

# **Level 3 Coaching Assessment**

## **Task 13**

### ***“Rugby Restarts – A Guide to the Kick Off and Kick Off Receipt”***

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## **Restarting Rugby – A Guide to the Kick Off and Kick Off Receipt**

The restart of a game is an element of rugby that is never intentionally, however often, overlooked. The purpose of this piece is not to provide a strategy that is fool proof and every coach can apply with 100% success rather it is to break down this game element and provide analysis of Super Rugby matches to provide information that coach's can utilize to assist their teams in developing there restarts.

How many times have you as a coach committed to planning a season and allocated a set amount of time to restarts, only to find that when your first trial match arrives you have not been able to allocate suitable time to making sure your team is across this skill? Rugby involves attack, defense, breakdown, set piece (scrum/ lineout) and core skills (catch/ pass/ kick/ tackle) among other skills. When you consider that most coaches (non professional) have approximately four hours per week to coach their side it is no wonder restarts are often overlooked.

### **The Kick Off**

The kick off is an area of the game that it is hoped a team do not have to perform on a regular basis, however there is a positive to kicking off in Rugby. When kicking off you are provided with an opportunity, if won, to attack in prime position on the field. Following is a list of roles at Kick Off that a team can use along with three different kick off options that can be utilized by coaches.

### **Roles at the Kick Off**

#### ***Shooter***

The shooter can be used to put pressure on the player receiving the kick. Generally the shooter will be a player that has an excellent leap and good hands. When using a shooter a team will generally be looking to isolate a player one on one and use the momentum of the player to either catch the ball or to tap it back to support in a second line. It is not essential that there is only one shooter; a team can have 2 or 3 people fill this role.

#### ***The Line***

The line is a second wave that still have good speed off the line yet are a couple of metres behind the shooter to enable them to pick any tapped back ball. Generally you will look to have a couple of tall targets in the line and you may give them the task of contesting for ball that is mistimed. Ideally you must look to have a good on baller that can act as a "scavenger" to pick up any scraps from the shooter.

### **Scavengers**

This role is important as it allows for a team to capture a tap back or loose ball. There should be a scavenger for the shooter role but also have these roles in place for the line. Generally the loose and tight head prop can fill these positions, as they are generally not able to maintain the speed of the line. An open side flanker is a useful option as a scavenger for the initial shooter as they have the speed and the on ball skills to secure loose ball.

### **Different Kick Off's and their Application**

#### ***Short, Front Kick Off (See Appendix 1)***

The aim of this kick off is to isolate one player and attempt to win the ball in a centerfield position. Generally a back rower and inside back will contest for the ball against one man. Whilst this option offers great reward if successful it also means that if unsuccessful the receiving team may have options both sides of the contest for quick distribution in attack. With this in mind it is important that players know their roles post contest to ensure that in attack there are options and in defense the team reacts to establish the defensive line effectively.

#### ***Short, Sideline Kick Off (See Appendix 2)***

This is a “traditional” kick off that most receiving teams will expect. What the kicking team must consider is where they can kick the ball so that they have a fair chance of contesting. At a community level there is not analysis of other teams always readily available. A suggestion is that teams form there chasing line with shooter options on the sideline and in the middle to enable the kicker to have two zones that can be kicked to.

#### ***Long Kick Off (See Appendix 3)***

This is a kick off designed to trap the opposition deep in their own territory and play off a mistake or poor kick to achieve good field position. If done well this allows for the kicking team to have good field position for attack inside their attacking half. What the kicking team must ensure is that the chase is good, particularly from the far side. The advantage of kicking long to a corner is that it limits attack options of the receiving team by trapping them in that corner however a lazy chase can inhibit this. Other considerations for the kicking team are that a kick deep may led to a direct kick out with no pressure however a kick deep yet not into the 20m area means that the chasing team have a chance to force an error as the direct kick out is not a readily available option.

