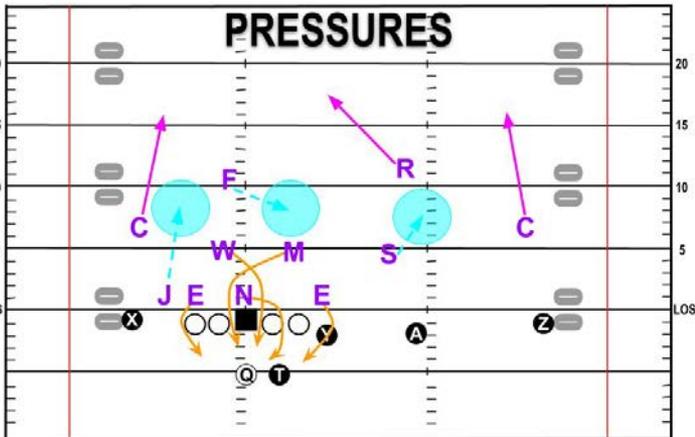
Safeties and Corners have specific alignment and adjustments as well.



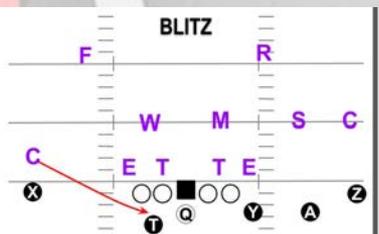
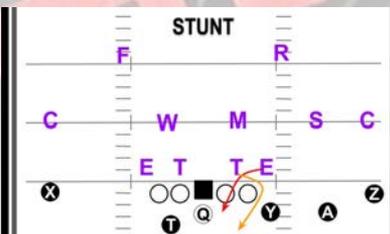
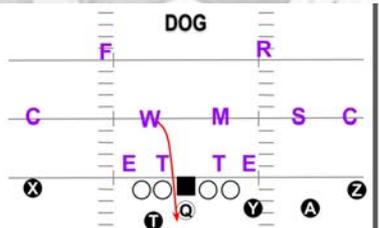
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## Pressures



## QB / METHOD



## COACHING POINTS

### PRESSURES

#### STUNT / DOG / BLITZ

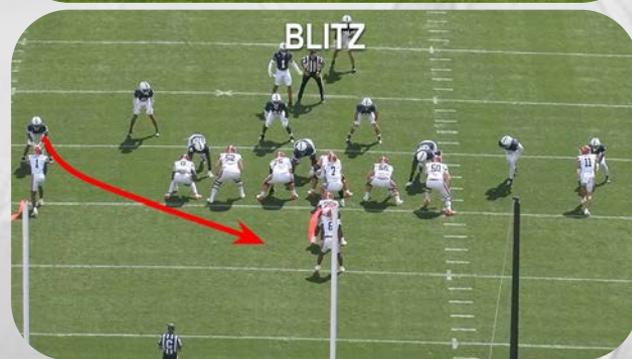
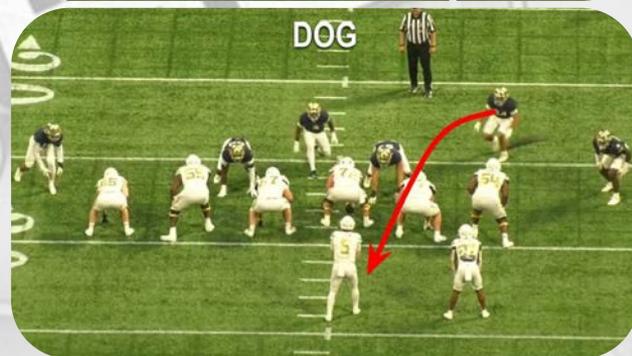
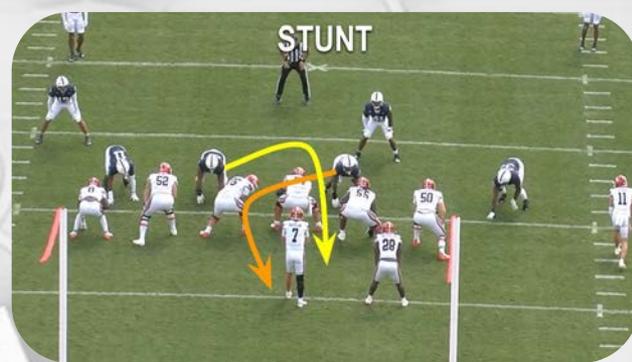
Defensive pressure terminology is very specific. Using proper identifying language can improve your communication process and help with protection issues.

