

# - CDMFA -

Capital District Minor Football Association

## 6 on 6 Manual



## Coach Resources



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The biggest discussion at the CDMFA level for the last few years has been about Atom Football and how we can adjust our sport in the capital district to align with the principles of Long Term Athlete Development, a national program designed to provide a better sports environment that improves upon safety and personal development in an age appropriate method. The changes will be familiar to those involved in other sports, as they have all paved the way with revised rules that allow coaches to focus on player development at a young age.

Though the CDMFA is the last major center in the last major sport to adopt LTAD at the atom level (ages 8-10). We have used this delay to plan and ensure that we have created a well rounded program.

On April 8th, the CDMFA came together, voting on moving away from the current full sized game just like the Edmonton Eskimos play, into a revised age appropriate game. In addition to the normal association members, all levels of football came out to show their support and how critical this change is to the health of the sport: Edmonton Eskimos, University of Alberta Golden Bears, Edmonton Huskies, Edmonton Wildcats, High Schools and Football Alberta representatives were all in attendance to speak, and answer questions on the implications on our sport.

These changes will be implemented in the 2015 season, as a vote by the majority of the association membership passed at the 2015 CDMFA AGM. Come help us with this this historic and exciting event in our community and in our sport.



The FUNdamental stage is the second of the three LTAD stages that are critical to the development of physical literacy. If children fail to develop physical literacy prior to the growth spurt in puberty, they will have limited ability to develop sport-specific skills at older ages and stages of training and development. Obviously, this will significantly impact their desire to continue in lifelong physical activity and limit their opportunities to develop as an athlete.

Children in the FUNdamental stage are motivated primarily by the desire to have FUN. While they may participate in competitive sports where points are scored, they are far less concerned with competitive results than they are with having fun, being with friends and developing a strong self-esteem.

Children in the FUNdamental stage improve their fundamental movement skills through well-structured programs. Skill development should happen through a combination of unstructured play in safe and challenging environments and quality instruction from knowledgeable teachers/leaders/coaches in structured programs at schools, community recreation centres and minor sport programs.

Children this age should not specialize in a single sport, unless they are participating in one of the few recognized early-specialization sports (e.g. gymnastics, figure skating, diving). If they have a preferred sport, they may take part in it two or three times a week, but they should participate in other sports and physical activities at least three to four times per week.

Children this age have a strong sense of what is “fair” and should be introduced to the simple rules and ethics of sports. Basic rules, tactics, decision making and ethics of sport can be introduced.

### **Things to Think About**

Hand and foot speed can be developed especially well by boys and girls during this stage. If this sensitive period of accelerated adaptation to develop speed is missed, body speed later in life may be significantly compromised.

Strength, endurance and flexibility need to be developed, but through games and fun activities rather than a training regimen. Children need to learn to “read” the movements going on around them and make sound decisions during games.

## CDMFA 6 on 6

### Guiding Principles

1. Athletes Come First. Youth participation at a variety of positions – whole player development.
2. Promote the LOVE of the game. Developing the FUN of football
3. Teach the necessary movement and football skills to provide a solid foundation which to build upon.
4. Basic skill concepts that are taught that can transfer to all positions: staying low, staying square, moving feet and keeping an athletic base





## Technical and Skill Development

**Technical Development:** A process by which quality opportunities are provided for the local community to enjoy sport at a level determined only by each individual/group interest and ability.

**Skill Development:** A learning process that is progressive and sequential. Coaches and Athletes move through specific phases as they teach and learn.

The emphasis on technical development at the grassroots level of football is an essential step in the development of young football players. The technical development of a football player is tightly tied to the physical development because once one has the physical ability to achieve the technical goals the player will experience success through his/her application of the technical skills used combined with his/her physical athletic ability.

Again, if one is highly developed technically but lacks the physical ability to carryout the skills within competition, both the player and the coach must spend more time dedicated to the development of physical abilities. The technical development is primarily focused on the development of individual skills. For example, it could be argued that all players should learn skills of running, tackling, and blocking, however there are also position specific skills such as: a quarterback must develop the skills of a drop back, throwing progression, and reading of defences.

