



Dayton High School Football

Quarterback

Coverage Recognition



How To Read Coverages

- One important thing a good passing quarterback needs to know is how to read defensive coverages.
- **Identify the coverages using the following numerical terms:**
 - 0** - Man - man by all LB's, Corners and Safeties. (expect a multiple blitz in zero coverage)
 - 1** - Man Free - man by both Corners and the \$/LB's but the Free Safety is in a zone coverage.
 - 2** - Two Deep Zone - \$ and FS are both deep and the Corners & LB's are in a zone coverage.
 - 3** - Three Deep Zone - both Corners and the FS are deep with zone coverage underneath.
 - 3Squat** - Robber – A cover 3 shell with the \$ squatting in the seam / hook area.
 - 4** - Four Deep ¼ Zone - a corner and a safety cover ½ of the deep field to the strength and the other corner covering the other ½.
 - 5** - Two Deep Man Under – Deep zone by the Safeties and Man by the LB's and the Corners.
- To tell the difference between these coverages we will use a phrase call "**Box D.E.A.**", which stands for Men in the **Box**, **Depth** of corners, **Eyes** of the Defensive Backs, and **Alignment** of Defensive Backs.



Pre-snap reads

“**Box D.E.A.**”

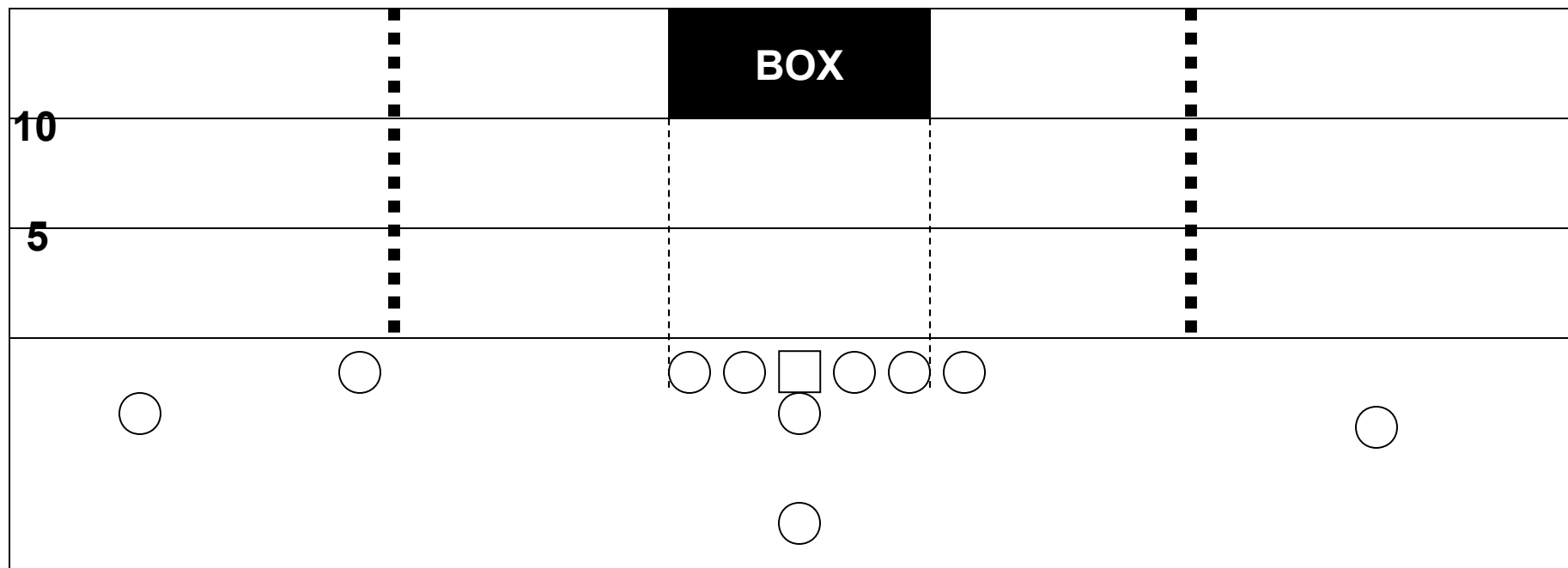
- To tell the difference between these coverages we will use a phrase call "**Box D.E.A.**", which stands for:
- Men in the **Box**,
- **Depth** of corners,
- **Eyes** of the Defensive Backs, and
- **Alignment** of Defensive Backs.

