

# 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<sup>1</sup>. Let the handlers deal with catching the pull, but as you run downfield try to see what defence structure is being used.

## Beating person-match defence with a vertical stack

Figure 1 (left) shows a situation with: a brick called; a forehand force; person-match defence; and your team using a vertical stack formation. Staying between the dashed horizontal lines may help<sup>2</sup>.

In Figure 1 (left) 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. D8 will be on the wrong side of you and so probably not 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 to D. All the cutters (O1-4) are advantaged here, 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 pick<sup>3</sup>.

Figure 1 (right) 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.

Vertical works against other person-match defences. But it might need some adjustment. For example: against (1) RH-backhand-force: mirror the above; against (2) person-match-straight-up-force: maybe stand at the back of the stack until a huck can be sent<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Referred to here as position O1.

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

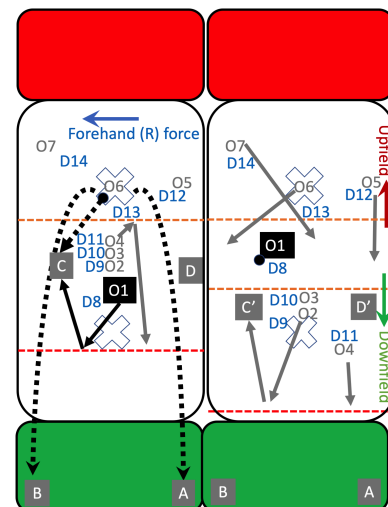


Figure 1: Vertical stack: starting position (left), and development (right)

<sup>2</sup> Position of the dashed red line might vary with how far O6 can or will throw. 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 general, either: be running or be standing still in the stack.

<sup>3</sup> Picks occur when a defender is obstructed from following someone they are marking. So maybe stand still until it's thrown so any pick might not affect the pass itself (meaning that it stands), and D8 only gets to catch up to put the force on earlier.

<sup>4</sup> D8 will probably only cover you under to C. Hence, if the handlers can break the force (directly or after moving the disc around a bit), you will have the advantage in any throw to A or B.

### Beating person-match defence with feldrunner

Figure 2 (left) shows a feldrunner formation, with 4 handlers, 2 cutters in the endzone, and you (O1) left isolated in the centre as the focus. O6 can throw to A, B, C or D. If D8 looks at you, stand still and O6 can throw it to your advantage. If D8 looks at O6, cut to A-D. Instead, O6 might reset to O4, O5 or O7, for them to throw to you. With the disc you can throw to cuts from O2-3, or dump and repeat.

### Beating person-match defence with a horizontal stack

Basic horizontal stack involves cutting upfield and downfield (black arrows) within your quarter of the field<sup>5</sup>. Figure 2 (right) shows O1 on the left wing. O6 can potentially throw to you at A or D<sup>6</sup>. 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 deep. To beat this you can: trade spots with O5; move to the open side, between D10 and O6; or stay still on the left wing, so O6 can get it to you quickly with a hammer or blade.

### Beating zone defence

Vertical stack probably won't work. 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 you<sup>7</sup>. Otherwise, O6 might throw over or through (to O2 or O3), or round (to O5 or O7)<sup>8</sup>.

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 3 (bottom left))<sup>9</sup>. Figure 3 (bottom right) shows how the further you are from the back corner the more D8/9 can cover both you AND others,, and the harder it is to throw direct to you. D9 might even be able to get a block on a throw to O5 (dashed blue line). This applies also when not close to the endzone (top right), If you crowd O2 and O3, D8 only has to cover O4, and D9-11 get to cover you (O1), O2, O3 and O5.

### Beating clam defence

Clam mixes person-match and zone defence styles<sup>10</sup>. Whereever you cut, one or more defenders will likely have you (at least somewhat) covered. As O1, you might coordinate with O2 to overload D8 or D9.

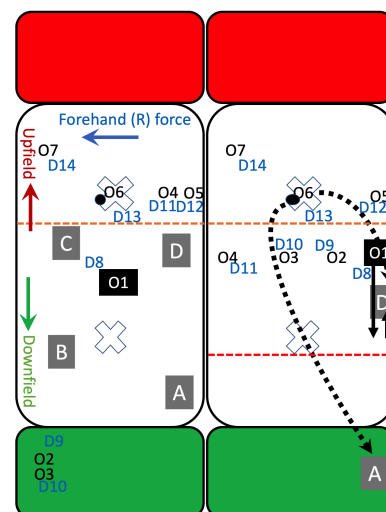


Figure 2: Feldrunner (left) and horizontal (right)

<sup>5</sup> Other cuts can work, but might need communication, e.g. diamond cuts involve you trading places with O2.

<sup>6</sup> Black arrows show how a back-under cut opens space for this throw.

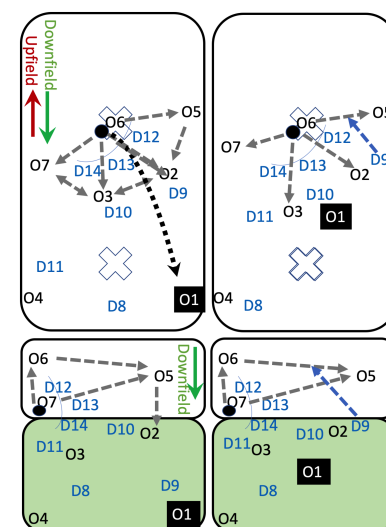


Figure 3: effective formations against 331 zone: general (top left) and close to the endzone (bottom left); and less effective formations (top, bottom right)

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> You, O2, O3 and O5 might then split D9-10 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.

<sup>9</sup> The defence will either leave you open, or cover you at the corner (D8 or D9), making more space for O2, O3 and O5-7 at the front of the endzone.

<sup>10</sup> Involves defenders switching so as to cover an area. For example, in Figure 1(left) D8 (the deep-deep) might cover O1 deep, but then switch with D11 (open-side wing) to cover O4's cut deep, while D11 covers the O1 cut to C.