



BrightonSM

Flag Football 2024 Coach's Handbook

**Brighton Recreation Center
555 N. 11th Avenue
Brighton, CO 80601**

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City of Brighton Youth Sports Contact Numbers

Amanda Aburto, Sports Supervisor	303-655-2208
Tyler Duckworth, Sports Coordinator	303-665-2281
Vacant, Sports Coordinator	303-655-2203
Brighton Recreation Center	303-655-2200
Sports Hot Line (Weather/Cancellations)	303-655-2210
Ambulance/Emergency/Police	911
Police Non-Emergency	303-655-2304

Schedules & league information can be found at:

www.teamsideline.com/brightonco

City of Brighton Coach's Code of Ethics Pledge

- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will treat each player as an individual, remembering that there is a large range of emotional and physical development at all age groups.
- I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
- I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat the injuries of my players.
- I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for ALL of my players.
- I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players and the opposing team.
- I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players.
- I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.
- I will remember that I am a youth sports coach and that the game is for children, not adults.

How to treat the Officials

- Are you aware that most youth referees are learning just like your child? They are members of our community who have come up through our programs just like your child is doing.
 - And did you know they often do twice the work as a professional referee...most college/professional games have a referee and two (sometimes three) additional referees to assist them! Most of our youth games have one or two referees who do it all!
- **Never, and we mean never, criticize a referee for making a mistake or bad call. It is disrespectful and not conducive to the lessons our program strives to teach our youth.**

In addition, would you want a spectator criticizing your child in that manner? Please put yourself in their shoes! We hope your child will become a referee in the future...so, think about how you would feel if that young referee was your own child! Also, it is very likely that the referee's family may be sitting next to you!

Positive Coaching Alliance

The Brighton Sports Department is proud to announce a partnership with Positive Coaching Alliance. The Positive Coaching Alliance teaches coaches and parents how to encourage their athletes with positive reinforcement. A combination of truthful, specific praise and constructive criticism has shown to improve an athlete's performance along with increasing their chances of sticking with sports longer. As well as, learn the valuable life lessons inherently available through organized sports.

Positive Coaching Alliance's mission is to transform the youth sports culture where all youth and high school athletes have a positive, character-building experience that results in better athletes, and better people.



BETTER ATHLETES
BETTER PEOPLE

Youth Coaching Guidelines

Reasons why people love to coach youth sports:

- ✓ **Sports contribute to the physical, mental, and emotional growth and development of our youth**
- ✓ A sincere desire to help youth have fun through sports participation
- ✓ To help offset bad influences youth are exposed to
- ✓ Working with children brings joy
- ✓ Belief that good leadership is needed more than ever before
- ✓ To give others back to the community; dedication and effort to help each participant become a better person and athlete

Whatever your why, we are happy you're here!

An effective youth sports coach will:

- ✓ Be interested in youth as people. Each as an individual. Treat each youth as you would like your own children to be treated.
- ✓ Be aware at all times that you are dealing with younger youth, not high school, college or professional athletes.
- ✓ Treat the sport as a game while maintaining a fun atmosphere.
- ✓ Help each child both on and off the field.
- ✓ Achieve a balance between fun and improvement.
- ✓ Work to understand how to motivate young athletes - aim to inspire, motivate, and understand children.
- ✓ Understand the attention span of children at each age level.
 - Rule of thumb: Children can give you 1 minute of undivided attention for every year old they are.
 - Example: at 5 year olds, they can give you about 5 minutes of undivided attention.
- ✓ Exercise caution and safety in every drill.

As coaches you are in a unique position to create positive memories about youth sports for the children on your team. We aim to have players return again and again, year after year, to participate in our programs because the experience was fun for them, and they remember being allowed to just be kids and play the game. When their parents ask them, "How was your practice/game?" We hope they'll answer, "It was FUN!"

We encourage you to consider yourself a teacher first and a coach second. You volunteered because you care about kids and sports. As you know, participation in organized sports is just one part of a child's overall development as a person. Building self-esteem, teamwork, problem-solving and social development will all take place throughout the season along with learning sports skills. You are the vehicle through which this learning will occur. Keep the focus on what's best for the players and what would be fun for you if you were their age!

