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*"We brought Coach Stewart to our school and installed his PISTOL WING-T offense. We went from 4-6, averaging 20 points a game, and 2200 yards of offense to 8-2, averaging 35 points a game, and 4800 yards of offense. This offense sets your playmakers up to make plays and keeps defenses on their heels"*      *--Jerry Hudnall, Head Football Coach, Lake Placid HS FL*

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*"In one season we improved from 1780 total offensive yards to 4400 by implementing the PISTOL WING T. I attribute all of the success we had to following the practice plans, rules, and procedures that are laid out in the manuals and the DVD"*      *--Ed Cunningham, Fayetteville HS, TN*

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*"Our football program over my first 6 years was 9-51. This season we were 7-3 and made the playoffs for the first time in 23 years! Offensively we averaged 15 points per game in 2014 – after installing the offense we averaged 25 points per game"*      *--Phil Marino, Columbus HS, GA*

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*"In our third year running the offense we won our first ever conference championship. We went undefeated in the regular season and 13-1 overall losing in the state championship game. We rushed for over 4300 yards and 62 touchdowns"*      *--Hancell Phipps, Wake Forest HS, NC*

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*"Huge difference watching a DVD vs actually having him work with our players. He has a unique way of connecting with kids that is amazing."*      *--Willie Herrera, East Union HS, CA*

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*"Coach Stewart's camps flat out made us better. His drill progression and structure of what he does and the detail with which he does it has made us much more efficient."*      *--Farhan Lalji, Head Coach, Canada*

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*"We bring Coach Stewart in every year after trying college coaches. He understands high school football. He explains everything in easy to understand language."* *--Al Yount, Black River HS, OH*

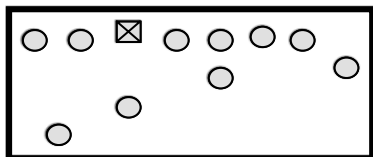
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# The Wing-T Offense

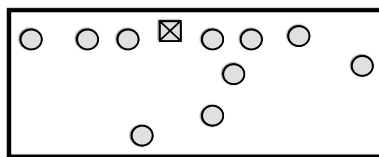
## HISTORY OF THE WING-T

The Delaware Wing T was developed by Dave Nelson in 1950's. At the time Nelson was the head coach of the University of Maine, but he was heavily influenced as a player running the single wing offense at Michigan under Fritz Crisler. After leaving Maine, Nelson joined the University of Delaware where he perfected the Wing T from being used primarily as formation into a complete offense.

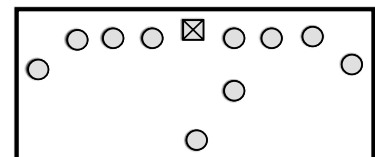
Nelson's Delaware Wing T also borrowed the wing concept from the powerful single wing offenses at the time, most notably the powerful Minnesota teams coached by Doc Williams. They also added Earl "Red" Blaik's Army Trap Series. The concepts of angle blocking and line splits were taken from Knute Rockne's Notre Dame offense and the dual threat of the wing was originated with Pop Warner's double wing formation.



*Fig 1: The single wing formation*



*Fig 2: Notre Dame Box Formation*



*Fig 3: Pop Warner's double wing*

The precursor of the original Wing-T is Clark Shaughnessy's modern-T, which put all 3 backs in the backfield and the QB under center. The deception possibilities of crossing the backs paths, as well as putting them in motion, helped Shaughnessy to one of the best turn-arounds in college history: taking the last place 1939 Stanford team to the Rose Bowl in 1940. The great Chicago Bears teams of the 40's and 50's ran the modern-T also after George Halas hired Shaughnessy to tutor his NFL staff. The Bears 73-0 championship victory in 1940 led the movement by most of America to move their QB under the center.

Don Faurot of Missouri widened the splits of the 3 RB with his "Split-T" formation. But Faurot's main contribution to the development of the Wing-T was designing plays that ran through seams that the defense could not defend with their normal techniques. The term "defensive conflict" is credited to Faurot and Shaughnessy.