- This is a ***pre-snap*** read that can, and most likely will, change after the snap of the ball.



The Box

- **BOX**: The Box is tackle to tackle, 10 yards from the L.O.S. and back. But it can shift right or left depending on whether the ball is in the middle of the field or on the hashes.
 - If there is a safety in the box, then you know that the defense is either 1, 3, or 3 Squat.
 - If there is not a safety in the box, the defense is either 0, 2, 4, or 5.





Depth, Eyes & Alignment

"ZONE COVERAGE"

DEPTH:

- If the **corners are 7 or more yards deep** their coverage, it is most likely a type of zone.

EYES:

- If the **DB's eyes are on the quarterback**, it is most likely a type of zone coverage.

ALIGNMENT:

- An **outside alignment by the DB's** on a receiver points to zone coverage.

"MAN COVERAGE"

DEPTH:

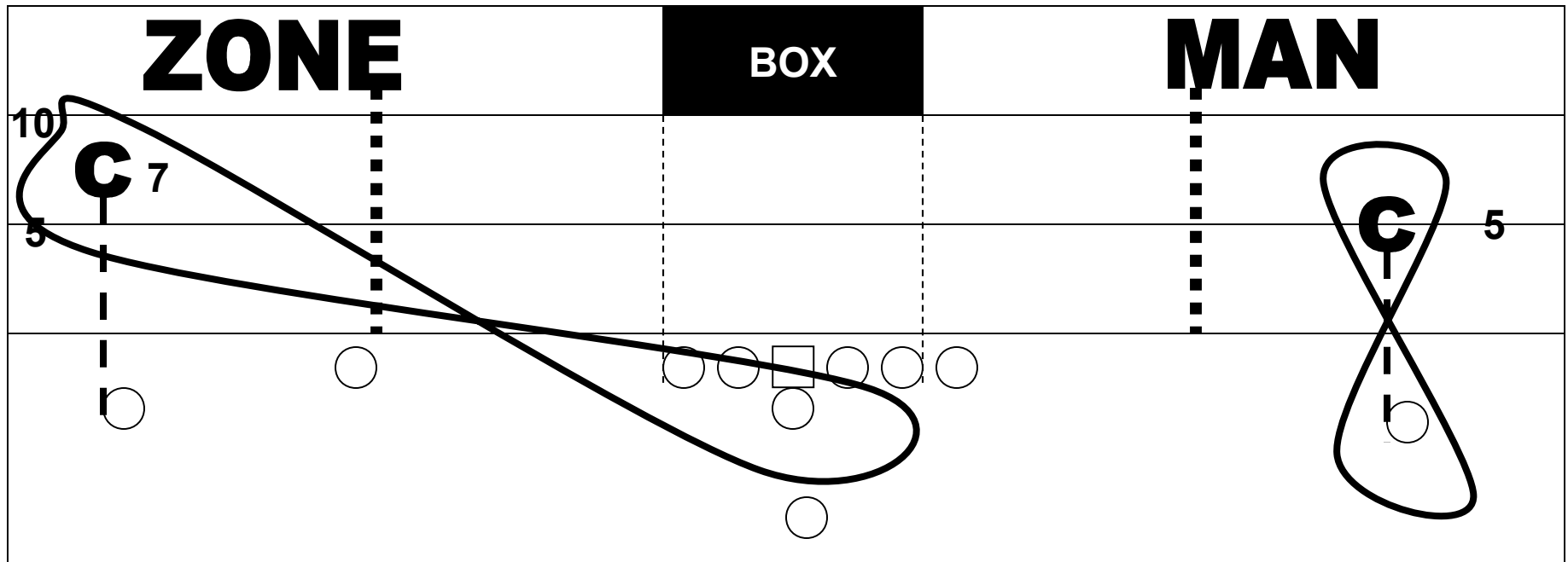
- If the **corners are within 6 yards** it is most likely a type of man coverage.

