
SECTION ONE

PHILOSOPHY



- Chapter 1 : Overview of the Wing T**
- Chapter 2 : Good Coaching**
- Chapter 3 : Practice Philosophy**

Overview of the Wing-T



This chapter will familiarize you with not only my Pistol Wing T offense, but also the philosophy of the Wing T. This offense is more than a formation. It is a system that puts defenders in conflict while putting your players in the best position to be successful. The key to the entire system is understanding how to use a defender's assignment or reaction to your advantage.

“If the defense does this, then you run that”

The Delaware Wing T is more than a formation. It is a philosophy of attack based on the anticipation of certain adjustments forced upon the defense due to the position of the wingback. It is a four back running system that forces the secondary to play at least three deep, due to the presences of three deep receiving threats. Thus, it is readily apparent that although the Delaware Wing T is a ground-oriented attack, it is equally dependent on an interrelated passing game.

HISTORY

Today the wing-T offense is ran predominantly at the high level, however, it originated at the collegiate level. A blend or mix of the Single Wing and T-Formation, the Wing T is a popular misdirection offense that can be hard to stop. Characterized by a wingback in the slot just behind the tight end, and a split end on the weak side, the offense places all three running backs in prime locations for counters, fakes, and other misdirection plays. The system also gives a good quarterback the chance to run or throw,

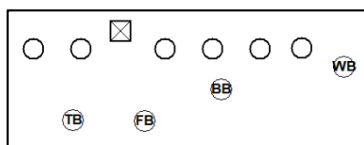


Figure 1-1: Single Wing

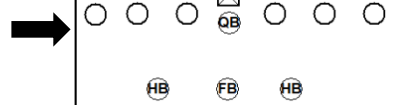


Figure 1-2: Straight Tee

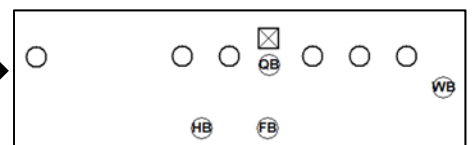


Figure 1-3: Wing T

It was originally developed by Coach Dave Nelson, a brilliant coach who learned the single-wing at the University of Michigan as a 5'7" 155 lb halfback. Sharing the backfield with Heisman Trophy winner Tom Harmon in 1941, Nelson led the team in rushing with an average of 6.3 yards per carry, nicknamed "one tough piss ant" by Mouse Davis.

The single wing uses extremely deceptive blocking schemes, with pulling and trapping on nearly every play. Most colleges and NFL teams used during that era. Nelson returned from WWII and started coaching towards the end of the two-way player era in 1946 at Hillsdale College. He had a 14-1-2 record running the single wing before moving on to the University of Maine. They struggled in their first year because of the dependence of the single wing to have a tailback.

At that time, the T formation, developed by football pioneer Walter Camp, was being used by top colleges such as Notre Dame and Army. The Chicago Bears used the "T" to win the most lopsided championship victory in pro football history. While the AD at Yale, Camp is credited with deriving football from rugby and soccer.

Nelson sought out Notre Dame coach Frank Leahy to teach him the T, which used straight ahead blocking with little deception. One obstacle was asking the QB to take the snap from under center, which was very rare in the 40's and 50's. The second obstacle was keeping the level of deception of the single wing. Nelson's staff ended up adding the "wingback" from the single wing formation to the "T" backfield, while using the highly deceptive single wing blocking approach.

In 1951 Nelson added Harold R. 'Tubby' Raymond to his staff, who learned the single wing from Michigan coach Fritz Crisler. The Michigan backfield was known as the 'Mad Magicians' due to deceptive ball-handling skills that led to a 9-0 record and a 49-0 dismantling of USC 49-0 in the Rose Bowl. Raymond played QB at Michigan and had a very advanced football coaching mind.

But in 1952, Nelson took the job at the University of Delaware, while Raymond stayed on as an assistant at Maine. Both universities began to change, modify and improve their hybrid single-wing "T" system. Nelson's success led to the nickname, the 'Delaware Wing T'. Tubby became Nelson's backfield coach at U of D in 1954, and they won 84 games in 15 years. In 1966, Nelson became AD at Delaware and promoted Tubby to head coach. Nelson was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 1987.

