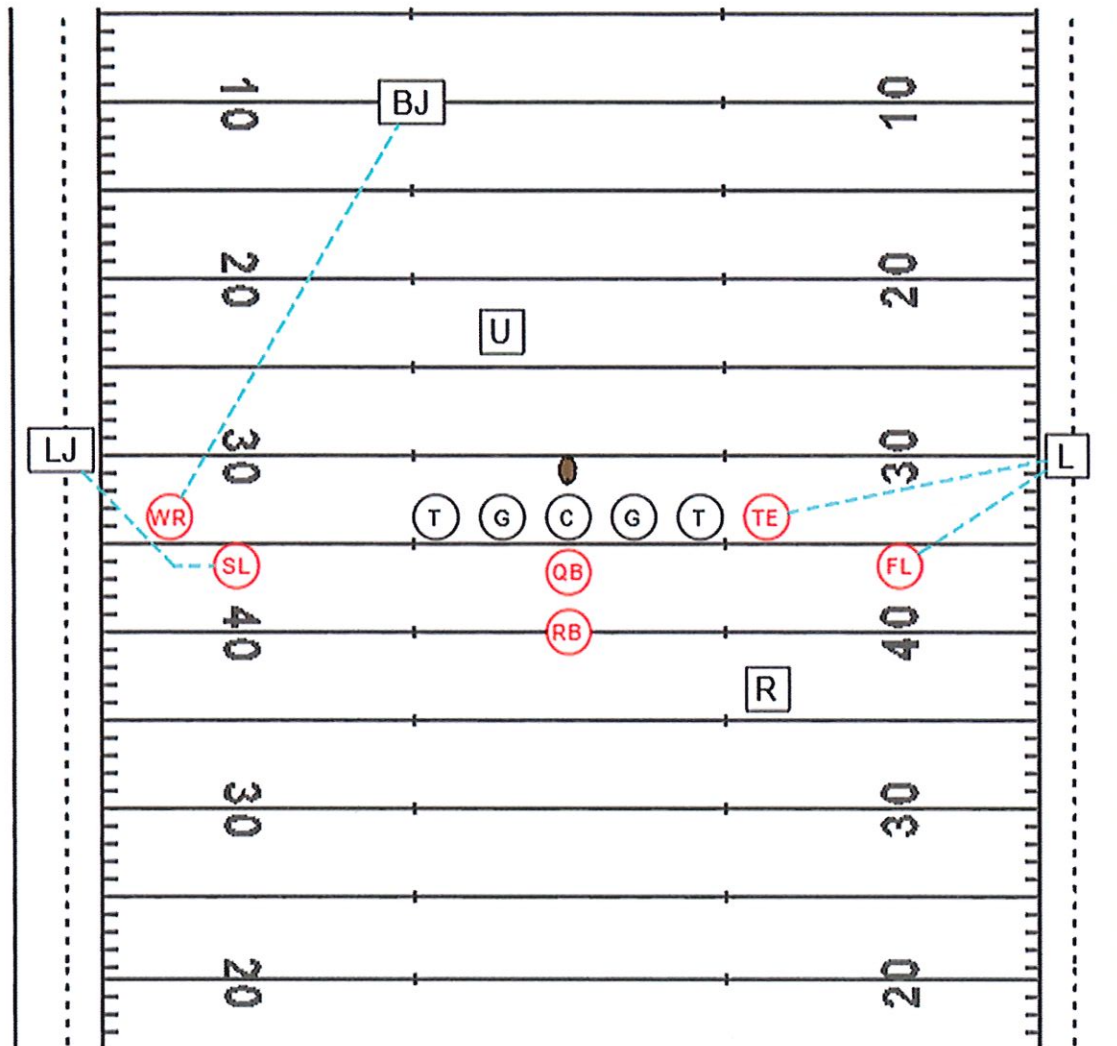


Passing Game Positional Keys

BASIC'S

- Positional keys are predetermined by the position you are working in the game and deal more with the Back Judge and the Wing officials.
- In order to determine positional keys, the game officials must recognize the strength of the formation (strong side vs. weak side). The strong side is the side on which there are more eligible receivers outside of the tackle.
- When determining keys, it doesn't matter if a player is on or off of the line of scrimmage.
- The Back Judge has priority in determining keys, followed by the wing officials. Generally speaking, the Back Judge's main positional key is the widest eligible receiver on the strong side of the formation. If players are stacked, the player nearest the line of scrimmage is considered to be the widest.
- Wing officials should not key the same player as the Back Judge.
- At the snap, the Back Judge first looks at the tackle to see if he's run blocking or pass blocking, then observes the actions of his key receiver. If that player moves into another game official's coverage area, the Back Judge shifts his attention to players who have entered his coverage area.

