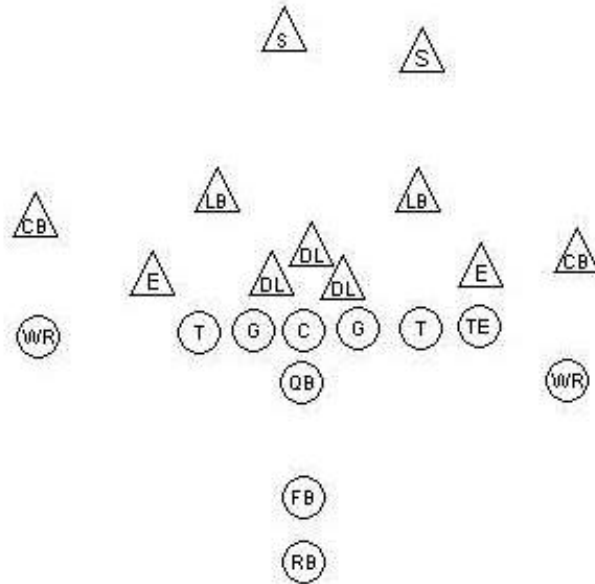


# Tight 3 Defense

Developed by Coach Jeff Teed 1995



The Tight 3 Defense was designed to stop the run and put pressure on the QB. The theory came from running a 4-4 and blitzing on of the Middle Linebackers over the Center. Every time we blitzed, either a defensive lineman was unblocked or the linebacker was unblocked. This caused major confusion on the offensive line.

We set up a scrimmage and set the 2 defensive tackles in the A gap and a 3<sup>rd</sup> lineman standing over the center. At times, all 3 linemen would stand, other times all 3 would be down, again, confusion was the major goal of this defense.

On the snap, all 3 linemen were to bull-rush the center back into the QB. We always made a contest out of it. The lineman who had the most sacks got a slushie after the game, or popcorn, etc.

The 2 defensive ends had to hold containment. Their only job was to NOT let the ball outside them. The strong side we had line up heads up on the TE. Reason for this was we did not want him releasing free for the quick pass. After he hit the TE, 3 yards and box, contain the outside. The weak side TE boxed and contained, stop all sweeps and reverses.

The corners played bump and run with the WR. On the snap we wanted them to hit the WR. Knock them down. If the WR is on his back, he cant catch the ball.

The linebackers and safeties played ball hawks and run stoppers. Hit the hole and clean up anything the linemen missed.

With this defense we had a 5 year record of 39-6. The last year going 9-0 with 0 points allowed. We averaged giving up less than 50 yards a game and 2 first downs a game. 80% of our tackles, or more, were either sacks, or tackles for a loss.

Now we will break down what we were looking for in players at each position:

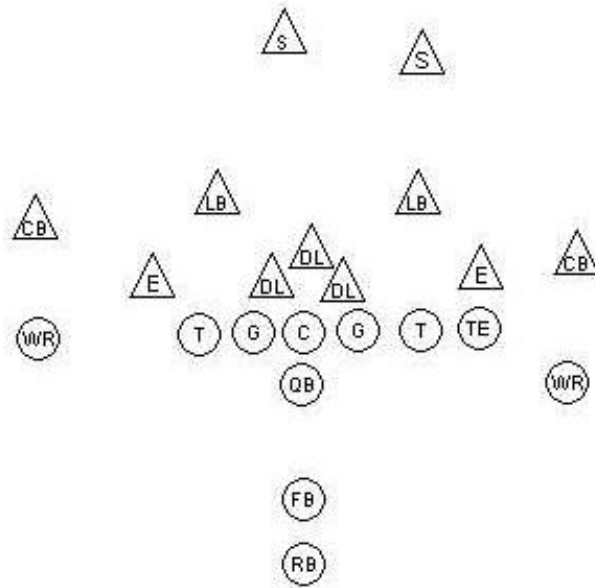
**3 Down linemen** – these 3 kids were usually 3 of our top 5 athletes. Big, fast, and strong. At one point, we had our starting HB, starting TE and Middle Linebacker playing here and told them to “get the ball”

