

THE STATUS OF SIX-MAN FOOTBALL  
IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS OF TEXAS  
AND A MANUAL FOR COACHES

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION OF THE GAME OF SIX-MAN FOOTBALL

American football is an outgrowth of soccer which is common in Great Britain and other European countries. The first collegiate football game ever played in the United States occurred in 1869 when Rutgers defeated Princeton, six to four. This game was played by teams of twenty-five players and was much more like soccer than present day football. Later, the team number was reduced to twenty; then fifteen; and in 1876, teams of eleven men were used.

Six-man football is one of the newest games in the sport world. The first game was played in September, 1934 at Hebron, Nebraska by two teams made up of players from four nearby high schools: Chester, Hardy, Belvidere, and Alexandria.<sup>1</sup> The game was an adaptation of football to make it possible for small high schools with a limited number of players to participate in the game of football. The game spread rapidly among the small high schools. In 1935, 140 high schools were using the game; in 1938, 1233; and in 1941, 2288. In 1950, after a decrease during the war years, the number had gone back up to two thousand.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen Epler, Six-Man Football, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Joe Reutz, "Small Town Football," Sports Digest, IX (September, 1951). p. 36.

The writer of this thesis was a former college and professional eleven-man football player who also coached football for five years. In 1952 this writer accepted a job to coach six-man football in a small high school in west Texas and immediately began to look for material concerning the game. Very quickly it became evident that there was an acute shortage of information available about the game of six-man football and most of the coaches of this game in Texas were operating on the trial and error method.

A review of this situation created a desire on the part of this writer to want to prepare material on six-man football which would contain information about this game and which could be used by the coaches to improve their athletic programs in the small high schools of Texas.

Instruction in the field of six-man football is not offered by the major colleges and there is only one very small publication devoted to this sport. Very little publicity is afforded this game because of the lack of interest on the part of the sports writers and their readers.

That six-man football is an inferior brand of football is a belief that is held jointly by those who are connected with the game in some capacity and those who are not associated with it.

The alleviation of this situation is the major purpose of this study.



## CHAPTER II

### THE GAME OF SIX-MAN FOOTBALL IN TEXAS TODAY

#### The Survey

In order to secure material for this study, a questionnaire was prepared and mailed to 100 coaches of six-man football in Texas and eighty responded by returning the questionnaire.

In Texas, there are twenty districts, embracing 200 high schools who play six-man football.<sup>1</sup> By sending out 100 questionnaires, it was possible to include one-half of the six-man schools and every district in the state of Texas.

#### The Athletic Background of the Coaches

An idea of the quality of six-man football in Texas can be gained through a study of the athletic background of the coaches who are responsible for the coaching of the team and the staging of the game in the six-man schools of Texas. Table 1 summarizes the data concerning the athletic experience of these coaches. These data are a key to the ability of the coach to understand and teach football.

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<sup>1</sup>  
G. J. O'Connor, "Six-Man Football in Texas," Six-Man Football Magazine, 1952, p. 45.

TABLE 1

ATHLETIC BACKGROUND OF EIGHTY COACHES OF SIX-MAN FOOTBALL  
IN TEXAS WITH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR PARTICIPATION  
IN COLLEGE FOOTBALL, EMPLOYMENT AS SIX-MAN  
COACHES AND THEIR VIEWPOINT AS TO THE  
INFERIORITY OF SIX-MAN FOOTBALL

	Played College Football	College Letter- Man in Football	Has Had Formal Training In 6 M.F.	Anticipated Employment As Coach Of 6 M.F.	Is 6 M.F. Inferior To Eleven-Man Football
Yes	16	10	5	0	60
No	64	70	75	80	20

The athletic background of the majority of the coaches of six-man football in Texas is not impressive as shown by the information in table one. Only a small percentage of the coaches had been connected with football in any manner prior to their employment as coaches of six-man football. The most important discovery is the fact that sixty of the eighty coaches believed that six-man football is inferior to eleven-man football. This is a good indication of the quality of the coaches because if an individual does not believe in the product with which he is dealing, then the results will be negative. The survey shows that none of the eighty coaches anticipated employment as coaches of

the amount of training and preparedness that the coaches of six-man football in Texas have had prior to their employment as coaches of this sport.

The Salary of the Six-Man Football Coaches in Texas

The amount of work and responsibility which is given to an individual should have some bearing upon the salary that he will receive but this is not the case in regard to the six-man coaches in Texas as shown in table two.

TABLE 2

SALARY BRACKETS OF EIGHTY COACHES OF SIX-MAN FOOTBALL IN TEXAS AND THE NUMBER OF COACHES IN EACH BRACKET

Salary Bracket	\$2400 To 3000	\$3000 To 3600	\$4000 To 5000	\$5000 To 6000	\$6000 To 7000
Number of Coaches In Each Bracket	30	30	12	6	0

Table two shows the salary range of the six-man coaches in Texas and it also explains the reason for the shortage of six-man coaches. Sixty of the eighty coaches receives less than \$300.00 per month while only eight of the eighty coaches receives a wage which is in the neighborhood of \$400.00 per month. This leaves very little money for the coaches after living costs and taxes have been deducted.

### Teaching Duties of the Six-Man Football Coaches

The size of the six-man football school and the limited number of teachers which can be employed makes it almost compulsory that the coach take part in the regular teaching program in the classrooms.

TABLE 3

THE TEACHING DUTIES OF EIGHTY COACHES OF SIX-MAN FOOTBALL WITH THE NUMBER OF PERIODS OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND THE NUMBER OF COACHES IN EACH BRACKET

Periods of Classroom Instruction	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Number of Coaches In Each Bracket	0	0	3	2	5	40	20	10

The data in table three add conclusive proof to the fact that the majority of the six-man football coaches in Texas are really classroom teachers who must also coach as an extra duty. The fact that seventy of the eighty coaches must teach five or more periods during an eight-period day in addition to their athletic duties is probably the big reason why only ten, of the eighty coaches surveyed, stated that they planned to continue coaching six-man football.

### Defensive Six-Man Coaching Trends

Six-man football has always been a wide open, high scoring affair with little attention or practice given to the defense. Coaches are just beginning to realize the importance of the defensive aspects of six-man football; they are beginning to vary their defenses and to use a greater number of defensive specialists in the games, which means that more boys get to play.

A study of the defensive formations used by eighty of the outstanding teams in Texas indicates certain trends in coaching. This material is a summary of these trends.

TABLE 4

THE DEFENSIVE FORMATIONS USED BY EIGHTY SIX-MAN  
TEAMS IN TEXAS WITH THE NUMBER AND  
PERCENTAGE USING EACH FORMATION

Defensive Formations	3-2-1	3-3	3-1-2	4-2	2-3-1
Number Of Teams Using Each	64	12	30	39	48
Percentage Of Teams Using Each	80	15	38	48	60

It is almost impossible to name all the defensive formations because of local variations but these variations are gained through the use of five basic defensive formations which are used in all parts of the state of Texas.

3-2-1 defense.--This defense is used by about 80 per cent of the six-man football teams in Texas. It is very popular with the teams that employ only one defensive formation. It has many variations which can be used to meet nearly any offensive formation. There are two general arrangements of the defensive halfbacks in that they play either inside or outside of the defensive ends. A greater variation can be found in the line play than in the backfield, especially in the sequence and style in which the line charges.

3-1-2 defense.--About 38 per cent of the teams used this defense and it is also very popular with those teams that use only one defensive formation. This defense is built around the player who backs up the line. Most teams vary this position behind the line from one to four yards and he usually moves to the strong side of the offensive formation. Some teams have him back up the weak side but when this is done, they generally shift the center to the strong and have him charge across the line of scrimmage. The defensive halfbacks play from six to eight yards deep, behind or outside the defensive ends.

3-3 defense.--This defense was used by about 15 per cent of the teams who employed it as a goal line defense instead of the 4-2 defense. Most teams placed a back outside of each defensive end and used the other back as a center linebacker. The defensive backs were from two to six yards behind the line. Some teams charged their ends and had the center wait on the line of scrimmage while others had the entire line charge. A few teams used this as the basic defense from which they would shift, at the last minute before the ball was snapped, into another defensive formation for the purpose of confusing the defensive expectations of the offensive team.

4-2 defense.--Only 48 per cent of the teams used this defense, although it is a good basic defense, especially near the goal line or against a team that likes to run with the ball most of the time instead of passing. In the operation of this defense, the ends will charge across the scrimmage line and protect their outside while the guards charge across the line to stop the play before it can develop. This is also a good formation to use as the basic defense from which to shift into different patterns as needed. If the offensive team has a good passer, this defense could not be used all during the game.

2-3-1 defense.--The increased use of the 2-3-1 defense is very marked because it is now used by about 60 per cent

of the six-man teams in Texas. Until recently, this defense had been considered effective only against a passing team but since nearly all six-man teams have developed a good passing attack to use along with their running game, this defense is ideal because it is truly a combination defense. This alignment will allow a defensive team to be ready for any offensive formation and any play which the offense might try. It is being used by additional coaches each year because it cuts down on the number of long gains to the offense by sacrificing a few short gains to the offense while remaining strong against the long passes and those plays which are designed for quick touchdowns.

Due to the limited amount of time which is available to the six-man football teams for practice sessions, the development of the defensive phase has had to suffer at the expense of the offensive part of the game. Usually a team will start their practice session by working on the offensive phase and by the time they get around to working on the defense, the practice period is over and they will have to let the defensive work that had been planned wait until another day. This usually results in the team playing its first game or so with very little practice on defense. The amount of time spent on developing a good defense is well spent because it will reduce the number of points that will be scored by the offense.



## CHAPTER III

### A MANUAL FOR COACHES OF SIX-MAN FOOTBALL

#### Introduction

In light of information which has been gained during 1952 and 1953: by experiments conducted with a football squad of twenty players of Paint Creek High School, who were good enough to win a regional championship, which is the limit on competition among six-man football schools in Texas; by studies with successful six-man football coaches; and by classes at the six-man football coaching school in San Angelo, Texas; this manual is prepared for the benefit of the coaches of six-man football.

A six-man football school in Texas means that the school has less than 100 students enrolled in its high school. Approximately one-half of these students will be girls; this leaves a maximum of about fifty boys from which to pick a six-man football team. Several of these boys will not participate in football for various reasons and this further reduces the absolute number of available prospects.

Most schools in Texas with less than 100 students in high school must operate on a strict budget which means that the athletic department might have to suffer at the expense

providing the absolute necessities needed by the school to operate. This will have a tendency to limit the caliber of coaching and quality of athletic equipment which the school might secure.

The purpose of this manual is to provide ideas and information which might be helpful to the six-man football schools of Texas and their coaches.

#### The Six-Man Football Coach

Responsibilities of the coach.--The coach is the key figure in the small high school. He can be the influence which will keep the students progressing toward an educational goal thus making the work of the other teachers a possibility and the complete harmony of the school system a reality; or his influence can cause a complete upheaval in the school and a laxity of morals and educational progress. For these reasons, any improvement in the handling of athletic programs must begin with the coach.

Opportunity for the coach.--The coach of the small high school has a magnificent opportunity to improve the community in which he is working and at the same time to better himself considerably. Due to the fact that the coaching staff is composed of one individual, he receives credit for every accomplishment his team gains. If the athletic program is conducted in a good manner, then the entire area is quick to heap praise upon the coach and will do most

anything to help him, whether it be for the benefit of the team and the school or for the personal benefit of the coach.

The point is that if the coach will work at his job in a gentlemanly, business-like manner, he can gain hundreds of loyal friends who would consider it a privilege to do a favor for the coach. Relations of this type can simplify the huge job of the coach in a community.

The attitude of the coach.--The secret of the success or failure of a six-man football coach can be found in his attitude toward his work. This is the most important basic issue because many obstacles can be overcome by a coach with the proper attitude, yet small obstacles become stumbling blocks if coupled with an improper attitude.

The greatest fault to be found among coaches of six-man football in the small high schools of Texas is the fact that they consider their position an inferior one. First, they think that six-man football is inferior to the eleven-man variety of football because eleven-man is played by the larger high schools, colleges and professional teams. It is given a greater buildup through publicity and most of the sports writers do not cover six-man football. Second, the fact that they are working in a small school which is usually located in a small town. Thus the feeling seems to creep into coaches that they are dealing with an inferior product in a country town which is filled with backward people.

This feeling soon spreads to the players and students and any further progress will definitely be limited.

A coach who accepts a job of coaching six-man football should immediately decide that he will become a student of the game and try to gain all the information available concerning the game. He should try to realize the opportunities and advantages which are to be found in the small high school of Texas.

Coaching problems.--Despite the fact that the coach of six man football will have only six men on the field at a time, his problems are equal to or greater than those of many other athletic coaches. Without attempting to list them in order of their importance or occurrence, some of the problems often encountered, especially by new coaches are: arranging of a schedule, convincing the public that six-man football is football and not outdoor basketball, making the game pay its own way, planning practice periods to the best advantage and gaining information on the game in other ways than through experience.

The basic problem is to make six-man football pay its own way and this in itself is quite a job, especially since this game is played in the small school which means a small community, thus the list of potential customers for the games will be limited. The simplest remedy for this situation would be to produce a winning team but all teams can't be

winning teams so other methods must be used in providing the needed revenue. Some plans for increasing the amount of interest in the games and also for increasing the attendance for the games are:

1. The game must be advertised in the local papers. Sports editors will present a good article about the game if given the opportunity. Of course their schedule may be such that they might not be able to come to the school for the information, but if the coach will go into their office for the interview, then there is a possibility of a good relationship which will surely benefit the coach and the school. After all, most publicity is a result of good friendship and respect for the writer himself.

2. The same procedure as outlined above can be repeated at the local radio station if some consideration will be given the announcer. Possibly the coach could offer some small favor to these people in order to gain their good will. This favor might be in the form of a fishing trip or a quail hunt which the coach could arrange through the help of the school board or some of the local patrons. This same system is used by some of the most successful coaches in the business.

The major part of the schedule is taken care of by the round robin plan with the other teams in the district. However, each team usually has room on the schedule for two or three games with outside opponents. If a school is in the

process of building up this sport, then opponents who will make the season record look good should be chosen. If the school is trying for a championship, the toughest competition available should be chosen; this is what produces winners when the chips are down.

In order for the time which is allotted to practice sessions, to be used to an advantage, a workable plan should be devised by the coach whereby the time could be divided so that all phases of the football game could be covered. At the end of each session, he should check immediately on what has been accomplished. Things that the team looked weak on should be added to the next day's schedule. If the same thing is done after each game, the coach will have ideas for the next week of practice.

#### The Defensive Theory of Six-Man Football

In observation of six-man football, it is very apparent that this game places the greatest pressure on the defense of any game in the sports world. Everything being equal, as far as ability and coaching are concerned, the game has developed into an overscoring contest that makes the art of defense look somewhat decrepit.

There are several reasons for this unbalance:

1. In the initial start of a six-man conference, there will be one or two of the teams that have coaches who have coached the eleven-man game. These coaches quickly realize

the great pressure that can be exerted on the defense and scientifically develop their offense along this line. Consequently this results in the inferior coached team probably being closed out by having many points scored against them. Therefore, they are humiliated and have a tendency to lose interest in the game, both from the standpoint of the players and from spectator interest.

2. In contrast, the dominant team enjoys interest from both of these standpoints for a while. However, this in itself becomes dangerous to the sport, in that the players do not work with the interest of competition and the spectators lose interest because of this lack of competition.

3. This overbalance has a tendency not to develop a well rounded player because the defensive ability of the boy is not recognized.

Under the present rules, it is impossible for the defense to cover the six-man playing area. A comparison of the six-man and eleven-man areas will explain why this holds true.

