

The 7-Diamond



The Seven Diamond, or 7-D is an archaic defense from the dawn of football time. When our ancestors were small, hamster-like creatures trying not to get stepped on or eaten by the gigantic lizards around us, those lizards were using the 7-D to shut down the T-formation. Does that mean it's outlived its usefulness? Most definitely not. The 7-D is still an effective, simple and easily taught defense for youth football, or goalline/short yardage at higher levels.

As you look at the diagrams, you'll notice a couple of things. First off, it's very similar to the Gap-8, and second, this is a run oriented defense.

Since the offense is required to have at least seven men on the line of scrimmage the potential is there to play each man head up, and slant the defenders to a particular gap, Unfortunately, doing so with only a single linebacker means that against some formations the poor kid has to cover a gap six yards away. Instead I recommend only using the noseguard and middle linebacker in your stunts, as in Fig 1.1.

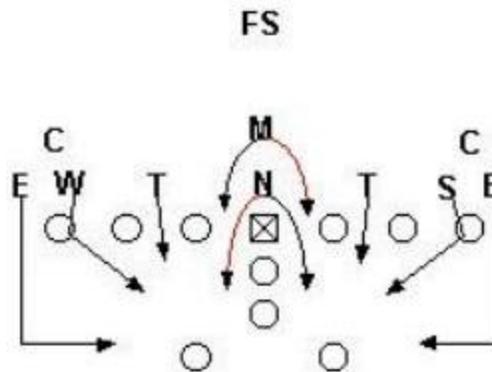


Fig 1.1 7-D slants.

I have never used the 7-D. I am reasonably familiar with the defense because I have considered using it as a change-up from my normal Gap-8. I've toyed with the idea of using the 7-D as a "passing defense", but never had the opportunity to do so.

By shifting out of the base front, a variety of different pass coverages and stunt schemes can be used. Figure 1.2 shows a few different possible looks from this same defense. Notice that the basic responsibilities have not changed, only the alignment of the defense.

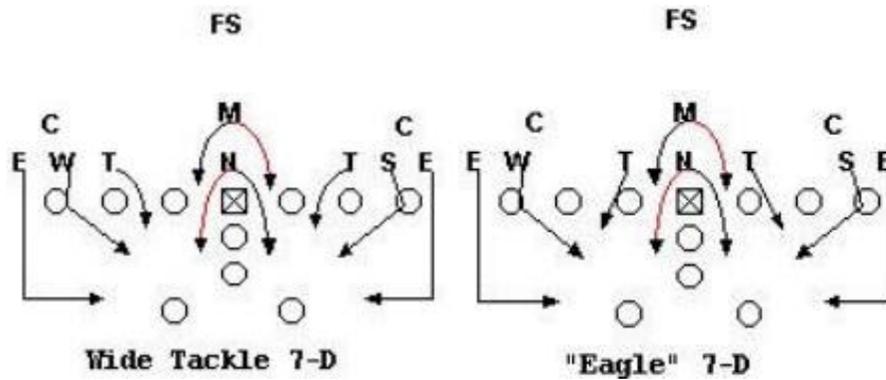


Fig 1.2 Different 7-Diamond Fronts

In the Eagle front, it's a good idea to shift the corners slightly inward to strengthen the off tackle gap.

The basic assignments of the defense are very similar to the Gap-8:

Lineup:

Sam	Inside shade of TE
SDE	1x1 "D" Gap
SDT	B gap
NT	Head up on center
WDT	B gap
Willie	Inside shade of TE
WDE	1x1 "D" Gap
SCB	Inside shade of WR
WCB	Inside shade of WR
FS	7-12 yards deep, 5 1/2 offensive players to each side
Mike	3 yards deep, 5 1/2 offensive players to each side

Run responsibilities:

Sam	C gap
SDE	D gap, trail reverses through backfield
SDT	B gap
NT	A gap, "L" or "R" depending on call
WDT	B gap
Willie	C gap

WDE D gap, trail reverses through backfield
 SCB Man pass coverage
 WCB Man pass coverage
 FS Read and respond to flow. Stay deep until ball crosses LOS
 Mike A gap, opposite call as NT.

Pass responsibilities:

Sam Bump and cover TE/cover closest back if split end
 SDE Rush passer with hands high
 SDT Rush passer with hands high
 NT Rush passer with hands high
 WDT Rush passer with hands high
 Willie Bump and cover TE/cover closest back if split end
 WDE Rush passer with hands high
 SCB Bump and cover WR/cover closest back if tight end
 WCB Bump and cover WR/cover closest back if tight end
 FS Deep zone, follow passer laterally, keep receivers underneath
 Mike Cover FB in man/ short zone

Another version of the 7-Diamond that is worth looking into is the 7-Box. Fig 1.3 shows the 7-Box.

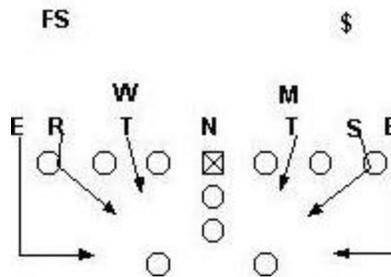


Fig 1.3 The 7-Box

In my opinion, the more effective pass defense would be the 7-box, because of its ability to cover each of the eligible receivers man to man, and still leave two deep defenders in zone coverage. The only drawback is the pass rush has been reduced from the six rushers of the Gap-8, to a mere five rushers.

If you have the talent and the ability to coach it, the 7-Box also lends itself easily to the idea of zone pass defense. Treat Sam and Rover like corners and give them responsibility for the outermost passing zones. Mike and Will cover the

short "hook" or "drop" zones, and use the free safety and strong safety in two deep pass coverage.

Here are the responsibilities for the players in the 7-Box, man coverage:

Lineup:

Sam	Inside shade of TE
SDE	1x1 "D" Gap
SDT	B gap
NT	Head up on center
WDT	B gap
WDE	1x1 "D" Gap
Rover	Inside shade of TE
Willie	3 yards deep, B gap, key to closest back
\$ (SS)	7-12 yards deep, inside shade of TE
FS	7-12 yards deep, inside shade of TE
Mike	3 yards deep, B gap, key to closest back

Run responsibilities:

Sam	C gap
SDE	D gap, trail reverses through backfield
SDT	B gap
NT	A gap, "L" or "R" depending on call
WDT	B gap
WDE	D gap, trail reverses through backfield
Rover	C gap
Willie	Key near back, hold on flow away
\$ (SS)	Read and respond to flow. Stay deep until ball crosses LOS
FS	Read and respond to flow. Stay deep until ball crosses LOS
Mike	Key near back, hold on flow away

Pass responsibilities:

Sam	Bump and cover end
SDE	Rush passer with hands high
SDT	Rush passer with hands high

NT	Rush passer with hands high
WDT	Rush passer with hands high
WDE	Rush passer with hands high
Rover	Bump and cover end
Willie	Cover closest back
\$ (SS)	Deep zone, follow passer laterally, keep receivers underneath
FS	Deep zone, follow passer laterally, keep receivers underneath
Mike	Cover closest back