**Defensive Ends** – these players were usually our tallest players. We used tall, strong kids here so they could read the play quickly. Starting from a 2 pt stance, they could read the QB and if it was a quick pass, either knock it down or intercept it. They had to be strong in order to get off the block and contain the outside

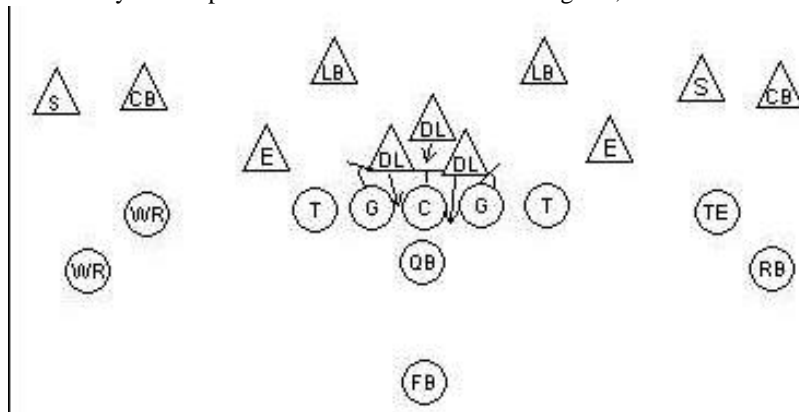
**Corners** – these players were usually our starting receivers on offense. They needed to be aggressive with good hands. Play bump and run and pick off the pass if thrown their way

**Linebackers** – these 2 players were fast and aggressive. Not afraid to hit and willing to mix it up on a blitz. Since we blitzed most plays, aggressive good tacklers were needed.

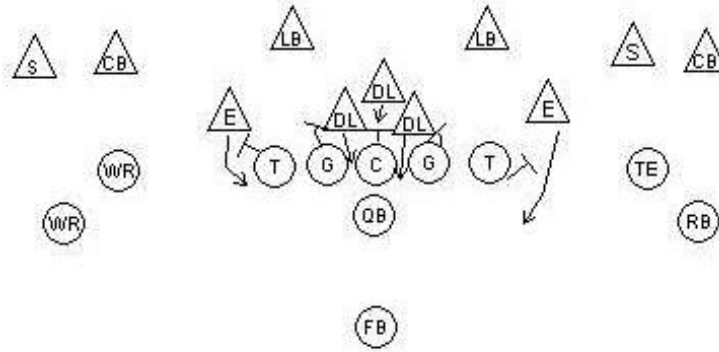
**Safeties** – these 2 players had to be smart and fast. They had to read the play as they were the last line of defense. Stop anything the linebackers missed and let nothing get deep on them. These had to be less aggressive, patient players.



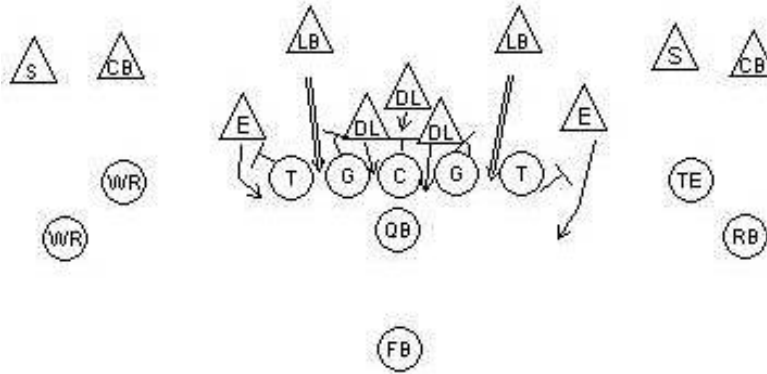
Looking at our base formation, we had other coaches look at the defense and tell us how they would beat it. At first glance, all said they would pinch the Guards down on our Tight 3, shown below:



Looking at this Pinch by the guards, we had our ends box and contain, taking up the Tackles



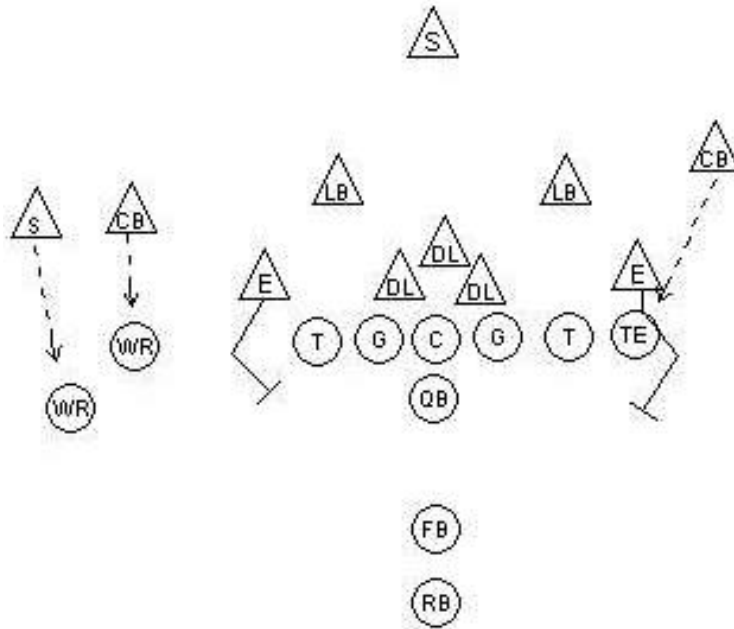
By boxing our ends, this freed the linebackers to Blitz, untouched, shown below:



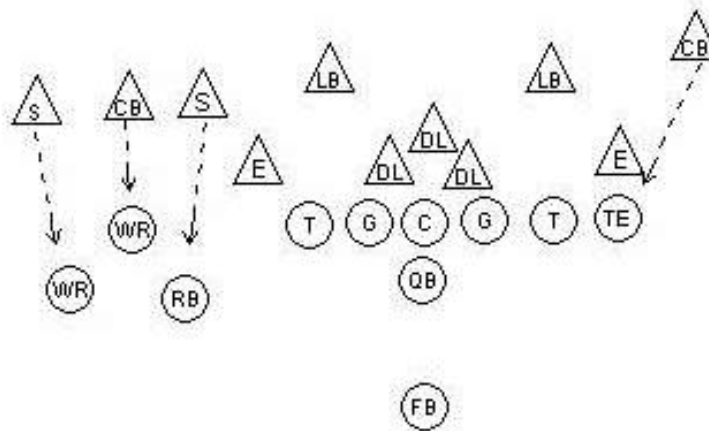
This is the reason we blitzed 80% of the time and the reason teams could not move the ball on us.

The next thing we did was ask the other coaches to develop formations to exploit this defense. Here is how the Tight matched up against the formations they used:

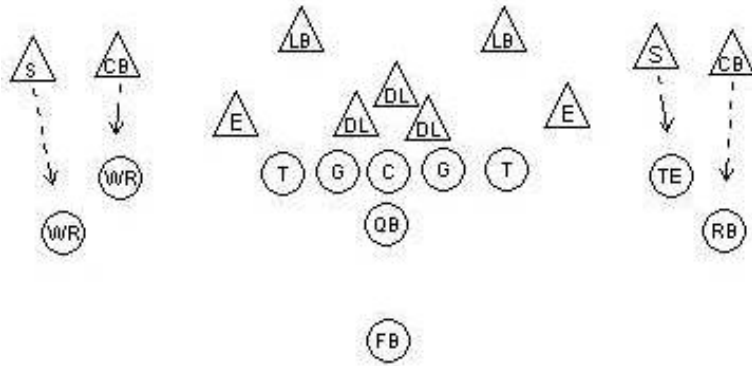
**Base Defense against Twins Formation:**