EYES:

- If the **DB's have their eyes on the receiver**, it is most likely some type of man coverage.

ALIGNMENT:

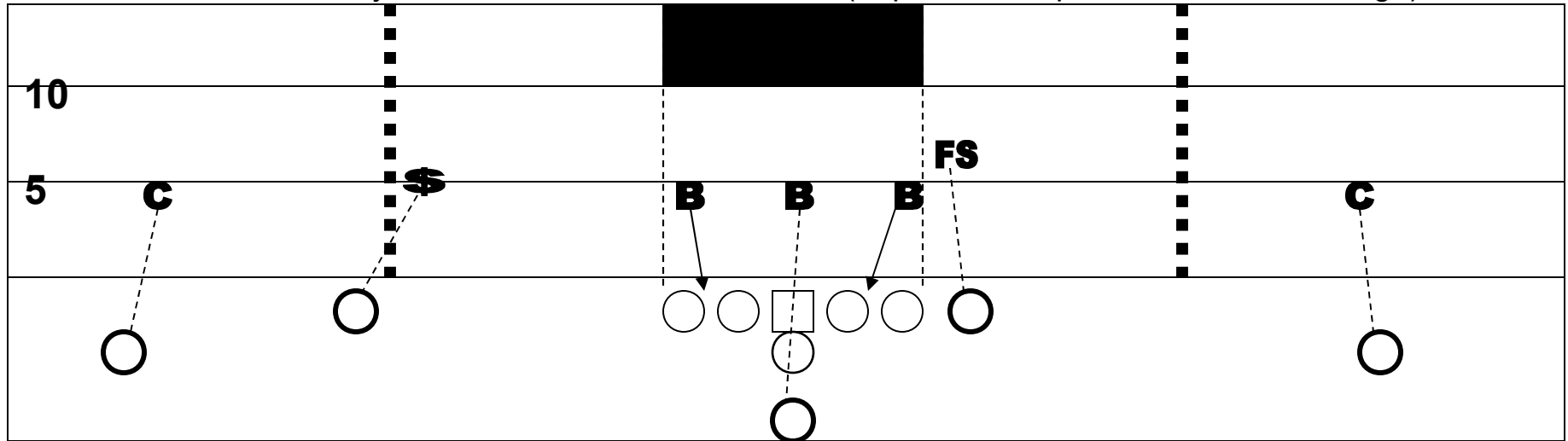
- An **inside or head-up alignment by the DB's** points to man.