Every individual's experience is unique and must be treated as so, therefore, a coach must teach basic skills to the entire group and continually add as the learner progresses. The progression of the learner can be planned for but must also account for an adaptive dimension to simplify for or challenge individuals.



Ed Hervey, Edmonton Eskimos General Manager, addresses participants at the first ever Atom Football event hosted by the Edmonton Eskimos, University of Alberta Golden Bears, Edmonton Huskies and Edmonton Wildcats.

### Teams

- Teams will play 6-a-side football
- Team Roster no smaller than 9 no larger than 18 (i.e. once 19 players are registered you would then have two teams)
- Age Level: children who will turn 8, 9 or 10 in the current calendar year (by December 31).
- 8 is a shared age with Novice to allow transition early for those players that are ready and later for those that are not.
- Players that are 6-7 would be registered in the Novice program, but would be grandfathered if existing players.
- Each association in the CDMFA can field as many teams as they like and no child who has the commitment and interest to play should be cut.
- There are no rules on eligible and ineligible numbers
- Home team has the dark jersey by default. Visiting Teams unable to wear a light jersey are responsible to coordinate with the home team.

### Game Structure

- It is a tackle game, using the Canadian tackle rules unless stated otherwise.
- In lieu of timed games, teams play a jamboree style of game where each team gets five offensive plays to score from the 35 yard line. Regardless if they score on the first play or lose possession to a turn over, they will get all five plays then the ball will be turned over to the other team to start at the 35 yard line.
- Each touchdown will be worth 1 point and no covert or kick-off will follow.
- Each team will have possession four times (20 offensive plays and 20 defensive plays total)
- During each teams set of five offensive plays they must pass the ball **forward** at least twice.
- If a Quarterback is sacked behind the line of scrimmage, it will count as one of the mandatory pass attempts.
- Games scores will not be tracked by the league, though we know atom players will track during the game (often incorrectly).
- The game ball is a composite or leather Wilson TDJ.

### Field Layout

- Four games run concurrently on a single field.
- Field size is approximately a quarter field (24 yards wide, 45 yards long). A sideline and end zone of a marked field will be used with small pylons (supplied by CDMFA) being used to mark the other sideline (on the inside of the hash) every 5 yards.
- Cones will also be placed between player benches (at the 20), which will be between the game fields
- Cones will be placed along the 45 as well, to ensure cameras and players entering/leaving the field do not interfere with another game.
- Parents are not allowed on the field or at the field level.
- One coach from each team will be allowed on the field each play to assist in setting up each play and coaching between plays. They must be able to stay out of the play (stand 10 yards back and avoid the players during the play) and they must abide by the 1 minute between plays rule.
- CDMFA will provide cones (and store at Foote Field)
- CDMFA will provide a yard marker (and store at Foote Field)
- Home team will provide a game ball
- Cameras are welcome but must stay on the outside of the field or between the 45 yard lines.
- VP Atom and/or the President of the CDMFA will be present at all Atom game days for 2015 to address any emerging issues/rule clarifications.

### Offense

The Offense is limited to four formations (tight, tight left, tight right, wide) with a Receiver that can motion.

Teams must have three offensive linemen lined up. The two linemen on the outside are considered eligible receivers as well as blockers. They will be called the Fullback and the Tightend.

The Center and the designated Running Back and the Quarterback cannot receive passes.

Anyone is eligible to run the ball.

Team must have on all plays at least one player lined up as a Running Back (directly behind the quarterback).

The snap must come from the Center to the Quarterback. It may be a shotgun, though it is understood to be currently difficult at this age level.

The 6th person is designated a Receiver and may be lined up anywhere, however they must be at least 2 yards off the line at the snap of the ball.

Only the Receiver may motion during the cadence

The Left and Right Linemen may be on a small spread (1 ½ yards or under) from the Centre or on a widespread (5 yards from the Centre)

Offense is not limited to fixed plays

### Defense

Two players (Tackle, End) on the defense must be on the line

For the 4 that are not on the line, they must be 5 yards back from the line of scrimmage unless that puts them into the end zone, in which case they may come up to the goal line.