**Stunts** are when defensive linemen loop into gaps they were not aligned in. Often done in coordination with other DL, these twists are meant to confuse the offense.

**Dogs** are exclusive to LBs pressuring. Dogs include various targets and tracks from LBs.

**Blitz** is a term specific to identifying a secondary player pressure. All pressures are not blitzes.

To identify who & where the pressure hits, gaps are labeled as A, B, C, D to the strong side and 1, 2, 3, 4 to the weak side.

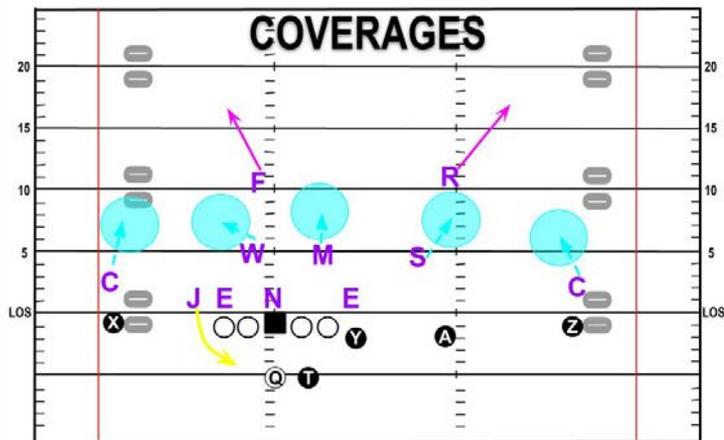


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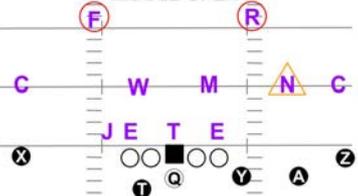
# Coverages

# COVERAGES

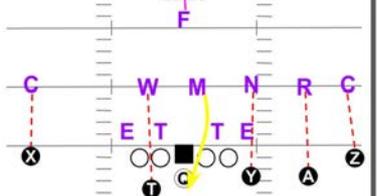


## QB / METHOD

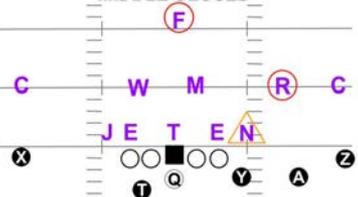
### MIDDLE OPEN



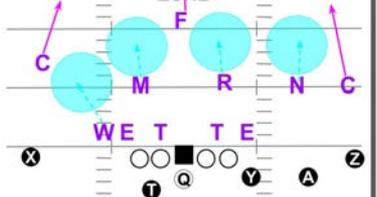
### MAN



### MIDDLE CLOSED



### ZONE



# COACHING POINTS

## COVERAGES

### MIDDLE OPEN VS MIDDLE CLOSED

Also known as 1 Hi or 2 Hi concepts, but as more teams are now implementing 3 safety looks, it is easier to simplify the picture by using Middle Open or Middle Closed.

Recognizing the **safety** location and seeing the **box defender** alignment can narrow down the defensive possibilities. There will be many plays where the execution relies on mastering this concept.

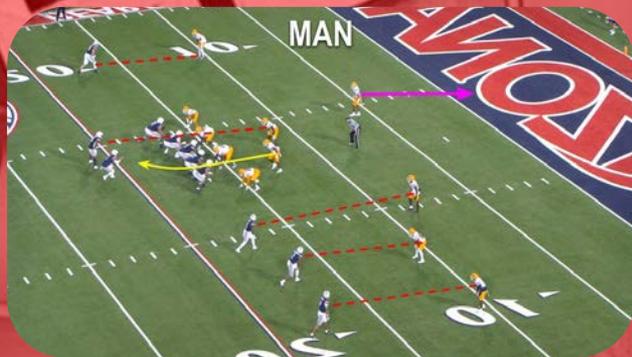
### MAN VS ZONE

The defense works really hard to disguise whether it is man or zone coverage. Knowing when you are going to have man chasers or zone droppers is critical to every QB's success. There are some tricks you can use to get the defense to expose themselves early.