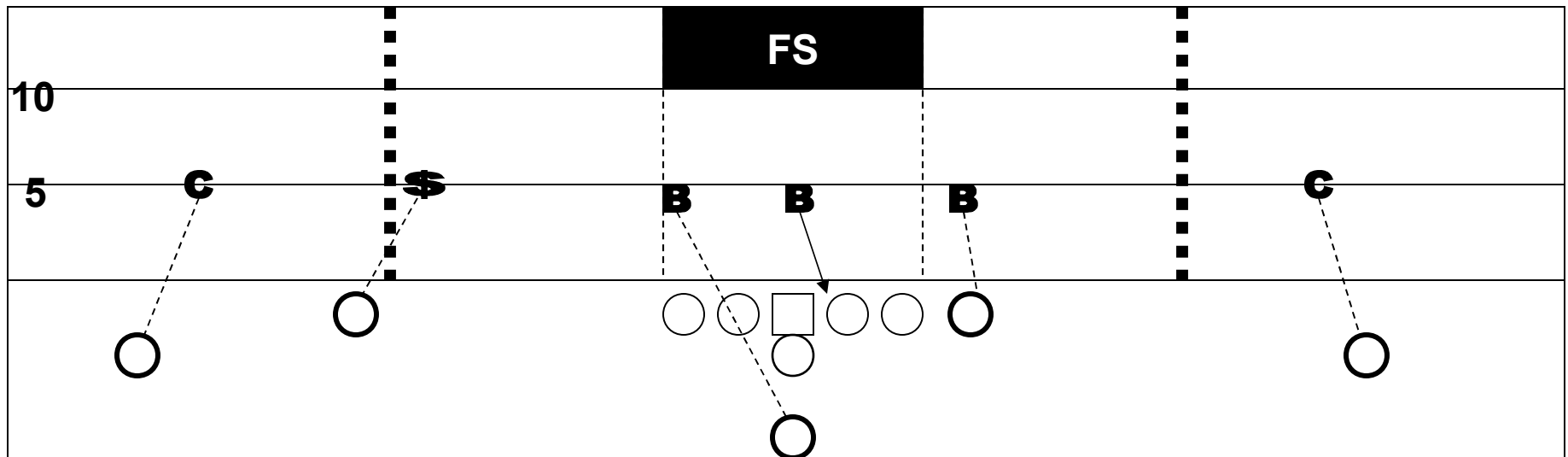


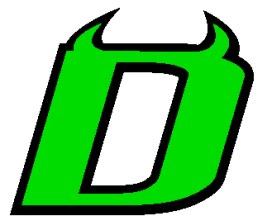
0 – Man & 1 – Man Free

“Cover 0” - Man - man by all LB's, Corners and Safeties. (Expect a multiple blitz in zero coverage)



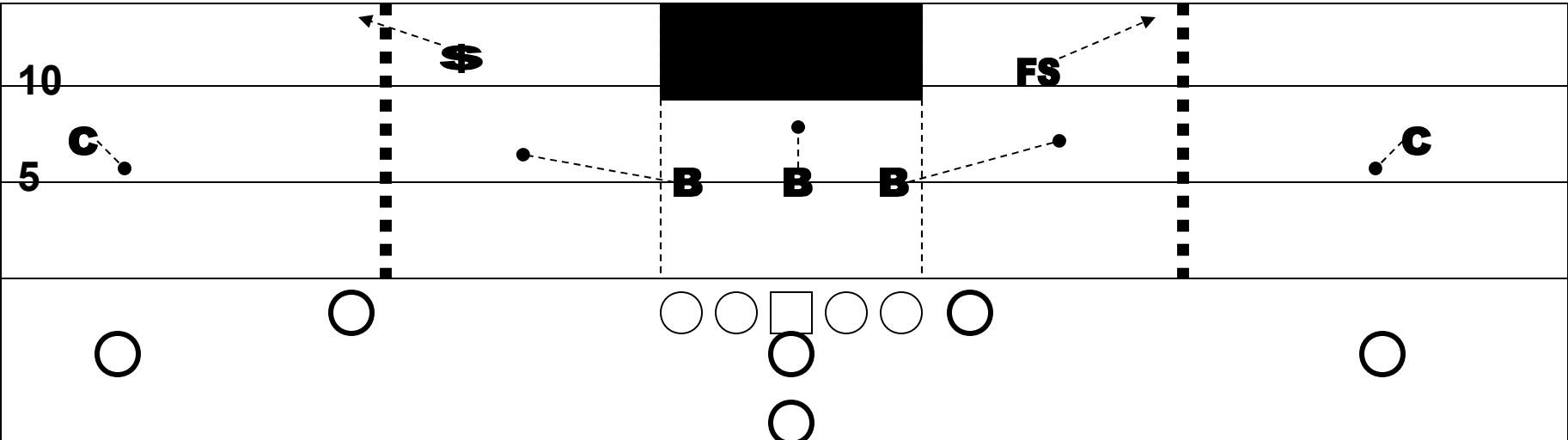
“Cover 1” - Man Free - man by both Corners and the \$/LB's but the Free Safety is in a zone coverage.