### Fair Play

Fair play rules will be in effect and will be openly communicated to parents as an atom league standard. All players on the roster must be in the game by the second set of possession and must play a minimum of 10 plays during the game. This will be done on the honour system since there are many factors that may prevent kids from getting 10 plays that are out of the coach's control. Teams are encouraged to assign a parent to count and control this rotation.

As Atom is focused at learning and development, it is encouraged that all players play all positions at some point in the season. Encouraged, but not required. For example: putting a very small player as the center, may not be 'fun' for them.

### Timing

Field Time will be scheduled as 90 minutes per game.

15 minutes is allocated to on field warm ups.

60 minutes is allocated to the game. If there is remaining time in the 60 minute game, teams can and are encouraged to play additional sets

No more than 1 minute will be allowed in between each play to keep the game moving. Player requiring more coaching should be sent off the field to another coach.

No more than 3 minutes will be allowed to change possession.

Time count violations may result in a loss of down to keep the game on time. Officials will strive to account for time required to move the play and will provide warnings to keep the game moving.

### Coaches

Minimum 2 coaches. One on the field, one at the bench.

Coaches **must** have taken "Making Headway" prior to coaching players.

Coaches **should** take "Intro to Competition – Tackle"



## Season Planning

An effective program is a planned program. The start of a regular season usually leads to some planning. Coaches should outline what they expect from his/her players for each week of the season. Planning will also include placing players where they have the best opportunity for success on the field and enjoyment of the game.

- 1) Teach the fundamentals every week: Running, Covering, Blocking, Tackling, and Catching/Carrying.
- 2) Implement Plays (Progress for Basic to Complex): Teach the basics of Offense and Defence to All Players:
  - a. Offensive Holes and Defensive Gaps
  - b. The Language of Play-Calling
  - c. Proper Huddle Formations
  - d. Alignments, Assignments, and Techniques
- 3) Slot Players into Positions that best suit their abilities.

## Progressions

All skills throughout the season should be progressive. Regardless of experience or skill level, all athletes should start from a base fundamental. Teach the following skills broken down from the very beginning:

- Stance – from multiple positions
- Balance
- First steps / Footwork
- Change of direction – agility
- Blocking – close proximity, stalk, etc
- Tackling – front, open field, angle, partner, team, etc
- Catching – use hands
- Throwing
- Pursuit
- Angles

