

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF THE DOUBLE TEAM BLOCK

By Steve Calande

The Double Wing Offense has long relied on great double teams as its heart and soul. Double Team blocking and the multiple pullers are the things that attracted me to the double wing offense in the first place. The "God Father", Coach Don Markham, once told a clinic audience that his team likely was capable of the "best double teams in the world" - Jerry Valatton, a former Markham assistant stated "Markham doubles everything". Coach Markham, who switched from down blocking to sealing the line of scrimmage to trying to get double teams on the most dangerous defenders believed strongly that no body could penetrate his play side if the kids understood the concept of double teaming and opening holes vertically in the defense. Markham sold double wingers on the idea that his two average guys could whip a division I player on the other side of the line while still protecting the line of scrimmage from penetration.

It's interesting to note that a double wing coach might not agree with a wing-t coach on how to "properly" double team a defender. This is what makes this both an art and a science. I am going to share with you my artistic view on how to perform the double team for your double wing offense. I am going to share with you my "science" as well. The science is basically what I have learned from my studies and trial and error.

When I first started coaching an offense with 0 line splits I found that double teams came naturally and could be taught quite easily. I taught the covered offensive linemen to "post block" the defender (drive him off the ball) while I taught the next man out to "pivot block" (drive him to the inside hard) and we were very successful. As always, I stressed the importance of understanding how and when to "combo" off of the double team.

For example, the inside man must be ready to come off his double team to pick up a run through by a linebacker. This really was no different than any other coaches post/drive double team. Many wing- t guys swear by this method for creating lateral openings in the line of scrimmage. It works quite well provided you do teach the two blockers to work together, protect the inside gap and also train them if and when to come off the block.

Now, I am going to discuss a slightly different technique which I prefer.

This is the Markham style "half man" double team. With my GOOD GOD blocking system we identify our designated POST BLOCKER in our play call. For example, "Ray 34 Power" identifies the 4 man as the designated post blocker.

If he has no man in his inside gap but rather a man on him or in his outside gap he will post that man. "Ray 25 Counter" identifies the 5 man as the point of attack and also as the designated post blocker. Why is this important? Well, for our double teams we want the designated post blocker to place his hat INSIDE of the defender being posted, allowing the post blocker to take his inside $\frac{1}{2}$ (inside number) while the pivot blocker takes the outside half (outside number) and the two of them are going to RUN THE DEFENDER VERTICALLY up the field and into the linebackers path preventing him from scraping rapidly. I teach the

inside man that he has three jobs. 1) take the inside half of the defender while he keeps his EYES INSIDE ,ready to protect his inside gap with his free arm/shoulder/flipper 2) keep his hip pressed into the post blocker to prevent the defender from splitting the double team and 3) runs his feet while staying low! I teach the pivot blocker to step first with his inside foot to get sealed hip to hip with the post blocker. He must keep his shoulders square to the line of scrimmage (as should the inside man) and the pivot man should fit under the pads of the defender on his outside half. Stay low and run his feet!!! Just run them hard!

My "science" has shown me that the pivot blocker has very little other responsibility. He really doesn't need to be concerned at all with a linebacker scrape over the top IF THE DEFENSIVE PLAYER HASN'T FLOPPED ON THE GROUND OR SLANTED HARD INSIDE.

What I expect is that the offensive line coach (me) will teach the blockers to become very skilled and very confident that they can DIG ANYONE out, dig them out and drive them off of the ball into the linebackers laps. The very heart of the double wing offense is winning the line of scrimmage and bottling up linebackers in the process. To ensure that this happens we work on double teams vs froggers, crabbers, floppers and also the "slant scrape stunt" where the defensive lineman slants hard inside away from the pivot blocker while the backer scrapes fast over the top of that slant. This last point is often some thing that gets missed by some double wingers. IF the post blocker is trained well he will get his hat inside that slant and we will get our double team. IF the slant is so hard and flat that a wash down block takes care of the lineman then the pivot blocker is free to come off and track the backer. Another thing that is important is training the kids that YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME OFF TO PICK UP THE BACKER RUN THROUGH ATTEMPT.

This takes some convincing for some stubborn coaches but believe me, the line splits are ZIPPO in this offense so your post blocker, when using the half man concept, need only throw his flipper and step with his inside leg into the gap to keep a linebacker from making progress in his run through attempt. We are using SHOULDER BLOCKING and not hand blocking and some very experienced coaches simply do not have the "science" with this technique to understand our artwork with it.

Video does not lie. Put in some double wing video highlights or game film and watch these half man double teams crush defenders and watch the "OTF"
(Valatton) blocks occur frequently (off the film) - Double teaming is the Double Wings heart and soul. - Calande

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