The eleven-man football field is 300 feet long by 160 feet wide, which equals 48,000 square feet. This divided by eleven equals 4,363 square feet that each defensive player must cover if the whole area is placed under the defensive category.

The six-man football field is 240 feet long by 120 feet wide, which equals 28,800 square feet. This divided

by six equals 4,800 square feet.

It may be argued that, because of more room to move without contact, the six-man player can cover this area as effectively as the eleven-man player can cover the smaller area. However, if the comparison is taken from the actual playing area, the six-man player is still at a disadvantage. The depth in defensive alignment for the two games is almost the same. That is, the defensive variation of line, linebackers, and secondary is about the same in depth as eleven-man. The eleven-man defensive area is about 160 feet wide by sixty feet deep, making 9,600 square feet. This divided by eleven is 872 square feet.

In six-man, the defensive area is 120 feet wide by sixty feet deep, which equals 7,200 square feet. This divided by six is 1,200 square feet and means that the six-man player must try to cover 328 square feet more than the eleven-man player. It is unreasonable to expect the six-man player to cover this area when the eleven-man player, with 328 square feet less to cover is being bypassed more and more by the offensive team. There is also the fact that the eleven-man player has the benefit of more defensive training than the six-man player because more time can be spent in developing the defense for eleven-man football. The defensive ability of the six-man defensive player must be developed as a result of his own initiative.



### Developing the Defense

Three rules peculiar to six-man football give ample room for the development of sound defensive play. The three variations from regular football are: the narrow field, the clear pass and the fifteen yards to be gained in four downs. The rule which hampers defense the most is the one that makes every player on the offensive team eligible to receive a forward pass. This passing threat, therefore, makes it necessary for the ambitious team to drill for long periods on pass defense.

The clear pass rule gives a split second longer for the secondary defenders to wait before charging in to get a ball carrier. The fifteen yards in four downs makes three and four yard gains in midfield of little value to the offense. However, a pass play in eleven-man football is much easier to diagnose than in six-man. In regulation football, the middle linemen cannot come across the scrimmage line until the pass is thrown; if they should the play must not be a forward pass. In six-man, the three linemen are eligible and could be coming out to block or to receive an aerial.

The main thing in training secondary defenders to diagnose a play is to have them watch the ends. If the ends block, the play is coming behind the block in the line. The secondary men can, most of the time, tell what is to happen by the way the ends block. If the ends come out, the play

is likely to be a pass, or at least it will be on the other side of the line. The secondary defenders must be given plenty of practice in covering pass receivers much as in guarding a man in basketball. They must watch at the same time, the opponents and the ball.

A sound defensive system in six-man football is based on the use of several defensive formations. A team must be trained in the use of three or four defensive setups with each one effectively meeting a running game and a passing game by the opposition. By changing these formations often, the offensive blockers become confused as to the blocking assignments. By playing the same setup all the way, the blockers know just where to find their opponents and the defenders simply become clay pigeons lined up in a shooting gallery. By placing the defenders in varying positions, the number of plays that will succeed against all formations is limited. A team soon finds that it can use only about one-third of the plays in its repertoire. Players who think slowly have difficulty in carrying out their assignments and become confused. A player may soon be found to be giving away the play with his eyes while locating his man.

When the three or four defenses are learned, the team should wait until the offense comes to the line of scrimmage and then go into the chosen defensive formation. One of the players must act as the defensive signal caller.

### A Shifting Defense

Six-man football is a scoring riot whenever clever, offensively minded coaches meet. This is because:

1. Every player is eligible to receive a pass.
2. Innumerable forward passes can be made as long as the ball is returned behind the line of scrimmage each time after passing the line of scrimmage.
3. The clear pass in many cases has actually become a hand-off.
4. The traditional three-man defensive wall is an easy mark for all types of blocks and blocking angles.
5. The simple fact that the ball can travel through the air faster than the defensive men can move to cover each player will allow the eligible to receive a pass.
6. The availability of more square yards of surface area to each player in six-man football than in the eleven-man game.
7. Split second timing on the initial pass from center to a back and thence to other players has made it almost impossible for any type of set defense to stop the dozens of versatile offenses which have been worked out.

Basic defensive formation.--It has been reasoned that the best defense is one that will always look the same to the offense, but the actions of which, no intelligent offensive team can predict. This way, the defensive team holds the initiative instead of the offensive team.

The defensive huddle formation is shown in Figure 1:

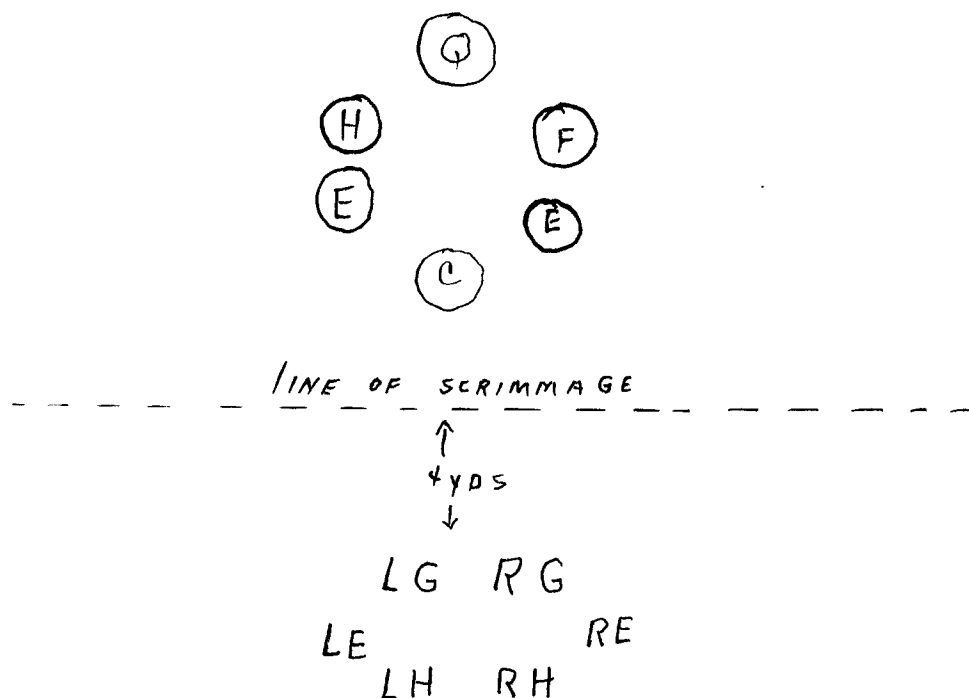


Fig. 1. -- Defensive huddle formation.

It is best to form the huddle each time, and to retain the huddle formation until the offensive center advances toward the ball. The distance from the line of scrimmage should be only a few yards in order that no quick scoring maneuver may be accomplished. It is best to have the defensive signal caller, either the LH or RH (left halfback or right halfback), so that the offensive team may be in full view at all times during the huddle. The defensive signal is given by name or number, based upon what can be expected of the offensive team in view of their strength and weakness,

the down, the yards to gain, the position of the ball on the field, the strength and weakness of the defensive team, and scouting reports of the methods and plays of the offensive team. As soon as the offensive team makes a move to play the ball by the act of the center or another player advancing to cover the football, then the basic defensive formation should be taken by all players as shown in figure two.

The basic defensive formation is shown in Figure 2:

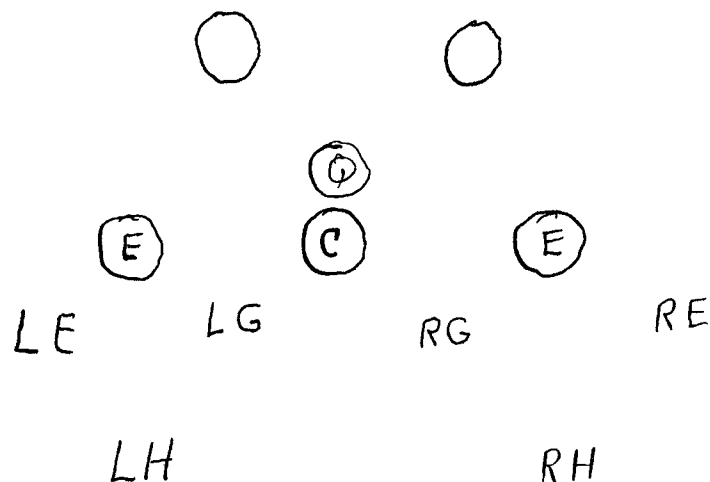


Fig.2. -- Basic defensive formation.

If the play is forming and apparently is not going to be stopped by the defensive maneuver called, the signal caller should cry out at once, or as soon as he can, the name or number of the defensive formation which should work to a

better advantage. Figure two shows the basic defensive formation to be that of a four man line and a two man backfield. From this formation, as many as fifteen or more defensive maneuvers may start, and the offensive team will have no way of knowing which one is in the offing. The basic defensive formation was chosen as the four-two because:

1. It is most difficult to get blocking angles on all the players without leaving at least one defensive player free to break up every offensive maneuver.

2. This is the best defense against a strong running attack.

3. This is the best defense against a team which passes several times behind the line of scrimmage.

4. The defensive players outnumber the offensive players four to three on the line of scrimmage.

5. Many teams become easily confused and cannot handle the ball rapidly enough to offset a hard-charging defense which is right in the offensive backfield almost as soon as the ball is snapped.

6. The best pass defense is to rush the passer very hard.

7. This type of setup seems to lend itself more readily to players with little skill, abilities and knowledge.

8. Experimentation so far has shown that it is the easiest to hide your defensive moves from this basic formation.

Selection of players for defense.--Since almost all running attacks in six-man football are strong to the right,

or on cutback, from starting to the left and slicing back to the right, the key man on the basic defensive setup must be the LG(left guard). All the four men on the front line must be taught the principles of body balance, good defensive position, the timing of the charge, the recovery and movement following the initial charge across the scrimmage line. It would seem best to use either the four point or three point stance, which ever is most comfortable, and which ever will give the player the best defensive balance, view of the offense, and ability to charge hard and low in order to avoid the charge of the offensive linemen. It is best to determine very early in the first days of practice who are the boys on the squad who can make the fastest charge with the best body position and angle.

The next step is to discover the boys who cannot be easily blocked and taken out of the play. The third step is to find the best tacklers among this group. The final step is to find those boys who can recover most quickly after charging across the line of scrimmage, and who can assume what is called the recovery position, which is approximately that of a good basketball guard, only somewhat lower in stance. From this position it is best to observe how quickly the player can pick up tell-tale evidence of what the offensive team is telling about what their offensive maneuver will be.

The best of the boys on all these counts should become the LG of the defensive team.

Two key men to the success of this shifting defense must be the LH and RH. These man should be selected for their defensive basketball experience, boys who are experienced at stopping the fast-break offenses on basketball courts. These boys must know how to play the ball and the men, and never let any man get behind them. They must, of necessity, be very fast and sure open field tacklers. They must be able to recover quickly once they have made a mistake in defensive diagnosis. These boys should be the best pass interceptors on the squad and they should be coached to intercept rather than to allow the other team to complete a pass and then tackle them. Daily practice, using three pass receivers, against two boys will develop this ability a great deal. Usually one of these boys will call the defensive signals, but it is not imperative if the halfbacks do not have the experience, intelligence, confidence, and ability to call defensive signals.

The other three players on the defensive team should be selected after the three just mentioned. Of the three players left, the RG(right guard) is the most important. He must possess the same qualities as LG. If he is just as good as LG, then well and good; if not, then against teams with strong running attacks to the left, these two men must change positions. Usually among the men who cannot learn to play well offensively, there are several who can learn to play RG on defense.



The ends have been chosen in the past upon their ability to wade through two or three man interference and slow, box in or tackle the ball carrier; they can be a real source of help in stopping short pass plays in and near the line of scrimmage. In addition the ends must be able to drop back very quickly from the line of scrimmage on their defensive charge, recover position, and act as a defender against reverses and passes to the weak side, and in the unguarded area of the secondary, away from the direction of the play.

It is to be readily admitted that it is difficult to get boys with these abilities, but they can be trained, and under the substitution rules as they stand at the time of this writing, it is possible to train a team which is composed of defensive specialists.

Shifting from the basic defense.--The basic formation, four-two, can be used within ten yards of the goal which the defensive team is defending; against teams with deliberate and telegraphing passing attacks; against a strong running attack; and as a maneuver to confuse the blocking assignments of the offense. The ends should line up on the three or four point stance with their legs on a line or just outside of the outside leg of the outside player on the offensive line of scrimmage, or in the backfield. The position of the defensive end will have to be varied with the ability of the defensive player to out-manuever the offensive blocker. The end must be coached to get the jump on the offensive

player, to avoid any kind of block (as clipping is legal on the line of scrimmage); to keep on his feet and to keep his head up to see what play is forming and keep the play to the inside.

The LG and RG should line up in the hole left by the offense on the line of scrimmage. If a four man offensive line is used, they should line up on the side of the offensive player to which the offensive maneuver is most likely to have the most power.

The LH and RH should line up six to eight yards back of the front line of defense. This distance increases as the reaction time of these halfbacks increases in their diagnosis of the direction and intent of the offensive ends, center, and any other player who comes across the line of scrimmage with or without the ball. These players can usually line up about as far as off the sidelines as the offensive ends.

The method of shifting from the basic formation to the 3-1-2 defense is shown in figure 3. The signal for the shift to this new formation with the RG back is given in the defensive huddle. The boys go to the line of scrimmage with all four front line players on their hands and knees. Just before the ball is snapped and before the offensive signals can be changed, the RG backs rapidly out of the line and into a standing position on a line with the ball, and about

three yards back of the line. He must be alert for a violation of signals by the offense, in which the offensive team attempts to dash through the position which he usually occupies in the basic setup. If the RG is alert to the actions of the center, he can easily use split vision and determine whether he must be alert for a short pass to the center, or whether the center will attempt to block the LG or him.

The shift from the basic formation to the 3-1-2 defense is shown in Figure 3:

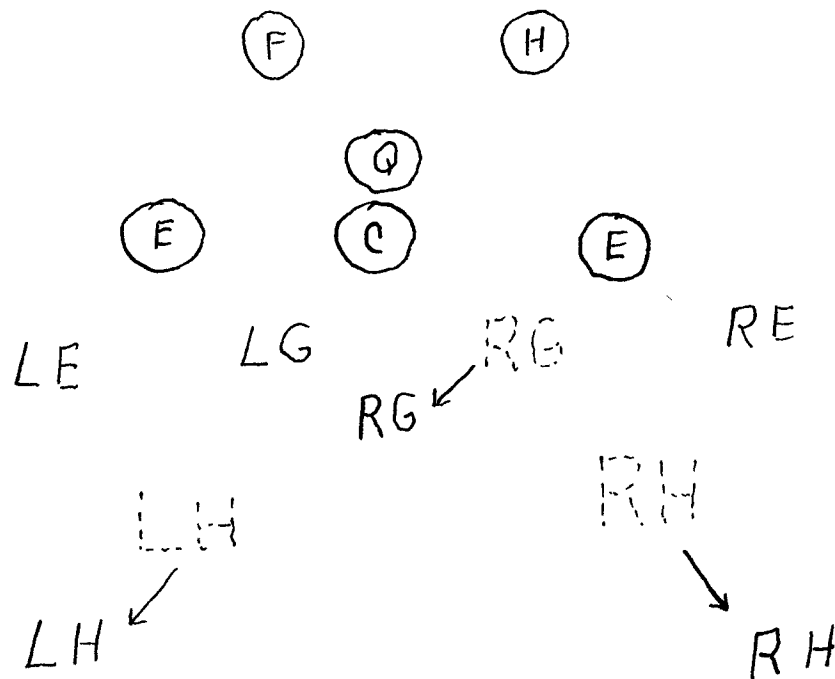


Fig. 3. --Shift from the basic formation to a 3-1-2 defense.