Coaching Hints

- Be specific with your praise.
- Stop practices to point out when players do something well rather than when they make a mistake.
- While providing feedback, use the “sandwich” method by placing a critical remark between two encouraging comments.
- Give high praise to kids giving their best and displaying good sportsmanship
- Provide constant positive reinforcement- it's the key to improvement
- Focus on fun and safety over wins and losses
- Be passionate and enthusiastic, it carries over to your players
- Have reasonable expectations and set attainable goals for the players; Children need clear guidelines and expectations
- Remember that kids will make mistakes, it's all part of the process.
- Youth athletes show great motivation and enthusiasm, which should be developed and encouraged.
- A “professional sports” model for coaching is not effective for youth sports.
- Each child's individual needs should be considered.
- Understand that the coach has a great deal of influence on a child's perception of sports.
- The greatest qualities a youth sports coach can have are ENTHUSIASM, UNDERSTANDING and PATIENCE.
- Fear is not an effective motivator for youth sports.
- Confident athletes develop more effectively and quickly.
- Involve every child into team activities 100% of the time.
- Become aware of each individual child's needs, strengths and weaknesses; each child will have some of each.
- Allow your players to tell you their feelings, expectations and use their feedback often.
- Positive reinforcement creates improvement, negative reinforcement fosters fear and frustrations.

Finally, please don't hesitate to call us if you think we can help make your season a better one. We support you in your efforts to make the youth sports experience a positive one for you players. Have fun out there!

Protecting Our Youth from Potential Predators

As Coaches it is important to:

1. Recognize that you are part of a network of people committed to protecting kids in youth sports!
2. Never be alone with a Pee-Wee player except in the case of an emergency.
 - Coaches should not meet with participants without parents or other participants accompanying them.
3. Be aware of body contact.
 - Coaches should limit the amount of contact made with their participants and create healthy boundaries that make all participants feel safe.
4. Do not host sleepovers or events outside of practice.
 - Team building activities are encouraged but should take place only at approved youth sports locations. Our program prohibits coaches from hosting events outside of practice without parents being present at all times.

As Parents it is important to:

1. Create a buddy system for your child when you are not around.
 - There is safety with numbers and your child needs to know it's important not to be alone.
2. Encourage open communication with your child, even when it may be an uncomfortable topic.
 - If someone inappropriately touches or speaks with your child, your child may become embarrassed and become reluctant to tell you. Make sure they know how important it is for them to inform you.
3. Listen to your gut feelings. Child predators avoid children who have vocal adults looking out for them.

Safety & First Aid

Prevent accidents by:

- Making sure players have proper equipment and the equipment is being used properly
- Make sure the field is safe and clear of safety hazards
- Do not allow “horseplay” during practices or games
- Concentrate on fundamentals of the game that can prevent injuries
- Make sure all practices and drills have supervision
- Have basic first aid supplies available

If you have a situation that requires medical attention:

- Contact the player’s guardian immediately for direction
- Call 911 if you feel it is necessary
- Submit an Accident Report to the Recreation Center (blank reports located in this manual)

Minor Injuries:

- Offer water, bandages, or ice, (no more than 20 minutes at a time and do not put ice in direct contact with the skin).
- Do not ask the participant to return to activity until both you AND they are comfortable

Major Injuries:

- Keep calm and keep participants calm
- Contact parent/guardian immediately
- If not a 911 emergency, wait for parents’ direction regarding how to proceed
- Do not hesitate to call 911 if the situation is serious. It is up to YOU to call if the situation is serious enough to do so, even if you’ve not heard from a parent/guardian
- Complete and submit an incident report to the Recreation Center, blank reports located in this manual.
- Do not transport a participant. Never administer anything other than water and bandages.

Stretching & Warming-Up

Stretching and warming up can prevent injury to players. Coaches will want to develop a pre-game and pre-practice warm up and stretching regimen. The following points are important when having players warm up.

- Cover all muscle groups including hamstrings, calves, neck and back.
- Try to make it relevant to the sport you're coaching. Exercises that focus on sport-related movements serve the dual purpose of getting the kids loosened up and simulating game action.
- Keep the exercises light. You want the kids to get loosened up gradually. Remind them to go at no more than half speed in the beginning. You don't want them going full speed throughout the entire warm-up so that by the time the game begins, they're fatigued.