## **The Kick Off Receipt**

There are many different types of set ups that a team can use to secure possession off a kick off restart. The overwhelming philosophy has to be that space is covered. How a coach decides to cover the space is dependent on one thing only – the strengths of their players.

*What are some of the elements of a kick off receipt that a coach must consider?*

- Catching ability (under pressure included)
- Jumping ability
- Supporting ability
- Running ability
- Passing ability
- Kicking ability

The challenge for any coach is to consider how they can best combine the talents of their players to ensure they are in a position to secure the ball no matter where it is kicked. We will look at different set ups, coaching techniques and basic rules for restarts that will enable to gain further perspective into this area of the game.

### ***Restarts & Lineouts – Is there a statistical link?***

Is there a link between teams that are successful at lineout and their success at securing good ball from the restart?

Appendix 7 and 8 show the restarts statistics from this year's Super XV competition as well as the lineout statistics for 2011. What is interesting to note is that Bulls, Highlanders and Reds were the top performing lineout sides in 2011. If this data is analysed next to the Restarts stats from 2011 the Bulls (2<sup>nd</sup>), Highlanders (3<sup>rd</sup>) and Reds (5<sup>th</sup>) are all statistically good restart receiving teams.

In an age where coaches are constantly trying to “find” time in the week to coach players in all aspects of the game what is clear is that the direct links between the lineout and successful restart receipts mean that coaches can utilize the skills used during lineout to transfer across to their restart training. There are obviously differences between the two elements of the game however there are clear links. Jumping, supporting, catching are all required. The difficulty that teams face with restarts is not the physical skills required but rather the mental skills, as decision-making is the key to success at this element of the game. Whilst a lineout involves players all in one line with movement along that line, the restart receipt brings players from different areas of the field together and any number of combinations can be involved. Coaching your players to develop their decision-making will assist them in mastering their receipts.

### ***Rules of the Restart***

There are some rules that coaches can enforce on their players to assist in the decision making process.

1. Always move forward to the ball.
2. A clear call for the ball
3. Work off the ball to support the player carrying the ball (this movement must commence immediately the ball is kicked)

### ***Restart Set Ups.***

Diagrams of the following restarts can be found in the appendices.

In junior rugby (Under 19) the over riding philosophy should be about field coverage. In senior rugby, where kicking skills are able to isolate players, players must be able to move to space to receive the ball and at times be supported into the air. An appropriate exit strategy is also necessary.

### ***Restart Set Up 1 – Appendix 4***

In this set up the major decision maker is the number 2. He must decide which pod to support and react accordingly. This isn't a job that he can do on his own and the jumpers must take ownership on where the ball is going to land and move to this space to get a clear jump at the football. With the 2 pods set up with a floating lifter (2) the support must come from the back row. If the ball lands at (5/3) area than the 6 and 8 must support. If it lands at 4/1 area than the 8 and 7 must support. There are also options at the back. If the ball goes to the 9 then there is an option of a link with 15 or 10 for a kick or the ability to hit the 6 on a run around to run the ball back to the opposition. If the kicking team elect to go to the other side then the near side pod (1/4/2) must act as a support to the ball carrier.

### ***Restart Set Up 2 – Appendix 5***

There are many different options for a split kick off. In the suggested set up there is a pod each side for catching the ball. The middle of the field has the 7 and 2 as a pod and 12 and 13 as catching options. If the ball is kicked to 6/5/1 then 13 and 2 will act as supporters and if the ball is kicked to 8/4/3 then 7 and 12 act as support players. If the ball is kicked deep then there are kicking options at 10/9/15 to immediately clear the ball.

### ***Restart Set Up 3 – Appendix 6***

This restart works on the theory that some analysis has been done into zones the kicking team like to utilize. The pods (6/5/3 and 1/4/2) work as units to catch the ball. The receiving pods can be moved into position that suits. In order for this restart to be successful the jumpers have to be confident in their ability to get under the ball and their supporters must give them the room to move to the ball. If the pod of 6/5/3 receive the ball then 7 and 8 act as support and if 1/4/2 receive the ball 6/5 act as support. Similar to the previous set ups the kicking options exist through 10/15/9.

