



# FORMATION KEYS



## **FORMATION KEYS - Guidelines**

- Strength of the formation is determined by the number of eligible receivers on a side of the formation. The tight end will usually (**but not always**) be on the strong side.
- A tight end is the end man on the line and **no more than four yards from the nearest offensive lineman**.
- Motion **may change** the strength of the formation.

### **MULTIPLE RECEIVER SETS**

A numbering system is used to help identify **initial** key. The widest receiver is number 1, next widest is number 2, etc. When team A **first sets its formation**, the back judge's key is number 3. The linesman or line judge has number 2 and the side judge or field judge has number 1.

### **ADJUSTMENTS**

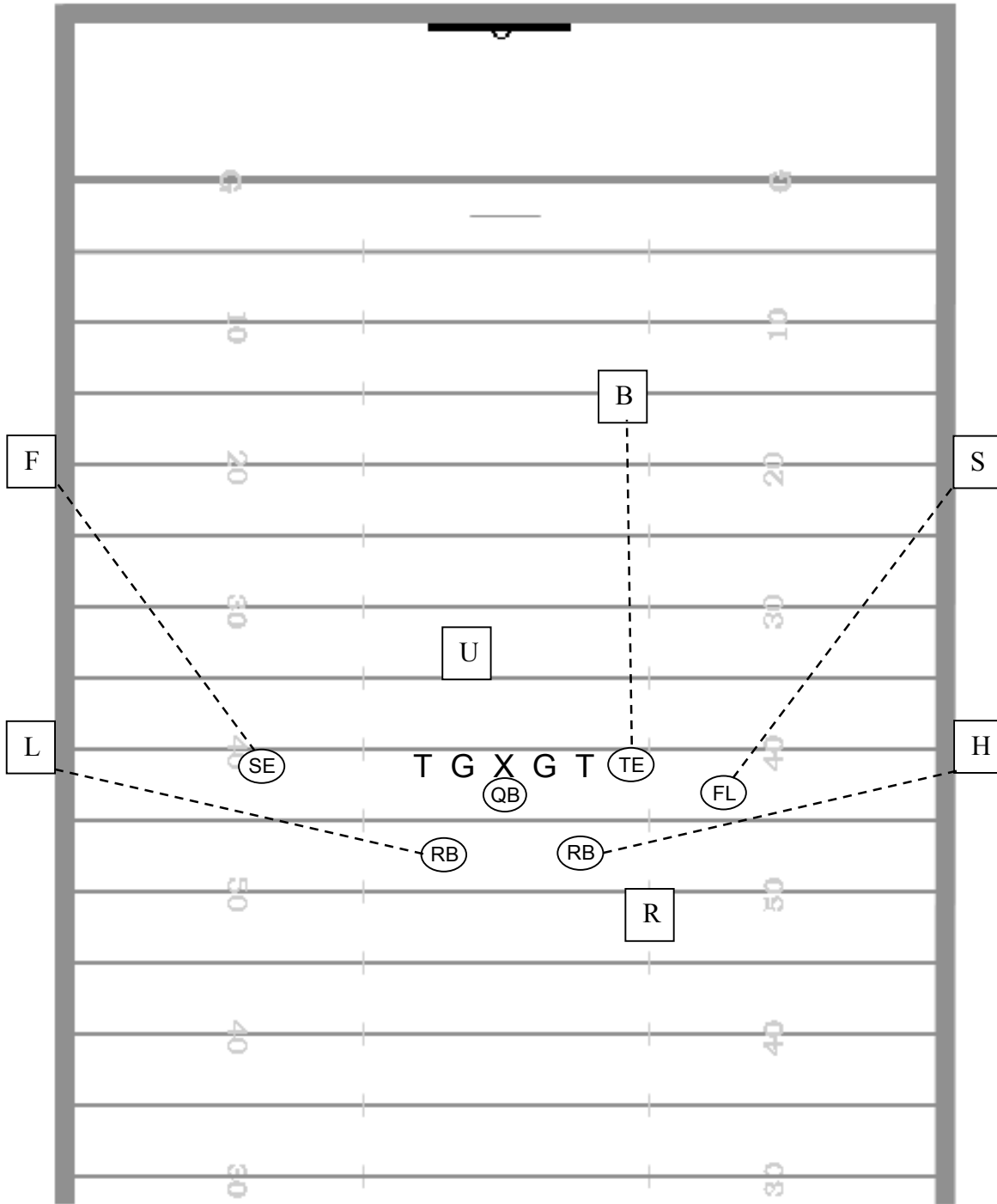
- **At the snap**, if receiver 3 comes off the ball toward the linesman or line judge, the linesman or line judge should switch to 3 and the back judge goes to receiver 2.
- **At the snap**, if receiver 3 **stays in and blocks**, the linesman or line judge will switch to 3: and the back judge goes to receiver 2.
- **At the snap**, if receiver 3 **goes beyond** the line of scrimmage, the back judge will stay with 3 and the linesman or line judge will stay with 2.
- **At the snap**, if receiver 3 comes **straight up the field**, the back judge will stay with 3 and the linesman or line judge will stay with 2.
- **At the snap**, if receiver 3 **goes away from** the linesman or line judge, the back judge will **stay with 3** and the linesman or line judge will stay with 2.

### **STACKING**

- If receiver 2 or 3 is in **close proximity** of each other, treat it as **stacking**. Consider stacking to be receiver 2 and 3, but **do not determine** which receiver is 2 or 3 **until** the ball is **snapped** and they **declare their routes**. The back judge will take the receiver that **comes toward him and his area**:
- On a **trips** formation that **has stacking**, linesman or line judge will stay with either 2 or 3 if he **comes toward** the linesman or line judge, **stays in and blocks** or goes **behind** the line of scrimmage. The back judge will then take the other receiver. If 2 or 3 goes **straight up the field**, the back judge will pick up that receiver and the linesman or line judge will take **the other stacked** receiver **regardless of where he goes**.
- On a **4 receiver** set, the linesman or line judge takes **2 initially** and the back judge **has 3 and 4**. **At the snap**, if 4 comes toward the linesman or line judge, **stays in and blocks** or: goes **behind** the line of scrimmage the linesman or line judge will **switch to 4** and the back judge will take **2 and 3**. If 2 comes **straight up field or goes away** from the linesman or line judge, the **back judge stays with 2** and the linesman or line judge takes **3 and 4**.



