

On ultimate; O4: primary long or right-wing

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This is a two-pager about primary long and right wing on offence¹.

Beating person-match defence with a vertical stack

Figure 1 (left) shows your team: using a vertical stack formation; having called a brick; and facing a forehand force with person-match defence². You (O4) are shown at the front of the stack. D11 is likely to set up, as shown, to defend the open side. O6 might therefore be able to throw a break-force you going to D3. If you do not receive the disc at D, you might then cut downfield on the break side of the field, heading towards A⁴.

The third, solid black arrow shown in Figure 1 (left) indicates you returning to the rear of the stack, or you might continue and cut to C. However, the dashed, red, horizontal line indicates the limit of how far you would go downfield⁵. Figure 1 (top-right) shows what might happen if you go downfield of the dashed red line prior to the disc being thrown. Because the disc travels slowly through the air, D11 will no longer have to stay as close to you to prevent or intercept a throw (to you and/or A) D11 is therefore able to play further upfield so as to cover you if you cut back towards the disc. They might also poach, so as to potentially intercept or prevent downfield throws to O1-3⁶.

Figure 1 (bottom-right) provides an example of a similar situation, but where the disc has moved in the meantime to O1, who cut to C. The dashed, red, horizontal line is shown further downfield in Figure 1 (bottom-right), reflecting that if O1 throws the disc to A it will arrive more quickly than before, when O6 had it further upfield. Hence, D11 will likely have to play tighter defence on you (O4), meaning that O2 and O3 will be able to cut deep to B.

As primary long, your role is typically to provide a target for a scoring throw into the endzone, or otherwise gain a lot of territory. If you do get the disc, you might be able to immediately pass to one of the other cutters (O1-3). However, you are also cutter, so the most important things to do are: to make sure your team retains possession of the disc. Hence, if no (safe) pass downfield is immediately available, it is probably time to engage one of the handlers (O5-7), throw a dump, and get downfield again to do some more cutting. The handlers can take care of the throwing, but your team likely needs you to be a target, which the handlers are likely too far upfield to provide.

¹ Referred to here as position O4.
This is part of a series, available at
<https://github.com/James-Reynolds/Ultimate-strategy-and-tactics>

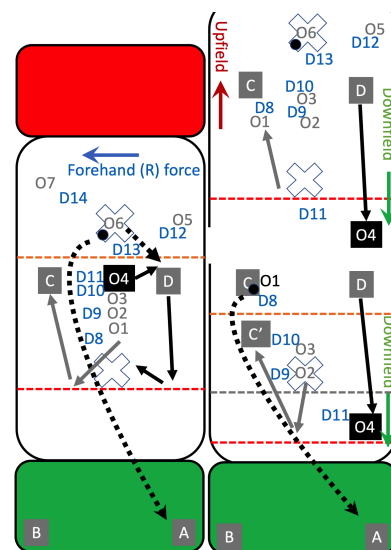


Figure 1: Vertical stack: starting position (left), D11 poaching deep (top-right) and disc moved to C means D11 covers O4 (bottom-right)

² Vertical works against other person-match defences, but might need adjustment e.g. (1) backhand force, mirror everything; (2) straight up force, maybe give the handlers time to move the disc around, and go out to the sidelines when you do cut; etc.

³ You may be able to stand still, simply wait for O6 to throw, and then run onto it at D.

⁴ Watch out that you do not cause a pick between D11, D10 and O3.

⁵ The position of this line varies with movement of the disc and the distance that the person with the disc can (or is likely to) throw. The dashed, yellow line, similarly indicates approximately the limit of how far you would go upfield. Any further and you are crowding the handlers, and your defender might be able to interfere with the dump

⁶ Note how Figure 1 (top-right) shows D8-10 having changed their positioning to cover O1-3 almost exclusively upfield, preventing the under cut. This is possible because you (O4) are so deep, that D8-10 may be able to rely on D11 intercepting or preventing any deep throws to their direct opponents.

Beating person-match defence with feldrunner

Figure 2 (left) shows a feldrunner formation, O1 as the focus, and O2 and O3 in the endzone. You are one of the four handlers. The idea of feldrunner is to pass to the isolated focus (O1). They then either pass to O2 or O3, or dump to the handlers and reset. Typically you, O5, O6 and O7 try to stay out of the way when you don't have the disc.

