5-3 Defense
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Definitions

Advantages of the 5-3
- 8 defenders “in the box”, effective against the run.
- D-ends do not have pass coverage.
- Fits aggressive linemen.
- Contains running options to the middle of the field.

Positions

D-Line
T Tackle
- Center in a gap, one gap away from NG
- Draw and split double teams
- Penetrate one yard then contain/chase/rush

NG Nose guard
- Strong or wide side A gap
- Draw and split double teams
- Penetrate one yard then contain/chase/rush

DE Defensive end
- 1yd outside EMLOS
- Angled in, pointed directly at their key, which is the nearest or deepest person in the backfield.
- Contain everything, nothing can get outside
- Take on all blocks with inside shoulder keeping outside shoulder and arm free
- Attack the blocker squeezing the running lane down and force everything to the pursuit

Linebackers
S Sam backer
- Sam takes TE side or wide side of the field, 6 tech over TE, 4yds deep
- Call out and pass thru all motioned receivers
- Key on TE - First step must be forward then flow with your read

M Mike backer
- Mike aligns in 0 tech over center, 5yds deep
- Call out and pass thru all motioned receivers
• Key on OG, First step must be forward then flow with your read

**W**  Will backer

- Will aligns opposite of Sam, 4 tech over OT, 4yds deep
- Call out and pass thru all motioned receivers
- Key on OT, First step must be forward, check for counter then flow with your read

**Secondary**

**CB** - cornerback

- Play pass first - deep outside 1/3 zone coverage
- Call out and pass thru all motioned receivers
- Backpedal on every snap, key on receiver
- Do not get beat deep
- Run support only when ball reaches the line of scrimmage
- Contain everything, nothing can get outside
- Take on all blocks with inside shoulder keeping outside shoulder and arm free
- Bend don't break - make sure tackles

**F** – Free Safety

- Split the two widest receivers, 11 yds deep
- Make formation calls- strong, shift and motion
- Play pass first – deep middle 1/3 zone coverage
- Backpedal on every snap, key on TE
- Do not get beat deep
- Run support only when ball reaches line of scrimmage
- Bend but don’t break – make sure tackles
**Huddle**

- **5-3 Huddle**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>DE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 5yds deep
- Mike calls the plays
- Two rows – 1) D-line 2) Linebackers and Secondary
**Base Alignment**

### 5-3 Base Alignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5-3</th>
<th>Alignment</th>
<th>Run Toward</th>
<th>Run Away</th>
<th>Pass - Zone</th>
<th>Pass - Man</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D-Line</td>
<td>Nose</td>
<td>Strong/Wide A gap</td>
<td>Maintain gap</td>
<td>Chase</td>
<td>Rush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tackle</td>
<td>One gap away from NG</td>
<td>Maintain gap</td>
<td>Chase</td>
<td>Rush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D-End</td>
<td>1yd outside EMLOS</td>
<td>Squeeze/Contain</td>
<td>Contain deep as</td>
<td>Rush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>6 tech over TE at 4yds</td>
<td>B/C gaps</td>
<td>Chase</td>
<td>Flat/Curl zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mike</td>
<td>0 tech over center at 5yds</td>
<td>A/B gaps</td>
<td>Chase</td>
<td>Mid/Screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will</td>
<td>4 tech over OT, at 4yds</td>
<td>B/C gaps</td>
<td>Chase</td>
<td>Flat/Curl zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td>Inside shoulder of rec at 6yds</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Deep Chase</td>
<td>Outside 1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corner</td>
<td>Inside shoulder of rec at 6yds</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Deep Chase</td>
<td>Outside 1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free Safety</td>
<td>Split widest rec. at 11yds</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Middle 1/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adjustments to Offensive Formations

Double Tight Ends

5-3 Base v. Double TE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5-3 Base v. Double TE Adjustments

- W goes into 6 tech over weak or short side TE at normal depth
- CB goes to 6X6 EMLOS if no receiver
- S adjusts alignment to split widest receivers
**Twins**

### 5-3 Base v. Twins

![Diagram of 5-3 Base v. Twins]

#### 5-3 Base v. Twins Adjustments
- W covers inside receiver at normal depth
- W plays under/inside zone
- Twins side CB plays over outside zone
- Non-twins CB goes to 6X6 EMLOS if no receiver
- F adjusts alignment to split widest receivers
### Trips

#### 5-3 Base v. Trips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>S</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>T</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- X
- Z
- S

#### 5-3 Base v. Twins Adjustments

- W covers inside receiver press coverage, attack is any receiver goes lateral or back
- W plays under/inside zone
- Twins side CB, outside should of outside receiver, plays middle outside zone
- F plays deep third zone over trips
- Non-twins CB goes to 6X6 EMLOS if no receiver
- F adjusts alignment to split widest receivers
### 5-3 Base v. Quads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### 5-3 Base v. Quads Adjustments
- W and S cover inside receiver at normal depth
- W and S backers plays under/inside zone
- Strong/Wide T plays 4i Tech
- CBs plays over/ outside zone
- F adjusts alignment to split widest receivers
**Defensive Line Calls**

**Base**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5-3 Base</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>DE</td>
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**Tight**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5-3 Tight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
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</table>

**5-3 Tight Adjustments**

- Both Ts play 3 Tech
- N plays 0 tech, chooses side and indicates by taping that leg
Line Backer Calls

Sting

### 5-3 Sting

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**5-3 Sting Adjustments**

- W and M shift to strong side of formation covering open gaps
- S shifts outside of DE at normal depth
Secondary Coverage

Cover 3

5-3 Cover 3 Zones

- CBs and F back pedal into zones
- Linebackers sprint to zones
- Attack the ball in the air
5-3 Cover 0 Responsibilities “Raptor”

- F walks up and cover TE man to man
- W and S cover back in man to man
- M has QB in man to man

**Cadence**

1. Defense “5-3”
2. Line call “Base” or “Tight”
3. Any blitzes “Sam”, “Will” etc.
4. Coverage change if any “Raptor”