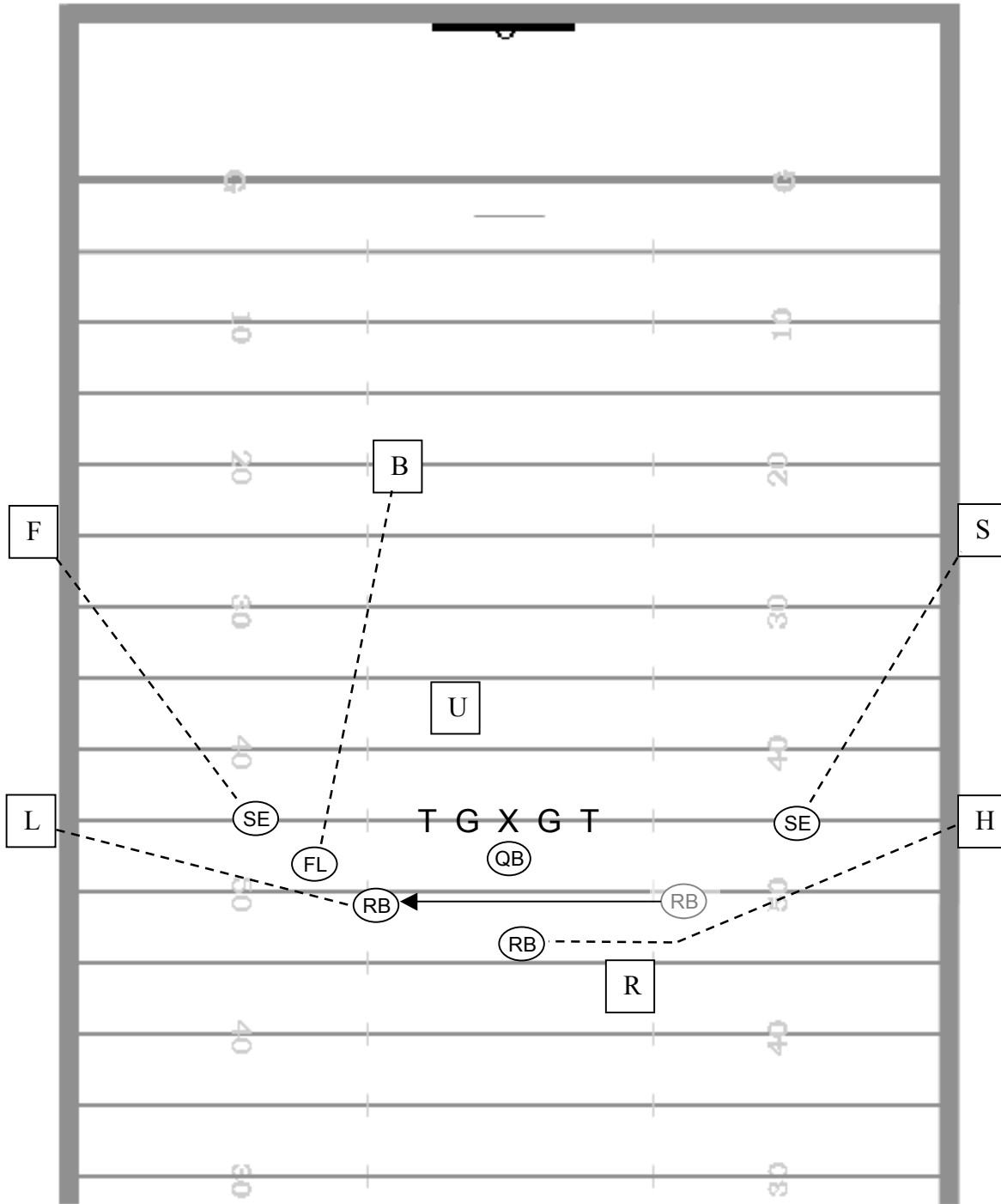
### Pro Set, Strength to Linesman's Side