The other players on the front line (LE, RE and LG) become responsible for every man in the backfield. This becomes a zone defensive maneuver with no player worrying too much about where his zone ends and the other begins. The defensive front line must not be blocked out by the offensive men on the line of scrimmage. As RG moves to a standing position back of the center, they no longer must watch the center for his offensive moves, but may now watch the end on their side of play to determine whether they are using blocks which mean a running play or a delayed passing play or are cutting directly for a pass receiving situation. The halfbacks can thus move back into a position of from eight to ten yards behind the defensive front wall and can move outside the offensive ends from a few inches to three yards, depending upon the ability of the RG to cover the center area and the speed and ability of the offensive ends on the flanks. The entire defensive team should keep up a running discussion during the time in which the offensive team is putting the ball in play. This not only keeps all the defensive players well informed as to what is going on, but it has a tendency to upset the thinking of the offensive team and in some cases will cause missed assignments on the part of the offensive players who have been listening to the talk of the defensive men. It seems as if the defense will play better if there is some talking being done.

Shift to the 2-3-1.--The shift from the basic 4-2 defense to the popular 2-3-1 defense is easily accomplished.

The shift to the 2-3-1 is shown in Figure 4:

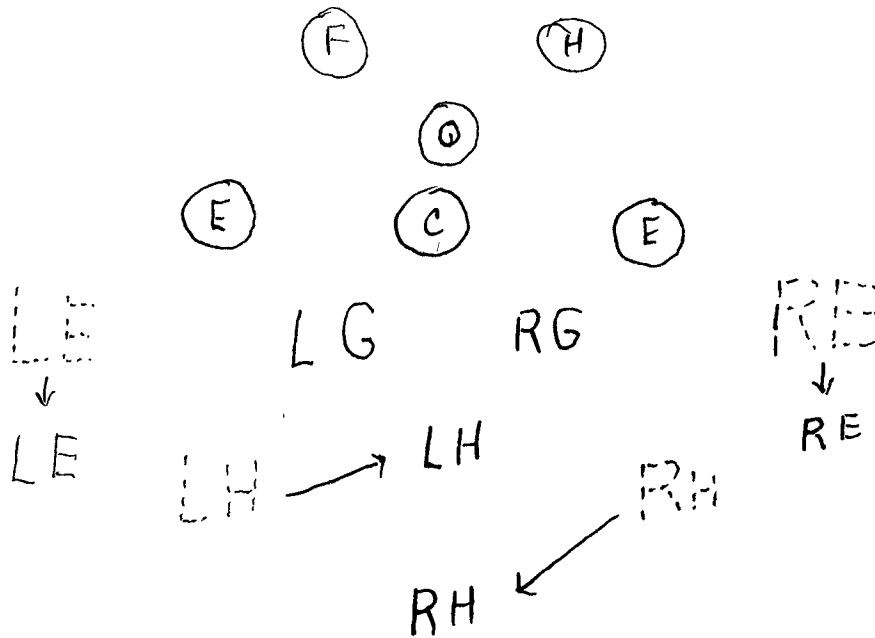


Fig. 4. --Shift from the basic 4-2- to the 2-3-1 defense.

The shift is made in the same routine and timing as for all other shifts, just before the offensive play gets under way. The LE and RE back up from their hands and knees position on the line of scrimmage and take a standing position from three to five yards back of the line of scrimmage, and just outside of the outside player on the offense. LG and RG retain their positions of balance and charge fast and hard into the offensive backfield, with heads up so they

can see, but the buttocks low and feet apart, ready to shift for any tricky attempt on the part of the offensive backs. LH moves to a position directly in line with the center and about three yards back of the line of scrimmage. RH, without taking his eyes off the whole offensive team, moves quickly to a position directly in line with the center and about ten yards back of the line of scrimmage.

Any shift of the defensive team to any type of defense can be easily accomplished. No attempt should be made to teach over one or two defenses a week for the first few weeks of practice. Later in the season as the boys become more alert to versatile offenses, it is possible to teach three defenses a week. Care should be taken to teach a defensive maneuver from the basic 4-2 which will best stop any and all offensive setups which are encountered, taught, or expected to be encountered.

Summary of the shifting defense.--The main points of this particular type of defense are as follows:

1. Use a neat and regular defensive huddle formation to give the defensive signals and hints to the other players.
2. Always shift into the same basic formation. The 4-2 is suggested as the best.
3. Shift into the defensive positions called for in the defensive huddle as soon as the offense advances to pick up the ball and run a play.

4. If the offensive change is too rapid, then the 4-2 formation is always set to meet the attack.

5. If the wrong signal has been called in the defensive huddle, then the defensive signal caller should call out loudly the number or the name of the defensive formation which is to be used as the offensive play swings into action.

6. Only a few basic defenses can be taught for every offensive formation, a shift should be worked out and practiced for each.

7. Chalk talks before every practice session are essential to the success of the shifting defense. The coach must be sold on this type of defense or it is useless to attempt it.

#### A Defense for the T Formation

Since the T formation is used by many of the better teams and can be found in nearly every six-man football district in Texas, this section will deal specifically with the problem in defending the offensive T formation.

The 3-2-1 defense, with the proper variations is a very fine defense with which to meet the T formation. The positions and the spacings of the players in this defense are ideal for the purpose of meeting the many quick opener plays and quick pass plays which can be run from the T formation.

The 3-2-1 defense against the T formation is shown in Figure 5:

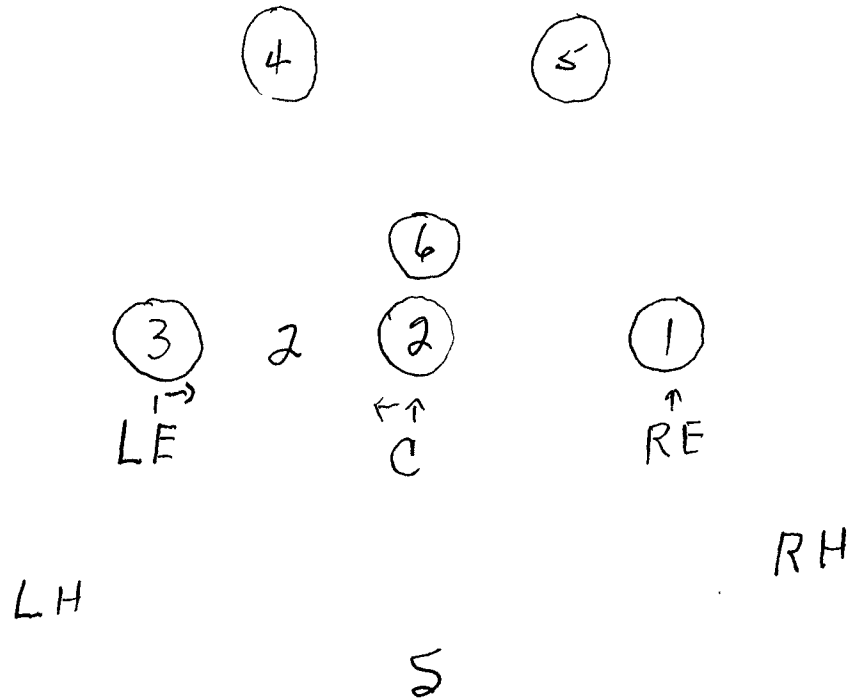


Fig. 5. -- The 3-2-1 defense against the T formation.

The defensive halfbacks play one to two yards outside the defensive ends and five yards behind. The safety man plays from eight to ten yards behind the line. The defensive linemen are playing in front of their opponents. The position of the defensive players follows the standard 3-2-1 defensive formation. After the ball is snapped, the defensive alignment may vary from the standard 3-2-1.

Defensive line play.--The defensive linemen playing in front of their opponents are in a position to move either



to one side or the other of the offensive player to stop the ball carrier. They watch the ball and take one step forward when the ball is snapped. Linemen tend to watch the backs and move when they move but they must form the habit of looking at the ball and stepping forward when the ball is moved. At the snap, they take one step forward and deflect the offensive charge by the use of their hands. Their objective is to keep the offensive blockers from their bodies and to slide along the line of scrimmage to make tackles. When using this type of line play, the linemen will not make many tackles in the opponent's backfield, since they step-hit-look and then move to meet the play. By immediately charging across the scrimmage line, the defensive linemen are often out of position to stop the ball carrier.

Defense for quick opening play.--When the quick-opening play is directed through the hole two in figure five, the defensive left end slides laterally to his right and the defensive center to his left. Against this play, the safety man will move forward to reinforce the line. The defensive halfbacks will protect to the outside.

Defense against the end run.--The end run from the T formation is one of the best plays in six-man football because of the deception and speed with which it can hit. A favorite maneuver to set up the end run is to draw the defense in with a few line plays, then fake a pass to force

the secondary deep then move quickly around one of the ends.

The 3-2-1 defense against the end run is shown in Figure 6:

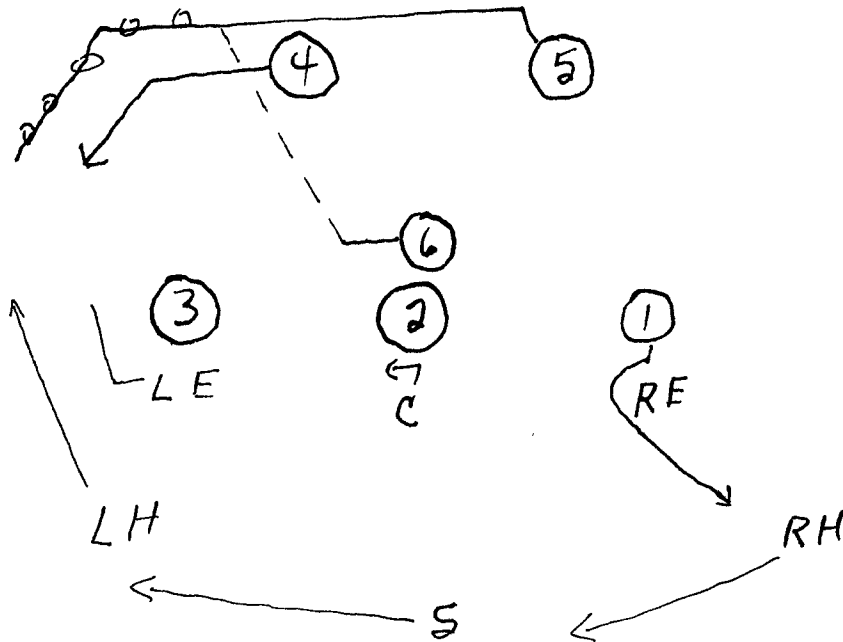


Fig. 6. -- The 3-2-1 defense against the end run.

The linemen step-hit-look and move to meet the play. The weak side end slides laterally toward the play, then drives in fast to meet the play. He must approach the play from the outside. The defensive left halfback moves in fast to the outside to meet the ball carrier at the line of scrimmage or behind it. If a forward pass develops from the end run, both the left end and the left halfback will rush the passer. By relieving the defensive left halfback of pass

defense responsibility, and having him move in fast on all plays that start around the end, the offensive team's blocking assignments will be adversely affected. Generally there is no player assigned to block him when a pass develops from the end run. The defensive center drifts laterally along the line of scrimmage toward the play. The safety moves over to the defensive left halfback's original position. The defensive right halfback drops back to the safety man's original position. The defensive right end, after the step-hit-look, drops back to the right halfback's original position when he sees the run toward the other end. The defensive players, in shifting to meet the end run, do not shift to their teammate's exact original position, but to positions which are more to the defensive man's left than the original positions.

End run pass.--Since the entire team shifts to meet the end run, they are in a position to defend against a pass from the run. There are two men, the defensive left halfback and left end, rushing the passer. The left halfback is generally an unexpected rusher. He should cause the offense the most trouble.

At the first indication of a pass, the defense should yell: "Pass". There may be some defensive player who is not in a position to see the first indication of a pass. This yell should alert the entire defense. The defensive center, who has moved over to his left, drops back into the center of

the secondary defense. As he drops back, he looks for the offensive center. He does not play the offensive center until he enters the defensive center's zone. It is his responsibility to let his teammates know where and when the offensive center breaks as a pass receiver. When the safety man shifts to the defensive left halfback's former position, he watches the offensive right end's movements. The safety man, now in the left halfback's former position, generally protects the territory in front of him and to his outside. As the defensive right halfback drops back into the safety man's former position, he watches the offensive left end. When the defensive right end drops back to the defensive right halfback's former position, he watches the snap receiver's movements. He is responsible for any receiver deep to his outside. At the same time, he must be aware of any receiver in the weak side flank. He will play the pass receiver in the flank only after the ball is in the air, moving toward this receiver.

Shift to the opposite side.--The defensive shift to meet the end run and the end run pass is the same. It has been explained for the end run and the end run pass to the offensive team's right. The shift to meet the end run or end run pass to the offensive team's left is the opposite.

For every play that starts around either end, the defense shifts toward the play as explained and will keep in mind that the play may be an end run, a pass or a cutback.

Defense against criss-cross plays.--The defense must have a general plan to defend against the criss-cross play from the T Formation.

The 3-2-1 defense against the criss-cross is shown in Figure 7:

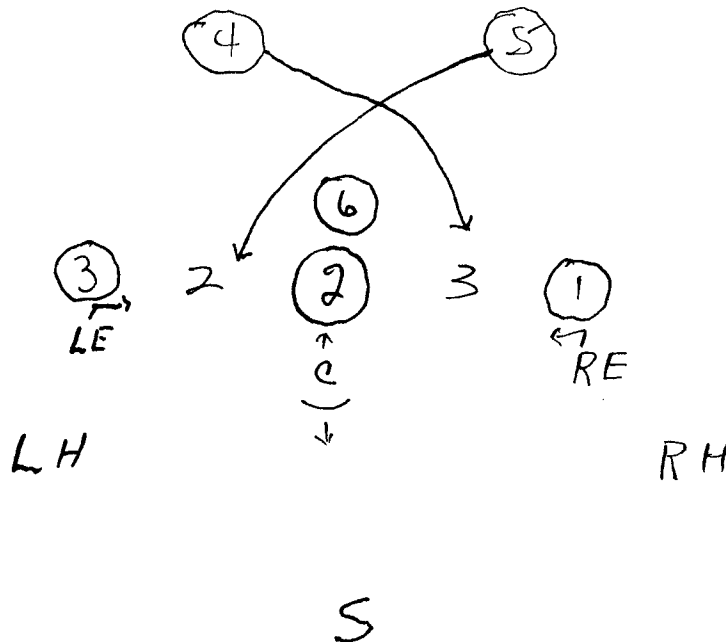


Fig. 7. -- The 3-2-1 defense against the criss-cross.

In the above defense, the center, o2, hands the ball to the snap receiver, o6, who turns his back to the line. He may fake the ball to o5 and give it to o4, or he may fake it to o4 and give it to o5. In either case, the defensive reaction is the same. The defensive linemen step-hit-lock. The defensive left end slides to his right to play o5.

After the step-hit-lock, the defensive center steps back; he will not commit himself until he is sure of the ball carrier's direction. The defensive right end slides to his left to meet o4. If the defensive end is sure the back is coming through the hole and does not have the ball, he shouldn't try to knock the back off balance by hitting him with his hands. If there is any doubt, he will tackle him. The defensive halfbacks must protect to the outside.

