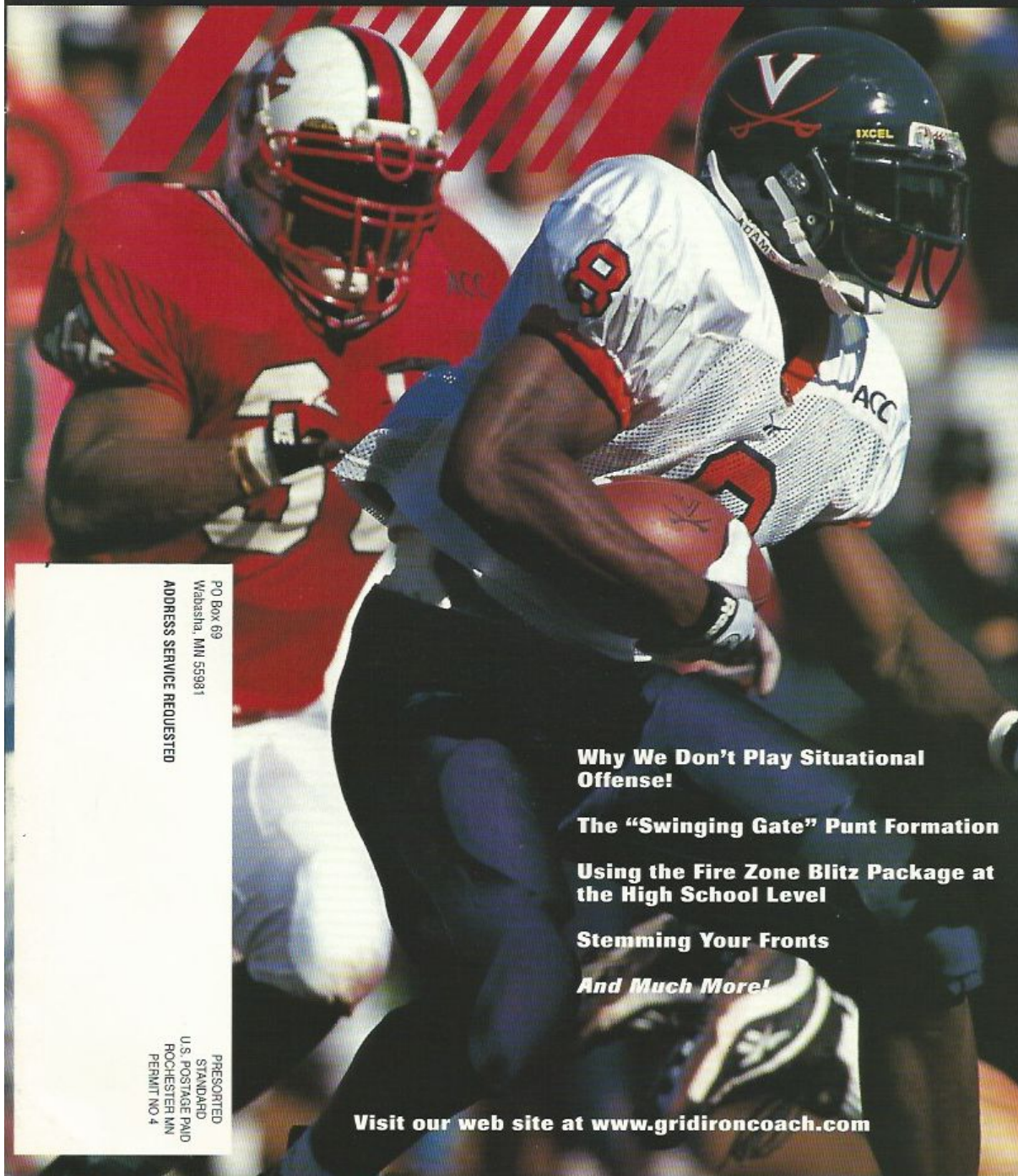


GRIDIRON

Coach
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The Number One Publication for High School Football Coaches



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**Why We Don't Play Situational
Offense!**

The "Swinging Gate" Punt Formation

**Using the Fire Zone Blitz Package at
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Stemming Your Fronts

And Much More!