If you do have the disc you will be trying to throw to O1. If D8 is looking at O1 you can throw into the space behind, allowing O1 to run onto it. Alternatively, if D8 looks at you, O1 can likely cut and get clear enough for you to pass to them.

Beating person-match defence with a horizontal stack

Horizontal stack typically involves cutting upfield and downfield (black arrows) within your quarter of the field⁷ as shown in Figure 2(right). O6 can potentially throw to you in the endzone or at C⁸.

Beating zone defence

Vertical stack probably won't work against zone.. Instead, your team needs to spread out. Three ways to beat a zone are: (1) over; (2) round; or (3) through. Figure 3 (top left) shows this against a 3-3-1 zone, with a throw direct from O6 OVER to you⁹. Otherwise, O6 might throw over or through (to O2 or O3), or round (to O5 or O7)¹⁰.

If the defence continues to play zone once the disc gets close to the endzone, you (O4) and the other wing (O1) can GO AND STAND ON THE BACK CORNERS (Figure 3 (bottom left)¹¹. Figure 3 (bottom right) shows how the further you are from the back corner the more D8 can cover both you AND others, and the harder it is to throw direct to you. D11 might even be able to guard O7 closely, if you end up close enough to O2 and O3. This applies also when not close to the endzone (top right). If you crowd forward, D8 only has to cover O1, and D9 and D11 can push upfield.

Beating clam defence

Clam mixes person-match and zone defence styles, with defenders switching frequently. You might coordinate with others to overload a defender, or spread out and give the handlers space and targets deep.

...AND FINALLY this is just a two pager; there are many more offensive strategies and tactics¹² Remember, defence wins games, offence loses them¹³; and it's better to get it back with another turnover¹⁴ than receiving another pull!

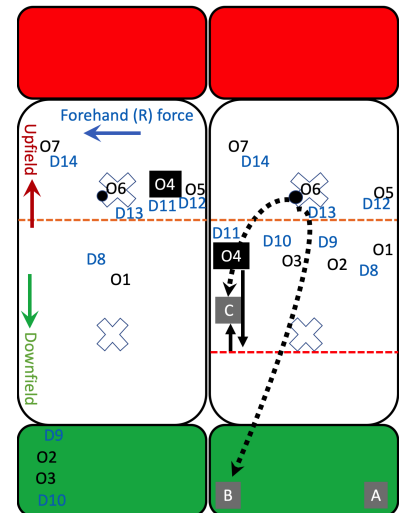


Figure 2: Feld (left) & ho-ro (right)

⁷ Other cuts can work, but might need communication, e.g. diamond cuts involve trading places with O3.

⁸ Black arrows show how a back-under cut opens space for the throw to C.

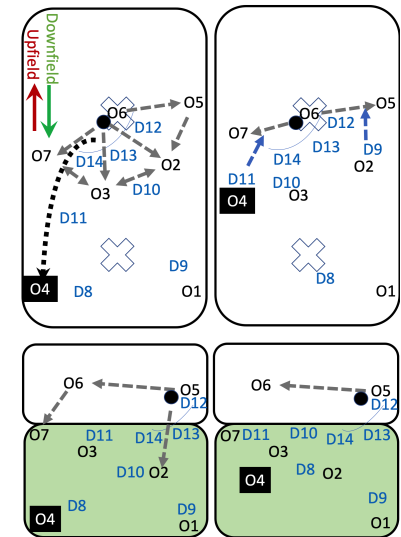


Figure 3: formations against 331 zone

⁹ This may be a blade or hammer, to get it to you as quickly as possible. So it may help to stand still and look at O6.

¹⁰ You, O3, and O7 might then split D8 and D11 to make ground before the cup (D12-14) catch up. Once they do, dump to O6 so all 7 of your players are involved again.

¹¹ The defence will either leave you open, or cover you at the corner (D8) making more space for O2, O3 and O5-7 at the front of the endzone.

¹² Try U-stack: two side stacks, one on each side, and three handlers back. Leaving space in the middle of the field.

¹³ Because the team with the least turnovers usually wins.

¹⁴ i.e. if you offence fails, its time to play defence, even though you're the O team :)