

On ultimate; O1: primary middle, focus or left wing

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This document is about playing primary 'middle', the focus, or left wing on offence, referred to here as position O1¹. You are starting the point on offence. Let the handlers deal with catching the pull, but as you run downfield try to see what defence structure is being used.

Person-match defence: vertical stack

Figure 1 shows how everyone might setup if there is a brick called, a forehand force, person-match defence, and a vertical stack. Restricting your cutting to between the dashed horizontal lines can help². If you go downfield of the dashed red line before the disc is in the air, D8 may be able to get to A or B before the disc, intercepting or preventing deep throws to you or others. Similarly, if you go upfield of the dashed yellow line then D8 may be able to help prevent dump throws from O6 to O5 or O7. Hence, if you cut to C but the disc is not thrown to you perhaps cut deep to clear the area, then return to the stack and make space for O2-O4.

In Figure 1 O6 is shown potentially throwing you (O1) either:

1. A break-side huck to A. This throw is probably difficult. However, you as O1 can just stand still till O6 throws it, then run and catch it. Figure 1 indicates how D8 will be on the wrong side of you and so probably be able to get to the disc first.
2. An open-side huck to B. This is viable if: D8 is closer to the disc than you; you are faster than D8; or D8 does not cover an initial cut downfield (black arrow).
3. A throw to C. The solid black arrows indicate a cut you might do; initially going deep, but then coming back-under on the open side.
4. A break throw to D. Any of the cutters (O1-4) can go and catch this, as all the defenders (D8-D11) are on the wrong side. However, if anyone except O4 cuts towards D prior to the disc being thrown then there is likely to be a pick³.

Figure 2 shows the disc having been thrown to you on the back-under cut towards C. In order of desirability, your options may include: (1) off-load to O6, putting them in power position; (2) throwing to A' to hit O2 or O4; (3) throwing to B' or C' for O2; (4) break force throw to centre the disc to O3 or O5; (5) dump to O7. Then, head back to the stack, or make another cut.

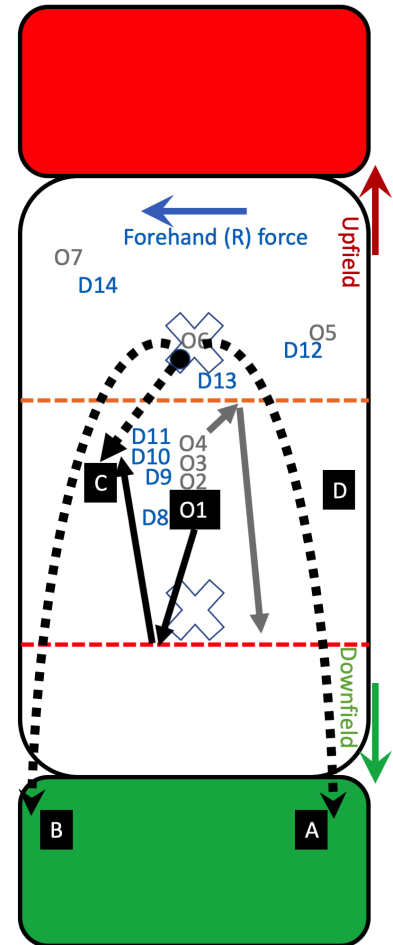


Figure 1: Vertical stack formation

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

² Position of the dashed red line might vary with how far O6 can or will throw.

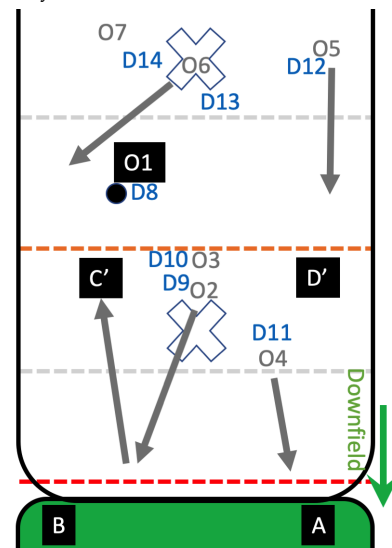


Figure 2: Vertical stack progression

³ Picks are when a defender cannot follow someone they are marking. However, once the disc is thrown, everyone can move anywhere to try and catch it. So, maybe stand still until it's thrown to avoid a pick

Person-match defence: feldrunner offense

Figure 3 (left) shows a feldrunner formation, with 4 handlers and 2 in an endzone stack. It involves leaving you (O1) isolated in the centre as the focus. O6 can throw to A, B, C or D. If D8 looks at you, let O6 throw it first. If D8 is looking at O6, make a cut. Once you get the disc either throw a goal to O2-3, or dump to one of O4-7 and repeat.