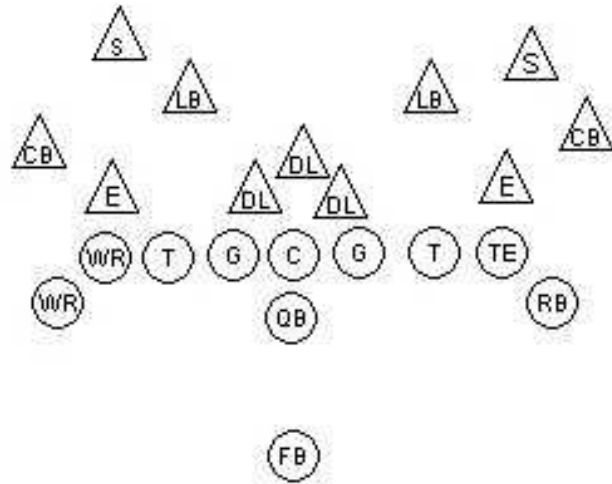
**Base Defense against Trips Formation:**



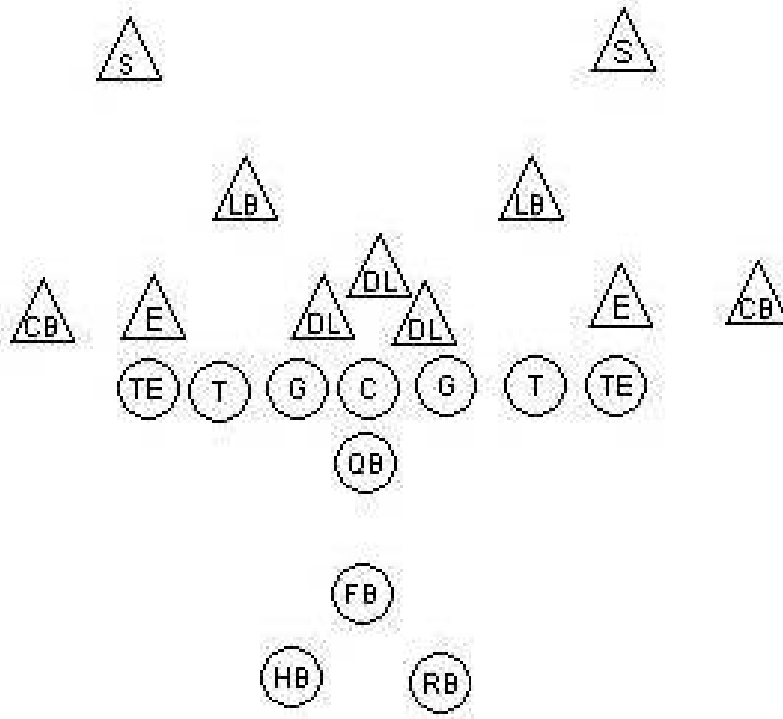
**Base Defense against Double Twins Formation:**



**Base Defense against Double Wing Formation:**



**Base Defense against Wishbone Formation:**



You will notice that we rotated our Corners and Safeties for pass coverage. Our philosophy was always stop the run. At the youth level, it is common for the offense to spread the field, hoping your linebackers shift out, opening the middle for a run. In the Tight 3 Defense, the linebackers stayed home. Their only role was to stop the run. We had 7 men in the box at all times. Since most youth teams have little success passing the ball consistently, we found that keeping the pressure on the center and QB, we could stop the offense....series after series after series.

These are just a few of the formations that are out there but this is what we normally saw at the youth level. It was dominant for us as we won 39 out of 45 games over 5 years.