

Multiple Ways to Run Power to Fit Your Personnel

I think the most important thing to be successful at the high school level is having the ability to adjust to your personnel. At the high school level, your players are constantly changing and every year is different so you need to have your base schemes flexible enough to adjust on a yearly basis. For us at St. Francis, our two base schemes are going to be inside zone and power, and we are going to hang our hat on those two plays. The reason I believe in these two plays is because you can run these two plays out of multiple formations and with multiple personal groups. This allows us to teach the base schemes and terminology at all levels even though each level might do it differently based on their personnel that year. For example, say one year we have a big line and a great tight end and fullback we might run more I or Pistol Power with that team. On the other hand, if we have a team that doesn't have a true Tight end or fullback, we might run more shotgun power read with that group of players. The great thing about both those scenarios though, is not only are we using our personnel effectively, but our line is also hearing the same terminology and working on the same techniques all four years they are in high school. This allows them to become great at what they are doing, and we all know that games are won up front.

With that being said, I want to focus on how we run our power play and the multiple ways we run it to adjust to our personnel each year. Let's first start though with the power play techniques that we teach.

The Power Play

Concept of The Play:

Try to build a wall on the front side, have the Fullback kick out, and the backside Guard pull through.

Responsibility

Everybody is responsible for their backside gap with one player kicking out. Gap always overrides people. Great vs movement and blitz because players are just blocking a gap.

Types of Blocks Used in the Play

Down Block (RT/C in the example below):

Description: This is used when a player has an immediate gap threat. We are trying to drive LB into lap of defender. Always expect to be by yourself, any added help is a bonus.

Technique:

- *1st step is diagonal step aiming for the V of the neck of defender inside of you (bite the inside number). Angle of step depends on alignment of defender. Come down on defender, get head across, don't allow penetration
- *Use outside hand to ribs so he can't come back over the top.

1 Arm Punch Block (Post Block) (RG in the example below):

(ex: PSG vs 3 Technique):

Description: Execute when there is no immediate threat to your gap responsibility. You are essentially giving help to the player next to you who is coming down on that man. Keep your eyes in your gap, don't sacrifice your job for somebody else's.

Technique:

- *First Step settle with inside foot, 2nd step should go thru the crotch of defender, aiming at inside number of defender
- *Get movement on DL but still look at your gap in case LB run thru.
- *Stay on double team until LB invades your personal space
- *Come off on BSLB and attack BSLB's inside number, if he goes over double team don't come off

Puller (LG in the example below)

Description: The backside guard will pull to block the playside LB

Technique:

- *1st step drop play side leg and throw elbow back, scrape the butts of the OLine while keeping eyes on Play side LB.
- *Once you get in the hole aim to get your helmet on the inside of the playside LB and kick LB out; Must come to balance to gain control and strike defender. Bring hips and feet (If LB Blitzes kick him out)

Squeeze Hinge (LT in the example below):

Description: This technique is used by the backside tackle. Always protect the the two backside gaps (B and C).

Technique:

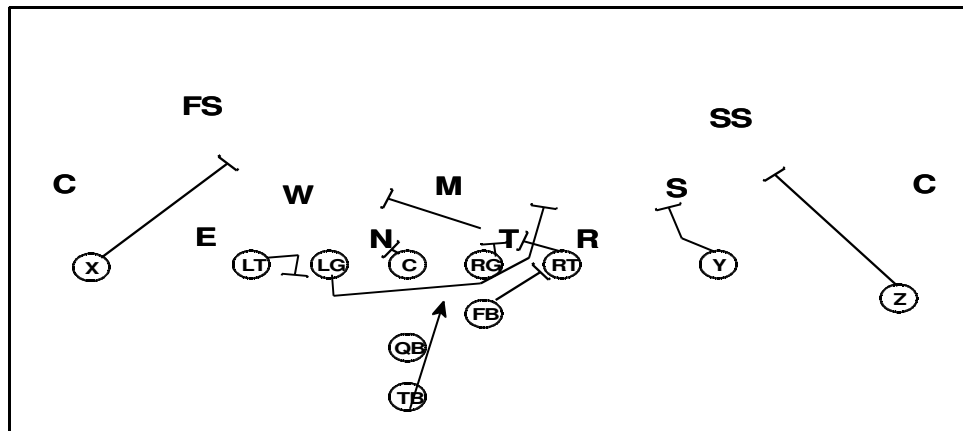
- *Step down to the side of the pulling guard to condense the run thru lane. Secure B Gap; Once you know the center has blocked back (Click shoulders), hinge back to C gap and keep player from chasing the play down.