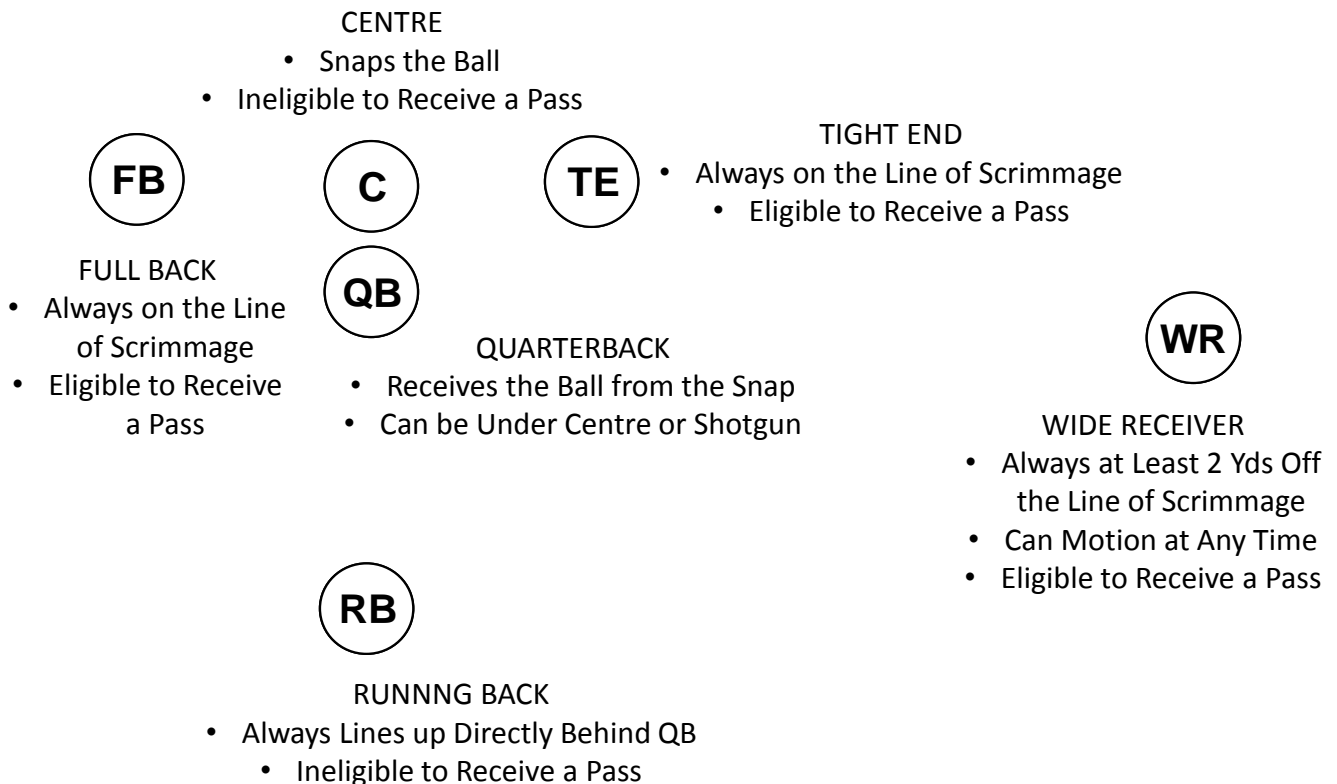
## Practice Planning

Clearly state your expectations at the beginning of the season with regards to practices. Ideally the practice to game ratio should be 3:1 – the players will benefit more from good structured practices than the actual game play. Practice planning is essential to get the most out of players and the most out of the practice. The amount of time you spend on particular parts of practice may vary throughout the season but the focus should always be on player development rather than system. Fundamentals should always take priority over system play – players will always move on to a team that uses different terminology and game planning but the skills will always be transferable. In order to get the most out of your practice time ensure that transitions are crisp and players are expected to hustle around the field so no time is lost.

<b>Practice Plan: Team Name</b>			
<b>Date:</b>			
<b>Session &amp; Time</b>	<b>O-Line &amp; D-Line</b>	<b>QBs, RBs &amp; RECs</b>	<b>LBs &amp; DBs</b>
Warm-Up 6:00 PM	Dynamic / Active Warm-Up Cone Agility, Ladders, Bag Agility, Form Running, Football Specific Movement		
Skill Development 6:10 PM	3 Stations: 5 Minutes Per Station Examples: Form Tackling, Open Field Blocking, Pursuit Drill Be sure that these are progressive and cover all drills over the season		
Individual Development 6:25 PM	Position Skills: Blocking, Stance, Shedding, etc	Position Skills: Throwing, Catching, Blocking, Running, etc	Position Skills: Cover Skills, Tackling, Shedding, Pursuit, etc
One on Ones 6:45 PM	OL vs DL	QBs, RECs, RBs vs LBs, DBs	
Contact Drill 6:55 PM	Safe and Progressive Hitting Drill Based Upon Skills Taught		
O and D Time 7:05 PM	Offense and Defense Insert New Plays or Rep Current Ones	Repetition of Run and Pass Plays and/or New Plays	Defensive Pursuit, Drills and/or New Plays
Team Time 7:20 PM	O vs D Scrimmage of Plays		
Conditioning / Fitness Stretch / Cool Down 7:35 PM	Football Specific Fitness Static Stretch		
Practice Ends 7:45 PM	Review of Practice Upcoming Events		

