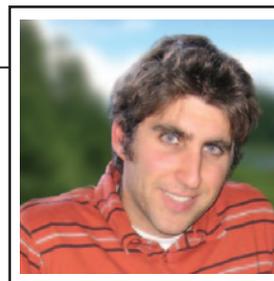


Deep Receiving & Cutting

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Presented by



OFTEN THE SKILLS OF DEEP CUTTING AND RECEIVING ARE NOT ADDRESSED AND TALKED ABOUT ENOUGH. A COMMON BELIEF IN THE SPORT IS THAT PLAYERS CANNOT BE TAUGHT HOW TO BE DEEP RECEIVERS.

IN FACT, NO MATTER HOW GOOD OF A DEEP RECEIVER A PLAYER IS, DEEP RECEIVING IS A SKILL THAT CAN BE TAUGHT, PRACTICED AND IMPROVED UPON. THIS SECTION FOCUSES ON FOUR MAIN TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVING DEEP CUTTING: THE ANGLE OF THE CUT, POSITIONING, TIMING, AND BEING ABLE TO JUMP OFF OF EITHER LEG AND CATCH WITH EITHER HAND.

ANGLE OF CUT

The type of deep cuts that happen in a team's offense is typically dictated by the offensive strategy that a team runs. In a vertical stack offense, deep cuts often originate from the center of the field, while in spread or horizontal stack offenses deep cuts mostly originate from the sideline. While a given offense dictates the parameters of deep cuts, good deep cutters work within those parameters to improve their deep cuts, mostly by maximizing the angle at which they cut.

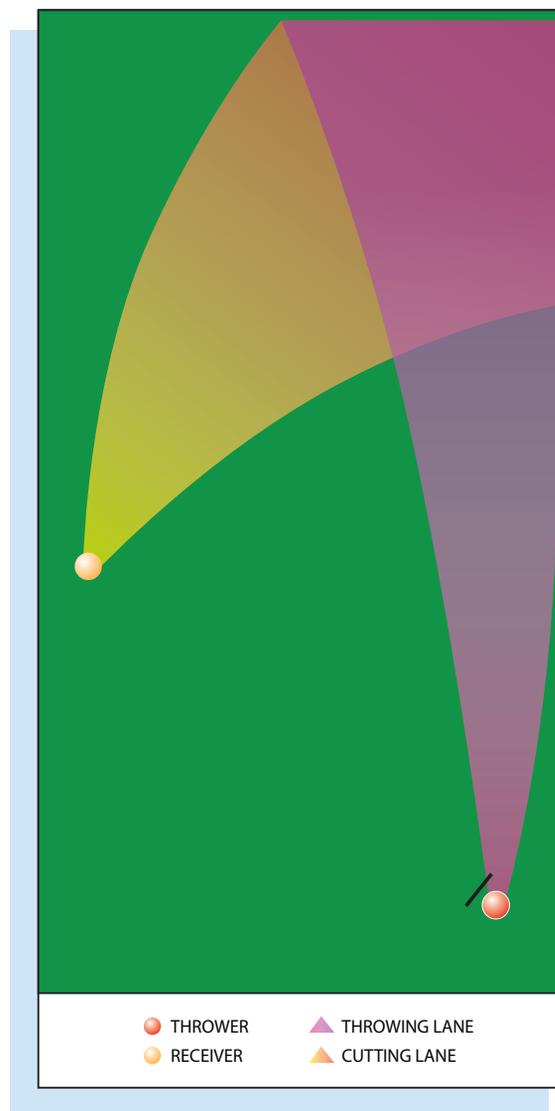
There is a natural tendency in Ultimate for downfield receivers to drift toward the space directly downfield of the thrower. Unfortunately, deep cuts that originate directly downfield from a thrower are the most difficult to throw to and read, while throws that originate from the farthest sideline from the thrower are the easiest cuts to throw to and read.

Deep cuts that begin near the opposite sideline allow more space with which to get open and, for a receiver that is faster than his/her defender, more distance for that speed to make a difference (see diagram). In addition, there is considerably more room for throwing error for cuts from the opposite sideline. A receiver that begins on the opposite sideline can adjust to a short or long throw without losing position to their defender.

In a vertical stack offense, receivers should work on timing their deep cuts off of their in cuts to the sideline in order to maximize lateral space for a deep cut. In addition, slight drifting to the opposite side of the field of the disc can help increase the lateral space. In a horizontal or spread offense, deep cutters must be disciplined and stay near the sideline and avoid the natural tendency to drift toward the disc.