Stretching

- Passive stretching is the most beneficial for children. Passive stretching allows children to move into a position slowly, without discomfort. Remind kids they should only feel mild tension and not pain. For example, players should slowly bend down and touch their toes and count to five and return to an upright position.
- Don't allow horseplay during these exercises. Focus attention on stretching.
- Emphasize slow movements. Younger children can complete just a couple of repetitions of each stretch. This repetition also helps ingrain in them at an early age the importance of always stretching before performing an activity.
- **Join in!** As the coach, you're running around and teaching and instructing during the course of the practice, so joining the kids for the stretches is a good idea for you and your assistants. This participation further instills the importance of warming up to the youngsters and helps you avoid being sidelined with a strained or pulled muscle. For a practice or scrimmage, ask the parents to come out and join too, it's always fun for players to see their parents participate!

City of Brighton Youth Flag Football Rules

GAME PLAY:

- A coin toss determines first possession.
- The offensive team takes possession of the ball at its 5- yard line and has four (4), plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, they have four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offensive team takes over on its 5-yard line.
- If the offensive team fails to cross midfield, possession of the ball changes and the opposition starts its drive from its 5-yard line.
- The snap/exchange from center to ball carrier begins the play.
- Ball *must* be snapped from the center to the ball carrier, between the legs, not off to one side.
 - The ball must be exchanged and the ball carrier must have full possession, (no other player touching the ball), of the ball before they may give a handoff, toss or pass. This eliminates any “center sneak” type play.

PLAYERS

- Teams must field minimum of (5) players at all times.
- Teams can play (6) players on the field.

TIMING

- Games are played by 2 (two), 20 minute halves with a 5 minute half
 - The game clock will run continuously.
- At half time, teams will switch sides and possession will be given to the team who began the game on defense.
- If the score is tied at the end of 40 minutes, the game will be declared a tie-no extra period, (overtime) will be played.
- Each time the ball is spotted, a team has 30 seconds to snap the ball.
 - Teams will receive one warning before a delay of game penalty is enforced.
- Each team has one 60 second time out and one 30 second time out per half.
- Officials can stop the clock at their own discretion.

SCORING

- Touchdown: 6 points
- Extra point: 1 point (played from the 5-yard line)
2 points (played from the 12-yard line)
- Safety: 2 points

RUNNING

- **The quarterback cannot run the ball.**
- Direct handoffs behind the line of scrimmage are permitted.
- Offense may use multiple handoffs and laterals.
- **PITCHES ARE ALLOWED.**
- “NO RUNNING ZONES,” located 5-yards from each end zone and 5 yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short yardage situations.

- The player who takes the handoff can throw the ball from behind the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball has been handed off, all defensive players are eligible to rush.
- Spinning is allowed, but players cannot leave their feet to avoid a defensive player (No Diving).
- The ball is spotted where the ball carriers feet are when the flag is pulled, not where the ball is.

RECEIVING

- All players are eligible to receive passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- Only one player is allowed in motion at a time.
- Players must have at least one foot inbounds when making a catch.

PASSING

- All passes must be forward and received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- Shovel passes are allowed but must be received beyond the line of scrimmage.
- QB has 7-seconds "pass clock." If a pass is not thrown within the 7-seconds, play is dead, loss of down. Once the ball is handed off, the 7-second rule is no longer in effect.
- Interceptions change the possession of the ball at the point of interception.
Interceptions are the only changes of possession that do not start on the 5-yard line.
 - Interceptions may be returned until flags are removed; the same as an offensive ball carrier.

DEAD BALLS

- Substitutions may be made on any dead ball.
- Play is ruled "dead" when:
 - Ball carrier's flag is pulled.
 - Ball carrier's steps out of bounds.
 - Touchdown or safety is scored.
 - Ball carrier's knee hits the ground.
 - Ball carrier's flag falls out.

NOTE: There are no fumbles. The ball is dead and will be spotted where the ball hits the ground.

RUSHING THE QUARTERBACK

- The player who rushes the passer must be a minimum of 7-yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped. Only one player can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback may defend on the line of scrimmage.
- Once the ball is handed off, the 7-yard rule is no longer in effect and all defenders may go behind the line of scrimmage. A special marker, or the referee, will designate 7-yards from the line of scrimmage.
- The player rushing the quarterback must identify themselves to the referee.

SPORTSMANSHIP/ROUGHING

- If the field monitor or referee witnesses any acts of tackling, elbowing, cheap shots, blocking, or any unsportsmanlike act, the game will be stopped and the player and or coach will be ejected from the game.

PENALTIES

All penalties will be called by the Referee.