Skills	
Agility	<p>Have players run, change direction, fall down and get up in the equipment. This allows the players to get used to the weight and confirm if it is fitting properly. Create some drills and obstacle courses that are safe and fun for players.</p>
Athletic Positions	<p>Teach players a solid athletic position to give them a base to learn each specific stance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 pt (Rec, RB, LB, DB, QB), 3 pt (OL, DL), 4 pt (OL, DL)</li> <li>• Bent Knees, Flat Back, Weight on Balls of Feet, Eyes up, Proper Weight distribution for each stance, Hands Up</li> </ul>
Advanced Agility	<p>Increase players' ability to move within their frame, keep their balance, change direction, and react to dynamic situations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up &amp; Down, Back &amp; Forward, To or Around, Pylons, Over Bags, Reacting to Signals, Reacting to Sound or Movement to initiate drills, Have players do drills with or without a ball</li> <li>• Encourage players to keep their eyes up, Keep an athletic base at all times</li> </ul>
Form Tackling	<p>Teach the proper form to tackle an opponent for safety purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackle with Eyes Up, Stay Low, Move your Feet, Wrap around the Small of the Back</li> </ul>
Blocking Basics	<p>Teach the proper form to block an opponent.</p> <p>Pass Blocking: Eyes on Chest, Keep Weight on Inside Foot, Punch The Chest Plate to Keep Separation</p> <p>Run Blocking: Place Helmut to One Side of Opponent to Gain Leverage, Stay Low, Move Feet, Keep Hands Inside on Chest Plate</p>
Ball Handling	<p>Teach Ball Protection, Taking a Handoff, Catching and Tucking a Ball.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover both points of the ball, Two Hands, One Hand and Elbow</li> </ul>
Contain Principles	<p>Teach Players to Force Ball Carrier to Inside of Field by Attacking the Outside Shoulder of the Ball Carrier.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run towards Outside Shoulder</li> <li>• Stay Square to the Line of Scrimmage</li> </ul>
Sample Skill Circuits	<p>Running With Ball Around Obstacles, Tackling in close proximity, Catching from Static Position, Catching while moving, Mirror Drill – Cover, Mirror Drill – Tackling, Mirror Drill – Blocking, Angle Tackling, Board Drill – Defend/Run Blocking, Running the Ball and Tackling in Space (Open Field Tackling), Angle Pursuit, etc</p>

- 3 on the Line of Scrimmage at all times
- Only 3 eligible receivers on any given play
- All players are eligible to run the ball BUT there must always be a Centre / QB exchange first



All Formations Below Are "RIGHT". To Flip them call "LEFT"

### Right (Left)

Both Eligible Players Within  
1.5 Yds from the Centre



FB Always  
Goes Away  
From Call  
Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"



TE Always  
Goes to  
Call Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"



WR Always  
Goes to  
Call Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"

### Spread Right (Left)

Both Eligible Players Spread  
Out 5 Yds from the Centre



FB Always  
Goes Away  
From Call  
Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"



TE Always  
Goes to  
Call Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"



WR Always  
Goes to  
Call Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"

### Tight Right (Left)

FB Within  
1.5 Yds from  
the Centre



FB Always  
Goes Away  
From Call  
Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"



TE Spread Out  
5 Yds from the  
Centre



TE Always  
Goes to  
Call Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"



WR Always  
Goes to  
Call Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"

### Full Right (Left)

FB Spread Out  
5 Yds from the  
Centre



FB Always  
Goes Away  
From Call  
Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"

TE Within 1.5 Yds  
from the Centre



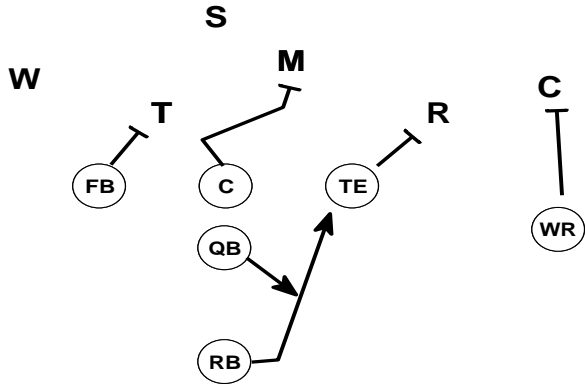
TE Always  
Goes to  
Call Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"