### MIDDLE CLOSED



### MAN



### ZONE



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## Modifiers

# COACHING POINTS

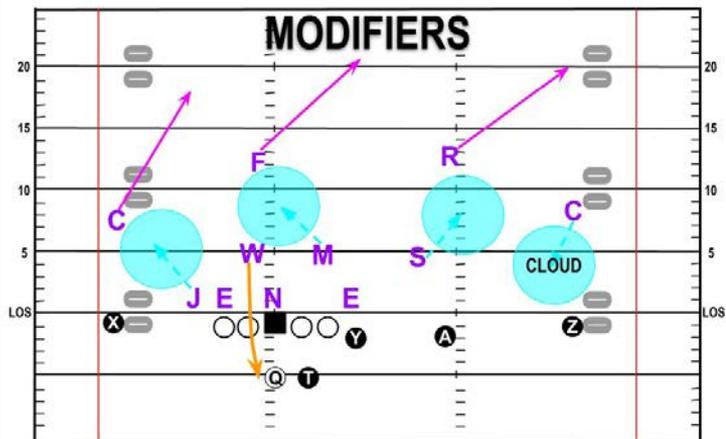
## MODIFIERS

Modifiers are terms used to adjust the rules and responsibilities of base coverages. Modifiers will typically speak to one player but will significantly impact the rules every other defender in coverage. Knowing these modifiers and how to recognize them can prevent costly errors.

## Examples

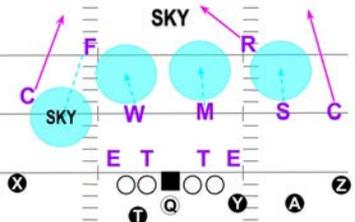
- Cloud
- Sky
- Match
- Tampa
- Palms
- Mini
- Trap
- Buzz
- Drop
- Spy
- Robber
- Deal

## MODIFIERS

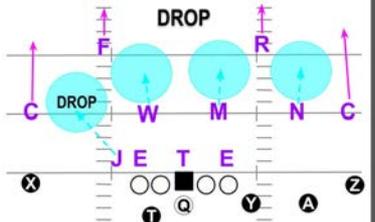


## QB / METHOD

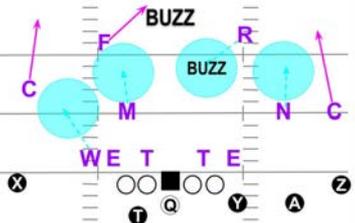
### SKY



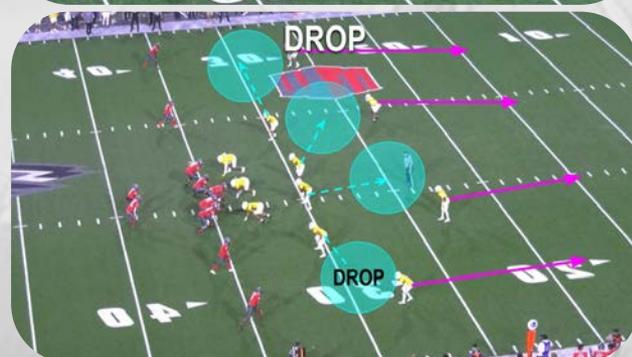
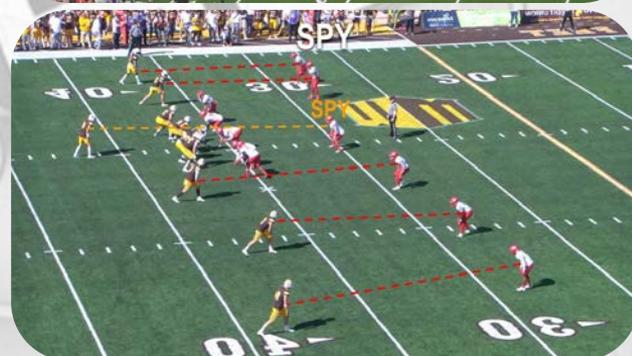
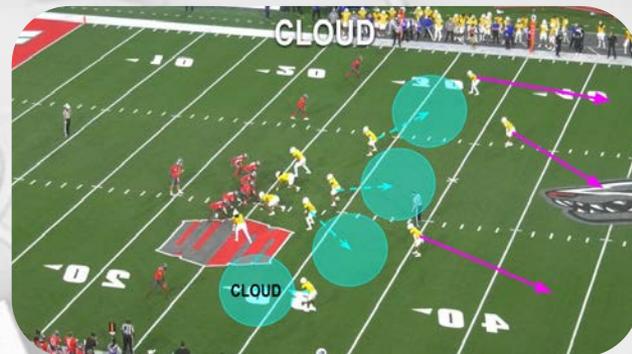
### DROP