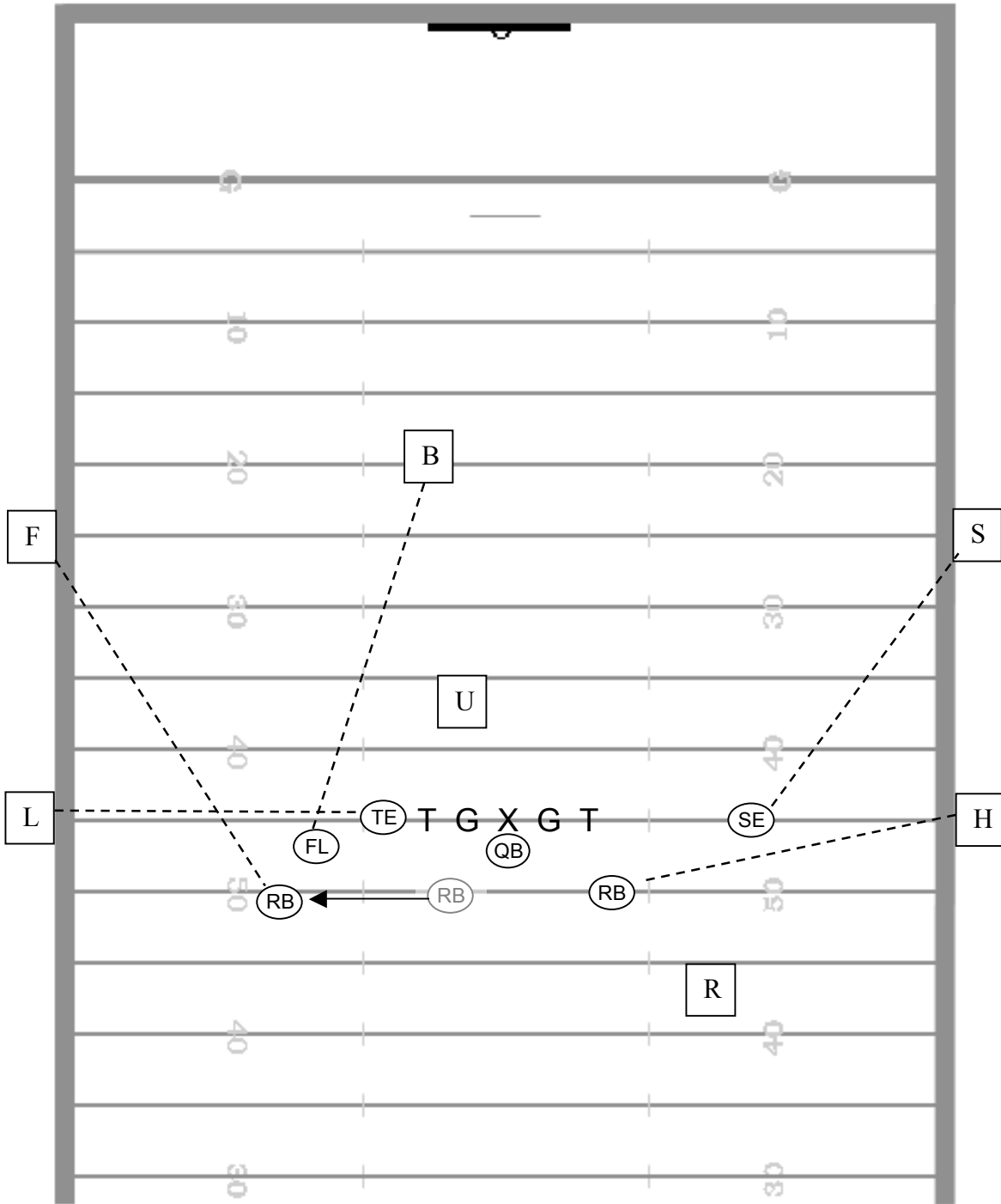


### Motion Man Outside Tackle at Snap



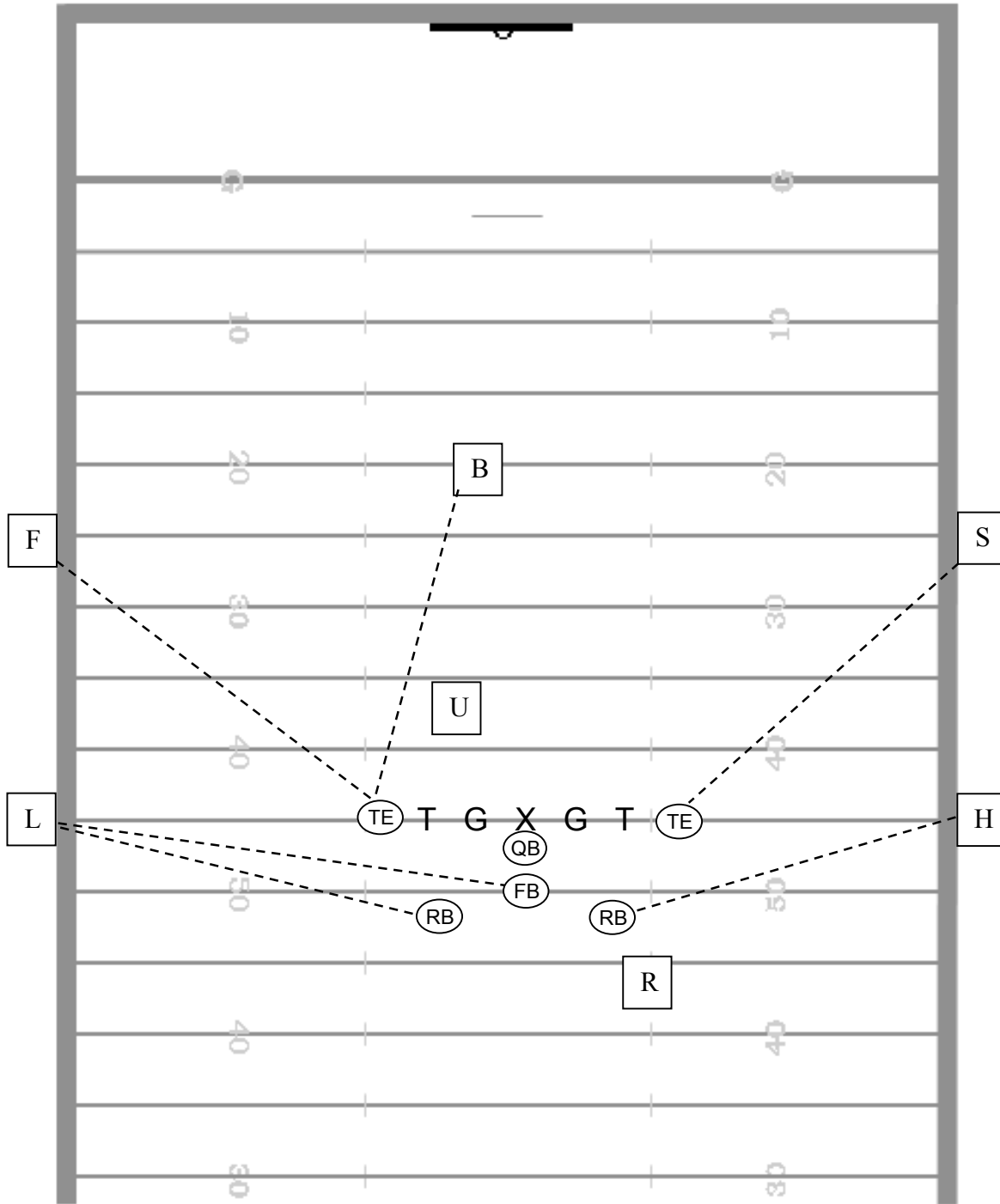


### Motion Man is Widest at Snap



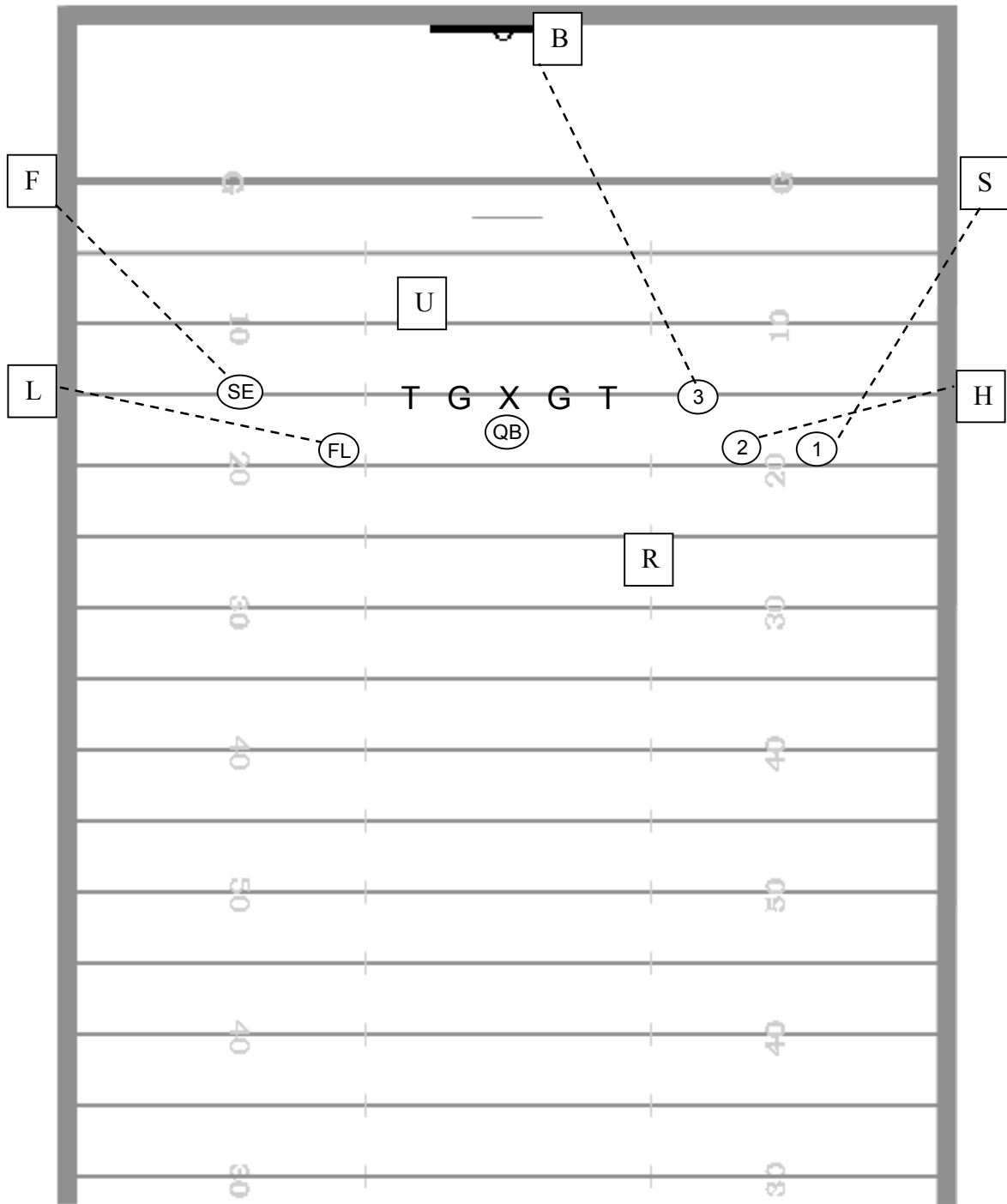