#### A Defense for Spread Formations

Most coaches agree that it is necessary to have some general plan for meeting spreads. The following is not the cure-all for spreads, it is just one method of getting in position to defend against spreads.

The basic wide spread with the defense set up against it is shown in Figure 8:

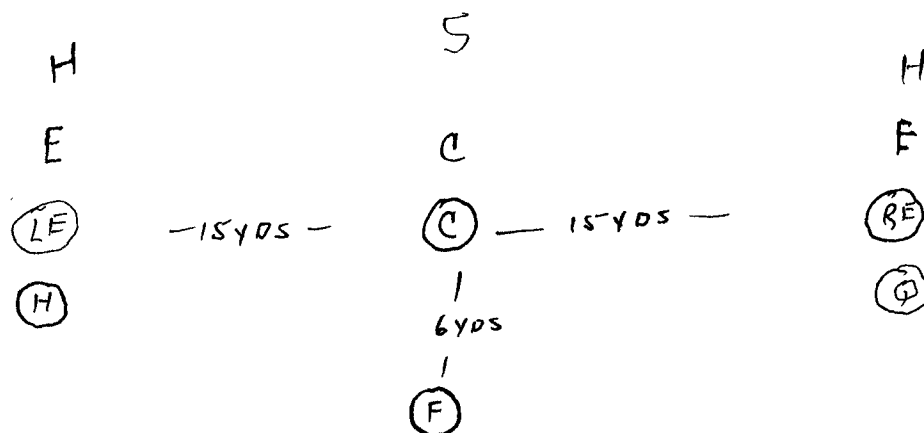


Fig. 8. -- A defense for the basic wide spread.

Figure eight shows the basic wide spread or balanced spread. The defensive halfbacks cover the men on the ends of the line which is the first general rule for getting in position to meet spreads. In this formation, the men on the ends of the line are the ends. In other words, the defensive right half plays the left end and the left half covers the right end. They are five yards from the Scrimmage line. When a back plays directly behind or to either side of the offensive end and behind the line, that back is played by the defensive end. This is the second general rule. The defensive ends should vary their positions so that they will play either one yard inside or outside of the offensive ends.

The defensive center may line up in front of the offensive center, but he should move to one side of the center before the ball is snapped. He may be a yard or more to the right or left of the center when the ball is snapped. From this position, it should be possible for him to keep the offensive center from blocking him. He should rush the snap receiver because the offensive center is covered by the safety man who is about six or seven yards from the line.

Scrimmage against the spread pass.--The only way to develop this phase of the defense, the center rushing the snap receiver, is to scrimmage against plays as shown in figure nine which is a spread pass with the snap receiver directly behind the center. The defensive center has an advantage because the snap receiver cannot run with the ball.

The wide spread pass is shown in Figure 9:

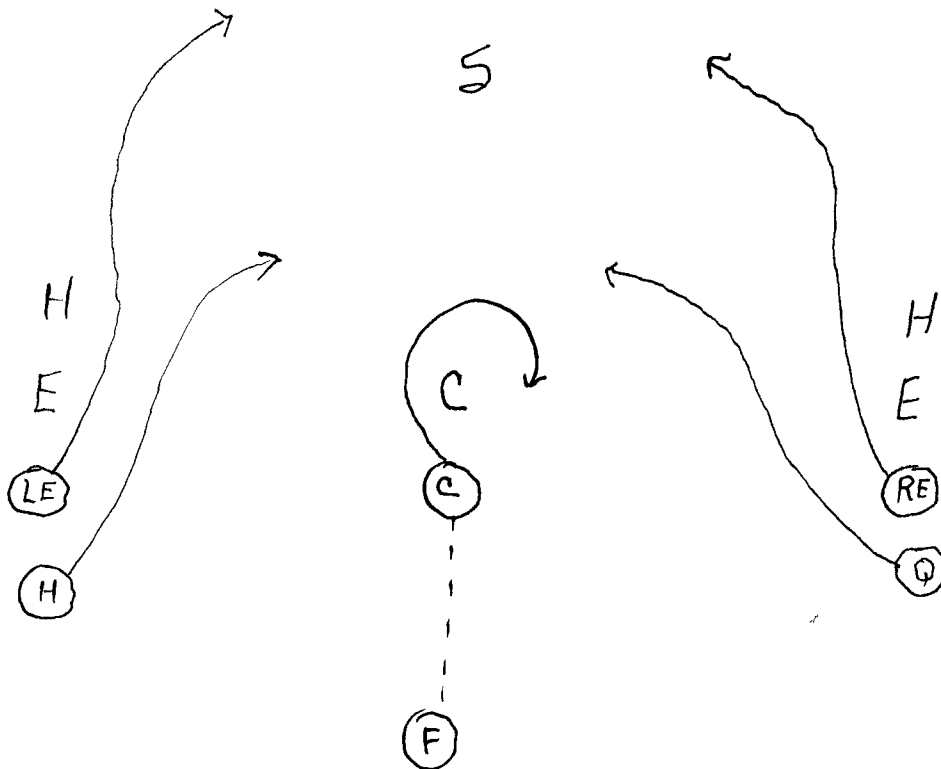


Fig. 9. --The wide spread pass.

This should be the easiest play to defend against because there is no clear pass and the positions of the offensive players tipoff the fact that the play is going to be a pass.

Defense for the man in motion spread.--When the offensive team, from the balanced spread, sends a man in motion, the defense must shift to meet this change in order that they can be in position to try to meet the spread play. By sending a man in motion, the offense has switched into an unbalanced formation.



The man in motion spread is shown in Figure 10:

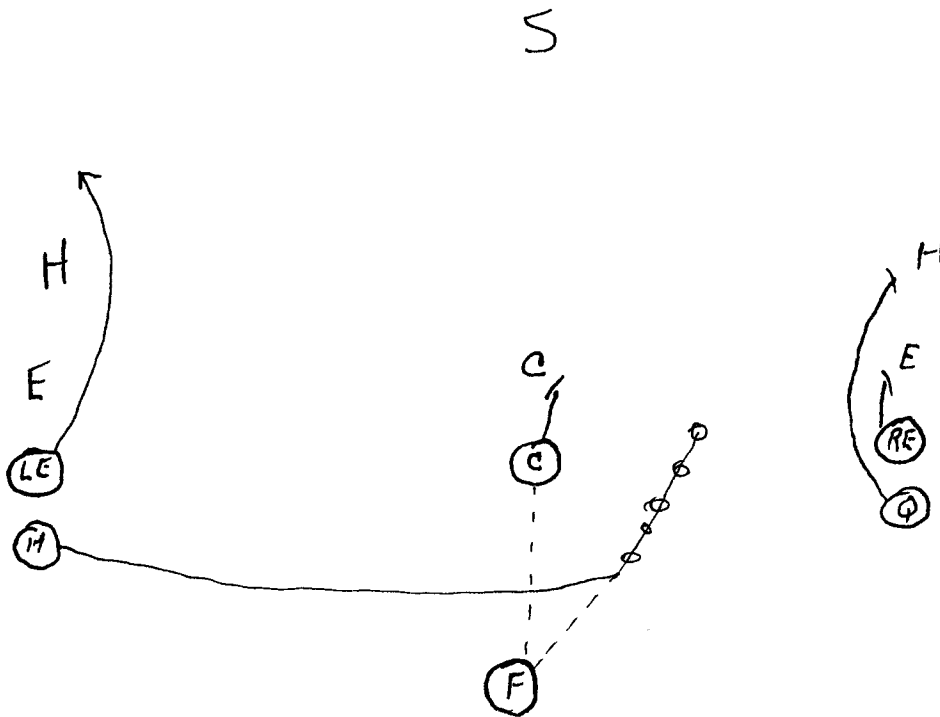


Fig. 10. -- The man in motion spread.

When the offensive left halfback starts in motion, the defensive right end should follow along the line to a point about two yards from the offensive center. The defensive center should move to a position two yards on the other side of the offensive center. When the man in motion runs by the offensive center before the ball is snapped, he will be played by the defensive center. The defensive right end will rush the snap receiver. If F gets the pass off to H, the defensive right end will stay with F. The defensive center will attempt to hit H when he is in the act of receiving the ball

from F. The center does not wait on the line of scrimmage but goes in to meet H. To stop this play much time must be spent scrimmaging against it in practice. The rest of the pass defense is the same as given in previous instructions.

The defense for the man in motion spread is shown in Figure 11:

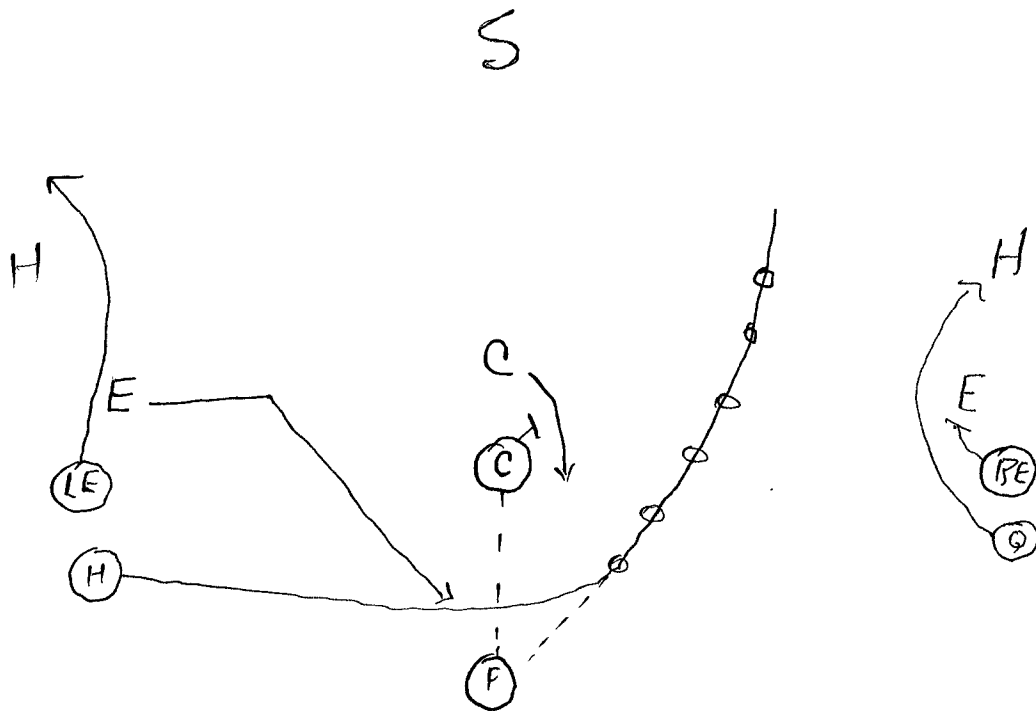


Fig. 11. -- Defense for the man in motion spread.

The secret of the defense for the spread formation is in the preparation to meet it. If all of the defensive players know exactly what to do, this will eliminate the confusion on the part of the defensive team which is what makes the spread so well in six man football.

The unbalanced spread formation.--- The spread formation can become still more complicated by the unbalancing of the basic formation.

The unbalanced spread formation to the right is shown in Figure 12:

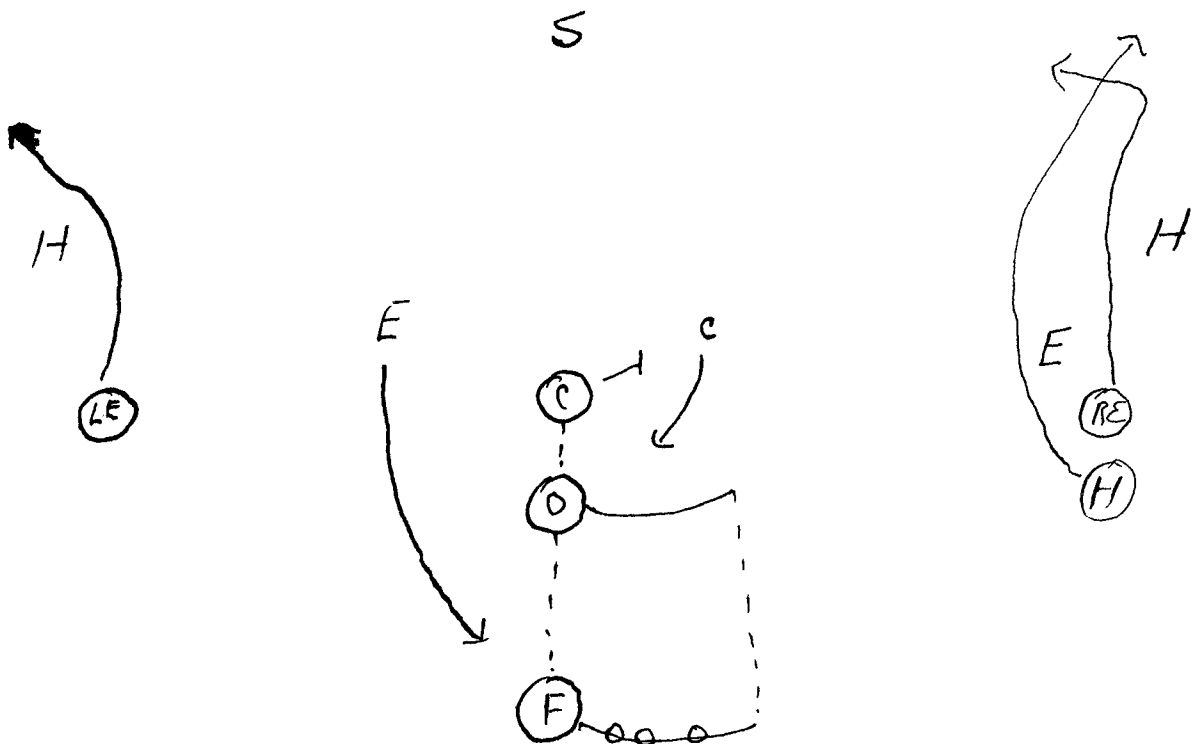


Fig. 12. -- The unbalanced spread formation to the right.

There are two general rules for getting into position to defend against this type of spread, as follows:

1. The defensive halfbacks cover the ends.
2. When a back plays directly behind or to either side of the offensive end and behind the line, that back is played by the defensive end. The defensive left end will play H,

in the event that he crosses the scrimmage line. Since a back is not directly behind or to either side of the offensive left end and behind the line in this unbalanced spread, the defensive right end will move in to play F. The center will move to his left and will rush the snap receiver (Q). He should be in such a position that the offensive center will have trouble blocking him. He will try to tie up the snap receiver before he can make a clear pass. If the snap receiver gets the clear pass off, the center will stay with him. The safety will cover the offensive center.

The defensive right end is expected to tackle F before the play develops. If F gets away from the right end, nobody leaves his man to take F until he crosses the scrimmage line. This defense depends on getting one man to the ball carrier before he can get away. Every effort is made to have at least one defensive player start from a position where he will not be blocked on the scrimmage line.

The spread formation may be unbalanced to the left in the same manner as to the right but the same defensive fundamentals will be used to get into position to meet the offensive plays. The defensive team must be well coached in recognizing these changes in the spread formation in order that they will not become confused in case the offensive team shifts into an unusual form of the spread. Preparedness is the secret of this defense.

The full spread.--This version of the spread formation will work very well if the defensive team is not well coached on the basic fundamentals of spread coverage. It looks different but the same general rules for getting into position to defend against spreads will work on it too.