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GRIDIRON Drills 3

Why We Don't Play Situational Offense! 4

Stu Sklar, Running Back Coach, Wilde Lake High School, Columbia, MD

The "Swinging Gate" Punt Formation 6

Michael Groisne, Football Coach, Clermont-Fd Titans, France

GRIDIRON Coach Bookstore.....9

Under the Lights: John Parchman of Midland Robert E. Lee 12

Using the Fire Zone Blitz Package at the High School Level 14

Troy Everhart, Head Football Coach, Winton Woods High School

Stemming Your Fronts 17

Robert Kitchen, Defensive Coordinator, Welland High School

Coaching if Filled with Ups and Downs 18

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The "Swinging Gate" Punt Formation

By Michael Groisne
Football Coach,
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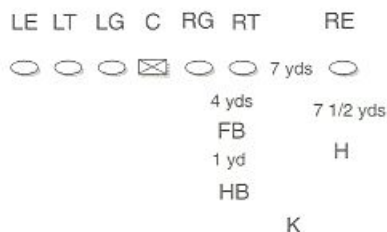
We use a version of the traditional "Swinging Gate" formation, for our punt formation. This formation is useful in providing us with a fake option to run or pass the ball when the defense fails to properly set or react

We are always seeking new and innovative ways to improve our special teams play. One technique that we have been using for over five years is an unbalanced line for the punting formation.

We often line up in what we call our "Ice Formation." This is a form of the traditional Swinging Gate, with an end over the ball and the remainder of line to his left. From this position the end could snap the ball to the kicker for a punt, snap the ball to the "Place Holder" for a run or pass fake, or, as long as he

does not touch the ball, the end can shift with the other players into a traditional kick formation. (See Diagram #1) The "Ice Formation" was described in GRIDIRON Coach Volume 5, Issue 3, on page 34.

Diagram One
The First Ice Formation



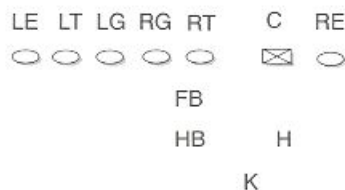
We often ran this play successfully, but developed a tendency where the end touched the ball only when he snapped the ball for a fake. This tendency was a big key for our opponents.

To avoid this tendency, we have refined our formation, and placed the center over the ball with the End to his right and the remainder of the line to the center's left. (See Diagram #2)

This new formation provides the following advantages:

- * Touching the ball is no longer a key for our opponents.
- * We always have an experienced player making the snaps.
- * Our center has more time to prepare, and does not have to run to the ball and set quickly to snap the ball for a punt.
- * Our shift to the kicking formation is simpler.
- * And, having the end on the right gives our opponent an immediate outside threat on a fake.

Diagram Two
The New Ice Formation



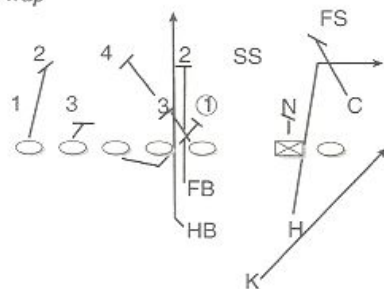
We run three basic plays from this formation. The first is a lead run (Diagram #3); the second is a pass to the flank (Diagram #4); and an option to the flank (Diagram #5).

We prepare to use these punt fakes during the game. We do not prepare for something we will never use, or something we do not want to use. We believe that if we are able to successfully run one-half of our swinging gate plays, it is the same as punting every time.

HOW DO WE CALL THE PLAYS?

As we approach the line of scrimmage, we attempt to take advantage of bad adjustments made by the defense. We look at player number 1 (counting the defense from outside-in). This player is aligned between our center and right tackle. The

Diagram Three
The Ice Trap



alignment of his player will determine the play we run. If he is aligned close to the formation, we will use the lead run. If he is aligned in the middle, we will use either the pass or option to the flank.

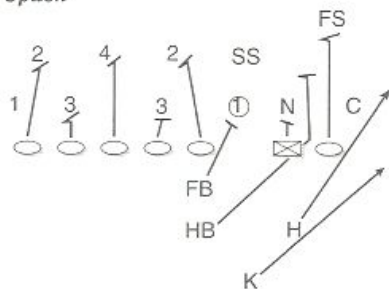
During the run we have the center block the nose, the RT is responsible for player 3/player 4, the RG is responsible for player 3, and the LG is expected to trap block player 1.

During the pass or option we expect the covered linemen to block man on. They should step with the right foot toward the center to get the proper angle and leverage. Unblocked linemen take a step back and help their teammates to the left or right, or block a rushing linebacker. The uncovered LT or LG has a double read.