### Double Tight End, Balanced Formation





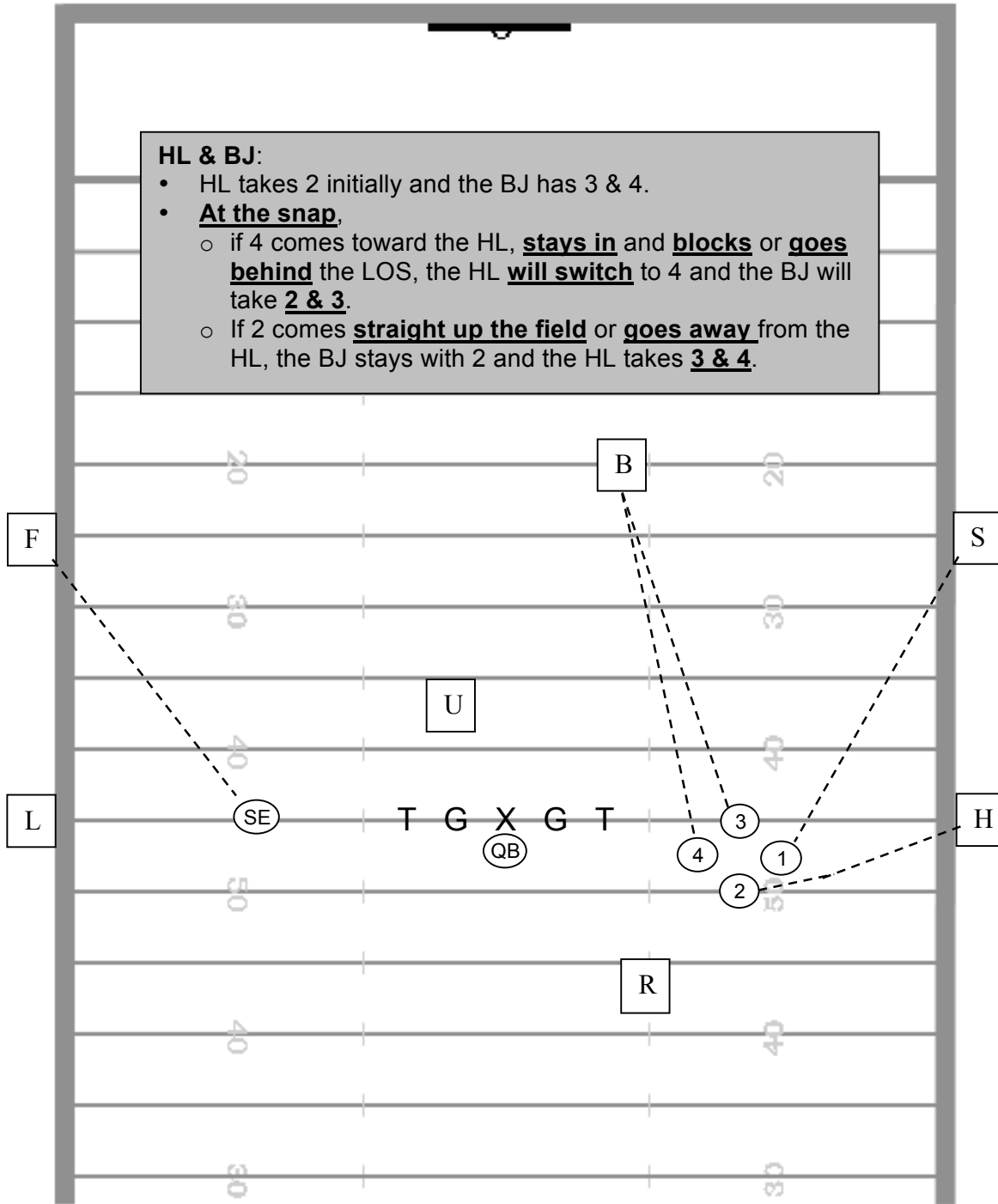
### Trips, Empty Backfield



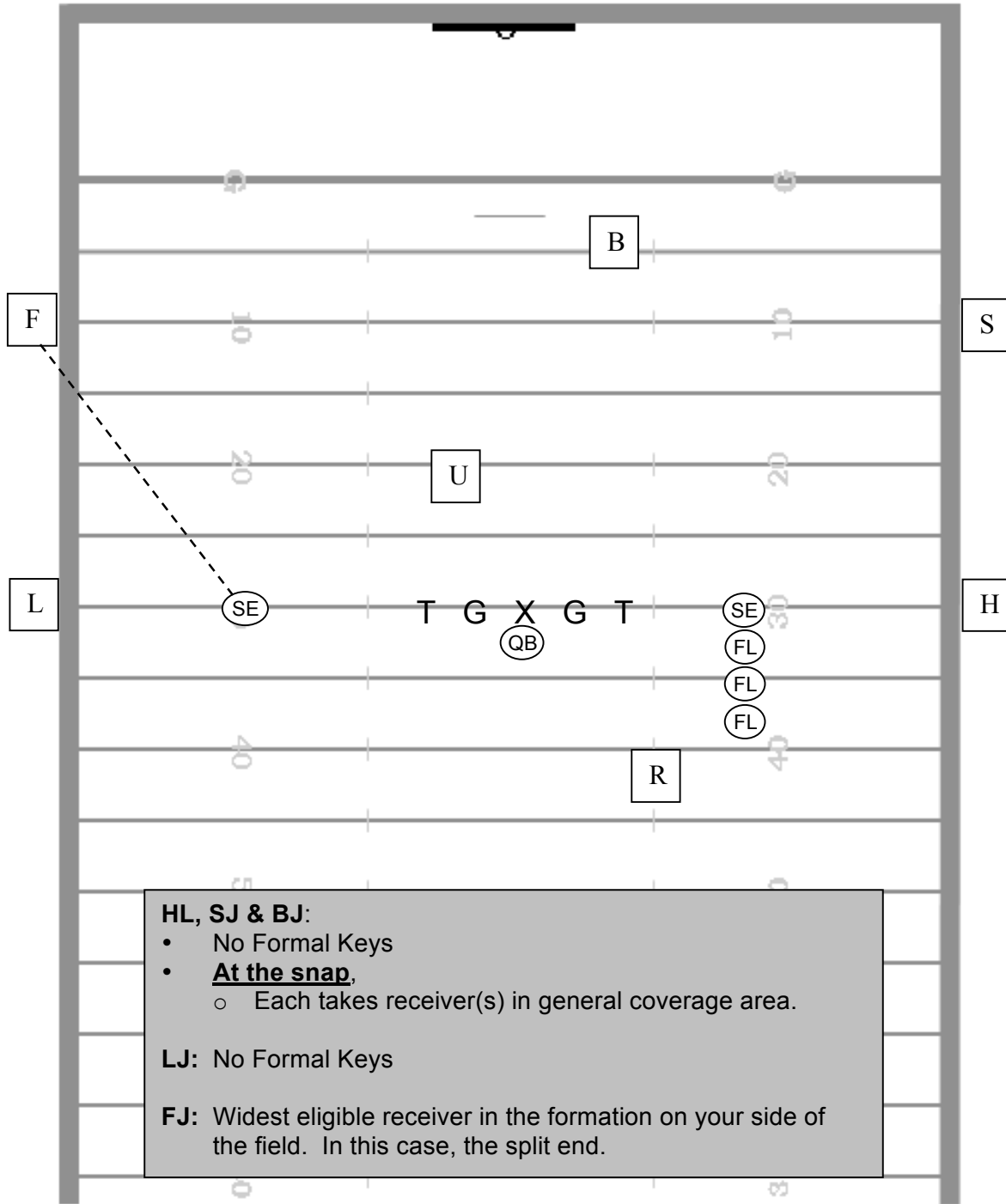
### Four Receivers, Unaligned

**HL & BJ:**

- HL takes 2 initially and the BJ has 3 & 4.