The full spread to the right is shown in Figure 13:

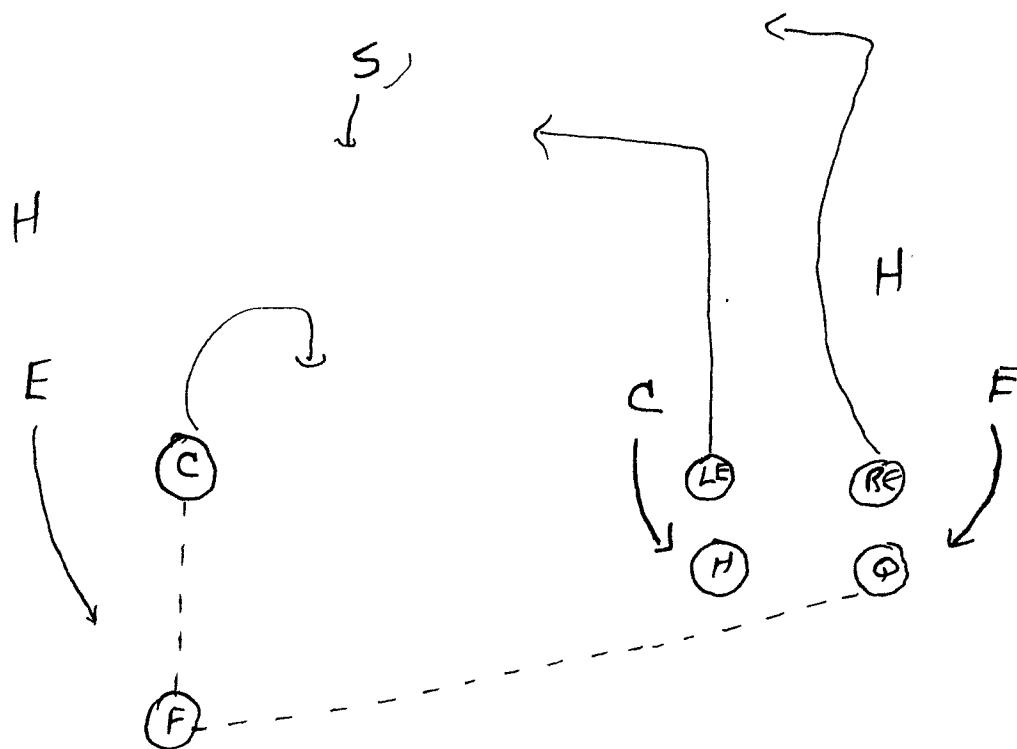


Fig. 13. -- The full spread formation to the right.

The defensive halfbacks will play the men on the ends of the line. The right half covers the offensive center and the left half plays the offensive end. The right end rushes F from the outside so that F will be forced to run

toward the strong side. The safety man will cover the middle man on any three man line. The center and the left end will play the backs who are directly behind the offensive ends. They should take a position on the scrimmage line that will make it almost impossible for them to be blocked on the line. When the left end sees the pass being thrown to Q, he will attempt to tackle Q when he is in the act of receiving the ball. If both H and Q remain behind the line after the ball is snapped, then both the center and the left end will move in to cover them when a pass is thrown in their direction.

Summary of the spread formation defense.--Like any other defense, these defenses are not perfect. Adjustments will have to be made to meet certain types of spread plays. The best way to learn to play against the spread is to use some spread plays as part of the regular offensive system. By scrimmaging against spread plays it is possible to find out how they work. The players will learn to recognize the different types of spreads. They will learn to get in position quickly and they will learn to tackle in the open field. The spread plays are part of the game. Spectators enjoy watching them and players like to use them. Teams that have a reasonable defense for the spread formations will like to play against them, especially if they learn to understand this style of play.

Pass defense.--The game of six-man football has developed into a wide open affair with excellent formations and plays with an emphasis on the passing game and the matter of pass defense has become increasingly important.

The preparation of a good pass defense is a must before success in the game of six-man football can be expected because of the rule which allows any offensive player to be an eligible pass receiver. When the pass receiver leaves the scrimmage line, the defender should start to move backward. He may back pedal for two or three steps but after that he will have to turn his knees to the side and run backward.

A pass defender should try to prevent the possible receiver from getting closer than six feet before the ball is in the air. He should try to keep the possible receiver between him and the passer and he should try to see the ball leave the passer's hand.

As much time as possible should be spent in drilling on pass defense. Several good drills can be planned by the coach for the use by the team in learning how to defend against a good passing attack.

The one on one drill during practice scrimmage will help the defender to learn how to keep the possible receiver between himself and the passer. The defender needs to be away from the receiver and to the receiver's outside. Of course, it is not always possible to be in the ideal position but the defender must learn to get into the favorite position

quickly. It must be stressed that the defender does not start to play the ball until it leaves the passer's hand. When the passer fakes a pass, the defender must not be pulled out of position but must disregard the passer's fake and this is not easy to do.

The defender should learn to judge the flight of the ball so that he will know about where it will come down and try to be there. He should be able to fight for the ball while it is in the process of being caught by the offensive player.

In order for any pass defense to be successful, some plan must be formulated which will allow pressure to be placed on the passer through the medium of rushing. It is always a good idea to have big strong boys in the roll of the rushers. When he reaches the passer, he should tackle high around the shoulders in a vicious manner; this will keep the passer from getting rid of the ball and will also make him aware of the big boy who is rushing.

A few fundamental tricks may be used to a good advantage when facing a team that likes to throw the ball. Most six-man teams will have one or two favorite pass receivers to whom the passer will throw if at all possible. In fact, the pass will usually be thrown to them even though they might be partially covered by the defense. These favorite receivers should be determined before the time of the game if



possible. During the game, some form of delaying action should be used against the best receivers whenever they attempt to cross the scrimmage line for the purpose of receiving a pass. This can be accomplished in many ways and a variation should be used each separate time. It is legal for the defensive players to shove the offensive players and a surprise shove often brings the favorite pass receiver flat on the ground where he is useless to the offensive team. Of course this maneuver must be executed before the ball is thrown by the passer or else it would be called interference by the officials and a completed pass would be awarded to the offensive team.

In any pass defense, if the home run pass can be controlled then the pass defense is very nearly a success; these passes which usually go for touchdowns are the ones that can break up the ball game.

The best possible way to stop these long passes is to place the safety man directly in the middle of the playing field about twenty yards back of the line of scrimmage. He should hold this position until the ball leaves the passer's hand. This will still give him plenty of time to cover the field from sideline to sideline before the ball can arrive and at the same time he will have a better chance of catching the ball than the intended receiver. The safety should be aware of the ends because they are usually the ones who go for the long passes.

### Offensive Six-Man Football

There are a great many variations of offense used in six-man football today, and all are worth while, providing the personnel used to play a particular offense is suitable to it. All too often, the six-man coach uses offensive formations and plays not suitable to the caliber of the boys participating.

Most small schools that take part in six-man football are faced with the problem of personnel. They are always lacking in numbers as well as in size. Therefore for this reason, many coaches are forced to place less emphasis upon the defensive aspect of six-man football and spend the majority of the time upon the offensive factor. By working long and hard on this particular aspect of play, they are able to outscore their opponents rapidly, and generally by fairly large scores. Teams of this sort usually score in quick fashion through an assortment of trick plays, lateral passes and line plunging. In general, the opponents will be kept constantly off balance through a situation being created with a very wide variety of offensive formations and plays.

Any offensive system which hopes to confuse the defense must be based upon speed, deception, blocking and passing. Speed is especially important in the six-man game because of the great amount of broken field running which can be planned.

### The Y Offense

The Y offense is run out of a formation which is essentially a T formation with one important change. In the T, the quarterback is under the center, while in the Y, he is moved back about three yards. This change, along with spreading the other two backs, results in several advantages. The quick opening, well balanced, deceptive attack of the T is possible, combined with the power of the short punt formation. The Y also lends itself to optional plays which let the defensive men's reactions determine the play.

The advantages of the Y formation over the T are easily realized because simplicity is the keynote in the Y offense. Several series of plays are used, and because of the balanced quality of the Y, the assignments of each player can be made almost identical for every play in a given series. This stereotyping of the offensive assignments makes learning and remembering plays easier, resulting in fewer mistakes during games. Another benefit of the series assignment is that the defense can't key off of the actions of any offensive player and diagnose the play.

Continuing in the line of simplicity, the offensive holes between the center and the ends are called the buck holes and those outside the ends are called the sweep holes. Plays are called by naming a series and the hole or by a series and a pass. Most of the plays have options built

into them so that the offense is more varied than it might sound. In fact, these option plays are the real favorites with most teams because this gives them a chance to change the play after it has already started.

The basic Y formation is shown in Figure 14:

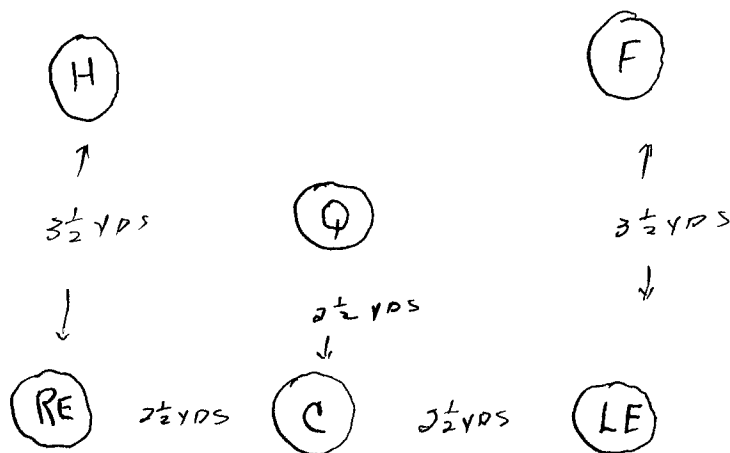


Fig. 14. -- The basic Y formation.

The Y formation is set up with the ends two and a half yards out from the center, the quarterback is two yards directly behind the center, and the halfback and the fullback are directly behind the ends and one to two yards deeper than the quarterback.

Series of plays and special plays can be developed by anyone using this formation.



The basic series with a sweep left is shown in Figure 16:

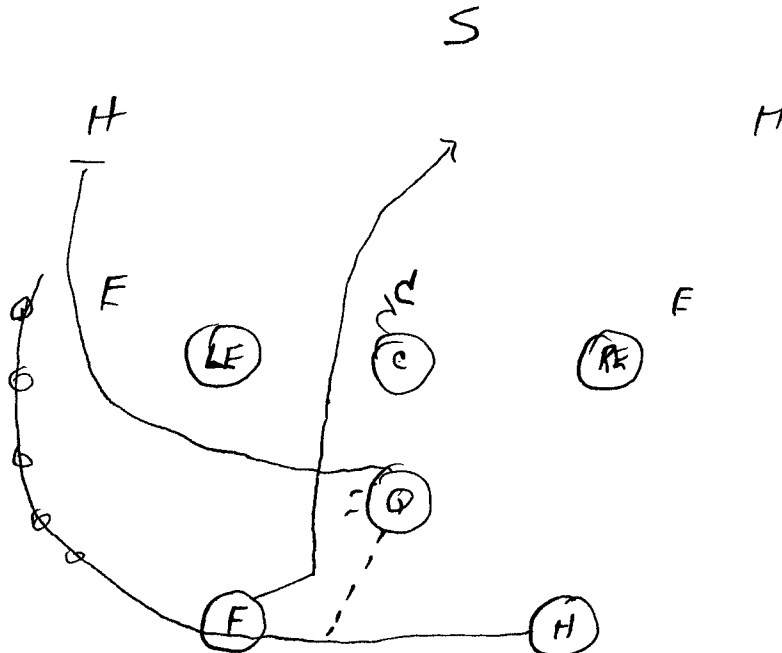


Fig. 16. -- The basic series with a sweep left.

It can be noted from this play the similarity of the different plays which can be run from this formation and the value which this similarity will be. As long as the plays look alike and are run alike, then the defense will certainly be confused. The quarterback can and should become an expert at faking with the ball or without the ball because if he can keep the eyes of the defensive team on him, then the ball carrier has a better chance of getting

away with his particular maneuver. The other play in this series which is the companion play to the buck and the sweep is the pass and it can be noted just how much the play is run so that it will look like the other two.

The basic series with a pass left is shown in Figure 17:

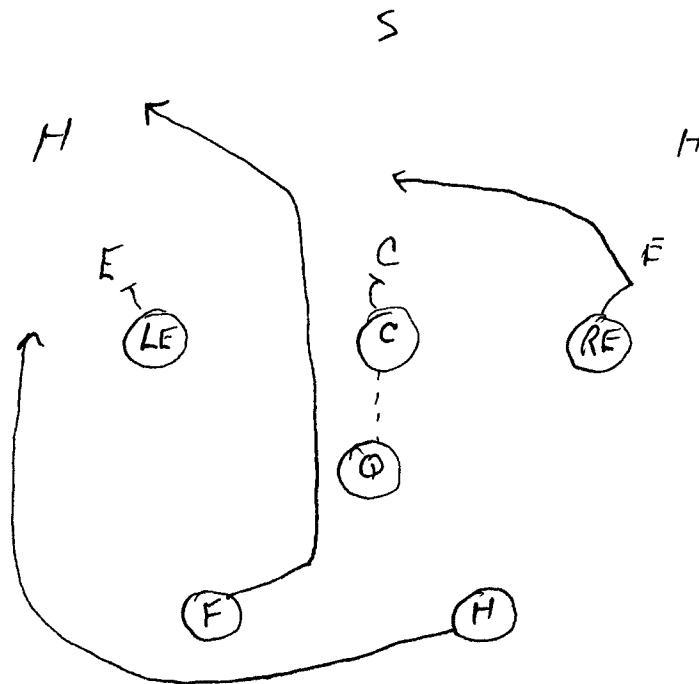


Fig. 17. -- The basic series with a pass left.

In this basic series, the assignments for the players are almost identically the same on all the plays, yet a pass, a buck, and an end sweep have been run. Here is the great secret of the Y offense. These plays were diagrammed against a three man defensive line but there is very little

change in the assignments when the defense uses a two or a four man line. Some special plays can be worked out from the Y formation.

The Y formation, end around play is shown in Figure 18:

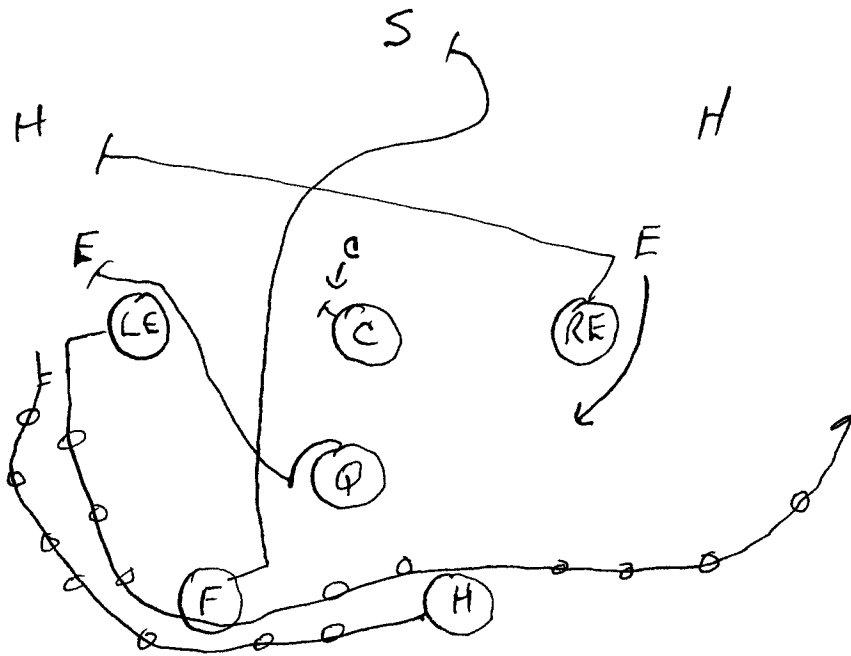


Fig. 18. -- The end around play from the Y formation.