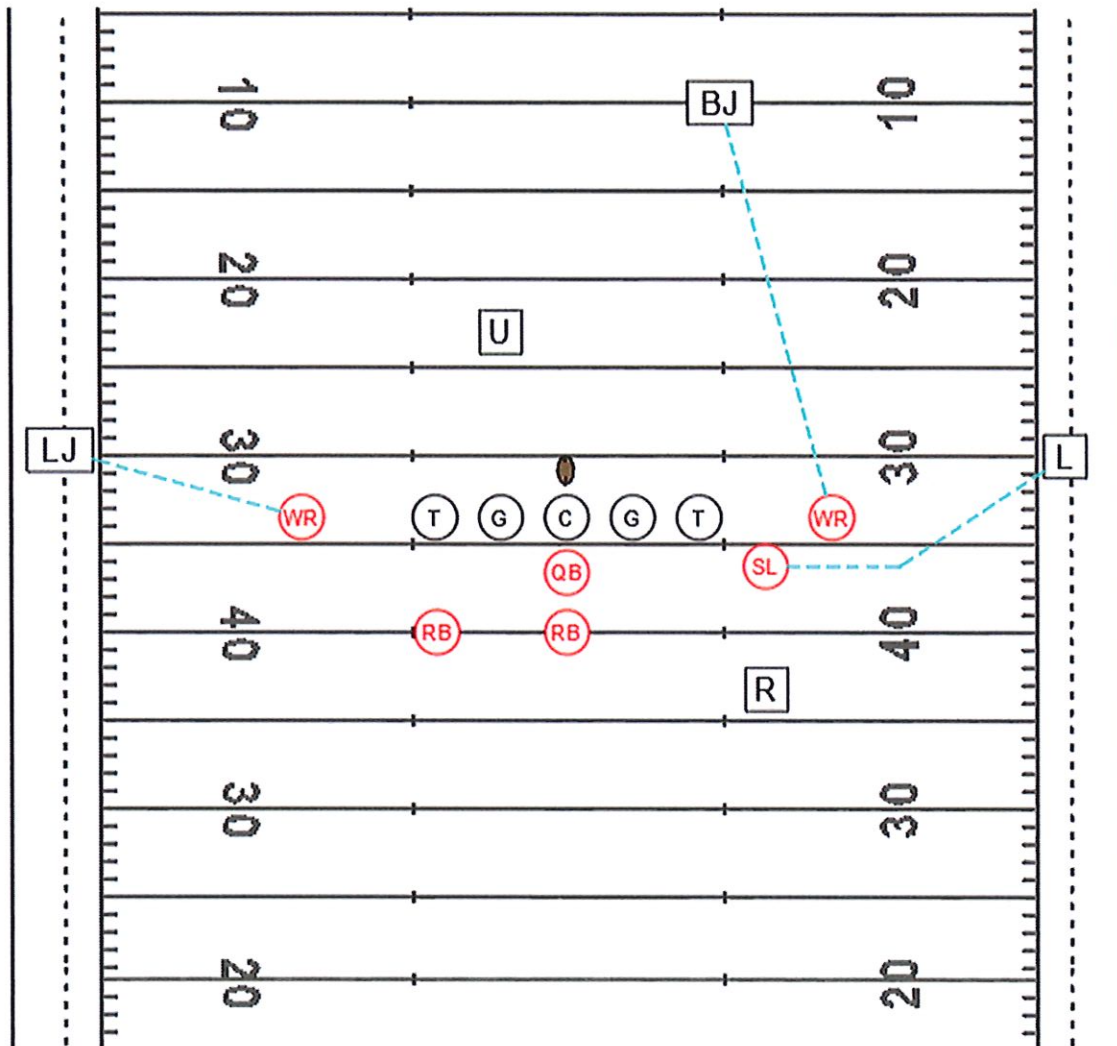
Balanced Formation



In a balanced formation, strength is always to the Line Judge's side. The Back Judge keys the widest receiver. The Line Judge keys on the inside receiver of the formation. The Linesman keys on the eligible receiver(s) nearest his side.

Either wing official may also have a back if he runs a pass route to their side.