With Pop Warner's success of using the wing back as a blocker, receiver, and runner it wasn't long before one of the 3 Tee backs was moved up into a wing back alignment. Many Split T coaches used this "Winged T" formation, but it was Nelson who made it a complete offense and not just a formation.

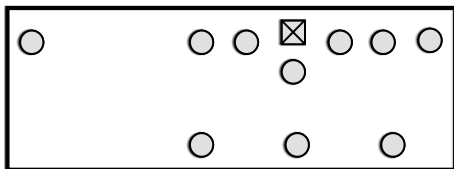


Fig 4: Tee Formation

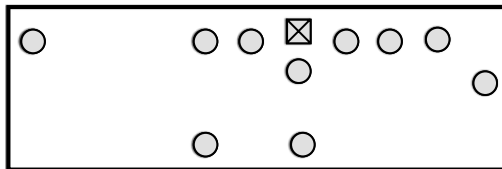


Fig 5: Evolution of Wing-T Formation

Although the Wing T has changed over the past couple of decades the principles and concepts are still the same. In order to keep up with the changing defensive trends in football the Wing T has evolved into the offense that is run today. A USA Today article claims that 16% of the 2006 state champions ran the wing-t and Bellevue Washington broke De La Salle's 152-game winning streak with the offense. Bellevue just had its nation leading 84-game win streak broken in December, 2014, but not before winning 11 state championships and 27 playoff games in a row.

Delaware won three national titles and made NCAA D-1AA playoffs thirteen times while amassing 250 wins running the offense. Ara Parseghian ran Wing-T at Notre Dame, Eddie Robinson ran it at Grambling, and Marv Levy ran it in the NFL with Kansas City Chiefs. Dennis Creehan went 39-20 with two league titles running it at Edinboro in '82 and '84, then took over a one-win program at South Dakota State, winning 28 games in 4 years. Carnegie Mellon, Allegheny, Mercyhurst, and Cumberland are some of the many colleges running the Wing T at the D-2 and D-3 levels. Gus Malzahn runs components of Wing T at Auburn, tracing back to his roots running the Wing T as a state championship high school coach.

## WHY RUN THE WING-T

One of the criticisms of the Wing T is the lack of passing game and exposure for players wanting college scholarships. I totally disagree with both statements as I have had an 1,800 yard passer and a 2,700 yard passer out of Wing-T. Colin Kaepernick, Dan Marino, Trent Dilfer, Alex Smith and Blake Bortles all ran this offense in high school.

While passing offenses are more popular and watching a receiver catch a 20-yard pass is more exciting than a running back pounding out 5 yards, there are valid reasons to run Wing-T in high school:

### PERSONNEL DOESN'T DRIVE THE ENGINE

- ◆ It is a system that adapts to different personnel from year to year;
- ◆ Not dependent on superior ability of one or two players to run the spread offense;

WIN WITH AVERAGE PLAYERS

- ◆ Angle blocking allows a team to be successful with smaller linemen;
- ◆ Does not require precision. Can still score if blocks are missed;
- ◆ Easier for running backs to make great fakes vs great blocks;

*Even A**Dead**Man**Can**Fake !*BUILDS TEAM CONCEPT

- ◆ Star Players have to fake and every player on team can be all league faker;
- ◆ Can't stop one player because ball will be spread around;
- ◆ The tough mentality required to run the Wing-T affects the defense. The development of a grueling consistent ground game builds a desire to dominate the opponent physically.

TOUGH ON OPPONENT

- ◆ Misdirection puts pressure on undisciplined 17-year old linebackers;
- ◆ Very hard for defense to prepare for in 3 days when only see it once per year;
- ◆ Logical progression. Defense must stop core play, its counter, and its play action pass;

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*SIMPLICITY with COMPLEXITY: Simple for US -- Complex for THEM*

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ENHANCES YOUR OFFENSE

- ◆ Ball control run attack is more suitable to end of season bad weather;
- ◆ Good run game HELPS the passing game;
- ◆ Pass protection is easier because can't blitz this offense;

If you really understand the offense, you will find that it is a system that allows you to focus on the plays and playmakers that you have in any given year.