By now, most major colleges were running the Delaware Wing T. Notre Dame and Penn State won national championships running the Wing T under Ara Parseghian and Joe Paterno. The Iowa Hawkeyes won the Rose bowl in 1957 and 1959, running the "Hawkeye" Wing T (halfback on same side as the wing). Even the Kansas City Chiefs under Hall-of-Fame coach Marv Levy ran it in the NFL.

Although not its inventor, Tubby Raymond is credited for modernizing the Wing T. He continually refined, improved and perfected the system. He coached Delaware for an unheard-of 30 years, winning 300 games and three Division I-AA NCAA titles. Raymond also won 142 games as the head baseball coach at U of D.

In the 1980's, true wing-T teams became extinct at the professional and D-1 college ranks. But it was still a popular small college offense and USA Today approximated that 75% of all high schools were running the Wing T. Midline, veer, and jet have been added to its arsenal and it is ran out of shotgun and pistol. That's the beauty of the system. It's flexible, highly deceptive, and marries deception with power. It is equally effective using the run or the pass in multiple ways out of the basic formation.

All this came about because of Dave Nelson desperation to change his team's fortunes and Tubby Raymond's creative genius. The Wing T is their living legacy; a system so effective that it is used from Pop Warner all the way to the NFL. It has left in its wake thousands of victories, and a debt of gratitude to the fertile football minds who saw and nurtured its potential. It is the only offense to stand the test of time of 60 years.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE WING-T

Although the Wing T has undergone drastic changes during the past two and one-half decades to stay abreast of the increased defensive sophistication, the basic principles designed and developed by Dave Nelson and Tubby Raymond remain intact. This offense is very deceptive, and every play looks the same for the first few steps.

Raymond gives seven principles of the Wing-T that have remained constant through its years of evolution:

1. The Wing-T is designed for consistency and strength and is ball control oriented.
2. All three backs can be used as blockers, ball carriers, or for deception.
3. The formations are characterized by a wing who is both a run and passing threat.
4. The offense is designed in complete “look-a-like” backfield series, each presenting multiple threats to the defense on each play.
5. It has a balance of passing, which is predominantly play-action in nature.
6. The spread of receivers is accomplished by ends, which accommodates the running game and enhances the passing game.
7. The QB threat to keep the ball on the attack flank and the backside flank with bootlegs.

Tubby Raymond details the role of the quarterback in his book:

“The QB keeping the ball or faking away from the flow of attack presents the defense with an additional contain problem that minimizes pursuit and provides big play opportunities.”

The QB is not just an arm on passing plays and a spectator that hands the ball off on running plays. He is supposed to fully participate in the offense and selling a play starts at the quarterback position. He must make each handoff look exactly the same, which is perfected with hours of practice. When the quarterback and running back meet, the ball is put near the running back's belly and then either given away or transferred to the quarterbacks lead hand, leaving the trail hand exposed and empty. That makes it look like the running back has the ball when he may or may not actually have possession.

The defense has to think that the QB has the ball while the running back is running downfield, and vice versa. Faking is an art perfected with practice. Quarterbacks and running backs work on deception in almost every practice. Handoff and cover-up drills are a routine part of a wing-T practice.

The Pistol really maximizes the role the QB plays. Being in Pistol not only makes him MORE of a passing threat, but he reads unblocked defender on every run play. This means that every play is a double or triple option play and the defense must account for the Quarterback runs.

Some of the other principles of Wing-T:

- Formation integrity. Run the ball inside, off tackle, and the perimeter, as well as play action pass from every formation. Stops defenses from cheating.
- A couple basic formations altered numerous ways to have or 25 or so formations. Add shifting and motion to give 100's of different looks. Then run a small package of plays from these formations which is easy for us and difficult on the defense.
- Shifting may be easy for defense to adjust, but makes their defenders think as the play develops.
- Adjusting to motion causes last-minute changes to defensive alignments.
- Option football. QB always has run/pass option on waggle, belly, and down pass. Can turn belly, down, jet into QB keeps. Incorporate midline and veer.
- Multiple faking areas provides confusion and misdirection to keep defense guessing and thinking.
- The physicality and fast paced practice will bleed over to your defense, making them more physical.