Person-match defence: horizontal stack

Basic horizontal stack involves cutting upfield and downfield (black arrows) within your quarter of the field⁴. Figure 3 (right) shows O1 on the left wing. O6 can potentially throw to you at A or D⁵. However, O6 throwing to O2, O3 or O4 may be easier. Hence, you may wish to wait and cut later. If you do get the disc at D a huck to A for O2 or to B for O4 may be effective. Otherwise, get it to the middle of the field with a dump to O5 or O6.

A typical pattern is that D8 (marking you) will try to help D9, D10 and D11 by poaching deep⁶. To beat this: you can trade spots with O5; you can move across to the open side, between D10 and O6; or stay still on the left wing, so O6 can throw it straight to you⁷.

Zone offence

Figure 4 shows a 3-3-1 zone, but regardless of what it is, the three ways to beat a zone are: (1) over; (2) round; or (3) through. As O1 (left wing), you are mostly relevant to (1) OVER, into the gap between D8 and D9. Figure 4 shows throws from O6 to you (black dashed arrows): (1) directly using a hammer or a blade to get it there as quickly as possible or (2) throwing to A. If (grey arrows) O6 throws over or through (to O2 or O3), or round (to O5) there are various ways that you, O5, O2, and O3 might seek to split D10 and D9⁸ before the cup (D12-14) catch up. However, once the cup arrives, it is best to dump to O6, as otherwise you are trying to throw to one of 4-5 offensive players, covered by 7 defenders. Dump, then move downfield to make it 7-on-7 again.

If the defence continues to play zone once the disc gets close to the endzone, you (O1) and the other wing (O4) can GO AND STAND ON THE BACK CORNERS (Figure 5 left). The defence will then have to either leave you open (a direct throw (1) over to you then scores) or cover you at the corner (D8 or D9), making more space for O2, O3, O5, O6 and O7 to score at the front of the endzone. The further you are from the back corner (Figure 5 right) the more D8/9 can cover both you AND others,, and the harder it is to throw direct to you.

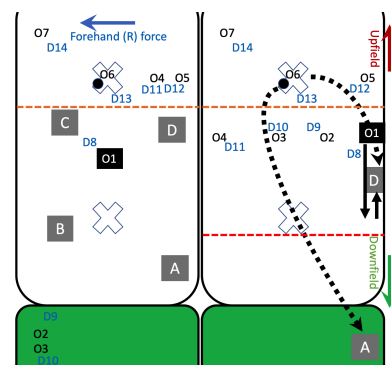


Figure 3: Feld (left) and ho-ro (right)

⁴ Other cuts can work. For example, diamond cuts involve trading places with your neighbour (o2). However, this may need coordination. So maybe keep it simple and just stay on the wing?

⁵ Black arrows show how a back-under cut opens space for this throw.

⁶ Even switching to person-match-but-last-person-covers-deepest defence

⁷ Also effective for zone offence because you spread the field, as discussed below.

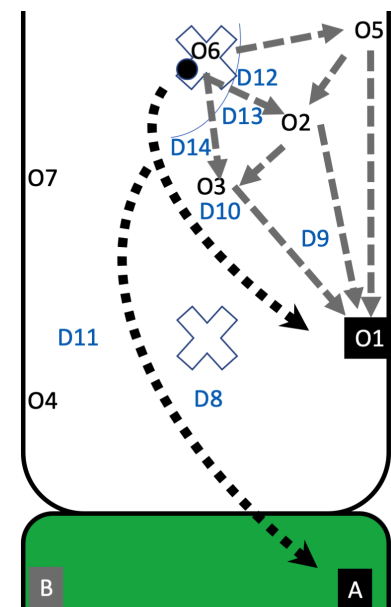


Figure 4: 331 zone formation

⁸ For example, O6 throws (2) through, to O2, who can then throw to O3, O5 or you (O1).

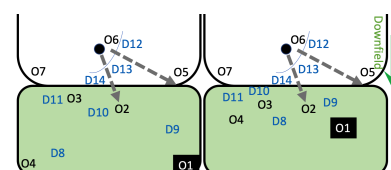


Figure 5: 331 zone at endzone