This play is very hard to stop when the defensive ends are crashing into the center of the formation in pursuit of the quarterback. It also works very good when the defensive halfbacks are moving over to get a better position on the fullback who may be making good yardage through the line or at any time when the ends are being ignored on the line.



The end around play works directly from the basic series and the blocking is identical with the other plays so that there is no tip off to the defense.

Another play which is run from the pitchout series which features the faking of the quarterback is the optional fullback end run of the halfback buck.

The pitchout series is shown in Figure 19:

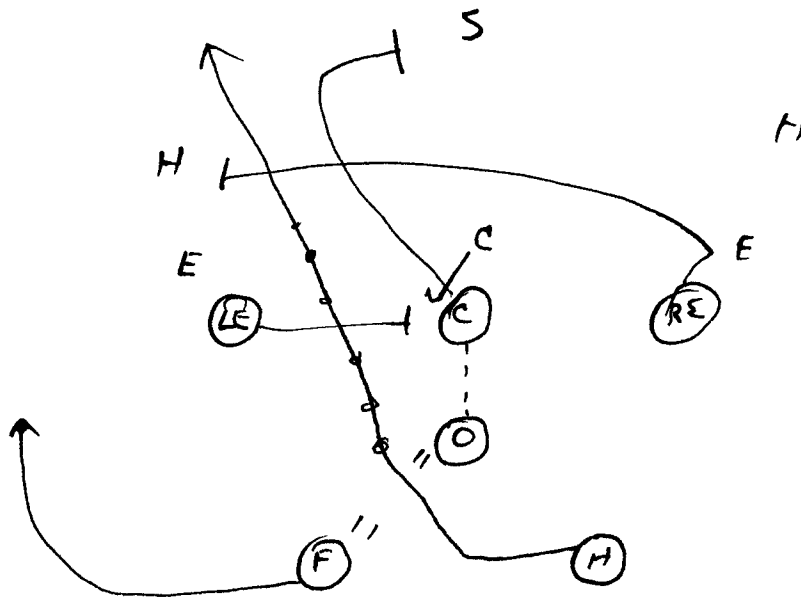


Fig. 19. -- The pitchout series.

This is an option play with the final choice depending upon the reaction of the defensive end on the side to which the fullback goes. The ball is given to the back which the defensive end does not cover.

A fake pitchout and pass to the center, and a stop-go pass to the wide back are variations which can be worked from the pitchout series.

A third series to which the Y formation is especially adapted is the optional pass-run series. Because the Quarterback is two yards behind the line of scrimmage, he can receive the ball, clear pass, and still be an effective blocker.

The pass or run series is shown in Figure 20:

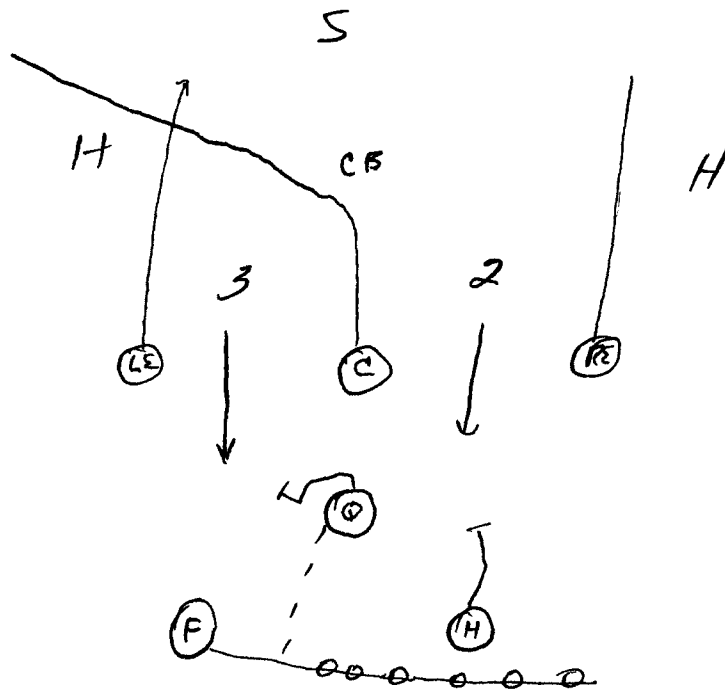


Fig. 20. -- The pass or run series from the Y formation.

This series is especially suited to the two man defensive line which is shown in the figure above, because of the blocking which can be placed on the two defensive linemen.

### The spread Formation

The value of the spread formation was clearly demonstrated at the seventh annual Texas high school six-man coaching clinic which was held at San Angelo, in August 1952.

It is customary to hold an all star game between outstanding performers representing east and west Texas on the concluding night of the clinic. The boys who make up these teams are selected by votes of the coaches in their respective areas. Two workouts per day are given the players throughout the week of the school.

At halftime the score of the all star game was tied at six to six. The teams played through the first half from compact or close formations. The defensive ends of the two teams waged a stand off battle throughout the opening two quarters by holding each other up at the line of scrimmage, limiting the running plays to negligible gains and bottling up the air attacks.

At the start of the second half, the east team swung immediately into a spread, with the ends out wide, the back your yard behind and diagonally to the left of the center, and another back on the left side also four yards away from the center, but closer to the line of scrimmage. A triangle, with the sides four yards long, was formed by the center and the two up backs. The tailback was situated about nine or

ten yards directly behind the center.

The defensive ends were forced wide almost to the sidelines to cover their opponents, who upon numerous occasions just stood still, and did not even break downfield. This neutralization of the strong defensive ends resulted in more maneuvering space for the shifty east backs, and they were able to go all the way for touchdown several times. The game ended in a twenty to twelve victory for the east.

The strength of the spread formation is great in six-man football due to the fact that all of the offensive players are eligible on pass plays. In six-man football it is difficult to set up a defense that will encompass both a running and passing offense, and the use of the spread further accentuates the defensive problems.

Six-man players like to use the spread formation in their offensive system because it allows them to have a chance to handle the ball and also this formation spreads the defense to such an extent that the offensive players have plenty of room in which to maneuver in the open field.

The most popular spread is the wide spread formation because it really spread all over the playing field and it gives a team the opportunity of planning many variations to be run from this basic wide spread. Most coaches just use their imagination while designing plays from the spread and in many cases their plays work very well.

Basic wide spread formation.--This basic formation is the one from which most all of the spread plays are designed.

The basic wide spread formation is shown in Figure 21:

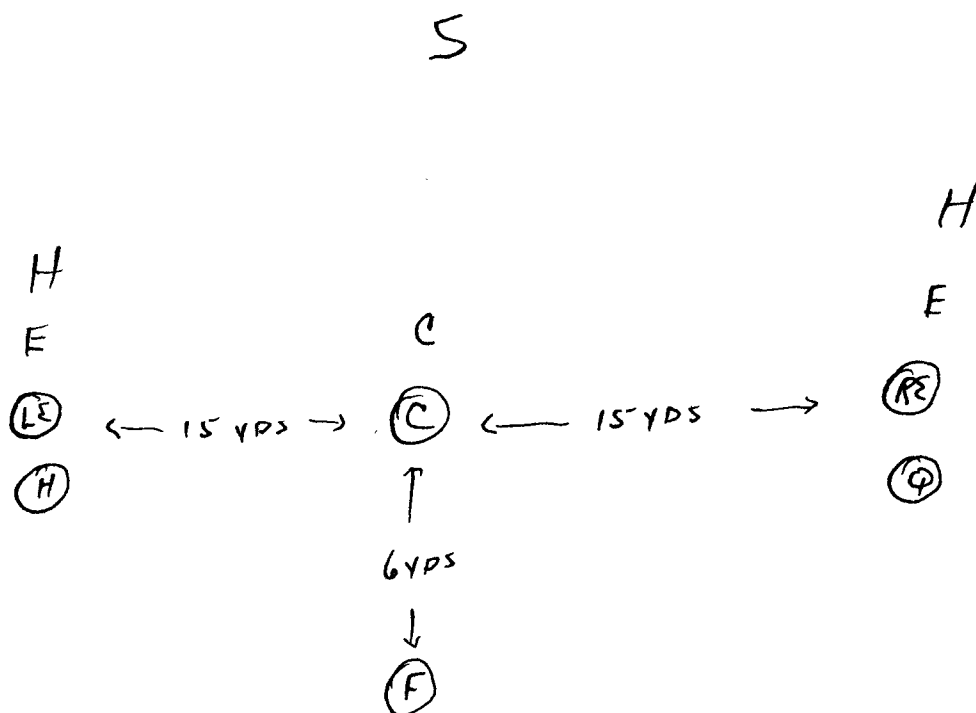


Fig. 21. -- The basic wide spread formation.

In the basic wide spread formation, the ends line up five yards from the sidelines on their respective sides of the field. The halfback lines up about three yards behind the left end and the quarterback lines up about three yards behind the right end. The fullback, who does the ball handling will line up about six yards directly behind the center. The ends are spread about fifteen yards from the center.

The spread pass.--This is the fundamental pass play from the wide spread formation. Most coaches use this pass play as the basis for designing their pass offense.

The spread pass is shown in Figure 22:

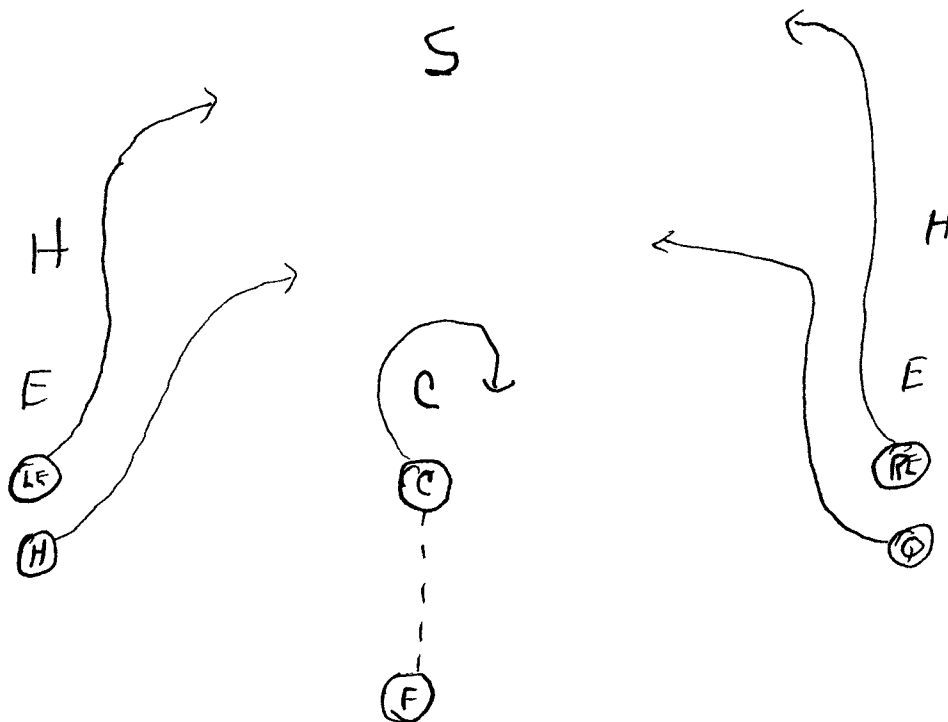


Fig. 22. -- The spread pass.

In the spread pass, the ends will go down deep, the backs, H and Q, break down field about five or six yards, then cut sharply in. Usually the backs are able to get open for a pass. The center goes out about three yards, turns and looks for short passes. When the passer is being rushed too swiftly, the center blocks the man rushing the passer, then goes out. The passer needs to be adept at shifting,

which will give him additional time to pass on occasions.

Pass to the Quarterback.--This is a slight variation in that the quarterback lines up about three yards directly behind the center and about three yards in front of the fullback.

The spread pass to the quarterback is shown in Figure 23:

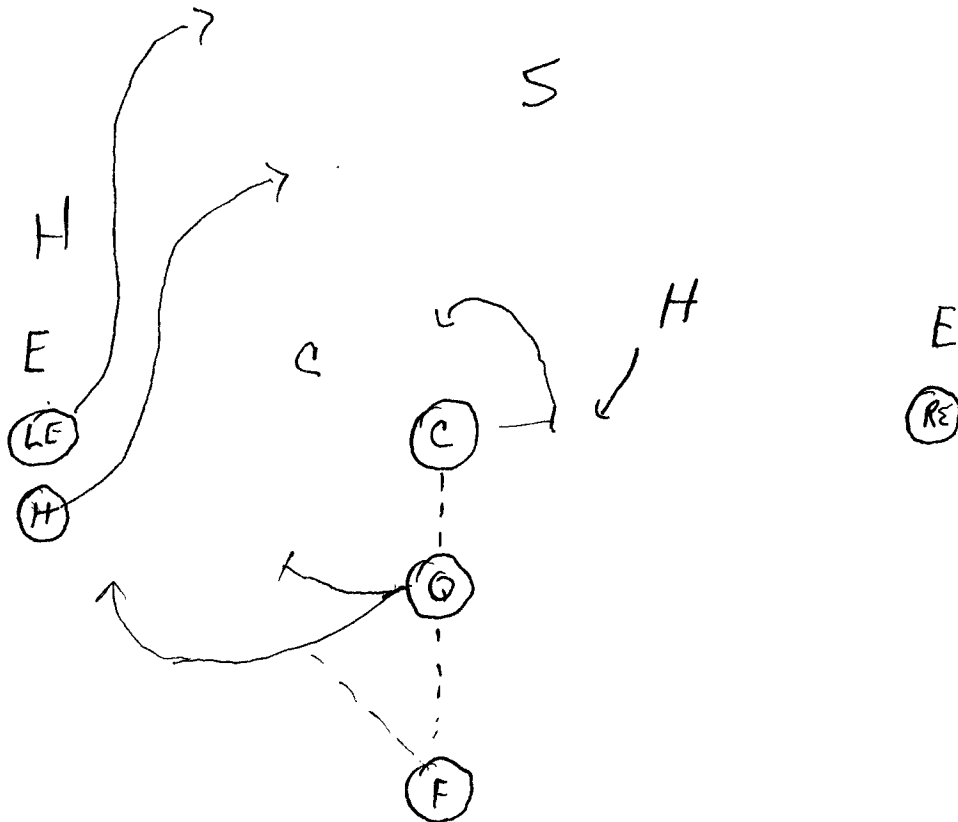


Fig. 23. -- Spread pass to the quarterback.

One back (Q) stays in the backfield with the passer (F). The ball is centered to the quarter(Q), who makes a clear pass to the passer, which makes F eligible to carry the ball across the scrimmage line. The quarter then blocks if possible or cuts out for a lateral.

On occasions, the ball is returned to the quarter, who runs or passes down field. The ends should go deep and use fakes to elude the defense. The center should block and then go out short for a pass. After receiving the clear pass, the passer has a fine opportunity to make long gains by just evading one rusher.

The man-in-motion spread.--When a man in motion is used with the side spread it has a tendency to upset the standard defense which is usually set up against the spread.