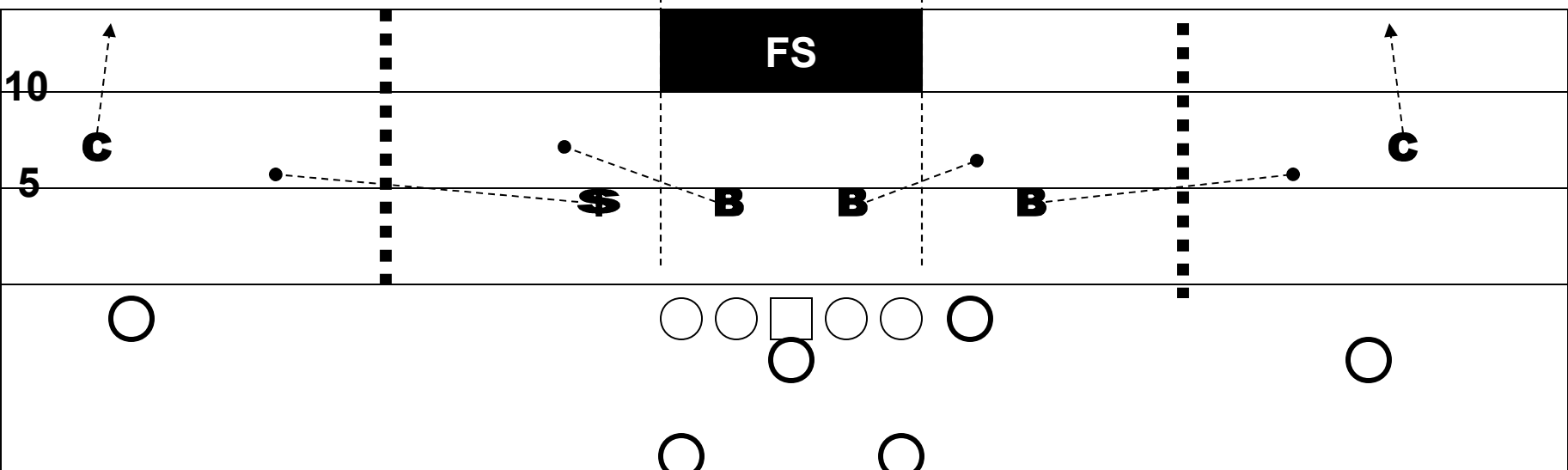


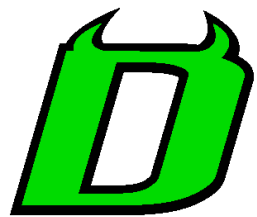
2 – TWO DEEP ZONE & 3 – THREE DEEP ZONE

“Cover 2” - Two Deep Zone - \$ and FS are both deep and the Corners & LB's are in a zone coverage.



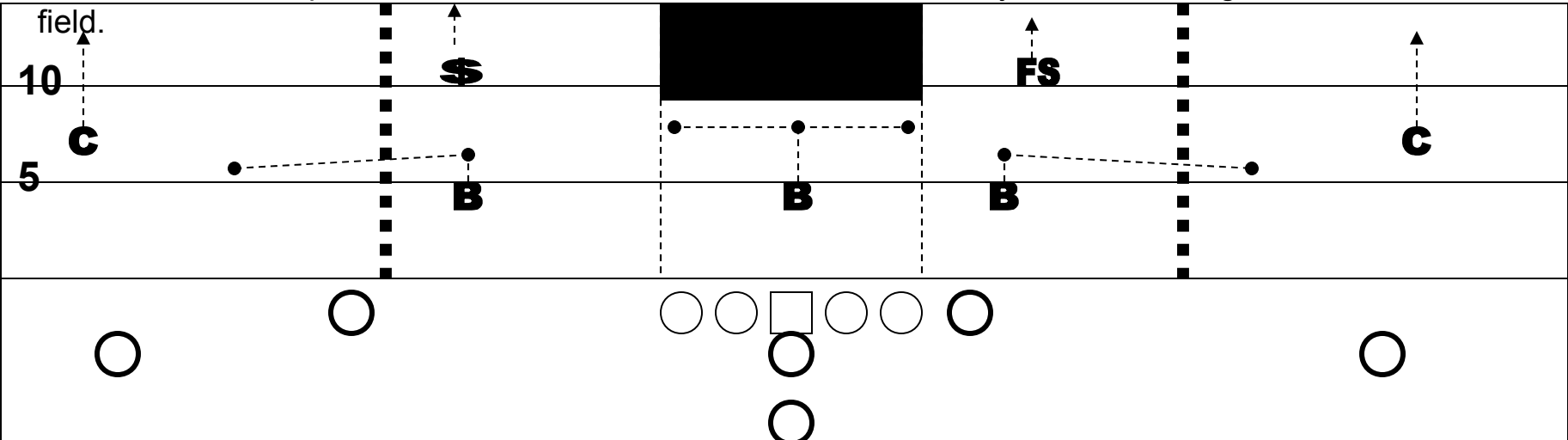
“Cover 3” - Three Deep Zone - Both Corners and the FS are deep with zone coverage underneath.



