
CHAPTER 12



Attack the Edge with Speed & Rocket

Alright, folks, we're going to talk now about, I guess we could say one of the new things in the Wing-T although it's been around a while; we call it the Speed Sweep, some of you guys probably call it the Jet Sweep, some people might call it Fly Sweep. My understanding of this play is it originated in Crestview, Florida in a high school that was a Wing-T football team. It eventually left Crestview, went to Mississippi, a coach from Mississippi gave it to a coach in the state of Tennessee, and my mentor Herschel Moore took the Speed Sweep and started running it, started developing more ideas and thoughts about the Speed Sweep. Then he left and went to Cumberland University and from Cumberland University being a college program running the Speed Sweep, Delaware then added it to their Wing-T package and I guess the rest of its kind of history as it's gone on.

Speed sweep, what makes this play interesting is this: It is legitimately a football play, that if it's timed out right, executed right, it is a play that will gain four yards and not have any other issues.

I think that no matter what you're doing in your offense, but when I look at plays, I want to know the percentage of time that the play gains four yards or more. So what I'm trying to tell you is when you look at the end of your season, it does not matter what a play averages per attempt, because in reality if you run a play 7 times and you get one yard, one yard, two yards, four yards, three yards, five yards, and 70 yards, you look at that at the end of the year and it looks like that play averaged 8 yards a carry. But in reality, only two out of 7 times did that play gain four yards or more for you. This means the play was only successful only 28% of the time you ran it by our standards.

The Speed Sweep play for us is a play that averages that four yards or more over 75% of the time year in and year out. So it's a great football play. The other side of that is now this play has become so popular, that defenses are starting to catch up with it and some of the things that we're going to talk about is how we are gaining numbers to run the Speed Sweep, and how to use formations to get done what you want to get done running the Speed Sweep.



I often get asked do I like to run the Speed Sweep or the Rocket Sweep better. To be honest both have their strengths and I feel the need to have both in my system. For us the Speed Sweep is a better play because we can run 90 percent of our offense with speed type motion, and it still turns out to be the same play. So we're going to take a look at the Speed Sweep, I think you'll find some ideas here that will help you make the Speed Sweep a great play.

We got reasons that we feel like we need to be able to run the Speed Sweep. We're going to talk about some musts that we believe are necessary to run the Speed Sweep. But number one, we like to run it because we really only need to block two people. There are not many plays in our offense where you only had to block two people to get that successful play, that's a four-yard gain.

The Speed Sweep also has helped us gain one of the things we believe are essential in running the Wing T Offense. The thing we gain because of the threat of the Speed Sweep is the fact that many teams are now rotating a Safety down to our Split End side when using a 4-man secondary. What this does for us is it puts the edge defender to our TE side being responsible for setting the edge and also covering the deep 1/3 on pass.

We can use the Speed motion by our Wing Back and still run the following plays or series in the Wing T: Trap, Bootleg, Counter Criss-Cross, Down, Belly and Ride Series. We even have added some Mid Line Lead with the Speed Motion. The threat of the Speed Sweep also tends to make the 5 and 9 techniques play a little wider and helps when we are releasing inside to get up on Linebackers.

I have been told by Coaches that they don't feel they have the speed at the Wing Back positions to be running the Speed Sweep. If you are of that belief I want you to think of this, the back receiving the ball is already moving and we all know you can run a much faster flying 40 than from a standing start. As well as you are adding to the ball carrier's speed while the defenders are standing still. I argue that this is actually improving your team speed.

The following things must happen for successful Speed Sweep!

- The handoff must occur in the play side A Gap.
- You must use formations that allow you to have a hat for a hat with the defenders on the perimeter.
- You must allow your Quarterback to check the play to the opposite side as needed.
- You must use a snap count that allows your Quarterback to snap the ball when the running back is in a particular spot for timing.

When we are running the Speed Sweep we tell our Offensive Line that we are not blocking any level one defenders aligned from the B Gap in that has his hand on the ground. Notice I said with his hand on the ground. We have found if a Linebacker walks up into the line of scrimmage anywhere from A Gap to B Gap and because he is standing his vision allows him to see the Speed motion coming he can adjust and sometimes make the play. We will get into the blocking shortly but we will always pull our play side Guard on the Speed Sweep unless the Linebacker is walked up and then we will reach him.