The Wing T is an offense that has withstood the test of time. Where other offenses and fads make great clinic talk, the Wing T continues to baffle teams with its misdirection attack. The Delaware Wing T continues to be one of the finest offenses used today on both the high school and college levels.

## PHILOSOPHY 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.

***Not a formation or certain plays...***

***It is a system of If-Then scenarios.***

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

The Wing T offense is a multiple formation, four-back attack that depends heavily on misdirection.

1. DECEPTION: Minimize defensive pursuit and provides big play opportunities. Does not ask a 140-lb running back to block a 220-lb linebacker...but instead takes the LB out of the play with great fakes.
2. ANGLES & FLANKS: Created by both technique and formation, an offense does not need big, strong guys to move the football.
3. FLEXIBILITY: From option to power runs to trapping game, all aspects of the run game can be ran. The passing game can include drop back, sprint out, & of course play action. The location of the wing backs allows this flexibility.

***“Don’t have so many plays that you aren’t any good at running any of them”***

The problem with the offense is its great flexibility. As you gain more knowledge of all the conflicts from the many formations and plays, the trap you must avoid falling into is running too much stuff. You can very rapidly have over 20 run plays, 20 pass plays, and 20 formations....which every play can be ran out of every formation. This leads to the problem of teaching and practicing 800 variations!

### **FORMATION**

It is a multi-formation offense where all three backs may be used as blockers, ball-carriers deception, or receivers. The ability to run every play out of many formations, minimizing tendencies for the defense.

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***“Both a 4-back running attack and a one-back spread”***

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The *Wingback*: is aligned 3-4 yards from the tackle and 2 yards off the line of scrimmage.

- ⇒ Immediate threat of three or four deep receivers.
- ⇒ Widens the defensive front.
- ⇒ An additional blocker at the line of scrimmage. Better angle on Linebackers.
- ⇒ The motion of the wing balances the attack & creates misdirection.

The *Halfback*: is aligned behind the tackle 4 yards behind the line of scrimmage:

- ⇒ Provides vertical blocking on linebackers and lineman.
- ⇒ Often times eliminates motion requirement to run a play.
- ⇒ Can still block the flank and run counters.

The *Fullback*: is called the Tailback and has a similar role to the I-back tailback:

- ⇒ Provides a dive threat to the middle of the defense.
- ⇒ Provides the offense with a balanced attack to either side of the formation.
- ⇒ Can easily get to either flank as a third receiver.
- ⇒ Solidifies the counter game by having the TB in a position to check.

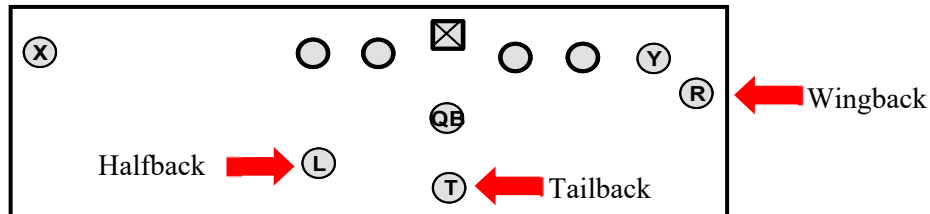


Fig 6: Alignment and Titles of Running Backs

### ***QB THREAT***

Threatens playside flank with option threat or opposite flank with misdirection away from flow. Gives defense contain problems and minimizes backside pursuit.

Under Center: Allows QB to hide the ball by turning his back to the defense.

Pistol: The loss of hiding the ball is offset by QB reading pass defenders, blitzers, and unblocked defenders on run plays.

## PASSING GAME

Overaggressive secondary support and plugging linebackers can make it difficult to move the ball on the ground. Consequently, the play action passing game creates defensive conflict for the players assigned to stopping the run. Of course, having 3 running backs enhances the play action more than other offenses. 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.