The man in motion spread is shown in Figure 24:

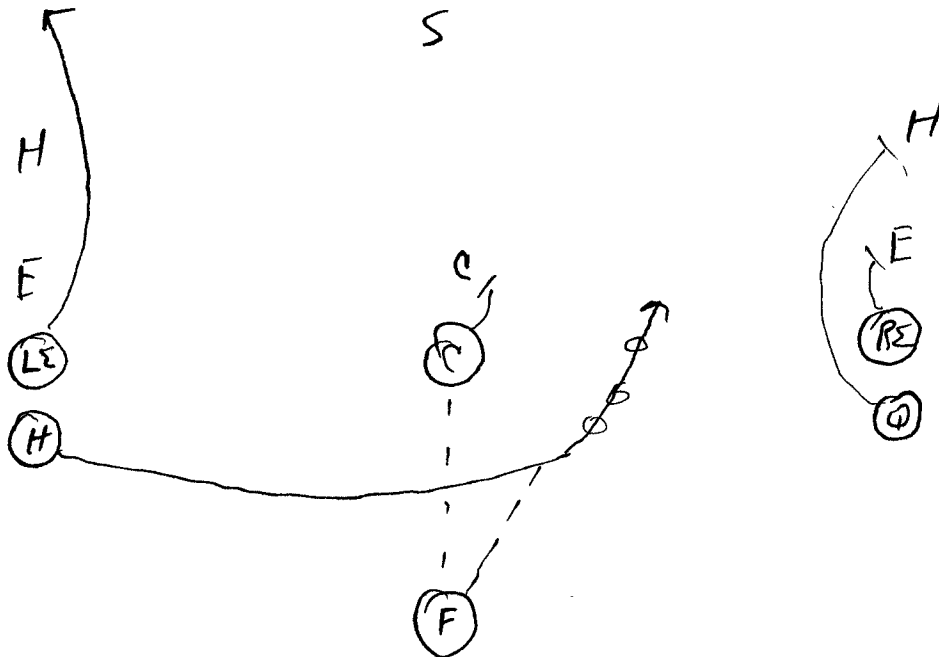


Fig. 24. -- Man in motion spread.

In the play shown in Figure twenty-four, which can be



run to the right or left, the eventual ball carrier is in motion at the snap. Upon receiving the center pass, the passer throws a clear pass to the man in motion who is traveling at top speed. The ball carrier then cuts in sharply and goes down field. The center blocks and the left end draws his man out of the play. The right end and the other back (Q) block their man to the right. On the next variation of this play, the man in motion will stop and pass, or only fake receiving the ball to draw the defense off the passer.

Man in motion and criss-cross.--This is a variation of the man in motion play to be used when the center crashes.

The man in motion and criss-cross is shown in Figure 25:

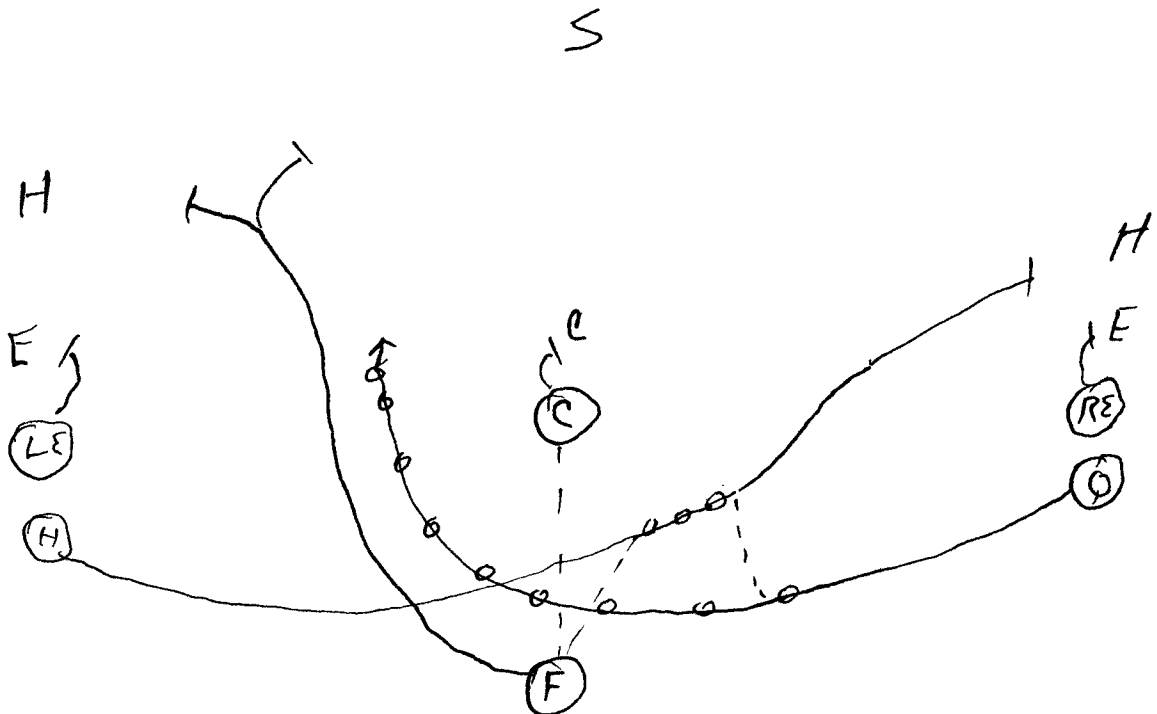


Fig. 25. -- Man in motion and criss-cross.

In Figure twenty-five, the back (H) receives a clear pass from the passer. As H cuts toward the scrimmage line, he laterals back to Q, who crosses to the left. The ends block their men out, the center blocks to the right. The back (F), after making the clear pass to H, leads the eventual ball carrier down the field.

This play is a very good check play for use with the regular man in motion spread.

Quick pass.--This pass play is used against a standard defense or when the defensive linemen are charging very hard into the offensive backfield.

The quick pass is shown in Figure 26:

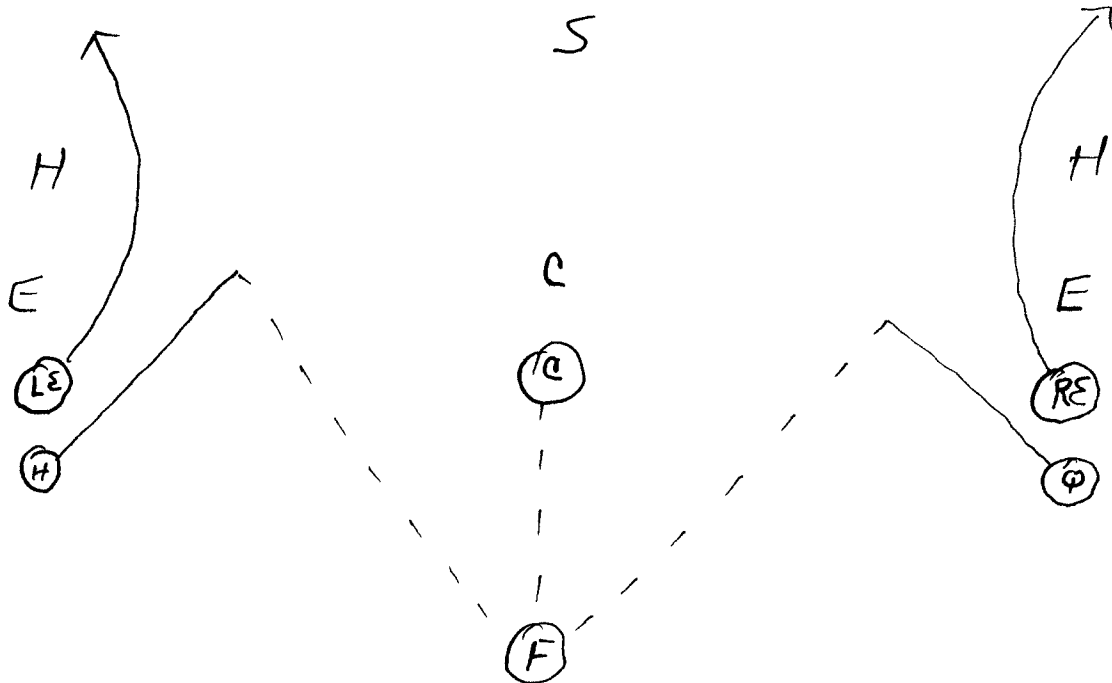


Fig. 26. -- The quick pass from the spread.

Figure twenty-six shows a quick pass to one of the backs, H or Q. The ends are instructed to run near the defensive men, H and H, who have been assigned to cover the offensive backs, H and Q. This is effective late in a ball game, as the opponents by this time have assigned players on a man for man basis. Backs usually receive the ball as they cut diagonally across the field.

The full spread.--This is a spread to one side of the field and is for the sole purpose of confusing the defense although some good gains may be made from it.

The full spread is shown in Figure 27:

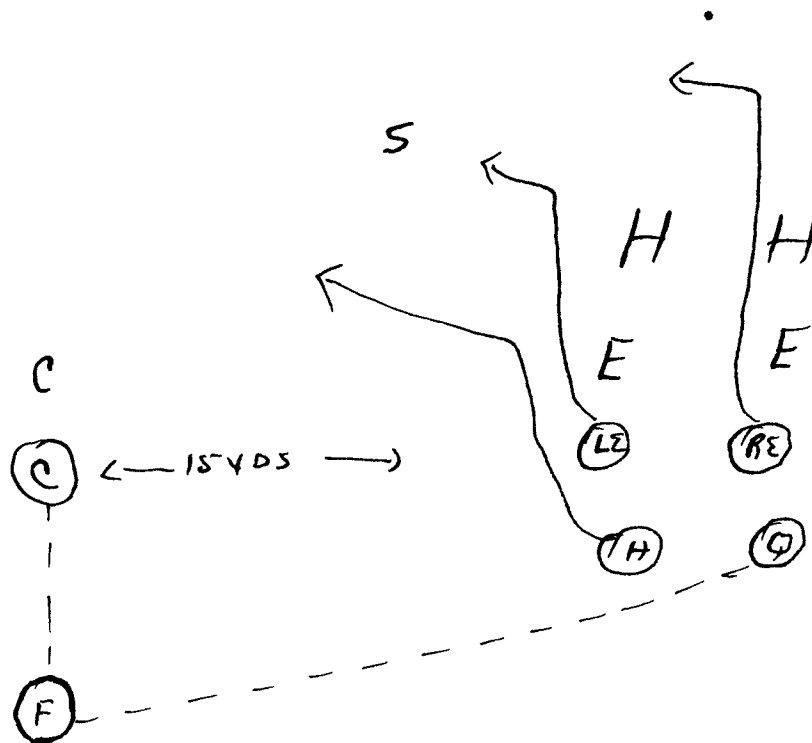


Fig. 27. -- The full spread to the right.

The full spread can be used to either the right or the left and will work effectively when used with the regular wide spread because the defensive team will be confused when all the offensive men line up to one side. One back, Q, remains stationary, and receives a pass from the snap receiver (F). Q then runs or passes, though it is usually a pass. Back (H) going down field, goes about five yards then cuts in; the left end goes about ten yards and cuts in, and the right end goes deep. The center goes the usual few yards and turns or blocks, depending on the setup.

Very little encouragement is needed for six man football players to want to work on the spread formation. It seems to be the big favorite also of the coaches and the spectators. The spread is good for the game of six-man football because it adds plenty of action and outstanding running and passing to the regular close or compact formation.

The spread is the ideal offensive formation for a team which includes only one fast player because he can make long gains almost every time he carries the ball due to the fact that the defense is spread out in the same manner as the offense.

Any six-man team with one fair passer, good receivers and one good runner that uses the spread effectively can be a good six-man football team.

### A Combination Offense Using the T and the Short Punt

The short punt with a man in motion and the T formation are an effective offensive combination. The same plays can be run from both formations.

The shift.--As the offensive team comes from the huddle they line up in a 3-3 formation on the line of scrimmage with the three backs about three yards directly behind the linemen then on a signal from the quarterback, they shift into either the short punt or the T formation, from which the play will be run.

The shift from the basic formation is shown in Figure 28:

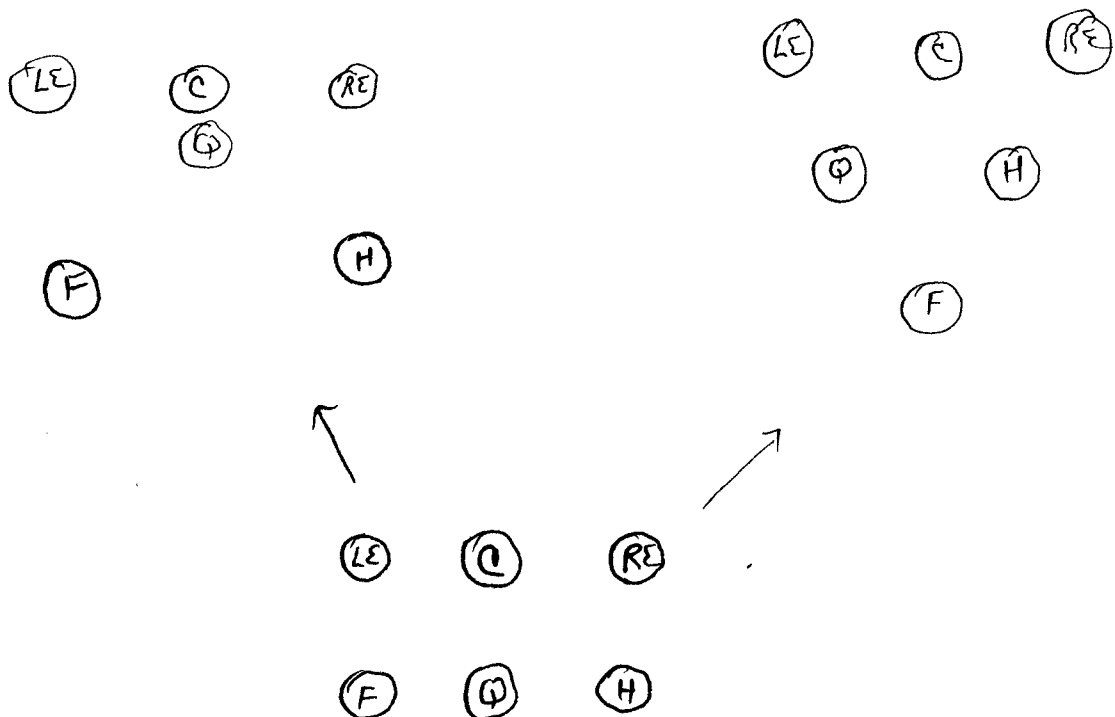


Fig. 28. -- The shift from the basic formation.

There is very little difficulty in teaching the shift or the man in motion style of play. The number hike system is used for the shift and the man in motion counts to himself and pivots into the play one full count after the hike number.

End run.--The end run is a favorite with the team who use the close formations. It will work very well from this system of offense, especially if the defense is confused by the shift.

The end run from the short punt is shown in Figure 29:

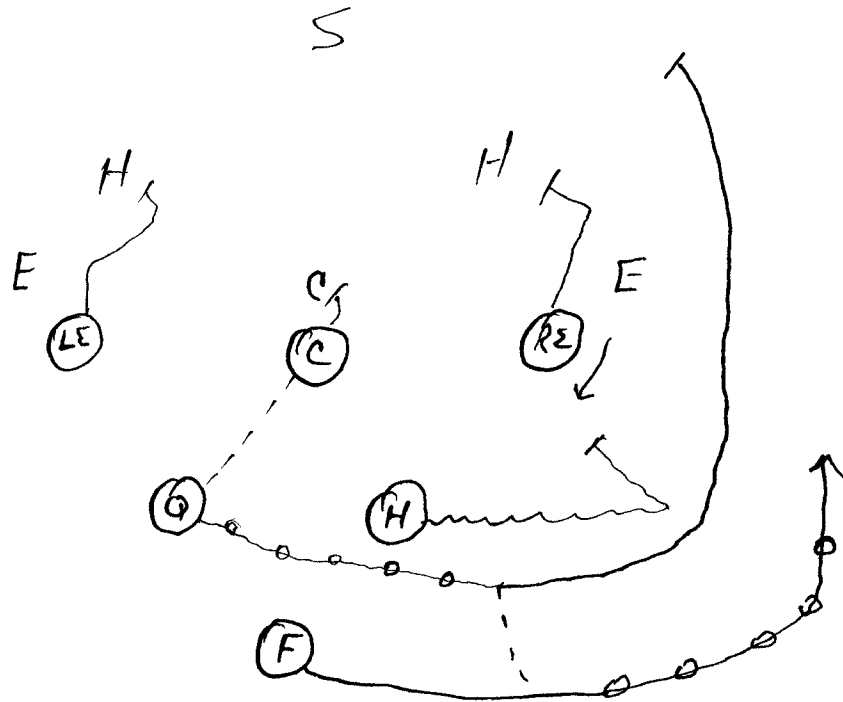


Fig. 29. -- End run from the short punt formation.