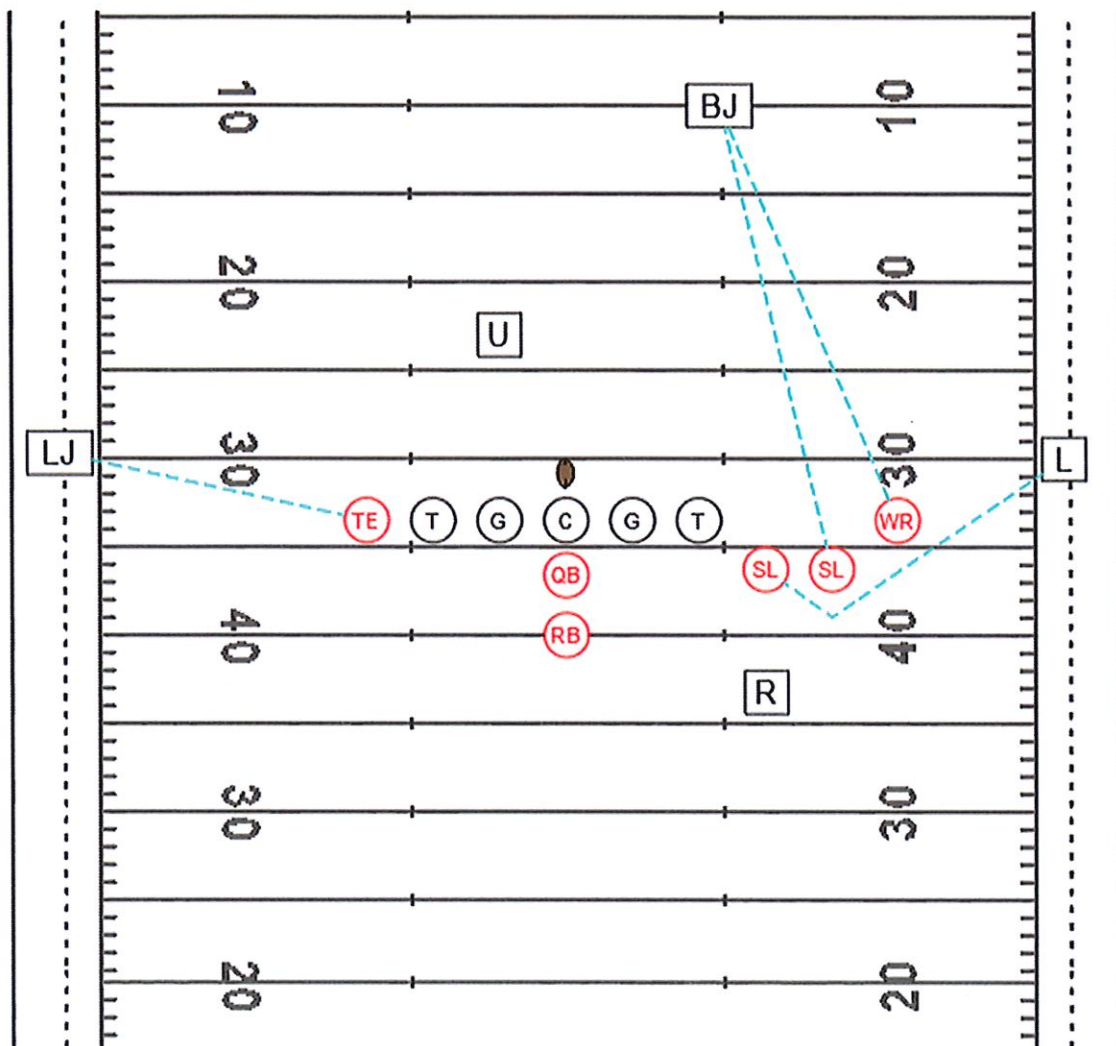
Unbalanced Formation



In an unbalanced formation, the Back Judge keys the widest receiver on the strong side. The wing official on the strong side (in this case the Linesman) keys the inside receiver of the formation. The wing official on the weak side (in this case the Line Judge) keys on the eligible receiver nearest his side.

Either wing official may also have a back if he runs a pass route to their side.