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*“There are only 3 things that can happen by throwing and 2 of them are bad”*

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## MISDIRECTION AND MOTION

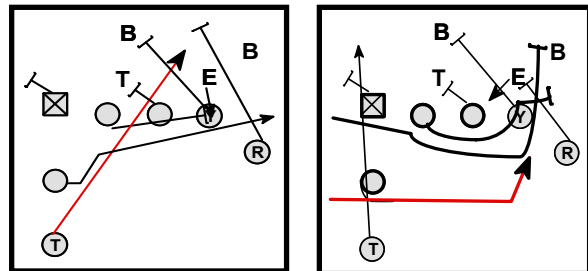
The Wing T uses misdirection as no other modern offensive formation does. Because of the four back attack, misdirection has a maximum impact and is a staple of the Wing-T attack. It has the same effect as the passing game in forcing the defense to play honestly at the flank and to not over pursue. Just 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.

## DEFENSIVE CONFLICTS

This is the secret ingredient to the entire enchilada. Everything that you do when installing and running the offense should always be predicated on where the defense is in conflict. Every play has an “if-then” statement where a defensive technique will be used against that player. If the defensive player uses Technique A, then there is a certain play that is called next. If the player reacts with Technique B, then there is a different play that must be called.

- ◆ IF end "squeezes" to attack pulling G to stop down,  
THEN run Buck (G.O.) sweep;
- ◆ IF end steps upfield to blow up G.O.,  
THEN kick him out & run Down.



This example shows that conflicts are not limited within families of plays. The Down & G.O. (Buck) Sweep plays are companion plays that have “look-a-like” blocking. The tackle, tight end, and wing steps are the same on both plays. So on both plays the DE sees the same first steps from the TE, RG, and Wing, while also seeing the play side Guard pulling at him.

Now let's look at Belly and its Tackle Trap counter play to put linebackers in conflict.

- ◆ IF the OLB tackles the TB on Belly, THEN the QB keeps the ball and runs option.
- ◆ IF the backside ILB makes the tackle on Belly, THEN run counter (tackle trap).

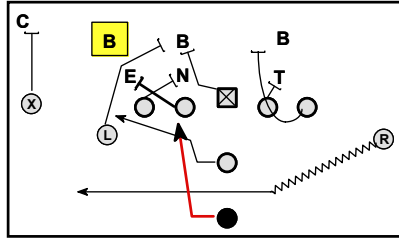


Fig 7: OLB conflict on Belly

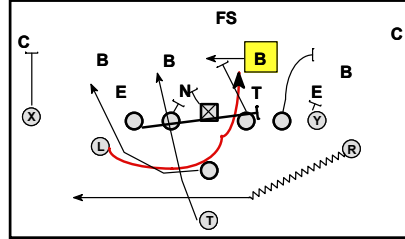


Fig 8: ILB conflict on Trap

Now let's look at a conflict on the TE / Wing flank. Let's start with the DE (#3 defender) in Figure 9 who is lined up inside shade on the TE allowing the TE to down block him on Buck, Down, & Fly Sweep to the edge. This alignment asks the OLB (#4 defender) to be a contain/force player on run, has pitch on option, and flats on pass.

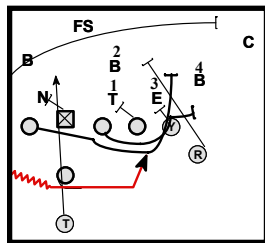


Fig 9: Inside alignment

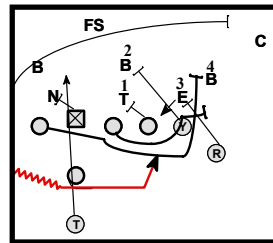


Fig 10: End Squeezes

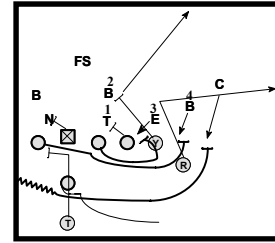


Fig 11: Cloud coverage

Rolling the CB up in a cloud, cover 2 coverage (Fig 11) to let the OLB focus on run puts stress on the FS if both the TE & WB run deeper routes. The key is that everyone's 1st steps are the same.

