

## MAGIC FOOTBALL- THE FINE ART OF FAKING

By Steve Calande

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Over the years I have been a big fan of "the hidden football" , offenses that hide the football well and provide punishing ground games because the defense is completely bewildered. Watching Triple option football, Single Wing football, Power T football, well coached Wing-T football and of course our beloved Double Wing.

The best teams hide the football very well and fake extremely well to provide an extra edge to their linemen and blocking backs.

One point I have always sold my players on is the idea that "one great fake is worth two great blocks" and have provided incentive to fake well enough to be tackled. What I have done, and the kids seem to love it, is to reward great fakes with helmet stickers. Yes, football is a team game and I think a player who puts as much emphasis on faking and blocking should be rewarded more than the back actually carrying the ball. (Afterall, thats a reward in itself!)

Now, when it comes to HOW TO FAKE obviously there are several ways to get it done and all have been proven to work. First a coach must set up effective fakes by using SERIES FOOTBALL. That is, as Ted Seay puts it "Unity of apparent intent" making it look as if the offense is going to do the same thing time and time again while attacking several points in the defense. This places players in conflict.

Recovery from an initial poor step or missed read often relies on the ability of a defender to quickly locate the football. Poor faking allows defenders an extra second or two to recover. What would be big gainers and back breakers turn into 5-7 yard runs.

A perfect example of poor faking is when a qb turns his head quickly to watch the wing back run the counter. Similarly a wing who stops his feet after a fake handoff or fake toss and turns to watch the runner also hurts an offense. What is important is to stress to your backs that they must not only block until the echo of the whistle (just as your linemen are trained to do) but they must also **FAKE UNTIL THE ECHO OF THE WHISTLE AS WELL.**

A major incentive for my wingbacks is **BUILT RIGHT INTO MY PLAYS** in that on my trap and counter trap plays I have a built in possibility of a

pitch downfield from the ball carrier (fullback) to the wing. On our regular quick trap play our motion wing must sprint around the corner faking sweep while our fullback runs trap. Now the fb can pitch downfield to the motion wing.

On my counter trap plays our NON MOTION wing will make two fakes, he will fake as if he has received a counter criss play , fake running off tackle then get into pitch relationship with the fullback downfield. The possibility of scoring a td off a pitch adds to both of those plays as my wings are more likely to REALLY RUN HARD even when they are not getting the ball.

A double wing quarterback who can fake well is worth his weight in gold. There are many opportunities for him to carry the ball in this offense and he can become a true 1000 yard running threat if he fakes well 100% of the time. The qb bootleg must be carried out in our sprint sweep series every time or it will become OBVIOUS to the defense when the qb has actually kept the ball.

One way that I have improved the faking of our qb is again thru helmet stickers. The other is in more carries. NO quarterback wants to be a "handoff machine" (or toss machine ) and a few carries will provide incentive for great faking and blocking. One example of faking/blocking for my quarterback is on my counter plays. I have designed my counters to include the quarterback taking the ball downhill to the wing, giving the inside handoff but continuing off tackle to fill and pick off chasers.

The quarterbacks generally enjoy the opportunity to hit a defender. I also believe strongly that this sets up the KEEPER OFF THE COUNTER much better since my qb cant turn and watch the play. (You can see a few clips of my kids faking on [www.coachcalande.com](http://www.coachcalande.com))

## Part 2

More about faking with the qb. I have seen lots of video of teams attempting to run the wedge xx. I cant tell you enough how great that play is when the qb carries out his fake OFF TACKLE rather than dropping back and faking additional handoffs. To me, the play looks more like a power if the qb spins and heads off tackle and has the motion wing in pitch relationship. The two wings will handle a fake of a xx in the backfield, now the defense is forced to look FOUR PLACES for the football. Its too late, the fullback is in the secondary with the football. (see the wedge xx highlights on [www.coachcalande.com](http://www.coachcalande.com) as well)

Faking is extremely important to the success of GROUND POUNDER offenses. Look at how the power T guys teach the fake to the fullback. This is something I am VERY INTERESTED IN for my sprint sweep series where our fullback fakes the trap (or carries it) as part of the boot/sweep/trap series.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zQ4GlbSvsM>

My plan is to have some guys with power T experience at my SMASHMOUTH CLINIC in 2008 and they will share the finer points of this faking technique. Over the years I have taught the "rock the baby" method of faking and its worked well. I also like the method that Tim Murphy has shown where the wings, once they turn the corner, grab ahold of their jersey and continue to pump the arm and elbow as if carrying the ball in one arm.

NO matter what type of faking techniques you apply, the key is to get every player to do it until the echo of the whistle! NO player should turn and watch the ball carrier. Ever.

As I break down film for coaches around the country I almost cannot avoid "your qb and wings need to carry out their fakes" - poor faking is epidemic in the double wing. Why? Perhaps this offense is TOO FORGIVING of those things. I maintain that running back coaches who can stay on top of the wings and qb and fb when it comes to faking will make your job as Oline coach go SO MUCH EASIER!

I look forward to seeing better faking on video in the years to come

[www.coachcalande.com](http://www.coachcalande.com)

<http://www.coachcalande.com/watchvideos.htm>