The Right End is to run a two path route. At the snap he must aim for a spot one yard inside the CB, when he reaches that point he must plant his inside foot and break parallel to the line of scrimmage. If he does not receive the ball on his third step after the break, he plants on his fifth step and turns inside for 2 to 3 steps facing the Place Holder.

(Continued on Page 8)

Diagram Four
The Ice Option



From the Editor: A Note on Unbalanced Lines....

The rules say that the offensive team must have at least seven men on the line of scrimmage and that the end men on the line are eligible for passes.

Today, nearly all high school teams use a balanced line, with a guard, tackle and an end on each side of the center.

Balanced Line



Unbalanced Line



Shift to Unbalanced Line from a Pro Set



**Shift to an Eight Man Line
(wingback moves up to block better)**



Unbalanced Line with Guards & Tackle Over



Unbalanced Line with Snapper as the End



When a team occasionally goes unbalanced, it often catches the defense off guard. This is usually true because we stress gap responsibilities for the common formations that we see.

When an outside linebacker has no TE or wide receiver to his side, he needs to recognize that he is seeing an unbalanced line and adjust.

Our local colleges, who see this formation from time-to-time, teach the weak side linebacker to move up into a 5-2 alignment (line on the ball) and play a cover-2 in the backfield. A second possible defense would be a 4-4 alignment (on the man) with a 3-deep zone.

If you would like more detail, let us know, so we can publish an article on reacting to the unbalanced line.

(Continued from Page 7)

The Kicker will run a corner pattern, looking for the ball over his inside shoulder. The LE will run a cross route and will stop when in the middle of the of the goal post. The HB will run to the left end corner of the goal line.

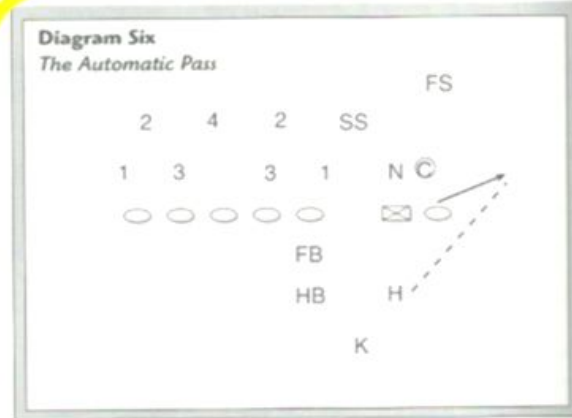
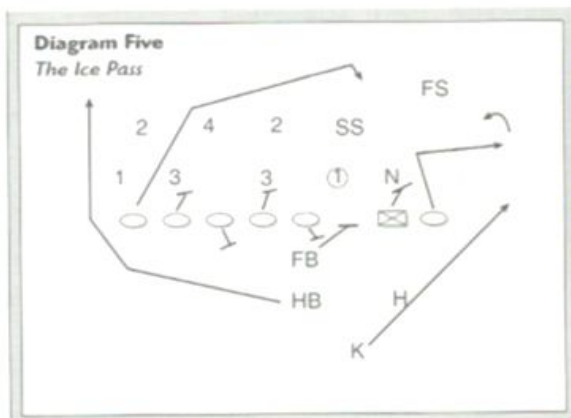
The Holder will progress through the following reads:

- * If the CB drops the RE to cover the Kicker, he should throw a quick out.
- * If no one covers the Kicker, he should throw to him.
- * If the FS comes quickly to cover the Kicker, of if he should roll with the CB, he should wait for the RE's fifth step turn and throw the ball to the RE.
- * If the right side is well-covered, he should look for the LE or the HB.
- * As a last option, he may run.

AUTOMATIC PASS

Our final play from this formation is an automatic pass. (See Diagram #6) When the CB is aligned more than 4 yards inside our RE, our RE signal the Automatic Pass to the Holder. The Holder will yell "strike, strike, strike" to get the ball from the center. When he gets the ball, he will take one backward step with his right foot and throw over the outside shoulder of the RE. The RE will run a 45 degree angle pattern from the line of scrimmage.

Michael Groisne is one of the most popular contributors to GRIDIRON Coach Magazine. Last year his article on creating opportunity by using motions & shifts on kickoffs (Volume 8, Issue 7) was voted the most popular article of the year by our readers. He has recently written a book on special team play and is looking for a publisher. We hope he is successful in getting it published. You can write to Michael at 14 Rue de la Barre, 63 100 Clermont-Fd, France.



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