### ***Final Thoughts...***

The purpose of this paper was to provide a guide to the roles associated with the Kick Off and Restarts in Rugby Union. It is important to note that whilst numbers have been used in the diagrams that these are as a guide only and as long as players have the skills necessary in each position then your restarts can be successful. It should also be acknowledged that there are many options coaches can use to be successful at this part of the game. The restart is an important part of the game and if done well either provides teams with an opportunity to attack in good field position after being scored against or, if receiving, can provide a team with a platform to place more pressure on the opposition.

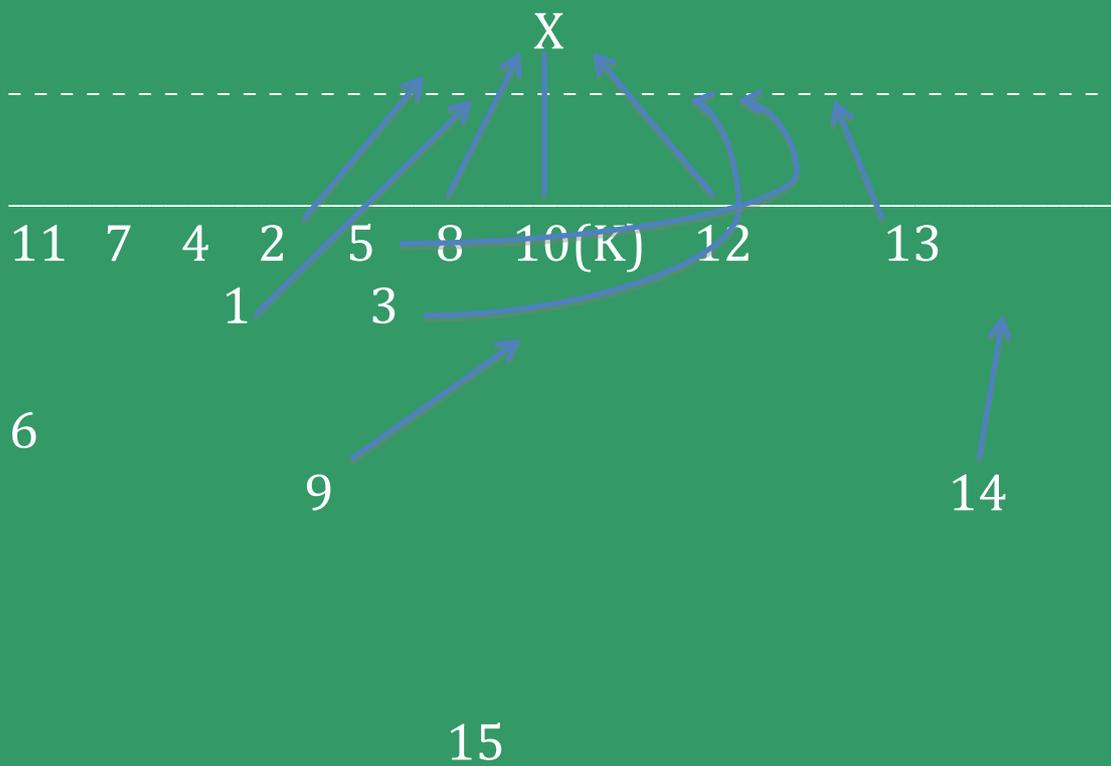
\*All statistics (Appendices 7/8) have been gained using the Fair Play Analysis System.