POSITIONING

Once the disc is in the air, the most important skill is positioning. It is important to be aware of where you are able to catch the disc as well as where other defenders and receivers are located. When you are the only receiver and there is only one defender, the best position to take is the one between your defender and where you can receive the disc.



Positioning is difficult because, by the rules, “a player may not move in a manner solely to prevent an opponent from taking an unoccupied position via an unoccupied path” (XVI.H.3.c). It is within the rules to position yourself in the way of the defender as long as you are going for the disc.

In order to position yourself well, you must know where the defender is. Whether a player is positioned well can be determined by the position of his/her shoulders. If a receiver’s shoulders are in front of the defender’s shoulders, he/she is said to “have position.” When positioning yourself on a reception, be aware of where your shoulders are in relation to your defender’s shoulders.

TIMING

Timing is the ability to jump at a point that allows a receiver to catch or block the disc at the maximum point that he/she can reach. This is a skill that takes practice. In order to time receptions correctly, a receiver must both know how well he/she jumps (how high and how much time in the air) as well as how to read the disc and identify where it is going to be/when. You can practice this skill by jumping for high discs that are thrown at you instead of catching them where they are easy to snag. Making a catch or block at the peak of your leap is one of the most satisfying feelings in Ultimate, and being able to time a catch or block can help shorter or less explosive receivers succeed in the air.

JUMPING OFF EITHER LEG/CATCHING WITH EITHER HAND

Being able to jump off of either leg allows a receiver to have twice as many potential points at which to jump for the disc. A natural complement to being able to jump off of either leg is being able to catch with either hand. A receiver jumping off of his/her right leg will be able to reach higher with his left hand and vice versa.

In addition to having additional points at which you can jump, there are situations where it is preferable to catch with one hand or the other. One such situation is when the disc is descending at an angle. If the disc is descending from right to left across your body, it will be at a lower point over the left side of your body than your right. In this case, catching with your left hand will allow you an easier catch while the rest of your body can be used to position against a potential defender on the right.

Practice jumping off of both legs and catching with both hands to improve your ability to make deep receptions.

Being a good deep receiver is a variable. With practice, you can improve your ability to get open on deep cuts and catch more discs that hang in the air. Of course, as with any skill, improving your fitness level can help your deep receiving as well. Speed and explosive work can have a significant impact on your ability to make the big catches.

Kyle Weisbrod coaches The Paideia School (Atlanta) Girls’ Varsity Ultimate Team, winners of the 2008 and 2009 UPA High School Eastern Championships. A former member of the UPA Board of Directors, he also edited and co-authored the UPA Coaching Corps Level II Coaching Manual. He has played for top Ultimate programs throughout his career including Paideia, Brown University and Johnny Bravo – an Open Division club team in Boulder, Colo.

UPA To Hold Its First-Ever Division III College Championships

The inaugural UPA Division III College Championships will be held in Appleton, Wis., from May 22–23 at the USA Youth Sports Complex. The event will be hosted by S&K Ultimate Events and the Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Sixteen men’s teams and 16 women’s teams from the U.S. and Canada will qualify for the tournament. Teams from colleges or universities with fewer than 7,500 students are eligible to qualify. More than 100 Division III teams will compete in the 2010 UPA college regular season. After competing at their respective sectional tournaments in April, the teams will be ranked according to their overall season record. The top-ranked team in each of eight regions will earn a bid to the event, with the last eight bids awarded to the top remaining teams in the national rankings.

“The UPA is very excited to be offering its first official championship for Ultimate teams from small colleges and universities,” said Will Deaver, UPA Managing Director of Competition & Athlete Programs. “With an excellent venue and an experienced group of local organizers, we look forward to providing an unforgettable experience for the athletes and spectators, most of whom will be playing in their first UPA Championship.”

Since 2006, an independently operated Division III championship was held each year before its organizers worked with the UPA to have the event incorporated into the UPA championship structure. This year’s event will feature pool play on Saturday followed by elimination brackets and the championship games in each division on Sunday.



JEREMY NORDEN, SKYING FOR A DISC AGAINST CLAREMONT COLLEGE (CALIF.) AT THE STANFORD OPEN 2010, AND THE WHITMAN COLLEGE (WASH.) SWEETS COULD VIE FOR THE TITLE IN APPLETON, WIS.