- **At the snap,**
  - if 4 comes toward the HL, **stays in** and **blocks** or **goes behind** the LOS, the HL **will switch** to 4 and the BJ will take **2 & 3**.
  - If 2 comes **straight up the field** or **goes away** from the HL, the BJ stays with 2 and the HL takes **3 & 4**.



### Four Receivers, Stacked



**HL, SJ & BJ:**

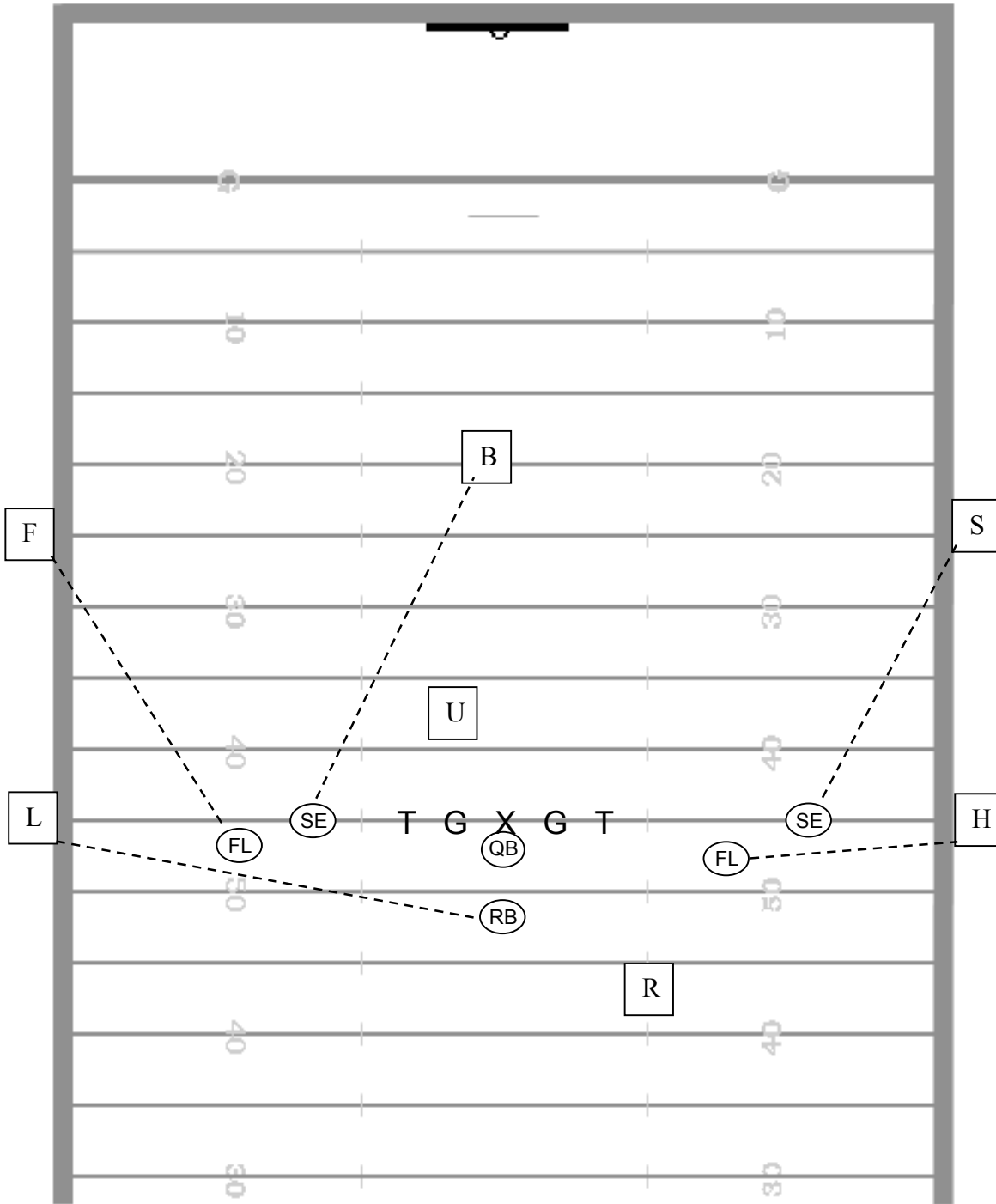
- No Formal Keys
- **At the snap,**
  - Each takes receiver(s) in general coverage area.