Defense:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Off sides- | <i>5 yards and automatic 1st down</i> |
| • Interference- | <i>10 yards and automatic 1st down</i> |
| • Illegal contact (Holding, Blocking, etc.)- | <i>10 yards and automatic 1st down</i> |
| • Illegal flag pulled (before receiver has ball)- | <i>10 yards and automatic 1st down</i> |
| • Illegal Rushing (starting rush inside 7 yards) | <i>10 yards and automatic 1st down</i> |

Offense:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Illegal motion (more than one person moving, false start etc.)- | <i>5 yards and loss of down</i> |
| • Illegal forward pass (pass received behind line of scrimmage)- | <i>5 yards and loss of down</i> |
| • Offensive pass interference (illegal pick play, pushing off defender)- | <i>5 yards and loss of down</i> |
| • Flag Guarding- | <i>10 yards (from line of scrimmage) and loss of down</i> |
| • Running in No Running Zone- | <i>10 yards and loss of down</i> |
| • Delay of game- clock stops- | <i>10 yards and loss of down</i> |

Referees determine incidental contact which may result from normal run of play. All penalties will be assessed from the line of scrimmage. Only the team captain or coach may ask the referee question about rule clarification and interpretations. Players cannot question judgment calls. Teams are not allowed to decline penalties, this applies to both defensive and offensive penalties.

ROUGH PLAY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

- Trash talking is illegal. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. (Trash talk is talk that may be offensive to officials, opposing players, teams, or spectators.) If trash talking occurs, the referee will give one warning. If it continues, the player, players, coaches or spectators will be ejected from the game.

DRILLS

Taking the Snap Drill

This is a very simple *flag football drill* to teach your players how to snap the ball. This drill should be practiced for 3-5 minutes every practice until it becomes perfected by the players.

- Center lines up over the ball – make sure that knees are bent and head is up and not over the ball
- Quarterback lines up under center and calls hike
- Center hands the ball between his legs while rotating the ball 90 degrees. It is important to stress here that the ball is not thrown to, or shoved at the QB. The center simply **holds the ball in place** until the QB takes it out of his hands.
- Quarterback steps back and raises the ball to mid-chest with both hands still wrapped around.

Hand- Off Drill

Taking a proper hand-off is the first skill all your running backs should learn. This *flag football drill* should be practiced in the early season for 3-5 minutes every practice until it becomes perfected by the players. Start the drill at 25-50% speed and work up to doing it at full speed.

- Quarterback holds the ball to his chest and simulates the snap
- Running Back is lined up 5-7 yards behind the QB. First on the right then on the left, alternating sides each time the drill is run.
- As the quarterback calls hike the running back moves forward to take the hand-off. Simultaneously the quarterback takes one step in the direction of the play and stretches his arms out, holding the ball securely and away from his body.
- The running back must gauge the distance and be sure not to strike the quarterback's body, arms or legs.
- As he moves forward the running back forms a pocket with his arms to receive the ball.
- The pocket is formed by placing one arm across the chest (parallel to the ground), palm down. The other arm goes across the lower abdomen, parallel to the ground and palm up.
- The QB then places the ball into the pocket and the RB clamps down on the ball with his forearms and palms.
- Make sure the RB does not try to grab the ball from the QB with his hands. Also make sure the RB is receiving the ball while moving and not stopping to accept the hand-off.

Fake Hand-Off Drill

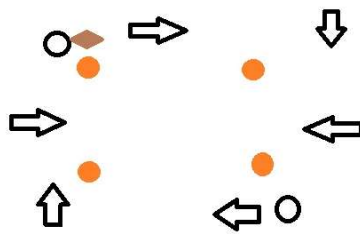
Similar to the hand-off *flag football drill*, but emphasis on the quarterback pulling the ball back out of the running back's arms. This drill should be practiced in the early season for 3-5 minutes every practice until it becomes perfected by the players. It can be worked in with the hand-off drill by alternating between the two.

