

Article written 4/4/08

Line calls are used to eliminate doubt and confusion among offensive linemates. The more a group of linemen can communicate in code using short simple words or numbers, then the more likely it is that there will be near perfect execution on a given play.

There is no right or wrong when it comes to creating a line call system provided your kids understand it and your opponent does not.

I am going to provide you with a simple offensive line call system for your examination and you will want to tweak it to fit your kids and your system.

System is the key word. You must be systematic in your application of line calls. Personally, I prefer to teach a system that I understand rather than use someone else's (I.e., Tom Herman has a line call system that I simply didn't understand when I viewed his tape, that however works very well for him and his kids. Given time and some discussion with Coach Herman I am sure that I would get it. Similarly, Creehan has line calls for his wing- t and I'm sure Coach Murphy has line calls for his kids. IN fact, I recall him saying that his kids make up their own calls.)

Now, Line calls can be as simple as colors, words, numbers, names...whatever. You can have the kids yell out the names of "hot chicks" in their school or "hot actresses" or "cool cars" and each could mean something TO THE KIDS. I on the other hand want to use a system that means something to me first so I can make suggestions on what calls to use for given schemes.

First, here is a very workable number system to try.

Lets give all one on one blocks an ODD number and give all forms of double team blocks EVEN numbers.

odd= one on one

even= double team of some kind

Now, you know we number our players.

Keeping that in mind, our players can then communicate to each other by first calling out the number of the player they are talking to and second calling out the type of block. For example, the center might say "TWENTY ONE! TWENTY ONE!" and that would mean he is speaking to the two man and requesting a ONE block. (whatever that means that year- and its not a bad idea to mix it up if you feel that folks are catching on)

Now, heres a sample of what might work for you:

- 1- Fold block
- 3- cross block
- 5- Fan
- 7- Domino/cover for me
- 9- Dummy call, youre free to speak to the next man out.

- 2- Inside chip double team
- 4- "4 eyes/4 hands" combination block
- 6- Outside chip double team
- 8- Lets take this guy off the film double team.

or perhaps you are working with young kids:

- RED- domino down
- YELLOW- help me some (dynamite)
- GREEN- Im good, do your thing.

Yet another system might just be words where the players make up whatever they want for each type of block. I personally am not a fan of that.

Line calls are so valuable and effective that I have had kids who had joined the team late and were not quite ready and up to speed with all of the blocking rules execute very well as part of the unit due to the calls. IN fact, my right tackle last year missed a bunch of classroom and on the field teaching time due to being in the training room but was often able to get his assignment by using the guards communication on a given play.

Here is an example of how a varsity offensive line (or a very well coached youth/jr high oline) might communicate on a given power play.

Lets suppose the offense was running "Ray 34 Power" versus a 43 defense.

Now, using the line calls I gave as examples above we can change the blocking up front ever so slightly to create a different effect while still running the same play.

---S-----F
C---W---M-----S---C
---E---T-----T---E

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---O-O-O-X-O-O-O
-O-----O-----O
-----O

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The diagram should show a pair of TIGHT 3 tech defensive tackles, a pair of 7 tech des and linebackers at 00 and 40 tech spots.

The rules for "Ray 34 Power" are:

center- man on/man away- domino if both
 rg- gap/on/down
 rt- gap/on/outside gap/down
 rte- gap/down/backer
 rw- first backer inside
 fb- kick first past the C gap
 qb- toss, lead inside out kicking out second level
 bsw- motion on "ready" and catch the ball, plant and get downhill NOW!
 bsg- pull, lead backer to safety.
 bst- pull, lead, seal inside
 bste- cut to cutoff (b to c gap)

now, BY RULE the blocks would look like this:

The center will block the backside 3 tech The psg will block the 3 tech
 The pst will block the 3 tech if his hat is in the gap/the 7 tech
 otherwise (maybe hes confused?) The pste will block the 7 tech if his
 hats in the gap or release to backer if its ON him. (maybe hes
 confused?) The wing will go to the first backer inside (sam) The qb will
 go inside out and kick the corner The bsg will pull and clock the safety
 The bst will pull and block the first ugly coming from the inside
 (backer or safety) The bste will cut the 3 tech ? or will he cut the 7
 tech? (maybe hes confused) hes not sure what the center is doing?

Now, you can see that this defense could give a poorly coached teams
 some issues? is that guy on me? is he in the gap? And this is where
 offensive line communication comes into play.

now, if we had taught the kids to communicate...

Center makes his call first " 99" he has made a dummy call.
 Both guards make their calls - The left guard has called "17"
 communicating to the center, while the playside guard calls " dynamite"
 telling the offensive tackle that he needs a bit of help with the 3
 tech. The Tackle declares that his outside gap is threatened by the 7
 tech and communicates to the te " 64" (6 man, 4 eyes block) and the te
 parrots that call . So, the kids have cleared up confusion, the

playside 3 tech and 7 tech are both double teamed with no hesitation and we have a play. Now, on the backside things could get messy if the center and te dont communicate. Each thinks hes got the 3 tech. One way to ease that is to simply have the guard on the backside ask for the proper coverage.

ie if he says " 77" - he is asking the 7 man to cover for him to allow him to pull..that would mean the dt was wide enough for the te to cut him. If he asked for the center to cover for him, meaning the dt was too tight to be cut by the te hed say " 17" (1 man cover me)- IN any case, when there is a backside dt, and an even front, either the te or the center has to block him when the guard and tackle are pulling. Its a very good idea to make sure that BOTH do not block him or you will have a chop blocking penalty and your drive will die.

Its interesting to note too some of the other calls that might have taken place:

The playside guard might have called the playside tackle to " 41" (4 man fold) so he could fold to the mike backer! This would have called off a double team by the tackle and the te for instance.

Again, this is advanced stuff here. But its a heck of a lot of fun.

If you want to discuss offensive line calls, things we have done in the past please do not hesitate to contact me.

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