### BUZZ



### SPY

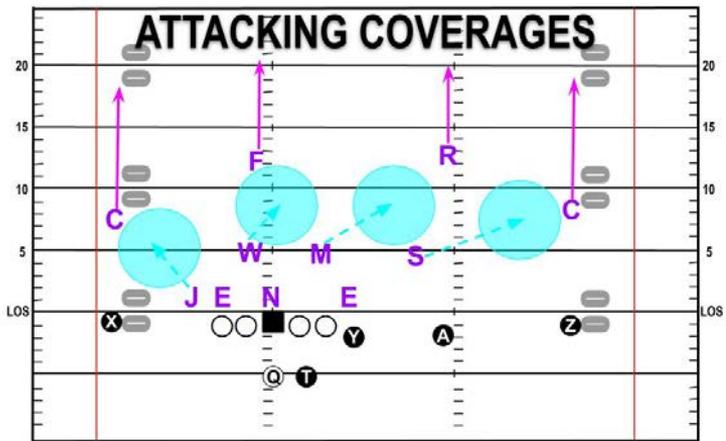


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Attacking  
Coverages

# ATTACKING COVERAGES



QB / METHOD

## COVER 3



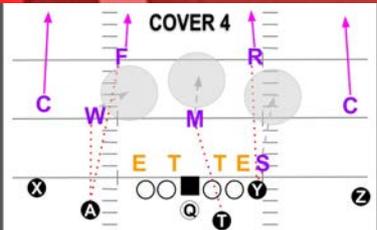
## COVER 6



## COVER 2



## COVER 4



# COACHING POINTS

## ATTACKING COVERAGES

### COVER 0

MAN / MFO / 6 Rushers / 5 Coverage

### COVER 1

MAN / MFC / 5 Rushers / 6 Coverage

### COVER 2

ZONE / MFO / 4 Rushers / 7 Coverage

### COVER 3

ZONE / MFC / 4 Rushers / 7 Coverage

### COVER 3 WK

ZONE / MFC / 4 Rushers / 7 Coverage

### COVER 4

READ / MFO / 4 Rushers / 7 Coverage

### COVER 6

COMBO / MFO / 4 Rushers / 7 Coverage

### COVER 7

MAN / MFO / 4 Rushers / 7 Coverage

### ZONE DOGS

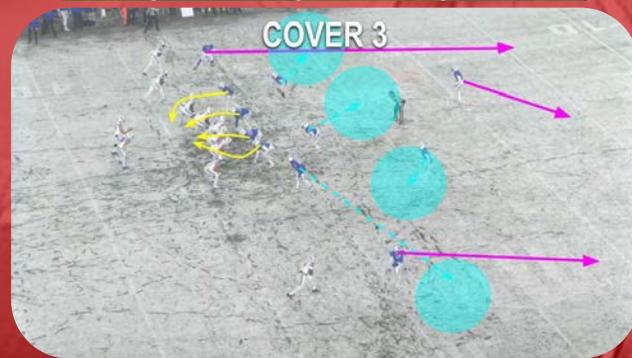
ZONE / MFC / 5 Rushers / 6 Coverage

### ZONE BLITZES

ZONE / MFC / 5 Rushers / 6 Coverage

### SIM PRESSURES

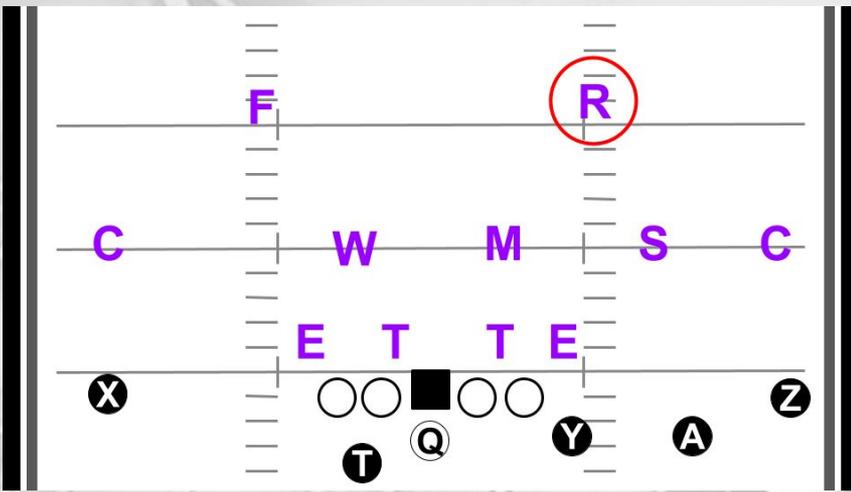
TBD / TBD / 4 Rushers / 7 Coverage



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# Review & Test



DB / METHOD

## 1. WHO IS THIS PLAYER?

- A. REAR SAFETY
- B. RIGHT SAFETY
- C. ROVER
- D. ROBBER

## 2. WHO IS THIS PLAYER?

- A. JACK
- B. DEFENSIVE END
- C. MIKE
- D. ROVER