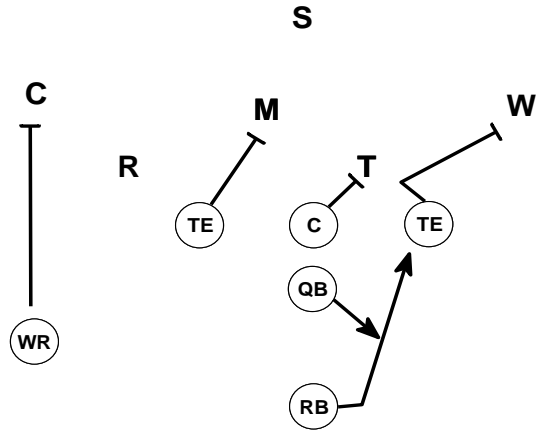
WR Always  
Goes to  
Call Side:  
Example  
Above is  
"RIGHT"



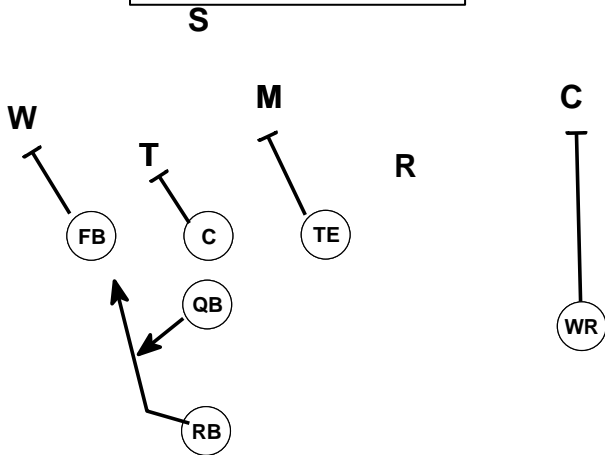
### Right Zone Right



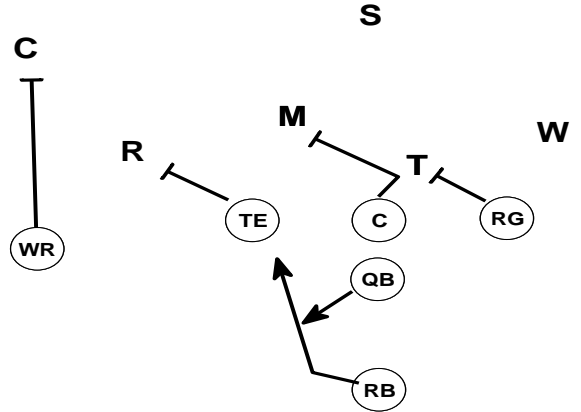
### Left Zone Right



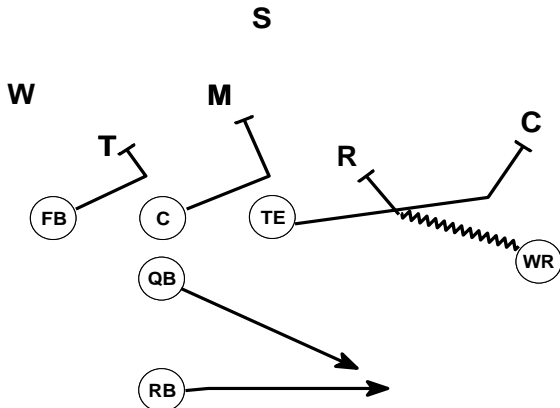