**LJ:** No Formal Keys

**FJ:** Widest eligible receiver in the formation on your side of the field. In this case, the split end.

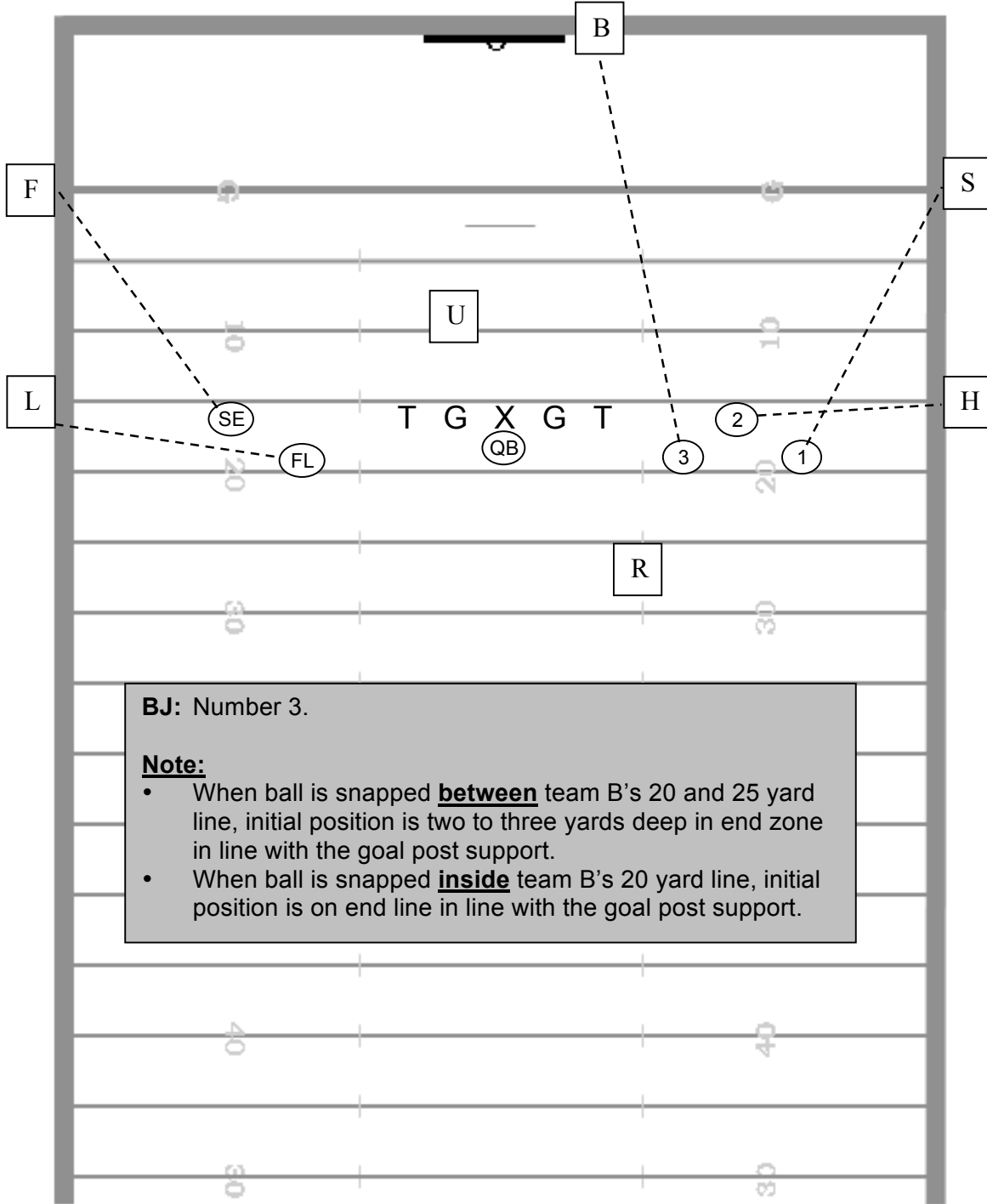


### Double Wing, Balanced Formation





**Red Zone**



**BJ:** Number 3.

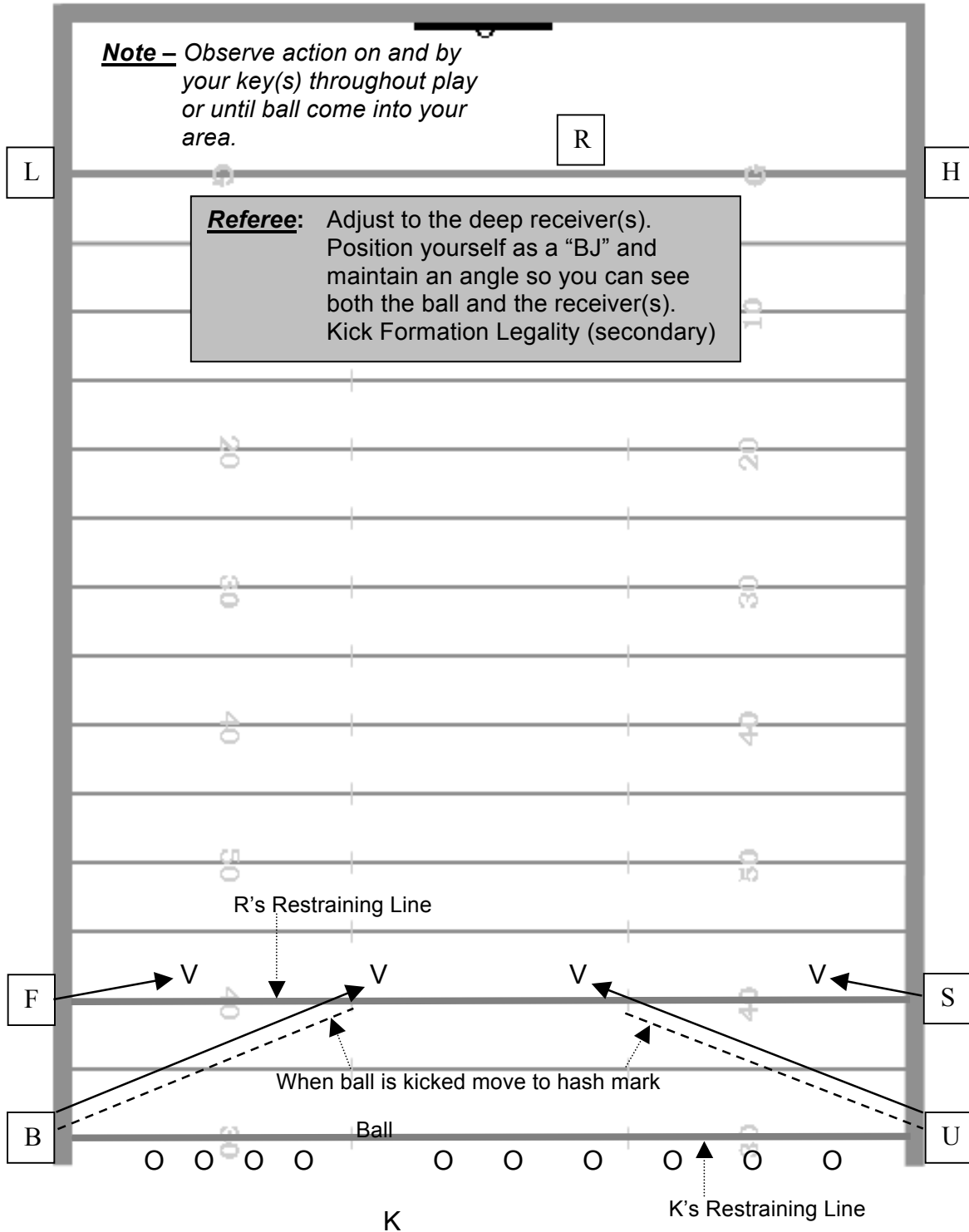
**Note:**

- When ball is snapped **between** team B's 20 and 25 yard line, initial position is two to three yards deep in end zone in line with the goal post support.
- When ball is snapped **inside** team B's 20 yard line, initial position is on end line in line with the goal post support.