BALL CONTROL- The Wing T is a power running attack that gets the ball carrier running North and South with shoulders squared to the line of scrimmage. We feel in order to be a consistent winner in football you must run the football effectively. And win the time of possession. They can't score when we have the ball.

COLD WEATHER: When it rains we can still run 100% of our package.

HARD TO PREPARE FOR- Our opponent has 3 days to duplicate everything that we do and we might be the only Wing T team on their schedule.

WHY RUN THE WING-T?

Critics of the Wing T argue that the offense does not prepare players for college. Younger coaches that live on the internet get caught up with RPOs, shallow crossers, and plays that they see on the TV. Lazy coaches migrate towards spread offenses that require very little coaching, depending on giving an athlete the ball in space.

People who do not understand the Wing-T fail to see that it is truly a system with a great amount of flexibility. It is the only offense that has stood the test of time for 60 years because it is easily adaptable to the kids you have year-in and year-out.

Outsiders might think that a ball-control offense like the wing-T is overly cautious. The old 'wing' was meant to gain 3 yards in a cloud of dust. They wanted to hold onto the ball and waste time. The modern Wing T is designed for the big hit. You can run the wing-T with a bunch of different variations -- even the shotgun -- depending on where your strengths are. The offense is more flexible than people think.

- Got a Great Running Back? Put him behind QB and let him run.
- Got a Running Quarterback? The Wing-T is tailor made for option football
- Got a Passing Quarterback? Our QB threw for 2,700 yards in 2012. Play Action is lethal.
- Got Good Receivers? Run two wideouts and no tight end. The Wings are same as slots.

As I have been blessed enough to travel the country, I see coaches changing their offense every 2-3 years to match their personnel. How will a coach every build a consistent winner, year-in and year-out by doing that?

The Wing-T offense is analogous to your tool box out in your garage. It is full of tools, some that you only use every other year. The Wing-T is a SYSTEM. The year you have a stud Tailback is the year you live in the Belly Family. He graduates and is replaced by a quick, but small, scat back. That year you live in the Jet family and get that quick little guy out in routes from the Wing position. Year 3 you finally get blessed with a 6-footer who can sling the ball and you talk a couple of basketball kids in coming out. Live in 2x2 "LOOSE" formation and throw the ball. Brian Sipe, Dan Marino, Trent Dilfer all ran Wing T in high school and NFL MVP Rich Gannon ran it in college.

I also have heard that the Wing-T does that star back a disservice by not getting him the ball 25-30 times a game. My response to that is that the team's success is more important than an individual's success. This is not to say that when we have an excellent back, we do not feature him more than the others. For example, last year we had an excellent Halfback how carried the ball 20 times a game. Last year we were predominately a Sweep and off tackle Wing-T team. This year we feel we have an excellent Fullback and this year he will carry the ball 20 times a game. That is one of the strengths of the Wing-T it is very flexible.

And what happens when you don't have a star running back or quarterback? The spread offense is totally screwed that year, but the Wing-T does not need a super back to carry the ball 90% of the time. All four backs can will share the carries equally to keep the defense guessing. It might be possible to stop one aspect of our system but it would be very hard to stop all of them. Do not get me wrong there is no substitute for talent, but I feel that with the Wing-T we can utilize what we have better than any other offense.

The great argument of running the Wing T is OFFENSIVE LINEMEN. The years when you are blessed with a couple of "biggies", then they will be devastating down blockers. However, you can still win during the years in which you don't have any big linemen. We had two 1,000 yard rushers at a school of 1800, playing in the 3rd highest classification in California, with our largest lineman tipping the scales at 250 and both guards under 200 pounds.

ANGLES- We feel that the blocking schemes of the Wing-T give us an advantage over the defense. We do not have the men up front to drive people off the ball. Most of our opponents will be bigger than us up front, but with the down blocks we can take advantage of the angles the defense gives us.

The wing t offense will use a lot of down, trap, and kick out blocks. Angle/down blocking is an excellent way to utilize a smaller offensive line. The guards will usually have to be decent athletes because they will be pulling. When you consistently pull guards you can also do some false pulls to throw off the defender that are keying the guards.