Kickout Block (FB in the example below):

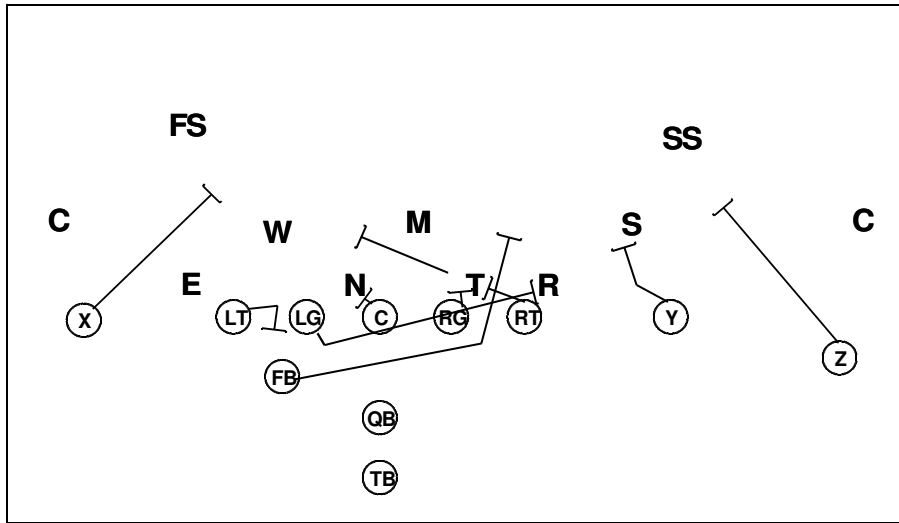
Description: This technique is used by fullback to kick out end man on the line of scrimmage.

Technique:

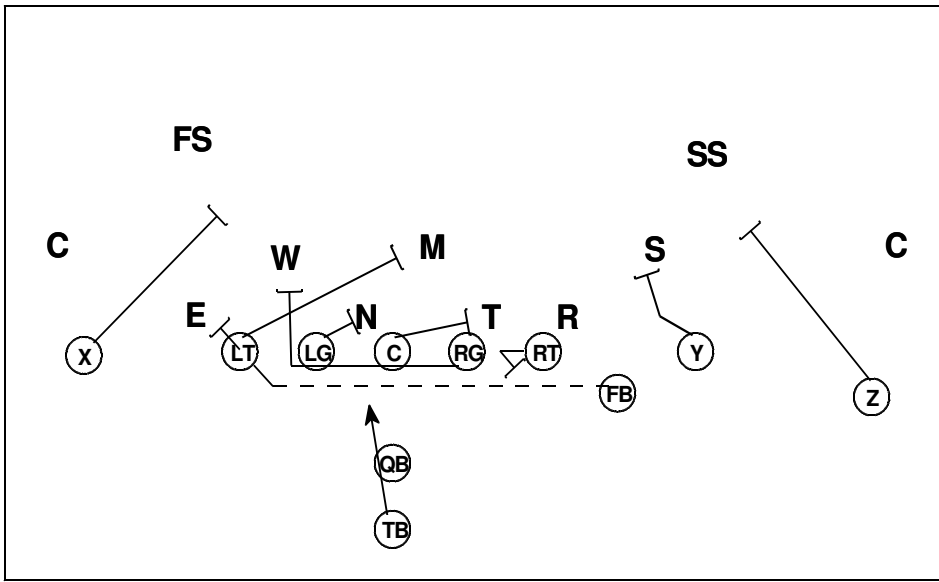
- *First step should be into the line of scrimmage, squeeze the space out of the block; anticipate where he is going to be not where he is
- *Aim to get hat placement on inside of defender and drive him out