## Appendix 1 – The Short, Straight Kick Off

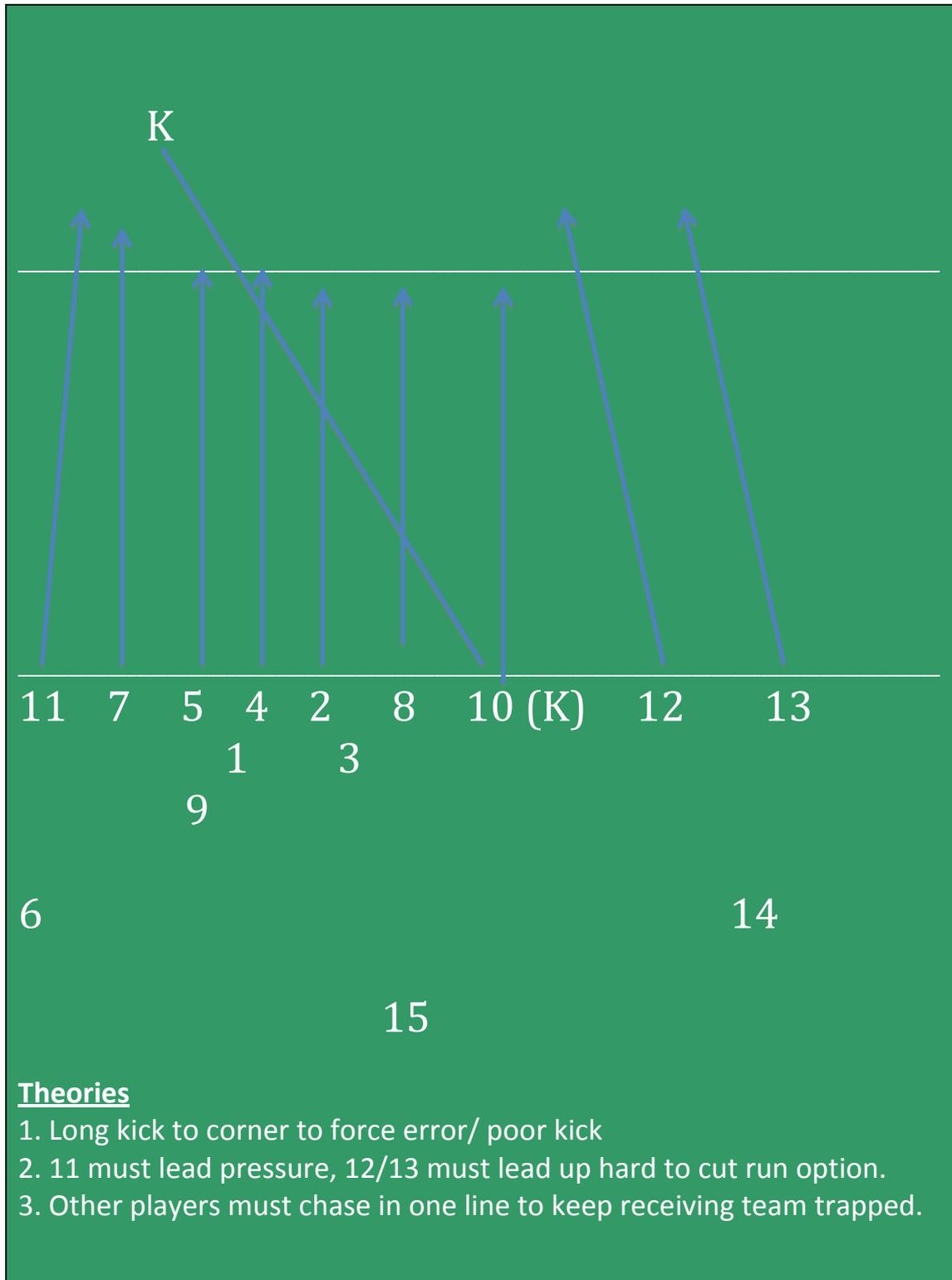


### Theories

1. 8/12 contest kick, 10 trails for tap back.
2. 5/3 must fill far side defense, 1/2 fill near side.
3. 9 moves behind breakdown, 14 makes decision pending result.