The wing t offense also utilizes a tight-end. Personally, I love having a tight-end because it creates conflict for the defense. You can down block with the tight-end. You can double team defensive linemen with the TE. Having a TE will create an additional gap that the defense will have to be responsible for. Tight-ends make the formation strong. Let's not forget that the tight-end can be a passing threat.

BREEDS UNSELFISH TEAMWORK

The Wing T requires unselfish faking by backs who don't have the ball. All 3 backs will get carries and the wings will get catches. This keeps more kids happy while instilling a team-first attitude. It is also harder to defend because they cannot key on one player. The 4-back offense is not affected if one of the backs, or even the Quarterback is injured.

In a normal offense, the running backs main job is to run to run the ball. But in the wing-T, they need to block first, fake second and run the ball third. Faking is the same as blocking. Doing the first two things well allows him to run the ball easier. Every player has to fake in order for the offense to work.

Practice and intensity are the keys to making a quality, believable fake. It must be emphasized on every play, every drill during practice. Faking is an essential part of our offense.

If a back does not fake 5yards in practice, he does pushups. The RB coach stands with the scout team linebackers to make sure this happens. Conversely, if a back gets tackled on a fake during the game, he gets rewarded with an ice cream or lunch the following week.

A Systematic Approach, Not A Collection of Plays

I feel that the Wing-T is the soundest system being run in football today. As offenses such as the Run and Shoot are slowly being replaced, the Wing-T has with stood the test of time because it is more than a formation but rather a system of plays that work off each other and set each other up. While many coaches just run plays, we run an offensive system.

The wing-T may not be magic, but it has proved to be magical for many underdog teams. After all, it's a system ripe with smoke and mirrors, a run-based attack that relies on misdirection and deception. Difficulty finding the football helps smaller, undermanned teams be more competitive. These underdog teams often band together, which leads to jokes about a secret society, with a special handshake and passwords and that only wing-T guys could come to the secret meetings.

The wing-T is popular at the high school level because it can be run effectively without a cannon-armed quarterback or sumo wrestlers along the offensive line. That's why Brian Sipe, former NFL most valuable player quarterback of the Cleveland Browns, installed the wing-T when he became a high school head coach. "With a small pool of players, I didn't have the athletes to run an NFL-style offense based on the passing game. I needed an offense that was more suited to having smaller, faster, bright kids on the front line, and that was the wing-T."

Sipe had a three-year starting all-league guard who weighed 195 pounds who probably wouldn't be an offensive lineman in most systems. The fastest player on the team, he could handle decidedly bigger defensive lineman because of his quickness, angle blocking, getting low, and attacking the larger defenders hip.

The Wing T helped Sipe lead his team to a 45-5 record and three CIF Division IV titles in four years. The Eagles routinely beat much larger schools with much bigger defenders during that span thanks in large part to near flawless execution of their highly choreographed offense.

More than a Formation

Tubby Raymond sums up the philosophy of the Delaware Wing-T in single paragraph.

The Delaware Wing-T is a multiple formation, four-back running attack that depends heavily on play-action passing and misdirection, utilizing synchronized schemes both in the line-blocking and backfield action

The ability to run every play out of many formations minimizes tendencies for the defense. However, Raymond emphasizes that the Wing T is “More Than a Formation” for a reason. The main philosophy of the Wing T is that play calling is NOT based on down & distance. Every play will set another play up by attacking defenders with dual assignments. This keeps the defenders honest and keeping gap control in the utmost importance.

Tubby calls it “sequence football”: a systematic way of attacking the defense. Several points are threatened as the ball is snapped. Inside, outside, backside, and play action pass.