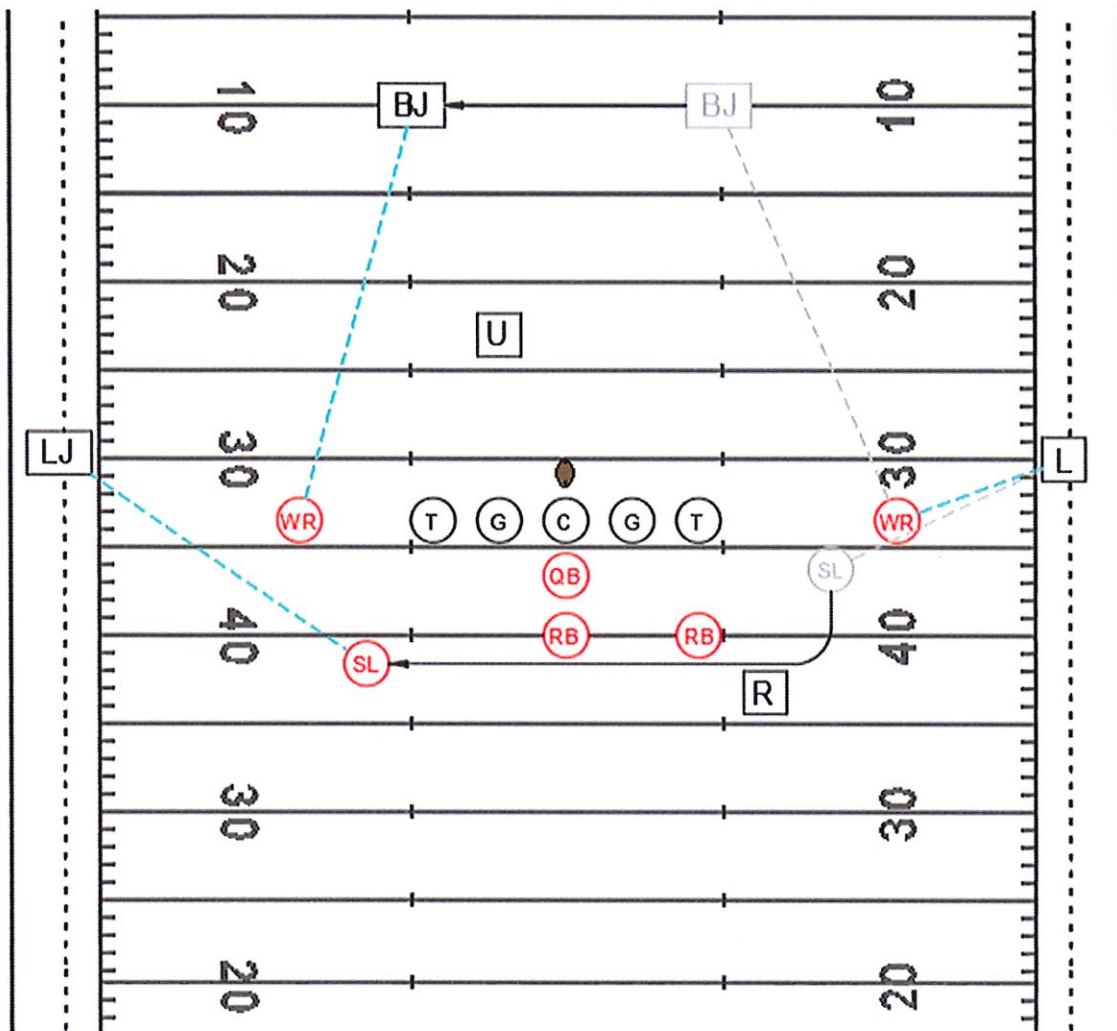
Three Receiver (Trips) Formation



In a triple formation, the Back Judge keys the two (2) widest receivers on the strong side. The wing official on the strong side (in this case the Linesman) keys the inside receiver. The wing official on the weak side (in this case the Line Judge) keys on the eligible receiver nearest his side.

Either wing official may also have a back if he runs a pass route on their side.

Motion that Changes Strength



It is crucial that the Back Judge and the wing officials know where the motion man is at the snap because the strength of the formation (and therefore the keys) may change.

Strength was to the Linesman's side, but the motion changed the strength to the Line Judge's side. The Back Judge shifts position and keys on the widest receiver on the strong side. The Line Judge will key on the inside receiver. The Linesman (on the weak side) keys on the eligible receiver nearest his side.

Although the Line Judge is now keying on the motion man's actions after the snap, the Linesman is still responsible for watching to ensure the motion man does not cut upfield before the snap.

Either wing official may also have a back if he runs a pass route to their side.