## Appendix 2 - The Long Kickoff



### Theories

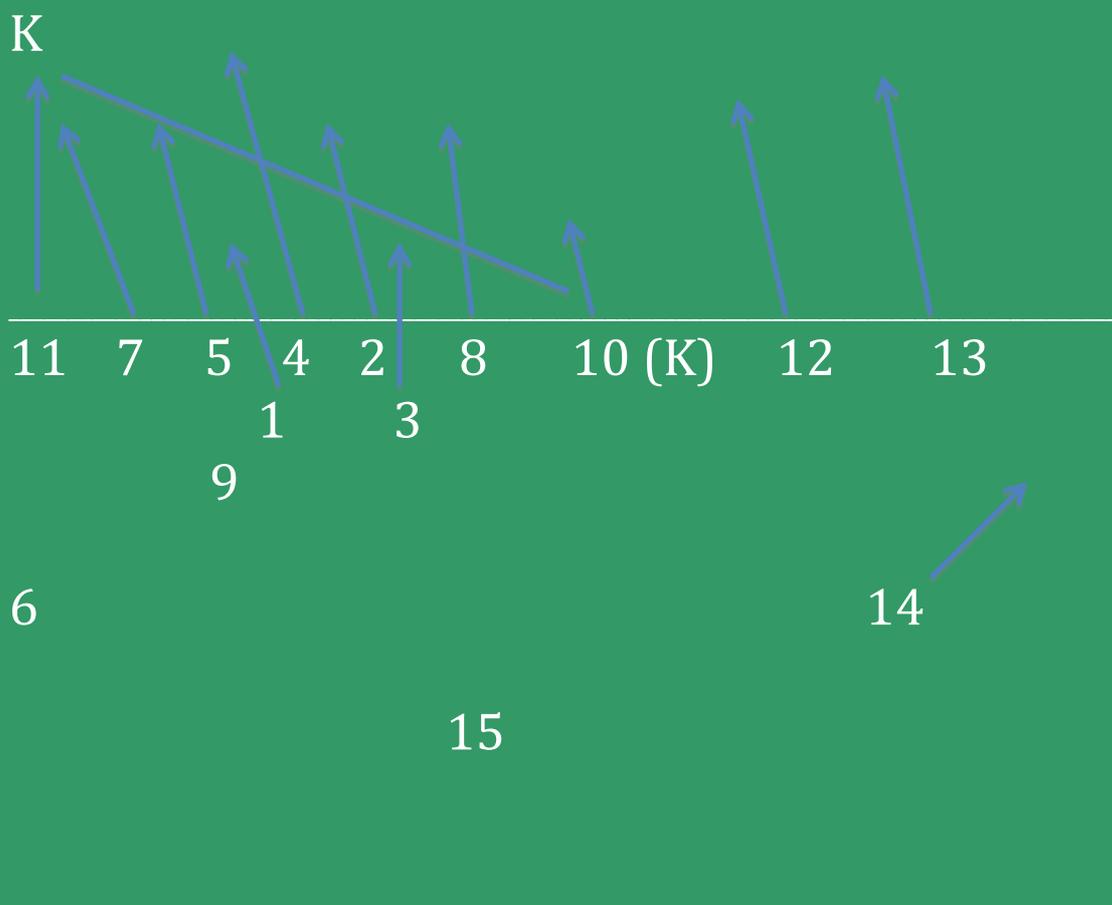
1. Long kick to corner to force error/ poor kick
2. 11 must lead pressure, 12/13 must lead up hard to cut run option.
3. Other players must chase in one line to keep receiving team trapped.