- Quarterback holds the ball to his chest and simulates the snap.
- Running Back is lined up 5-7 yards behind the QB. First on the right then on the left, alternating sides each time the drill is run.
- As the quarterback calls hike the running back moves forward to take the handoff. Simultaneously the quarterback takes one step in the direction of the play and stretches his arms out, holding the ball securely and away from his body.
- As he moves forward the running back forms a pocket with his arms to receive the ball.
- The pocket is formed by placing one arm across the chest (parallel to the ground), palm down. The other arm goes across the lower abdomen, parallel to the ground and palm up.
- The QB then places the ball into the pocket and quickly pulls it back out.
 - Place emphasis on the quarterback holding the ball securely
- After the ball is removed, the RB should close his arms and hunch over for a few steps, acting as if he got a real hand-off

Snake Drill

This is a drill designed to reinforce good flag pulling techniques and running with the ball. Variations can work on flag pulling, handoffs, or YAC

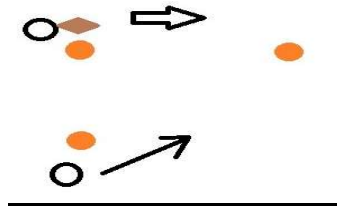
- Coach arranges 4 cones in a rectangle. Place the cones at 5 yards wide by 7 yards long. You can increase or decrease length on side or both to change the timing of the flag pull
- Start 1 player as a defender with a line behind them – This player is positioned at one corner of the cones.
- All other players form a line opposite corner the defender and outside the play area. With one stepping out to call the ball
- Players run down the length of the rectangle, (Running in opposite directions) to the cone that is on the same side as them. Then round the cones (having the players face each other)
- The defender will attempt to stop the player's progress by pulling the runners flag using good technique.
- After each attempt the runner becomes the defender and the defender moves to the end of the line.
- Variations add a handoff as the offensive player runs down the side, or have a coach throw to a player who then turns out in between the cones.



Pursuit Drill

This drill allow players to learn how to set an angle to make the tackle when coming from across the field. Can also be a conditioning drill.

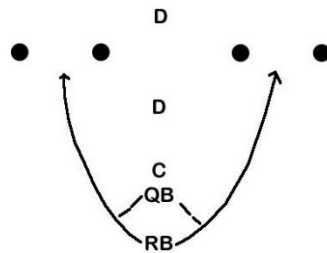
- Set up three cones in a right triangle each the same distance apart such as 10 yards. The larger the distance the more effective the conditioning
- Have the defender and the offensive player facing towards the third cone. The goal of the defensive player is to pull the flag of the offensive player before he reaches the cone.



Oklahoma Drill (3O v 2D)

This is a really effective drill that gets 5 plays at a time involved and in a game situation - simulating a running play.

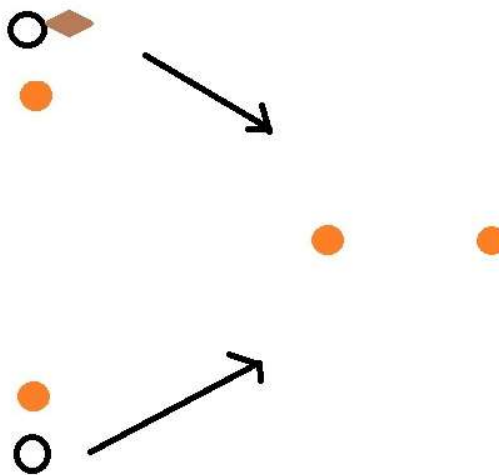
- For this drill, on offense you will have a center, a QB and a RB and on defense (1 Lineman and 1 Linebacker). Set up 2 pairs of cones a few yards apart, about 5 yards down field from the line of scrimmage, one pair left of center and one pair right of center - these are the areas that the Running Back needs to run through. Have coach standing behind LB. He will point to which direction the play will go
- Have your Running Backs line-up in their proper stance and in their proper position in the backfield, Have the QB call out the signals, move and pivot in the correct direction and hand the ball off to the RB. The RB should have a proper hand position so as to correctly accept the hand-off. The QB should make sure that he firmly puts the ball into the RB's target area. Then, it's up to the RB to try to get through the designated cones before the 2 defenders pull his/her flag.
- After each play, rotate the positions. Rotation could be RB to LB, LB to DL, DL to C, and QB to RB. Depending on # of players you can run this drill with 2 groups.



Angle Flag Pull

Similar idea Snake drill except the players will be running faster.

- The cones the players start at should be 10 yards apart. With the other two cones set at 5 yards but at an angle. The larger the angle the greater emphasis on speed. So to keep it as even as possible keep the angle smaller. To focus on the Flag pulling.

