

The
READ & REACT
4-4 / 4-2-5 / 3-4
COMBINATION
DEFENSE

PLAYBOOK
&
INSTALLATION
Manual



INTRODUCTION

This manual started out to match my 4 Gang Green videos that I made for Championship Productions in 2012. The success of those videos, followed by the huge amount of questions through email inspired me to put our defensive blueprint that we used to build 3 championship programs down on paper. This book and those videos have one common underlying theme:

“A Championship Defense Can't Think, It Has To React”

However, during the process of research and writing the book, in addition to installing the defense at many different schools every summer, has led me to make **VERY SIGNIFICANT** changes that are NOT on the original GANG GREEN videos made by Championship Productions. In fact, there are very little similarities.

The videos that will match up with this playbook are on **COACHTUBE**.

The playbook that matches the GANG GREEN videos is called “**THE BRAIN DEAD 4-4 D**”

Football is a game that can be very complex with its 22 moving parts while at the same time being so simple. This paradox of learning all of its interconnected layers while not forgetting the simplicity of its fundamentals makes coaching football a great challenge. The successful coaches all have one thing in common: single-mindedness. They have bought into something that they really believe in and become an expert at it.

“Name an offense or defensive scheme and I’ll find a coach who went 10-0 running it”. I have seen to many young coaches who have not yet decided which direction they want to go on offense, defense, or just general coaching philosophy. Experimentation is good, but it can be painful and I have seen programs crumble or at the very least have stunted growth while the head coach is searching for a single, sound concept. I encourage shopping around—calling, writing, and visiting coaches you admire. Investigate all aspects of their attacks. Talk it over with your coaches and mentors, think it through. But once you decide, lock on and stick with it through the rough waters that definitely will come as your entire program is learning it.

In my experience, the biggest tests will come from within the inner circle of your program from people who believe they have the program in their best interest. These are people that you trust and they are not intentionally being disloyal, but they were not with you at every step as you formed your vision. You need to have a “contagious” confidence that comes from knowing you have a sound product. The hidden fears of uncertainty will be diminished by the knowledge that is gained by your staff and players as you shape and develop it.

It is OK to add your personal touch in many area, in fact it is imperative that you take ownership and make it your own. The head coach must remain true to himself and not try to be someone or something that he is not. The following statement is true in all areas of life, not just football: “Be Yourself, not your idea of what you think somebody else's idea of yourself should be.”

As you take in all of our X’s and O’s, our techniques, and drills...please remember the most important job that you have as coach: To teach your players to be better sons, husbands, and fathers.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

Since the original videos were published in 2010, several hundred copies have been sold. This has opened up my dialogue with coaches from all over the country, in addition to running the defense myself. This Playbook contains many updates to this smothering defense contributed by this vast pool of coaching knowledge.

- ◆ EXPANSION OF COVERAGES

The original videos did not teach the split field concept which now allows for mixed coverages.

- ◆ CHANGES TO REVOLVER

Revolver is no longer the 4-2-5 component. It is a call to re-route a single receiver with the OLB and have CB help over the top. The 4-2-5 is no longer a single call, it is not the fabric of the defense.

- ◆ CHANGES IN RE-ROUTE TECHNIQUE TO ALLOW PATTERN READS

The re-route used to be up in your face, "right now" physicality. We have backed the OLB up to 4 yards allowing more time for the CB, OLB, and Safeties to pattern read and react off the #2 receiver routes.

HEAD UP ALIGNMENTS

The READ & REACT Multiple Front Defense has a 0-tech NG and a 4-tech DT who slants weak, putting them in the same position as traditional 1 and 3-techniques once the ball is snapped. The philosophy is that head up defenders create more confusion for the blockers since they can slant into either gap. The 0-tech alignment makes for an easy transition from 4 man to 3 man front. The uncovered guards give very clean run/pass reads to the defense.

DIVORCED FRONT and SPLIT FIELD

The "Front 6" consists of four DL and two ILB who align to a run strength. The "Back 5" align to the multiple receiver side. This separation of the run and passing strengths is referred to as a "DIVORCED FRONT", which allows the defense to have multiple looks while remaining simple to learn (multiplicity with simplicity). Formation recognition is also easy to learn by splitting every formation in half, effectively reducing every offensive formation to 6 alignments.

INDIVIDUAL POSITIONS

Section 4 has "Every Day Drills" (EDDs) that are used in practice to teach the positions and explain every position's Alignment, Assignment, and Responsibility. In the defensive line chapter, the STUD and END techniques are not the same as the TACKLE and NOSE techniques. The Outside Linebackers are actually HYBRID SAFETIES and their techniques are more similar to the defensive backs.

RUN FIT DEFENSE

This defense is a contain and turn it back inside philosophy. The goal of every run play is to force the running back into a very narrow "alley" in which he will be outnumbered 3 to 1. The beauty of the Read & React 4-2-5 is that each player's job remains the same regardless of whether you are in the 3-4 or 4-2 fronts.

Alignment Doesn't Change Assignment

Backfield actions are broken into fast flow, split flow, and counter flow. The 2 inside linebackers play 20 technique and read the uncovered guards which allows clean reads and aggressive reactions. The

defensive line primary job is to “sting” their man and keep the offensive lineman from blocking the linebackers. They are taught to react, not read, to the five things an OL can do: reach, fire out, escape inside, pull, and pass block. The secondary provides the force, alley, and contain players as the Falcon (FS) is an aggressive run defender and the corners provide secondary run support.

PASS COVERAGES

As previously mentioned, the Read & React method of teaching divides the field in half, thereby narrowing the teaching of 4 coverages (man, 2, 3, 4) versus 6 alignments (pro, solo, tight, wing, twins, & trips). These chapters start with 1 on 1 route defense and progresses to multiple route recognition based on our “+1” rule: Always have 1 more pass defender than they have receivers. This section has 4 chapters dedicated to pass defense.

GAME PLANNING and SCOUTING

Section 6 takes you through how Stewart starts scouting his opponent in the spring and takes you up through “Saturday to Friday” game week preparations. There is detailed explanations on how to use HUDL most efficiently. Practice organization and how to fit everything into a 75-minute practice Mon – Wed is also detailed.

EDITABLE DROP BOX FILES

Email coach Stewart for game playsheets, wristbands, scouting reports, and player evaluation forms that can be edited with Microsoft Office. There are also 10 spring practice, 6 summer, and 20 August practice schedules that you can customize to your needs. All the tackling drills, pursuit drills, and individual position EDDs are in pdf printable form. There are also powerpoints to show your staff and players.

If you have any questions, please email me at rick@allaccesscoaching.com and I am committed to helping you build a CHAMPIONSHIP DEFENSE. There are also videos and articles on my website:
www.allaccesscoaching.com *“Coaches Helping Coaches”*

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