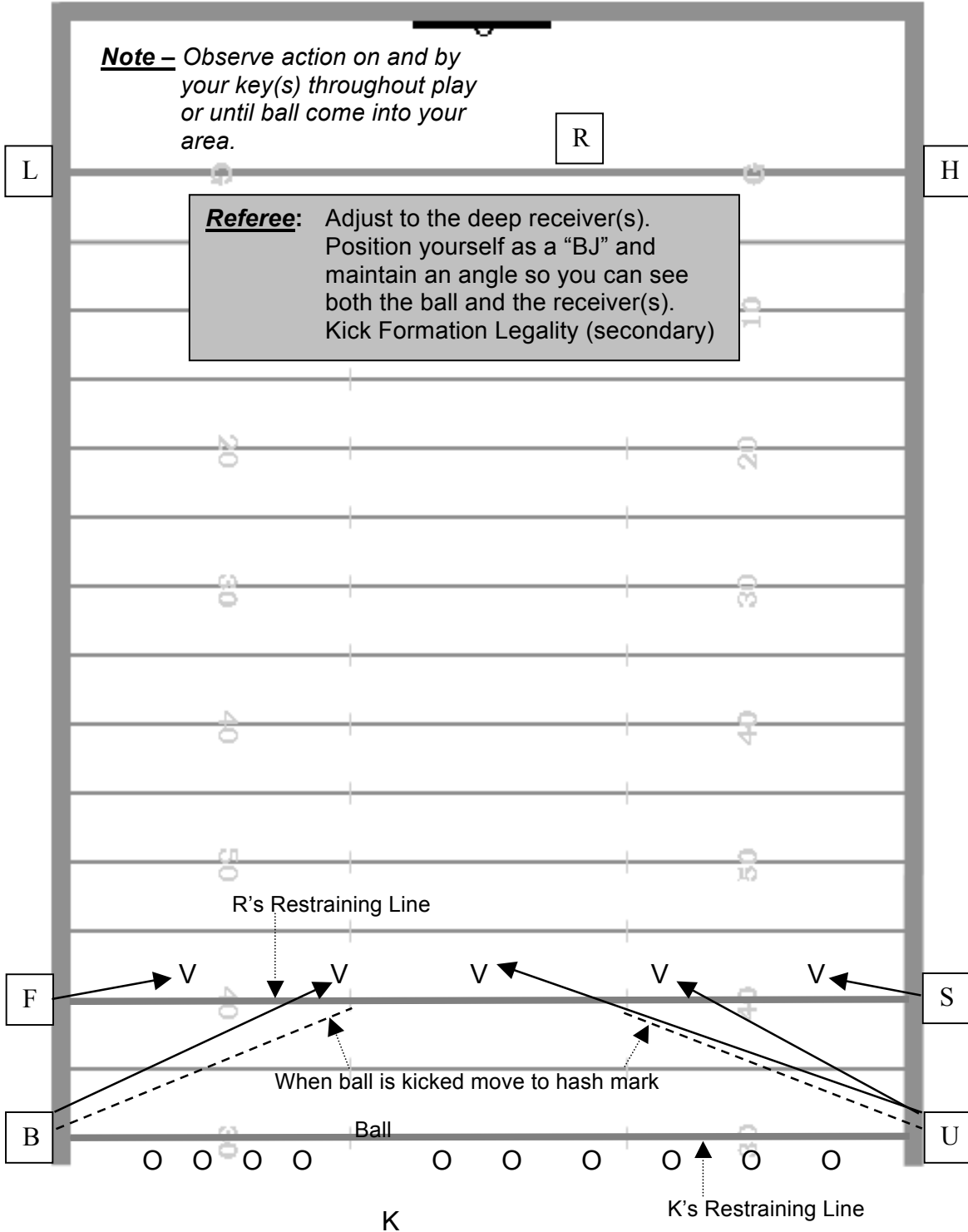
## Free Kick - 4 R- Team Players at the Restraining Line

**Note** – Observe action on and by your key(s) throughout play or until ball come into your area.

**Referee:** Adjust to the deep receiver(s). Position yourself as a “BJ” and maintain an angle so you can see both the ball and the receiver(s). Kick Formation Legality (secondary)



## Free Kick - 5 R- Team Players at the Restraining Line



## Free Kick - 6 R- Team Players at the Restraining Line