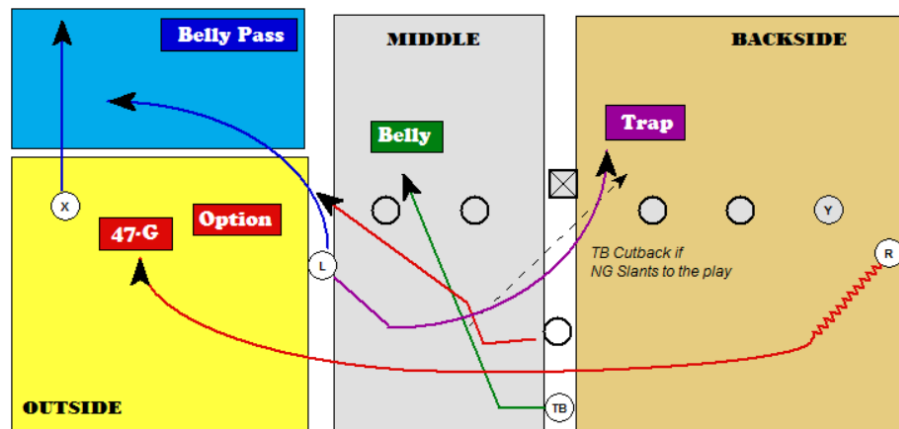


Figure 1-4: SEQUENCE FOOTBALL: Attacking several points on same play

When we call BELLY, all eleven defenders cannot attack our Tailback because the defense doesn't know if we are going to fake Belly and run or pass to the outside, or fake Belly and run Tackle-Trap counter to the backside.

That 11-man choreography is one part coordinated blocking and another part backfield deception. Plays are grouped into “series” or “families” because they look and feel similar. Within each series all the plays look the same for the first two or three steps. Several different plays look identical at first glance but can develop several different ways. This means the backfield paths and blocking must “LOOK-A-LIKE”.

On virtually any basic wing-T play, there are three possible ball carriers: the fullback, the running back and the quarterback. The quarterback snaps the ball, executes two seemingly identical handoffs and then acts like he's running with the football. At some point during that sequence, the ball changes hands or stays with the quarterback, leaving the defense confused about who actually has possession.

Look-A-Like Backfield

The paths of the backs on every play in that family, or SERIES, should “look-a-like” so the defense who keys backs will be confused. Every family has the CORE play; a COUNTER play, and a PASS play. They attack backside, middle, and outside.

The quarterback, tailback, and the wingback all run exactly the same path in different plays, but the ball goes to different ball carriers going in different directions. This same backfield motion is used to add a quarterback run with a pitch option and finally a pass play.

Look-A-Like Blocking

The system is designed to run outside, inside, and backside with blocking schemes that look the same. These blocking schemes can create defensive conflicts independent of the backfield action. For example, pulling the play side guard on Down, Down Option, & Down Pass combined with the same backfield action on those 3 plays does not allow the defense to just key on one player.

The blocking style is designed so that as a defensive man reacts to the blocking in his area to stop a particular threat, he will be placing himself in jeopardy for a companion play. In other words, the Wing T has an answer for whatever technique the defense is using and uses that technique against the defender. The drawing on the next page shows some of these conflicts in both the Down and GO families.

The keys to creating conflicts in all four plays are: (1) the down paths by the tackle, TE, and wing; (2) the pulling action of the G; (3) the use of motion by the LW.