### Right Zone Left



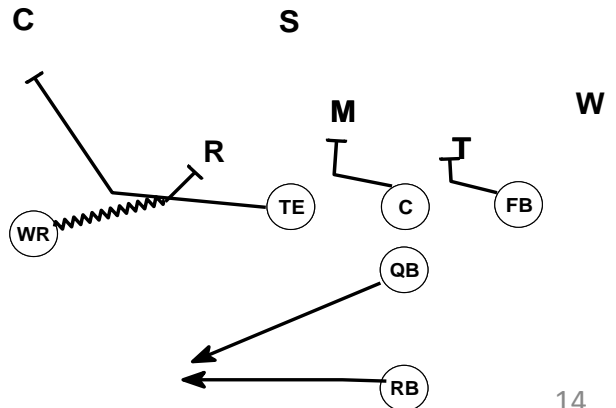
### Left Zone Left



### Right Toss Right

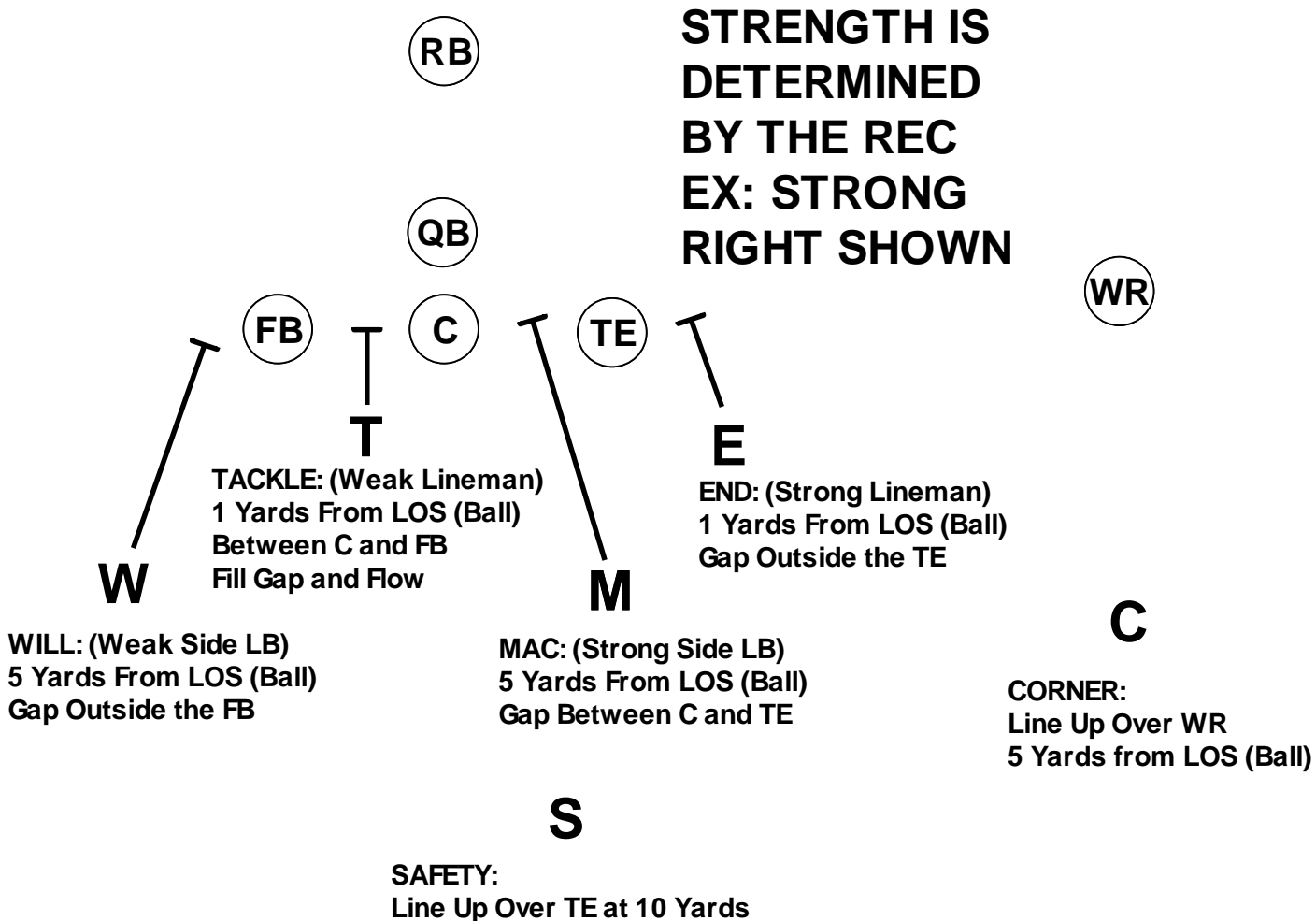


### Left Toss Left

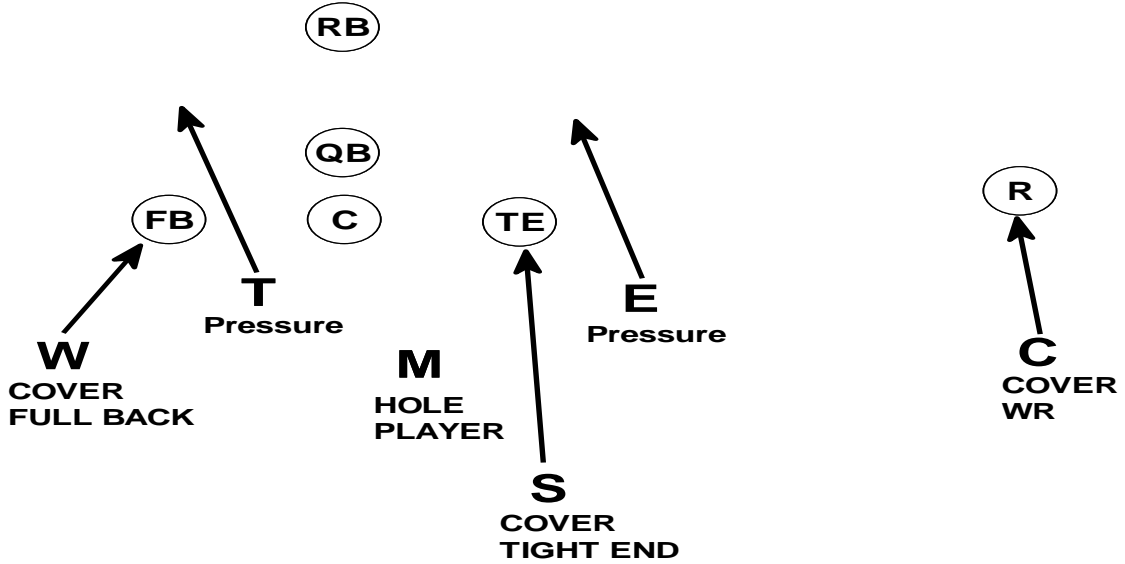




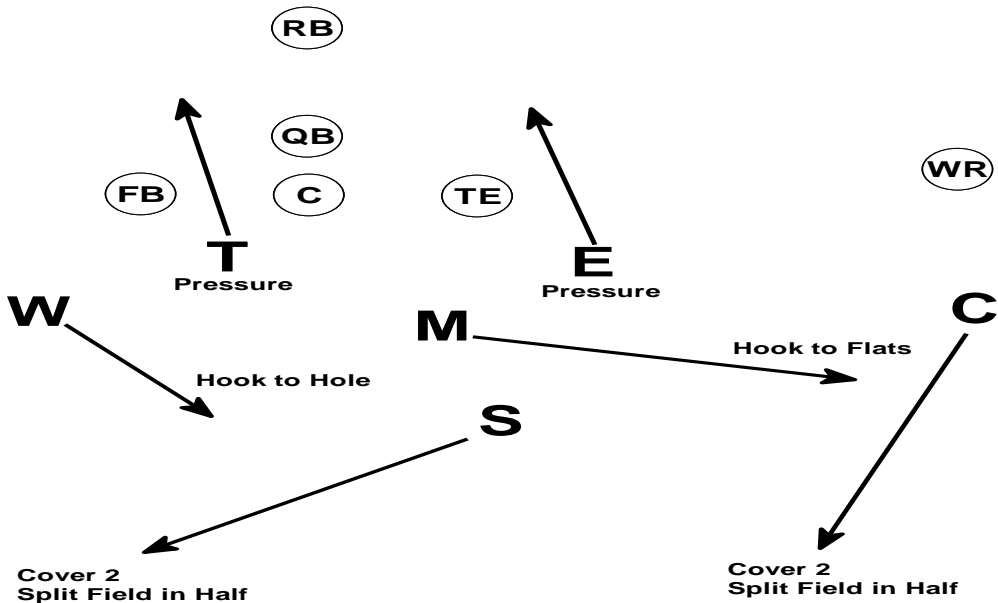
- Only the TACKLE and the END may be within 1 yard of the Line of Scrimmage
- ALL other defensive players must be at least 5 yards from the Line of Scrimmage when the ball is snapped
- Strength is determined by the WR (Wide Receiver)



### Base Man to Man



### Base Zone



Topic	Notes