Another conflict is the DT (#1 defender) lined up in a 3 tech. If he steps towards the RT down block or tries to pursue the pulling RG, he is vulnerable to Guard Trap with an influence pull by the RG. Still another conflict is the defenses reaction to the motion of the left wing. Any slanting, blitzing, or rolled coverages can be exposed by this motion and running counters & boots in the direction opposite the motion.

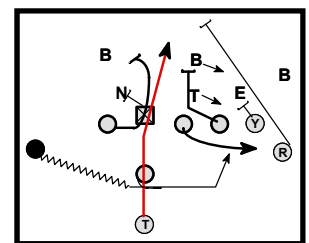


Fig 12: DT conflicts

The key to all of this conflict is that both the blocking and backfield action looks the same. Don't ever run a play in the Wing T system without a "look-a-like" companion play. A list of the companion plays and the many conflicts are summarized in the Appendix.



## LOOK-A-LIKE DECEPTION

Plays are grouped into “families” by similar backfield action and each family attacks several areas of the defense on every snap. The line blocking matches the backfield action to minimize defensive keys. Even a defense who reads linemen has to find backfield flow after the OL 1st or 2nd step. For example, pulling playside 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.

### LOOK-A-LIKE BLOCKING

Blocking schemes on different plays look the same so that defenses are lured into false reads. Notice the similar blocking schemes making defensive reads very difficult.

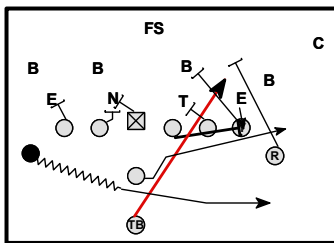


Fig 13: Off Tackle Down.

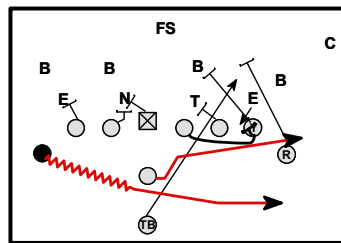


Fig 14: Down Option

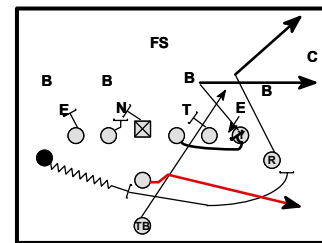


Fig 15 Down Pass

Another trap that new Wing T coaches fall into is trying to match a previous blocking system to Wing T backfield action, for example trying to zone block the Belly play. By changing the blocking, Belly Option and Belly Pass will not be as effective.

### LOOK-A-LIKE BACKFIELD

Plays are grouped into series, or families, based upon backfield action. The paths of the backs on every play in that family 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.

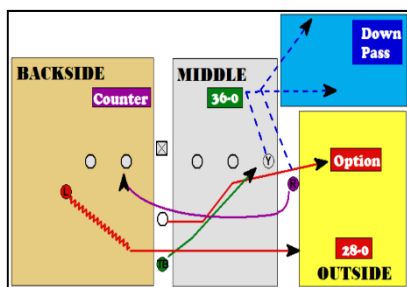


Fig 16: DOWN Family

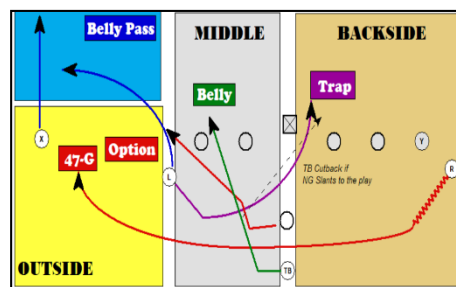


Fig 17: BELLY Family

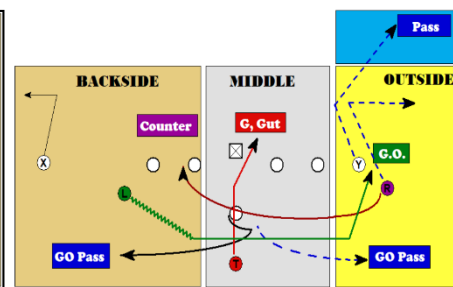


Fig 18: GO Family

The Delaware Wing-T then, 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 defense can't make the tackle until it locates the ball.