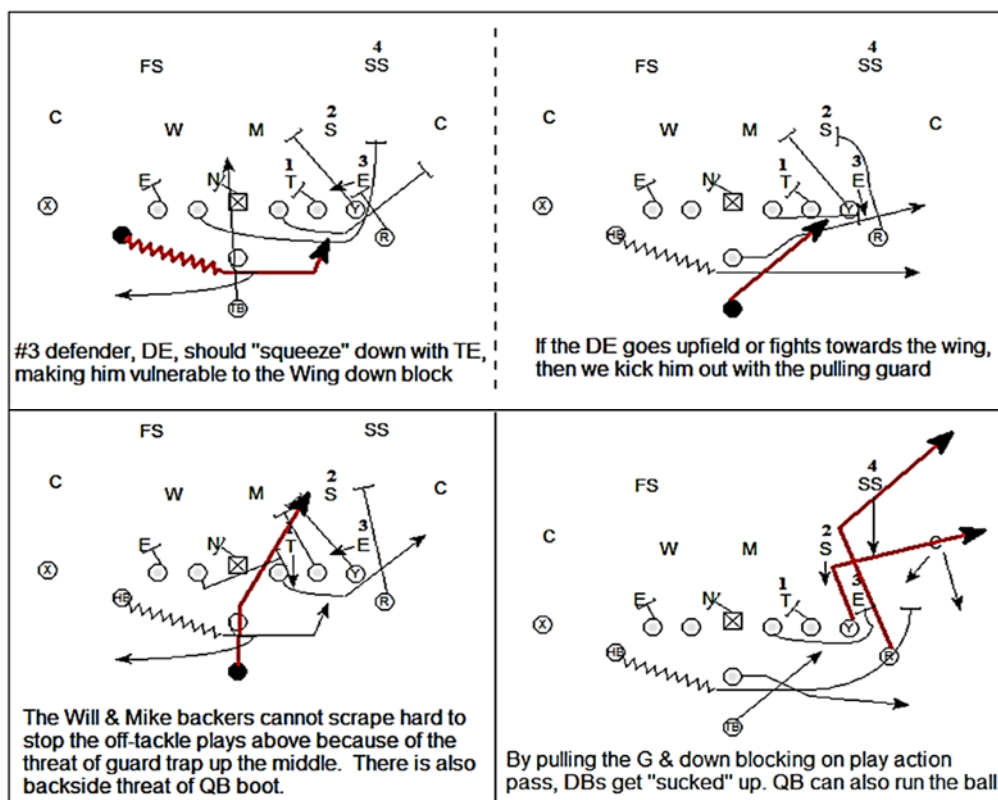


Figure 1-5: Look-A-Like Blocking Examples

The series of plays inside the Wing T are designed to place many conflicts on the defense as possible and are directed at defensive players who have dual defensive assignments. The blocking style is designed so that as a defensive man reacts to the blocking to stop a particular threat, he will be placing himself in jeopardy for a different play. For example, if the defensive end squeezes vs a down block, he runs the risk of being blocked by the pulling guard. We also can block squeezing defensive ends with a bunch of smaller backs. If the defensive man does not squeeze down on the down block and steps up field, then he runs the risk of being kicked out by the pulling guard.

Creating Conflict

The goal of the wing-T is to put a defender in conflict. It forces the defender to stop one of two plays that look identical. If he stops one, you run the other. By the time he's figured out which play it is, hopefully you've blocked him, and the ball-carrier is already into the backfield.

Since defenders have a tough time seeing the football, they are forced to rely on the offensive line to tell where a play is going. Most of the blocking is set up to support the ball carrier, so offensive linemen can offer valuable insight to dumbfounded defenders. Defenses will often times key the guards.

Making correct reads, however, can actually get a defender in trouble. Wing-T coaches know that guards are used to find the ball, so they will send out "false keys," where the lineman will block in the opposite direction that the ball goes. There are false keys within every series, so it's always available.

Again, that is why it is a SYSTEM, not plays or a formation. SYSTEMS have answers.

Wing-T proponents insist that there is a counter to most every defensive scheme. But when organization is matched with raw strength and size, the wing-T can run into problems. If a defensive scheme stops a Wing T play, there's a counter play that will be successful.

Passing Game

With a run-based system, the incorporation of play action is a mainstay to create explosive plays. Consequently, the play action passing game creates defensive conflict for the players assigned to stopping the run. Most of the spread passing game concepts can be easily infused into the Wing-T because the wing alignment presents a 4-receiver threat on any play.

The waggle action off of the buck sweep is one of the best play action pass plays in all of football. Sending the fullback into the flats, a comeback or post-corner by the split end, and the TE dragging over the middle provides the quarterback with a three-level stretch. With a strong run game and play action game, the dropback game is the last major component of the offense. The dropback game features traditional three step passing concepts with the intention of taking advantage of one on one matchups on the outside.

With the popularization of RPO's, the Wing T offenses are also running the same RPO's as the spread gurus, combining traditional Wing T run plays with pass and screen concepts. With the introduction of RPO's and the spread, one can have a very effective offense with sweep, trap, belly, and a three step passing game."

Misdirection and Motion

The Wing T uses misdirection as no other modern offensive formation does. Because of the four-back attack, misdirection has a maximum impact and is a staple of the Wing-T attack. It has same effect as the passing game in forcing the defense to play honestly at the flank and to not over pursue. Just as important is when a smaller running back takes out a larger defensive player by faking instead of having to try to block him.

