

Shotgun triple option alternating motions to get to the pitch

By Bryan Stoffel, Offensive Coordinator, Bemidji High School

In 2009, our staff prepared our team to meet Sartell-St. Stephen in the opening round of the Class AAAA State Tournament. Our base offensive scheme had been split-back veer, but we had morphed into more of a broken "I" team. The use of triple option as our foundation had given us an opportunity to be successful, despite not being very physical up front. The result of that game has drastically changed our offensive philosophy since. An outstanding Sartell team beat us 27-7 in a game where our offense was stagnant at best. The Sartell coaching staff had done a good job of identifying our tendencies and it felt like they were one step ahead of us the entire game. After meeting as a staff during the off-season, we concluded three things about our program. First, we had athletes at the skill positions. Second, we were not physical enough up front to run our split-back veer attack against state caliber teams. Finally, we had been extremely predictable with our formations and the corresponding plays we ran out of those formations. We have since morphed into a multi-formation shotgun option team. This change in philosophy has given us the ability to put our athletes in a position to be successful, take some pressure off of our offensive line, and limit tendencies.

Many of our formations have only one back in the backfield, thus we need to motion a player to be the pitch-man. We tag all of our eligible players with a letter; quarterback (Q), halfback (H), fullback (F), tight end (Y), flanker (Z), and split end (X). By tagging these players, we have the ability to designate the player that

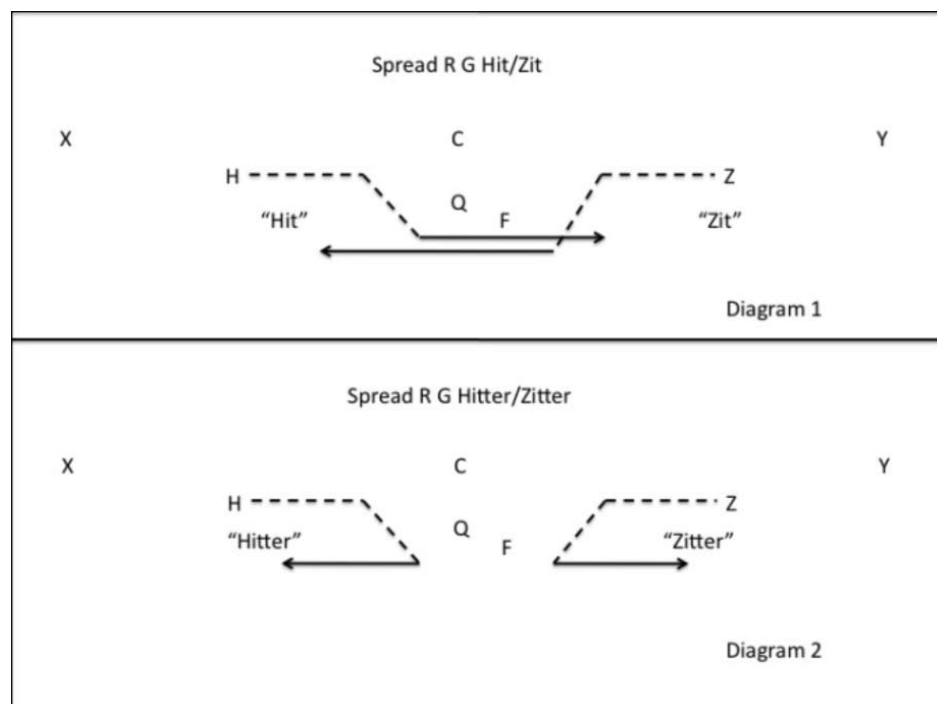
will be the pitch-man and what type of motion we will use to get to the pitch. Our base formation would be Spread R/L. The first motion we install would be Hit/Zit (Diagram 1). Each term is designated to an individual player, hit (H) and zit (Z). The "i" tells the tagged player that they are coming into the formation.

The counter motion to hit/zit is hitter/zitter (Diagram 2). In hitter/zitter motion, the player will motion exactly like hit/zit except at the snap they will plant and reverse direction getting into pitch relationship. Typically, if our offense aligns in spread the defense will balance their alignment. If we use hit/zit motion and the defensive players do not adjust,

we will have numbers on the play side. At times, we will see defenses that roll secondary or slide linebackers towards the motion direction. When we identify that tendency, we will then use hitter/zitter motion and have numbers to the backside of the formation.

Early in the 2010 season, we used hack/zack motion to assist in our 3-step and sprint out passing game (Diagram 3). The "ac" in "hack/zack" tells the player to motion across the formation. In an effort to reduce tendencies we implemented hacker/zacker motion in order to get to pitch relationship (Diagram 4). In hacker/zacker motion, the player will motion across the formation to the far

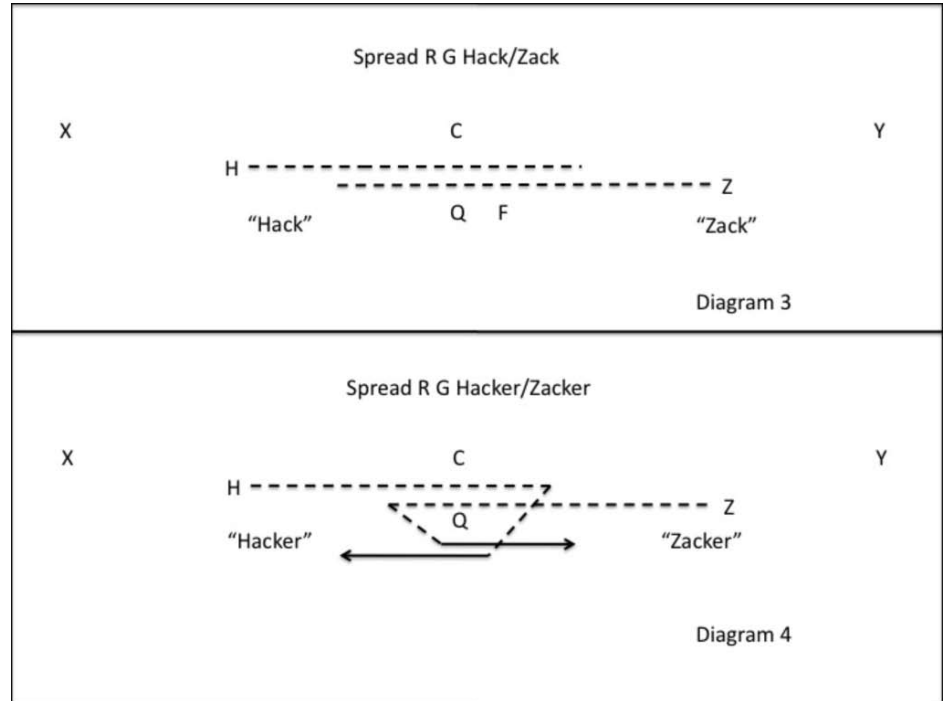
Diagrams 1 and 2



side tackle and then arc back into the formation. Some teams had an automatic check to roll into a cover three anytime the offense motioned to trips. With the use of hacker/zacker motion, we forced the secondary to roll towards the trips and then attacked the weak side with triple option. We found that it put significant pressure on the high safety to roll to the play-side, then stop, and get downhill to play the backside alley on option.

The use of motion to get to pitch relationship has given our offense the ability to run triple option out of numerous formations. The benefit to using multiple motions has also helped dictate pre-snap defensive alignments/coverages with our formations, while still being able to run our base play.

Diagrams 3 and 4



During the school year visit the MFCA Website for updated information!

MINNESOTA FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION

“The keepers of the game”



www.mshsca.org/football/index.htm