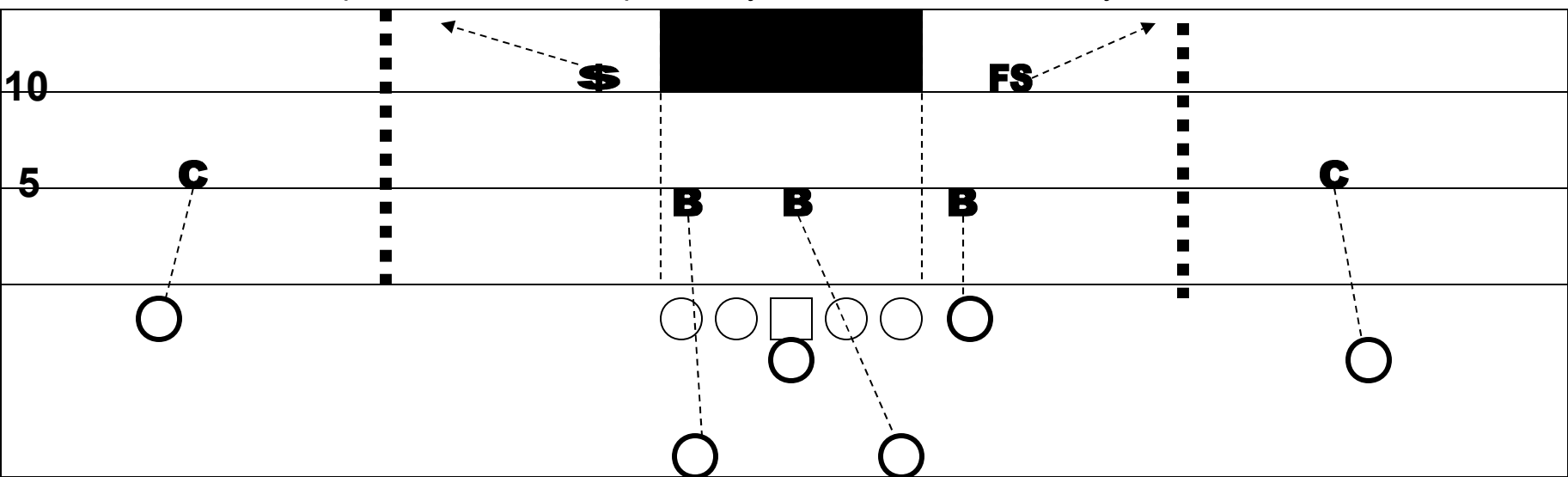


4 – FOUR DEEP ¼ ZONE & 5 – TWO DEEP MAN UNDER

“Cover 4” - Four Deep ¼ Zone – Each DB covers ¼ of the field; Safety and Corner together cover ½ of the field.



“COVER 5” - Two Deep Man Under – Deep zone by the Safeties and Man by the LB’s and the Corners.





REMEMBER!!!

- These are only *pre-snap* reads. A pre-snap read may indicate a certain coverage only to have it change right after the snap of the ball.
- Changes in coverage are performed by a rotation in the secondary coverage personnel.
- A common coverage change-up is to align in a cover 2 and rotate to a cover 3Squat.
- As the quarterback takes his drop, he needs to keep his eyes down field and recognize any alignment changes after the snap of the ball. Movement of the Free Safety and Strong Safety are usually the best indicators.

Cover 3 Squat - Robber – A cover 3 shell with the \$ squatting in the seam / hook area.