Motion increases the chances of misdirection as you can send the motion man one way and have a player, such as the QB, keep the ball in the opposite direction. Conversely, you can give the ball to the motion man and have other backs fake in the opposite direction.

"Both a 4-back running attack and a one-back spread attack"

Furthermore, The Wing T is all about trying to fool a 17 year old LB into not trusting his coach. Utilizing misdirection and motions creates deception in the backfield and when those kids are really well coached (ie read guards) use keybreakers. Pistol Wing T allows you to accomplish this more easily.

ATTACKING THE DEFENSE

Any defense must do 4 basic things on every play. (1) defenders must first use their SIGHT to see the formation; (2) Then they must RECOGNIZE the formation and line up; (3) Then the ANTICIPATE what the offense is going to do; and finally, (4) they react once the ball is snapped.

The Wing-T is designed to make the defenders THINK. So the offense will change formations, shift, motion, use misdirection, use option football, change the pace and spread the field in an effort to make the defenders on the field think. To use the defenders' sight and recognition to make them think before, during and after the snap to slow their reaction just enough to give the offensive players more of an advantage.

The wing-T philosophy takes advantage of the adjustments a defense must make to compensate for the wing's flanking angle. For example,

- the 7-man front must adjust its secondary to the wing, which weakens the opposite flank.
- The wing will widen the 8-man front, making it vulnerable off-tackle and between the tackles.
- The three-deep secondary scheme that plays man-to-man in order to get adequate run support on the perimeter becomes vulnerable to the weakside running game.

The wing-T has the option available as a weapon and it does not take a lot of practice time since it is double option. The option series are valuable weapons to attack the outflanked defensive perimeter. The threat of the QB runs both playside and backside slows down defensive pursuit by all 11 defenders.

Formations create angles. The wing forces every defense to make an adjustment through its alignment. One defensive flank or another is vulnerable to the angles created by the wing-T formation. The wing-T coach obviously directs the flow of attack toward the offensive flank, which presents the most advantageous angle to place pressure on the opposing defensive flank.

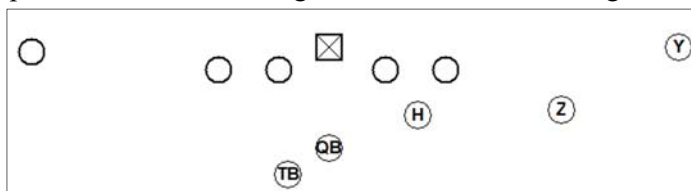
The wing-T coach looks for defenders who have dual responsibilities. The nature of the wing-T is to confront these dual responsibility defenders with two options. The wing-T coach plans the attack so that either choice the defender makes places the defender in conflict. If the defender reacts to stop the trap, he places himself in jeopardy for a companion play to the trap. If the defender reacts to stop the sweep, he places himself in jeopardy for a companion play to the sweep.

EVOLUTION OF THE WING T

The Wing T is an offense that has withstood the test of time. It continues to baffle teams with its misdirection attack. In order to keep up with the changing defensive trends in football the Wing T has evolved into many different variations of the wing t offense. There is the traditional under center wing t. There is the spread, and pistol wing t that utilize a mobile QB.

So many Wing T offenses have made Jet Sweep, Midline, and Veer part of their attack, that they are now considered as important as Buck and Belly. Many teams will now run trap, power, counter, and waggle off of jet motion. Now a days many teams are utilizing the mobile quarterback. Numerous teams will run QB draws, QB counters, QB powers, and QB sweeps. This pretty much takes away the defense's extra defender.

Many college teams, primarily Gus Malzahn's Auburn Tigers, still apply its principles. The base formations always have three receivers, one of which in position to motion through the backfield like a wingback if needed. Each play presents multiple threats. The quarterback is instructed to sell his fakes, even if he's not a serious running threat. And the wingback closely correlates to Malzahn's flanker/slot receiver (labeled Z).



WHY THE PISTOL WING-T?