### ***Appendix 3 – The Short (Traditional) Kickoff***

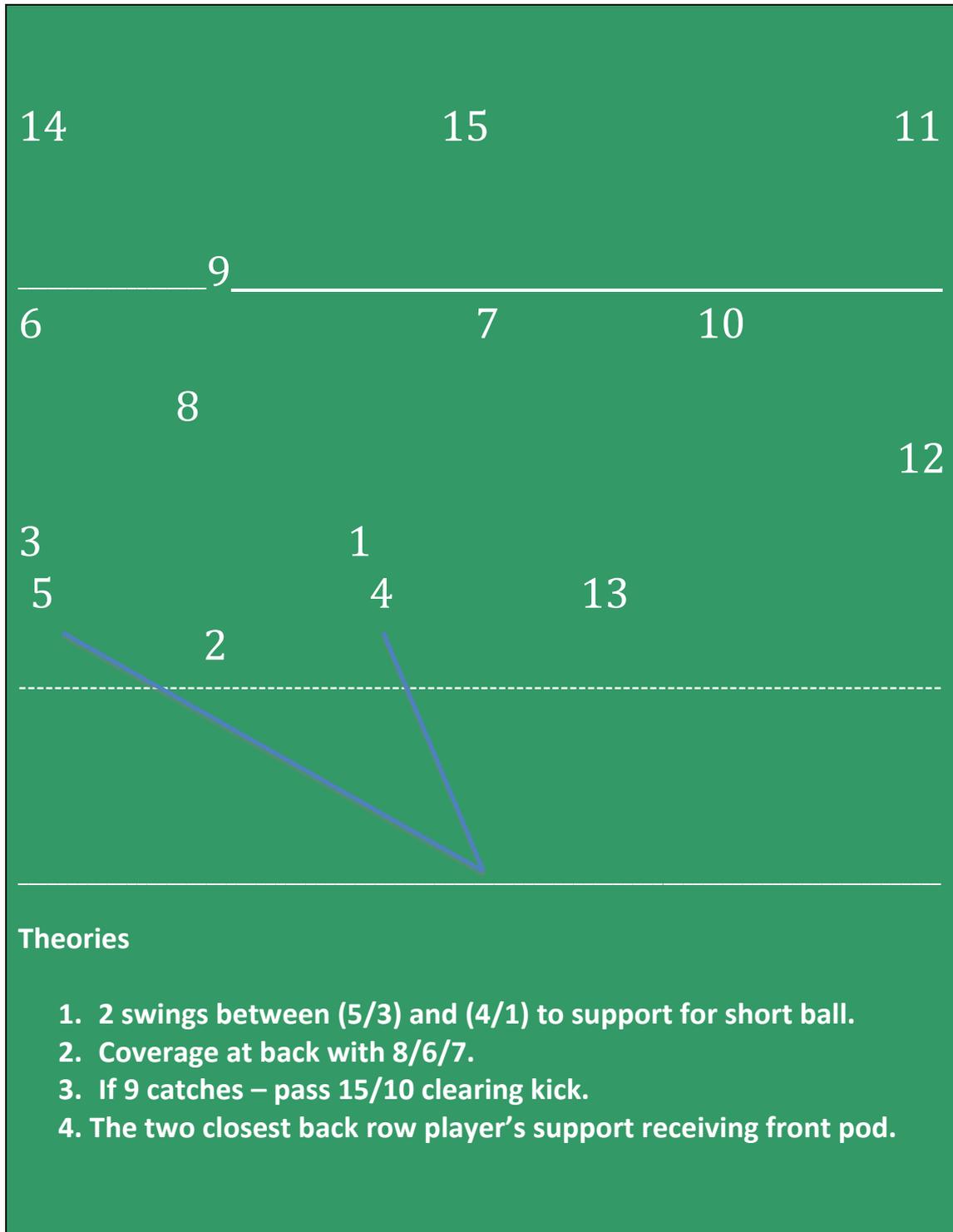


#### **Theories**

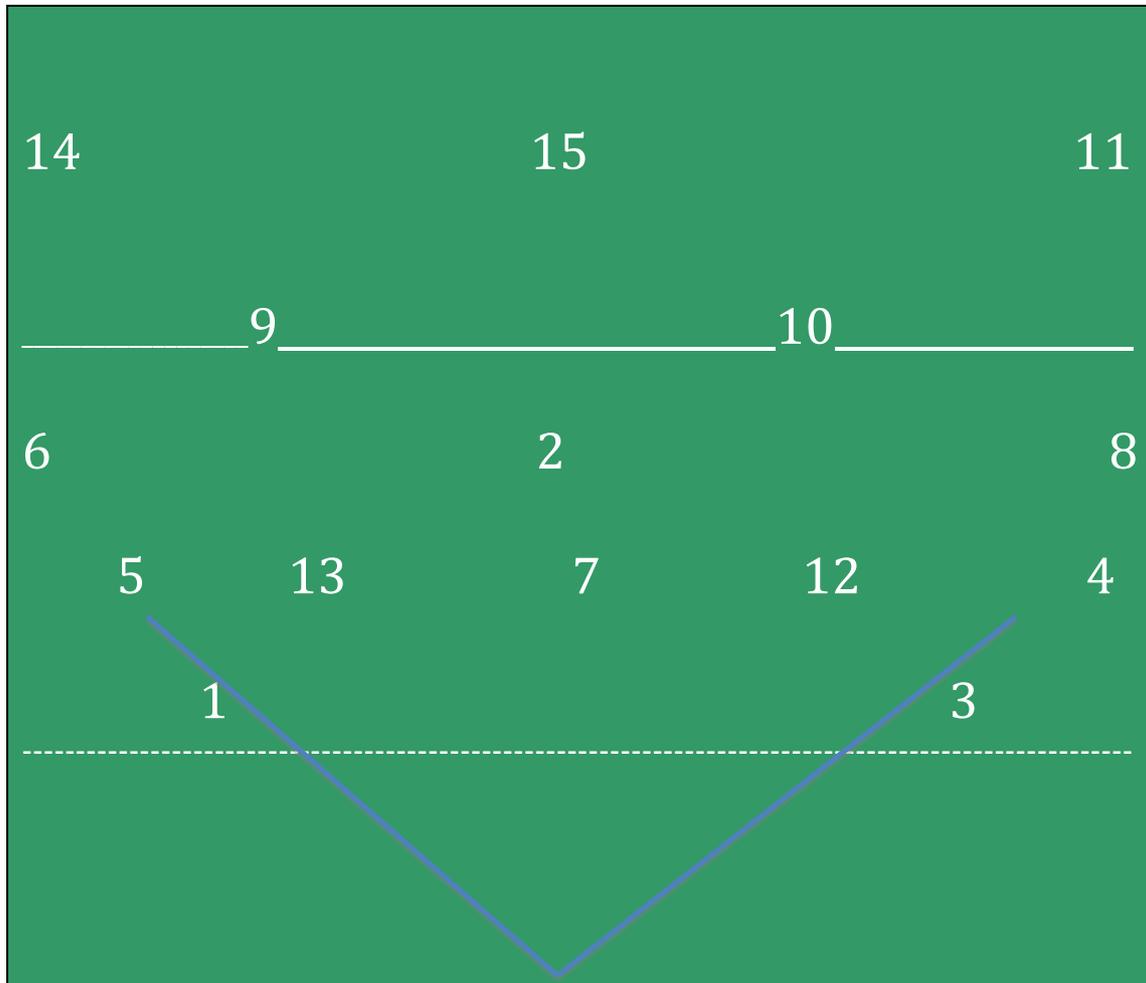
1. 11 and 4 are shooters, 7 and 2 and scavengers. 5/8/1/3 form the line looking for tap back ball.
2. 10/12/13 must come up to provide defensive line if ball is lost. Their role is to cut down a running option for the receiving team.