On the end run from the short punt formation, the half-back is in motion before the snap. He cuts back and blocks the end. The right end blocks the defensive halfback. The left end blocks the other half or draws him out of position by acting as a pass receiver. The same play can be run from the T formation and the assignments will be the same.

The quick opener.--For short gains and to pull in the defense, the quick opener play is very good, especially when used with the man in motion.

The quick opener is shown in Figure 30:

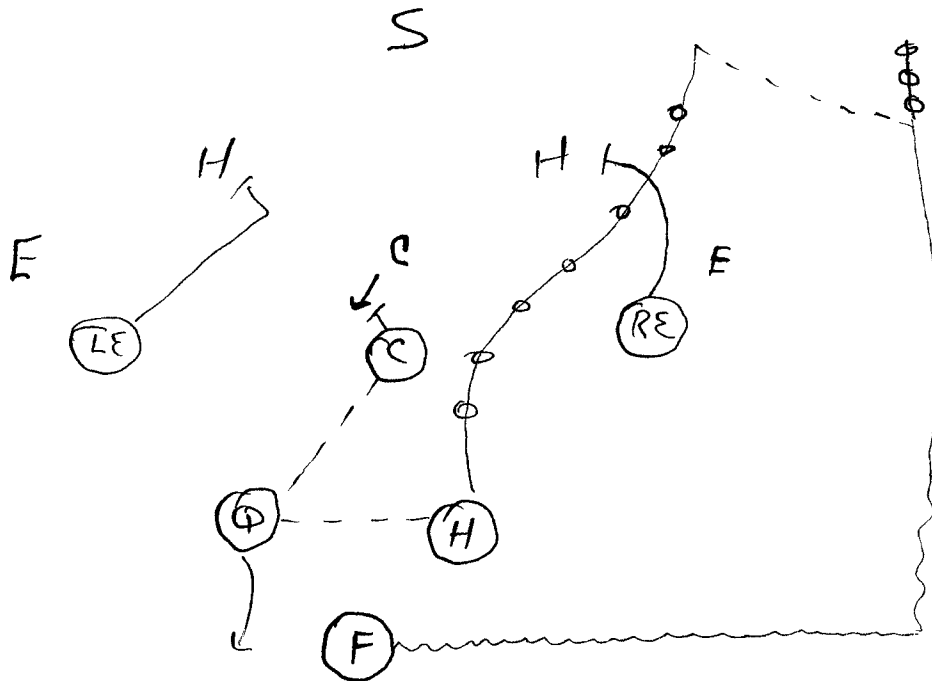


Fig. 30. -- The quick opener from the short punt.

The quick opener play, at times, will go for long yardage. Where the ball carrier goes depends upon the defensive center's charge. If the defensive half moves out with the man in motion then the right end blocks the safety. The defensive ends are out of the play if they are on the outside of the offensive ends. This same play works well from the T formation.

Fake power play.--After the offensive team has run several power plays such as the quick opener or the fullback buck, the defense will move in to stop these plays. The fake power plays will then work for long yardage.

The fake power play is shown in Figure 31:

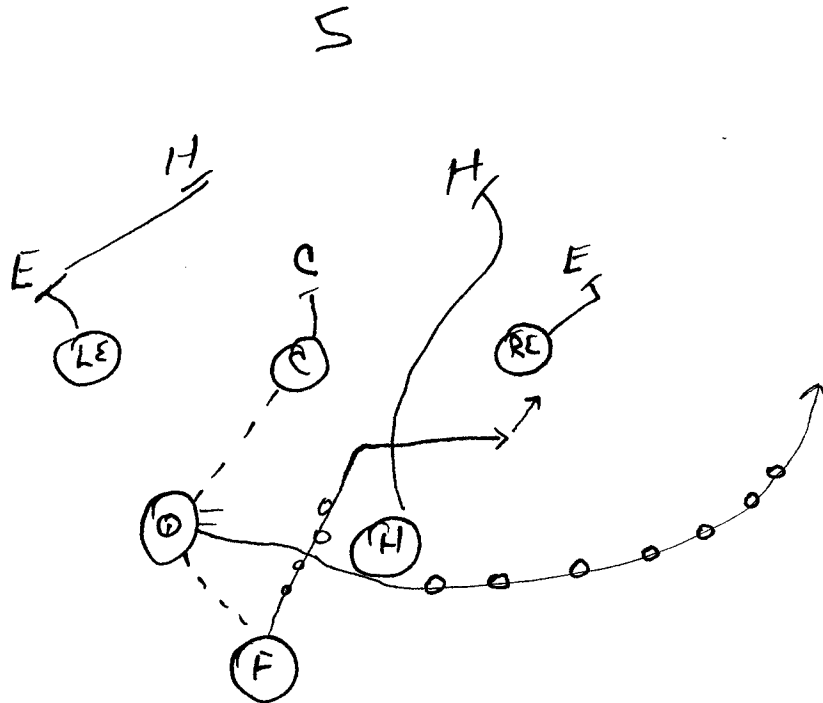


Fig. 31. -- Fake power play.



When running the fake power play from the short punt, the full back will take a short step to the right before receiving the ball from the quarterback, he then drives into the line and as he passes the quarterback, he slips the ball to him; the quarterback hides the ball on his outside hip and runs around end. This play could be called a six man football "bootleg" play.

The combination offense, using the short punt and the T formations, is fundamentally a running offense in that a good running game is necessary to the success of this style of offensive play. If the running game will be developed to a very high degree, then some excellent gains can be made on passes, especially when the secondary defenders begin to come up near the line of scrimmage to help in defending against the plays which have been hitting for good yardage in the line. On a situation of this kind, a fake run and pass will work very well.

Option plays can be developed from this offense and they have a tendency to keep the defense out of position at all times.

The quarterback who is the snap receiver in this style of offense should be a good faker with the ball. Much time should be spent in working out this phase of the game because this may eliminate defenders on almost all plays. The defense will be watching the quarterback because he receives the ball from center; if he can keep them watching

him even after he has given the ball to another offensive player, then the timing of the defensive maneuvers will be upset to the extent that the particular offensive play should go for a good gain.

### Officiating With Two Men

In most six-man football games, only two officials are used to call the game because it is hard to get good officials and because of the expense which would be involved if more than two officials were used. As a general rule, these officials will be experienced in calling eleven-man football where the rules are different and the game is played in a different manner.

This material is for the benefit of those officials to use in order that they might call a better game, thus improving the general condition of the game of six-man football.

Positions.--The two officials, the referee and the linesman, cannot call a six-man football game in the proper manner unless their position are such that they will be able to see the entire playing field. They must be able to see every maneuver on the part of the defensive and the offensive players so that they will be able to detect any infraction of the rules.

The correct positions of the referee and the linesman are shown in Figure:32:

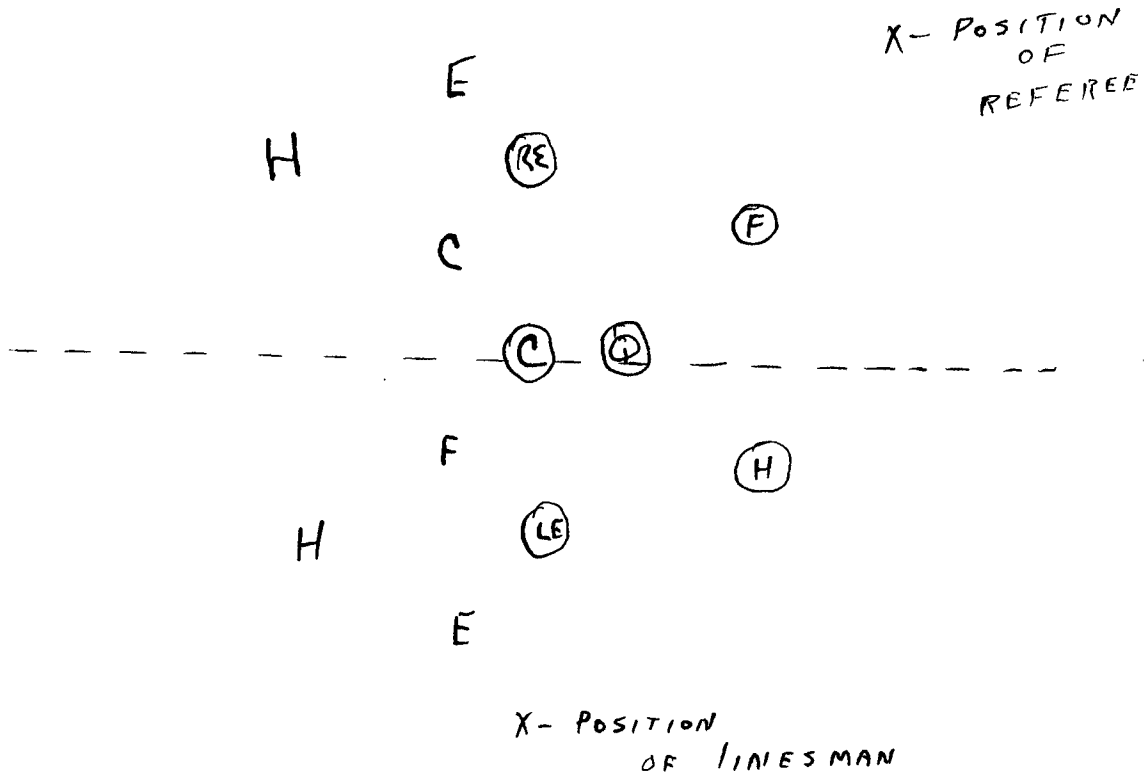


Fig. 32. -- Positions of the officials.

The referee should stand behind the offensive team and toward his sideline half of the field for plays from scrimmage. At the beginning of every down he should check the down number with the linesman. The linesman should be in the neutral zone and at a distance from the players in order to avoid interference with play. It is the responsibility of these officials to keep out of the way of the player of both the offensive and the defensive team.

The referee.--The referee shall use a whistle, a horn, and a marker. The whistle is sounded for putting the ball in play and when the ball becomes dead. The marker, which should be a red and white flag, is thrown to the ground, and the horn blown to indicate a foul has been committed. The referee is responsible for making all final decisions. He shall explain penalties for fouls to the offended captain, giving him the choice of options where necessary. He shall measure off penalties. He shall maintain control of the game and players with strict enforcement of the rules. He shall control the conduct of substitutes and coaches on the benches by enforcement of penalties for unsportsman like conduct.

The linesman.--The linesman shall assume the duties customarily done by the head linesman, who watches for off-side plays and signals the position of the yardage chain and down marker. He shall supervise his three assistants who are in charge of the yardage chain and the down marker. They do not move the yardage chain or the down marker until the linesman signals them. They remain off the field unless a measurement is required. These assistants are representatives from the two schools and are selected prior to the game .

In addition to the above duties, the lineman shall sound his horn and drop his marker for any violation of the rules as if he were the referee. He has an equal right to

call any fouls he sees. This is particularly true on his side of the field. However, he shall throw his flag for infractions such as offensive or defensive holding in the neutral zone, failure to clear pass, at any time. He shall signal and call out the number of the down to the referee. When a pass which moved toward strikes the ground near the neutral zone, the linesman must know if it crossed the scrimmage line in flight. This play situation is a major six-man football officiating problem. A discussion of the rules pertaining to this play situation follows: In six-man football, a pass which moves forward but fails to cross the scrimmage line in flight is not considered a forward pass. It is treated as a backward pass, even though its direction is forward; the six-man rules state that a backward pass or a clear pass may be recovered and advanced by any player.

Grounded pass.--When a pass which moves forward strikes the ground near the line of scrimmage or the neutral zone, the linesman must signal the referee. If the pass failed to cross the scrimmage line in flight, the linesman signals by pointing with his arm extended toward the offensive side. The referee withholds his whistle since the ball may be recovered and advanced by any player. If the pass crossed the scrimmage line in flight, the linesman gives the signal for an incomplete forward pass (hands rapidly criss crossed in horizontal plane). The ball is dead and the referee blows his whistle.

Punt.--If it is reasonable certain that a punt is to be attempted, the linesman shall advance deep into the receiver's territory to watch for out of bounds plays. The referee then switches his position from behind the offensive team to the neutral zone.

Try for point.-- On the try for point after touchdown, the linesman is in the neutral zone where he may observe snap infractions. From this position he may determine whether the ball passes over or under the crossbar. The referee is behind the offensive team and in such a position to judge whether the ball goes through the goal above the crossbar or directly over a goal post.

Kick off.--On the kick off, the linesman takes a position on the kicker's kickoff line. He watches for kick off infractions and for any players going out of bounds on his sideline. The referee takes a position near the receiver's goal line and sideline opposite the lineman.

Duties in common.--Duties in common to both officials exist at all times. Both men should feel complete responsibility for making decisions and signalling violations, timeouts, out of bounds, and any other infraction which they might see. They should immediately consult with each other. Official signals are then given after the decision has been reached. On long running plays, passes, or kicks, the linesman should indicate, by pre-arranged signal, that the play has gone through without violation. This enables the referee

to signal immediately for legal touchdown plays.

The referee and the linesman should consult the captains of the two teams at the start of the game and at the half to decide the choices for the coin flip.

Both officials should be attired in regulation uniforms and report to the field of play at least fifteen minutes before game time.

During this period the timers and scorekeepers should be consulted. They are supplied by the two schools. Their table should be on the forty yard line and at least five yards from the sideline. Benches for the players and substitutes of both teams are on either side of the timers table. The appointed yardage chain men and the down marker man should be properly instructed.

The officials should conduct the game throughout in a friendly, business like manner. Interpretations and decisions with the players or coaches during the game should not be permitted. It is unwise to caution players of rule violations. If there has been a foul in the judgement of either official, it should be called and the penalty inflicted.

Good officiating is a must for any game of six-man football for just the same reasons that it is essential for a college or professional eleven-man football game. It is possibly more important in the small high school because good officiating will eliminate the hard feeling and arguments.

## APPENDIX

### A QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO THE COACHES OF SIX-MAN FOOTBALL IN TEXAS

Directions: These questions are to furnish material for a study to determine the status of six-man football in the high schools of Texas. Will you please fill in the following questions concerning yourself and school? Please return to J.C. O'Neal, Football Coach, Paint Creek High School, Haskell, Texas.

1. Did you participate in college football?
2. Did you letter in college football ?
3. Have you had any formal training to coach six-man football ?
4. Did you anticipate employment as a coach of six-man football ?
5. What is your salary ?
6. How many classes do you teach daily not counting athletics ?
7. List the defensive formations which your team used in 1952.
8. Is six-man football inferior to eleven-man football ?
9. List the offensive formations which your team used in 1952.



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