This is the million dollar question. And you need to bounce this off your coaching staff and be very, very honest with yourself: Don't run Wing-T out of the PISTOL formation because *you* want to change it up...examine your Quarterback position before deciding.

The Pistol QB has to possess great game instincts and quickness. Pure, raw athleticism helps, but there has to be discipline and intelligence. While he doesn't need Olympic gold medal speed, he needs to have quick feet and above average change of direction. When he decides to pull the handoff and keep it, his first steps have to be very quick so he can hit the hole or the edge before the defense reacts. And the last, but very important quality, is unselfishness. This offense gives him the green light to run, but he has to possess patience and great decision-making skills.

Easier To Pass

There is something to be said about the defense being more worried about the passing game when the QB gets into Pistol or Shotgun alignment. Whether it is consciously or subconsciously, backing the QB away from center makes the defense think about the threat of the passing game.

There is more to this however. The farther away from the LOS that the QB gets makes it easier for HIM to read the defense and find his pre-snap reads. Furthermore, he can get to his landmark and setup quicker than having to "drop back" five yards.

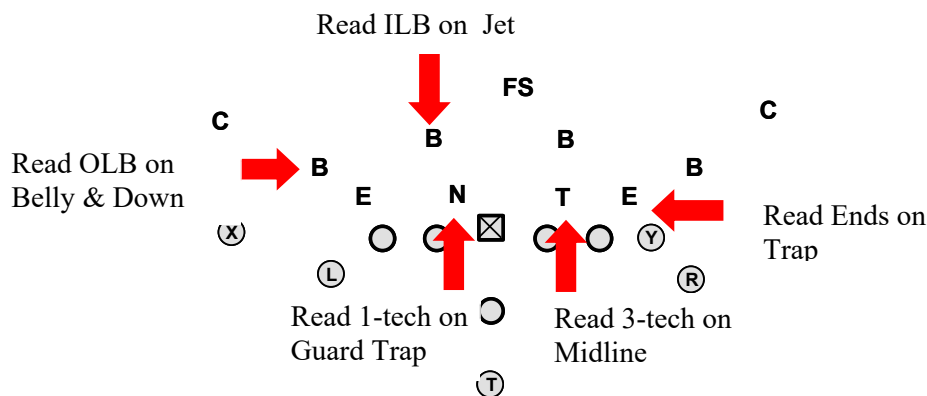
Allows Pre-Snap & Post Snap Read Plays

While passing the ball is easier from the Pistol formation, the hidden advantage is in the running game. The 3 yard alignment and facing the defense gives the QB more time to read unblocked defenders without sacrificing the quick hitting run game that is lost by backing all the way up to 5 yards.

"The 3 yd alignment is a "happy medium" between under center (allowing TB to hit the LOS the quickest) and the 5 yd alignment (giving QB most time to make his reads)."

Post Snap Reads:

A basic premise of option football is lengthening the time that the QB has to "ride & decide". Obviously putting the QB at 3yards instead of at the Line of Scrimmage will give the QB more time to decide whether to give the ball to the RB or keep the ball and run. This longer faking action also freezes defenders which allows the lineman to gain better angles and more leverage. Again, putting the QB at 5 yards allows even more time, but the tradeoff is that the back also takes longer to get to the LOS.



Backfield Action and Footwork

The Pistol formation keeps the TB directly behind the QB, which severely minimizes changes to RB footwork and landmarks. A disadvantage to Shotgun Wing T is having to offset the TB to the side of the QB, which necessitates more changes to backfield footwork.

- ◆ Easier for the QB to run every play from both under center and in Pistol.
- ◆ Younger teams stay under center for easy transition to Pistol at older levels.
- ◆ Zero changes to wing back footwork & motion landmarks.
- ◆ Only difference to TB footwork is always having midline GO family.

Regardless of whether a team runs the Wing T out of Pistol or Shotgun, the QB is going to have very different footwork compared to being under center. But these differences between Pistol and direct snap are far less than direct snap and shotgun.

Trade Offs Of Going To Pistol

- ◆ Loss of deception is offset by easier to read unblocked defenders;
- ◆ Guard Trap & Midline hit slower with TB at 5 yards, but option is better as “ride” is longer;
- ◆ Center has to learn the 3yd snap.