Above is the basic way we run power and the first way we install power on day one. The other variation we will use is the Golf play. The front side and backside tackle performs the same techniques as the basic power play. The only difference is that the backside guard becomes the kick out player and the fullback now becomes the puller. Since the guard and fullback exchange responsibilities, we call it "Golf" because of the G and F, it reminds guard and fullback to switch responsibilities. Again the reason we have this variation is for two main reasons. The first reason is because of personnel reasons. If our fullback struggles to match up and kick out a defensive end this variation puts our guard who is usually bigger against the defensive end, and our fullback against a linebacker. These match-ups from a personnel standpoint might put our players in a better situation to be successful. The second reason this variation is a good compliment because if you just run power, defenses might load up to the upback/fullback's side because they know power is coming. If an opposing defense does this then you come back with the Golf play and you can overload the weakside. The Golf play is diagrammed below:

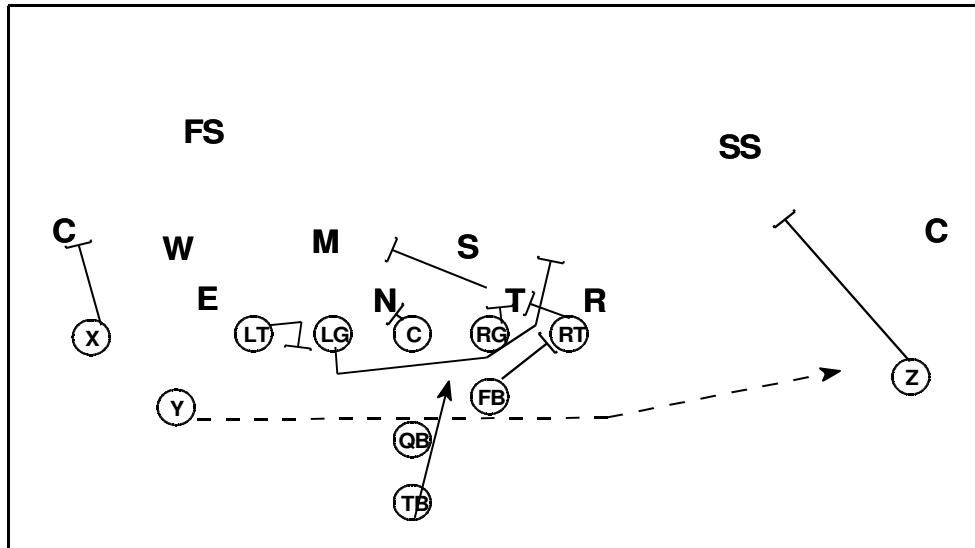


Another variation of power we may use depending on our personnel is the power play with motion. The most basic motion we can do is just line up in various formations and motion our F to kick out the defensive end. You can use motion to gain a better angle, window dress, or gain an advantage from a personnel standpoint. What I mean by this is maybe the defense you are playing plays with a strong side end and a weak side end, and you don't feel great about your fullback versus the strong side end. So in order to get a better matchup you can use a formation to get the strong side end to the strength and then use motion and run power at the weak side end where you feel like your fullback can win that matchup. Again, it's about putting your personnel in the best position to be successful. An example of this is below:

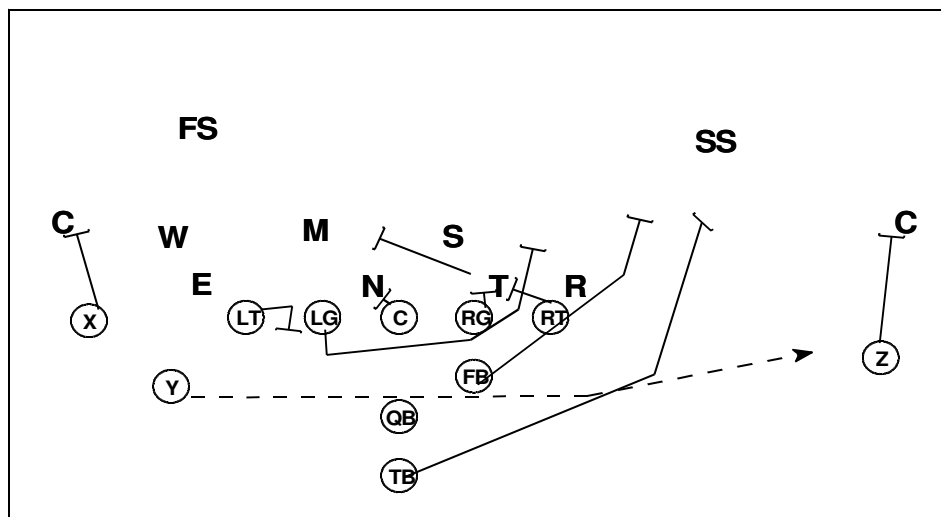


The other type of motion we like to use to utilize and help our personnel is to fake the jet motion. I like this motion for several reasons. The first reason is with faking the jet you are actually changing the formation strength post snap which is hard for a defense to adjust too. The second reason I like using this motion is it helps set up the fullbacks kick out block. By selling the jet, the defensive end may lose his aggressiveness and come more upfield instead of crashing down with the tackle. This allows your fullback an easier kick out block. Again, if your fullback is undersized, this type of motion gives you a chance to be successful at the power play. If the defensive end does not respect the Jet and just crashes the jet you must come back to the jet play to keep the defense honest. I will show that variation next. The other

thing the jet motion can do is slow down the linebackers and get them moving laterally instead of downhill. If you get on them a half second sooner that again can help increase the chance of success with the play. See the diagram below:

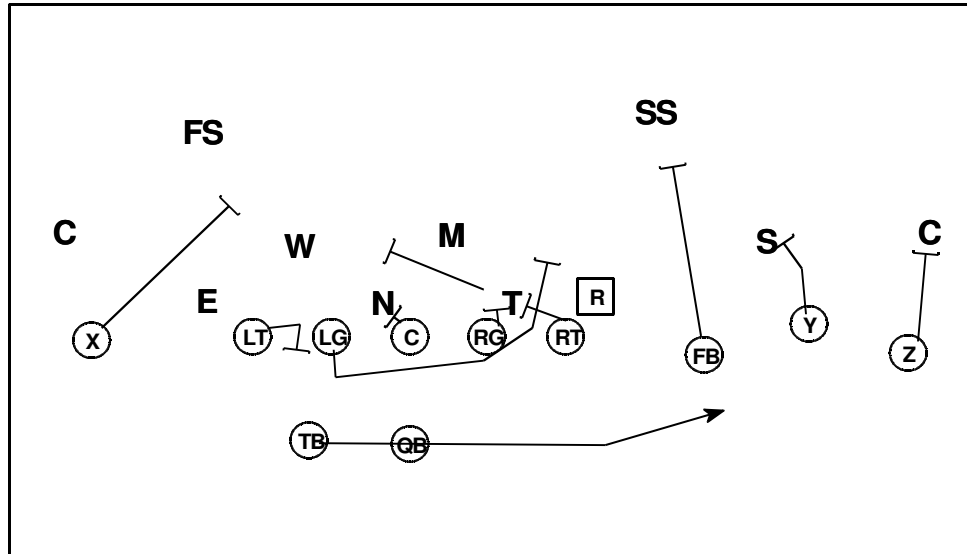


So like I mentioned before, if the defense does not respect the Jet motion then you need to come back with the actual Jet sweep to the motion guy. Many teams like to block the Jet by reaching the play side gap, but for us we still run the Jet and block power. The reason we do this is so the play looks exactly the same to the defense and they don't know if we are running the power or the jet. I believe this freezes the defense more because they are playing the power and then the jet is hitting outside. The other nice thing about doing it this way is only a few guys have to make great blocks instead of the whole offensive line. Not to mention reaching a gap over is teaching a new technique which again takes time to practice which may take away from getting good at something else. Below is the diagram of the jet sweep:

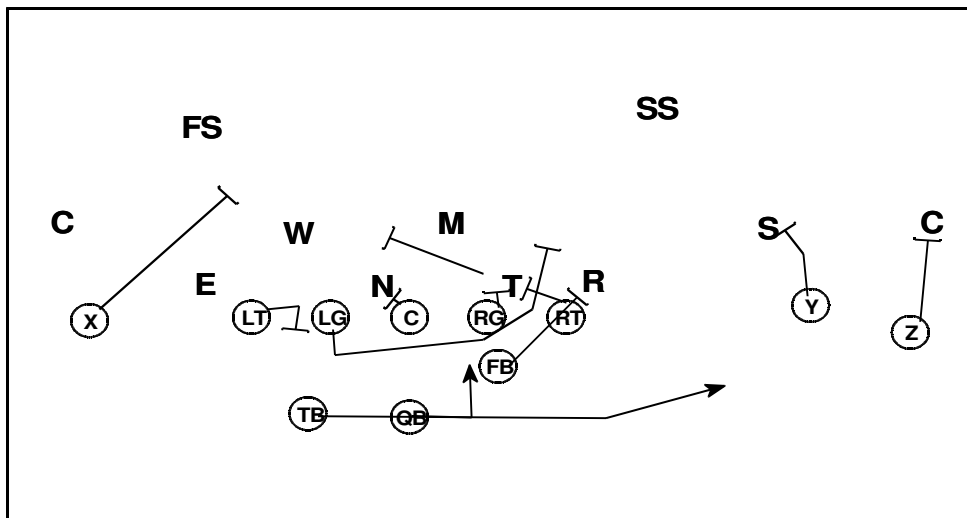


The next variation that may fit your team's personnel is the QB power read play. We have used this play in years where we might not have a true fullback that matches up well against defensive ends or during season's where we have a very athletic QB. Instead of blocking the defensive end we are going to read him on this play. Our QB takes to lateral shuffle steps with the running back running a lateral sweep path and reads the defensive end. If the end comes up field the QB will pull and follow the guard. If the DE crashes down hard with the offensive tackle then the QB will give the ball to the running back and the ball will hit on the perimeter. Again, what's great about this play is your offensive line continues to get great at blocking power. Maybe your freshmen have a great athlete at QB but you don't on the varsity level, but you

still want your offensive line to learn how to block power. This play again provides a solution to those dilemmas. Here is a diagram below.



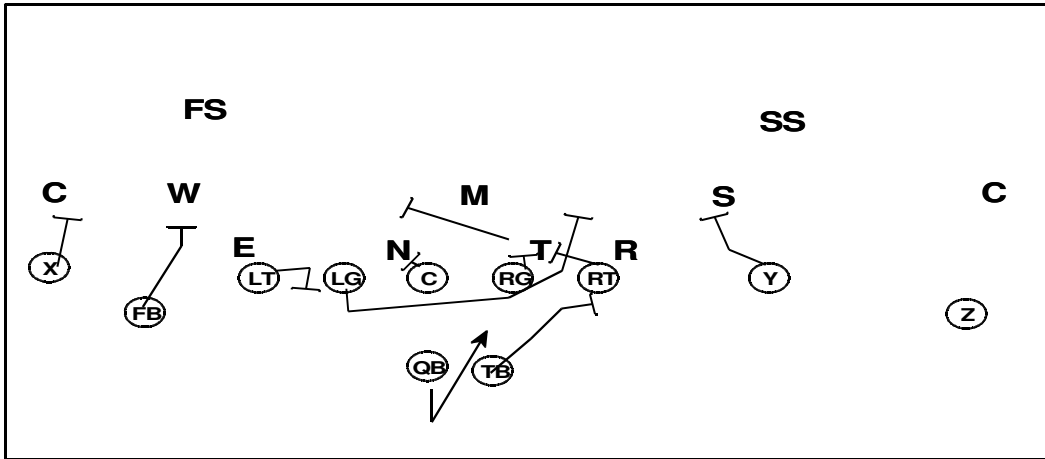
Another play similar to this is where we run QB power and fake that we are reading the play, but we aren't actually reading it. The reason we do this though is again to try and get the defense moving laterally instead of downhill. This action can also help your fullback make the block against the defensive end even if he is undersized because the appearance of the power read play will hopefully soften the defensive end. Again, just like we did with the fake jet, if the defensive end isn't softening and is still crashing then run the power read and get the ball to the edge. Here is the QB power below:



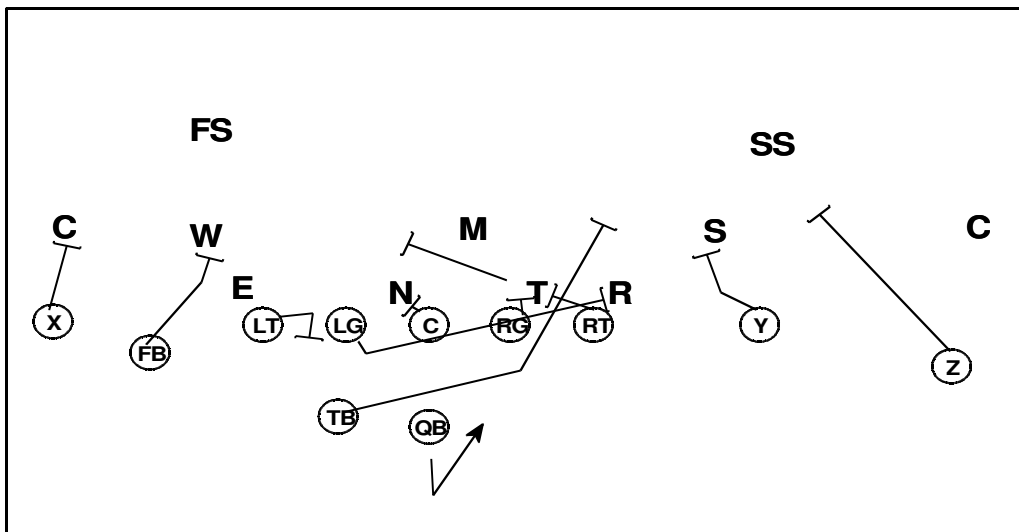
We can also sell the power read fake in the backfield and run the counter play where the guard will kick out the defensive end and the fullback will wrap for the linebacker. Again there is no read but we are giving the defense the appearance that the qb is reading the play. The action also hopefully slows down the aggressiveness of the defense opposed to running downhill power or counter out of the pistol.

The next wrinkle we can use with the power play is to run the QB Draw with power blocking. The tailback will now be the kickout player to kickout the defensive end. The QB will sell a quick three step drop to try and entice the defensive end upfield and then the QB will tuck the ball and follow the guard. Again this is a great play to run your base power scheme but hopefully put your players in a better situation because the QB is showing pass. This will hopefully get the LB's to pass drop instead of filling gaps. And if the LB's are dropping then your offensive linemen can stay on the double

team longer and get more movement. Again this puts your offensive line a better position to be successful especially if you are undersized relative to the defense you are playing. Here is the diagram below:



The slot receivers will initially sell a vertical route and break down when the overhang players break down. If there only 1LB in the box the front side double team can really lock unless the Mike shoots the play side gap. Again, if you are worried about your running back versus the defensive end then you can run the counter blocking scheme with the guard kicking out the end and then the running back wrapping for the playside LB. That version is diagrammed below:



Again the nice thing about both of these variations is you can run from more spread looks. If you can get a one LB look in empty you can run this counter draw without the running back leading through because of the 4-1 box look. You can also tie screens to these plays as well to take advantage of situations where you have numbers on the perimeter.

The other thing we try and do with all of these plays is to have some type of play-action off of all of these looks. I believe you have to have this built into your system to take advantage of teams that are over playing certain runs. Again, this helps your players be successful because the defense cannot just key in on this run.

In summary, I really hope you come away with something from this presentation. I think the toughest element of coaching high school football is adjusting to the strengths of your players and putting them in positions to be successful. As you can see from all of these plays, our offensive line is running one scheme and that's the gap scheme Power. We can make it look different behind them but they are mastering this play during individual each day. They will know the

technique and responsibilities inside out and we all know games are won up front. Each level and each year, we may be better at one variation than another based on our current personnel but one constant is our players will know how to run power and be great at it. We do the same sort of thing with our inside zone play where we have several variations to adjust to our personnel on a yearly basis. Those are our two bread and butter plays that we will run. On Monday we work on all inside zone fundamentals and variations and on Tuesday we work on all power play fundamentals and variations. Wednesday we work on situational football and accessory runs that we may have in that week that are game plan specific. Having two runs like inside zone and power really give you so many different ways to run them that you can set your practice schedule up like this. Maybe you don't run these plays but I think you still might be able to take some of these ideas to see if you can create variations with your base plays so you don't get stuck into forcing your players into a position where they cannot be successful.

If you have any questions or ever want to talk football please don't hesitate to shoot me an email at mfitzgerald@sfhscollegeprep.org