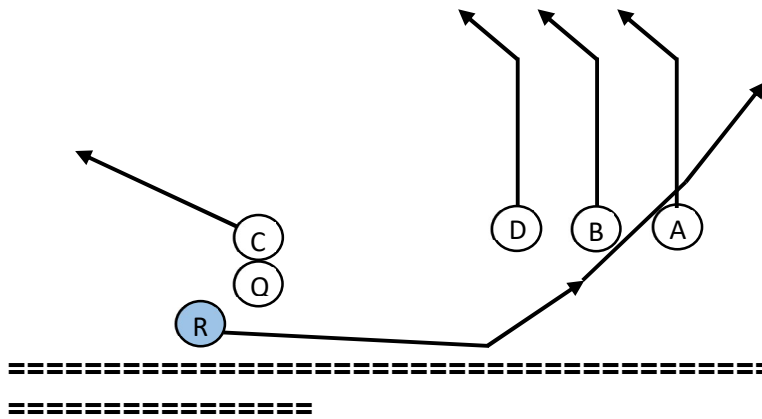


6 v 6 plays (passing)

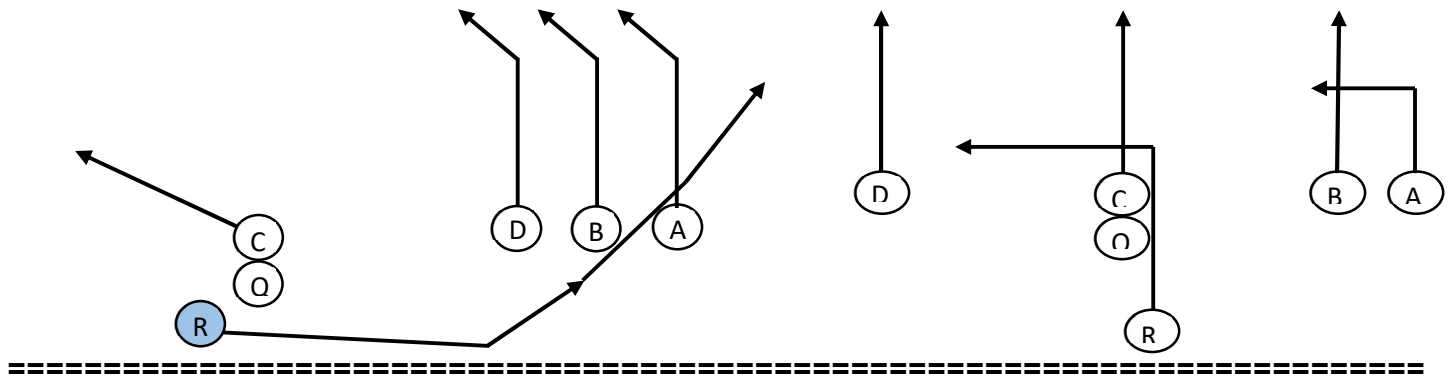
Note:

Q = Quarterback
C = Center
A, B, D = wide receivers
R = Running Back

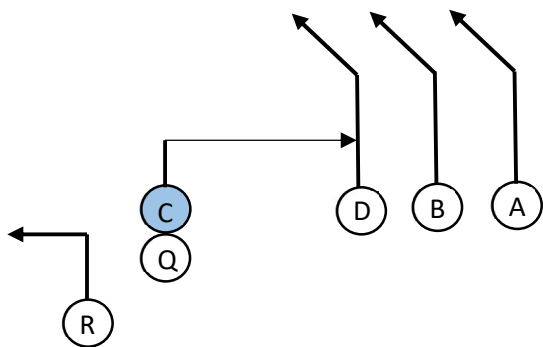
Trips Swing Pass



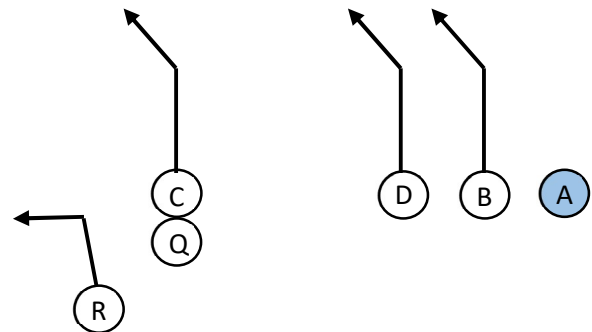
Twins Fly



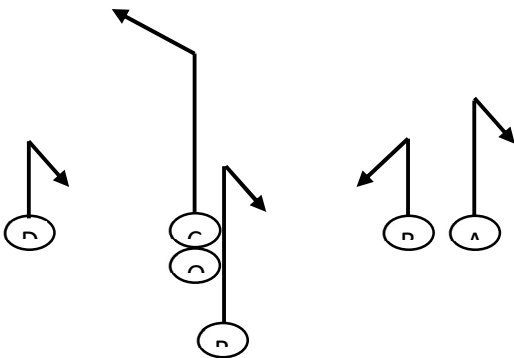
Trips Center Screen



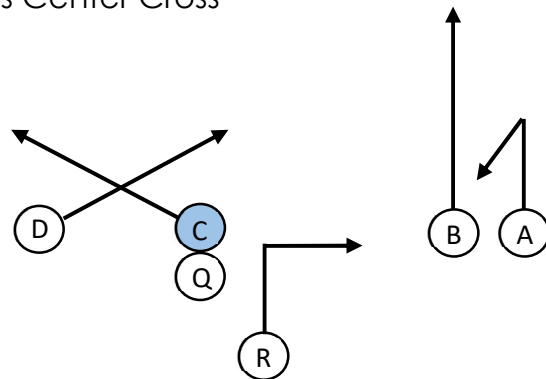
Trips Receiver Screen



Twins Hooks



Twins Center Cross

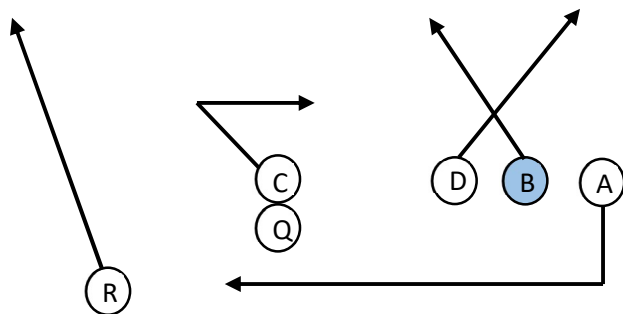


6 v 6 (running)

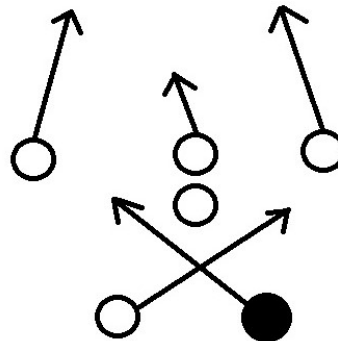
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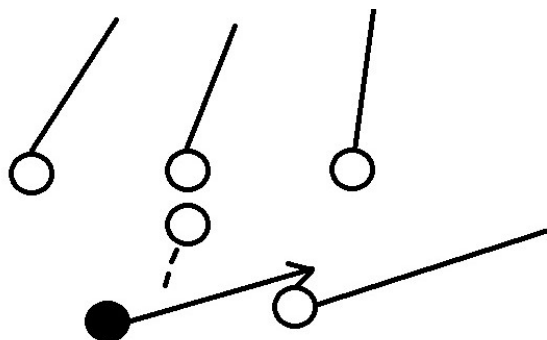
Trips End Around



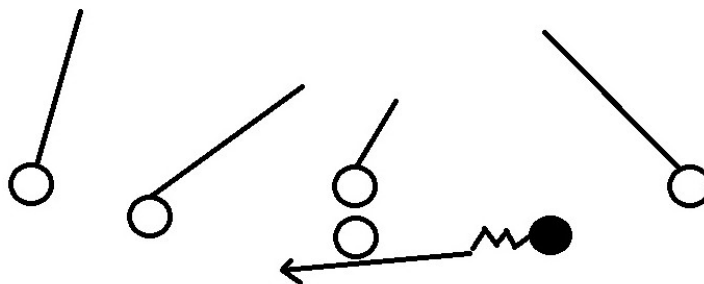
Tight Run Left



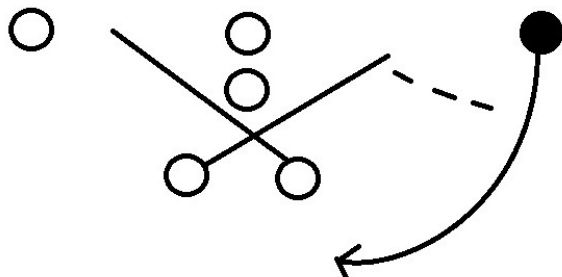
Tight Pitch Right



Spread Motion Left



Tight Reverse Left



I-Form Fullback Left