## Appendix 4 – Kick Off Receipt Suggestion 1



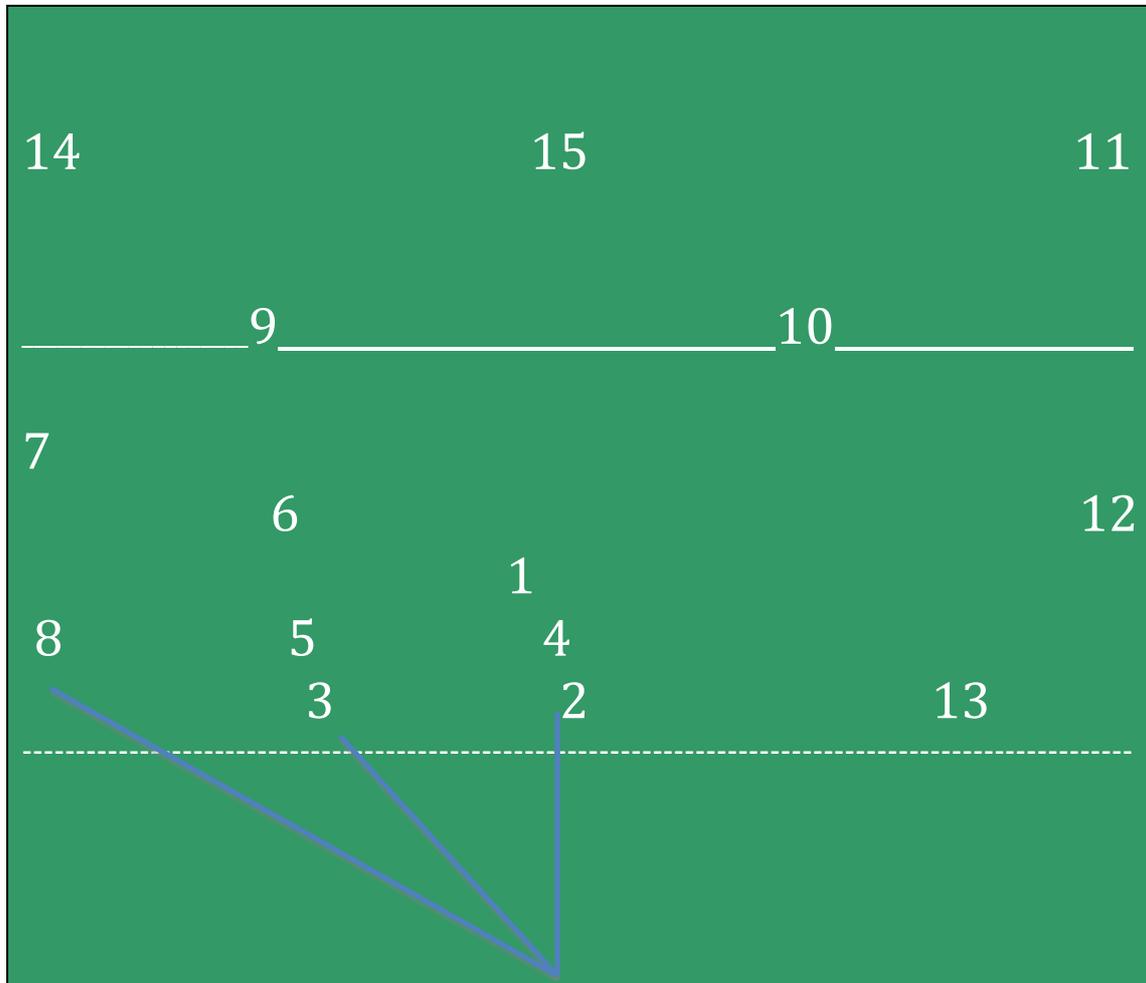
## Appendix 5 – Kick Off Receipt Suggestion 2 (Split Receipt)



### Theories

1. (6/5/1) and (8/4/3) act as catching pods on either side.
2. 13/7/12 act as catchers for centre field kick
3. Kicking options at 9/10/15 offering options on both sides of field.

## Appendix 6 – Kick Off Receipt Suggestion 3



### Theories

1. Two catching pods with a centre pod to counter the straight, short kick.
2. Kicking options at 9/10/15.
3. If ball is kicked to 12/13 then 1/4/2 act as support pod.

