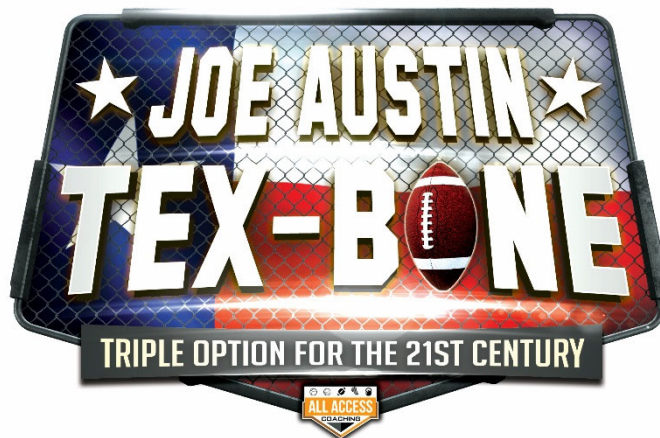


The

TEX-BONE: Triple Option for the 21st Century

Joe Austin



The Tex-Bone: Triple Option for the 21st Century
First Edition, XXXX 2019
ISBN (XXXXXXXXXXXXXX)
Copyright © 2019 by Joe Austin

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of Rick Stewart. For permission requests, write to Joe Austin at the address listed on his website: www.coachjoeaustin.com.

Certain other noncommercial uses are permitted under Fair Use in United States Copyright Law, Title 17, Chapter 1, Section 110. Reproductions and displaying of sections of this book, including charts and diagrams may be reproduced by individual coaches for their teams and coaching staff if it is in a classroom setting for educational use. No parts of this book can be displayed online for public viewing or sent electronically, for example via email. If there is an admission fee being charged (i.e. clinics) then the law states that as NOT being an educational classroom setting.

Ordering Information:

Special discounts are available on quantity purchases by corporations, associations, and others, especially educational uses for faculty, staffs, and schools. Special editions or book excerpts can also be created to meet specific needs.

Printed in the United States of America by All Access Publishing.

Ordering Information:

Special discounts are available on quantity purchases by corporations, associations, and others, especially educational uses for faculty, staffs, and schools. Special editions or book excerpts can also be created to meet specific needs.

Printed in the United States of America

All Access Coaching:

Websites

www.allaccesscoaching.com
www.allaccesscamps.com
www.coachjoeaustin.com

Videos

Tex Bone: Overview
Tex Bone: Power Option
Tex Bone: G Load Option
Tex Bone: Double Pull Power
Tex Bone: Speed Option
Tex Bone: Power Read
Tex Bone: Veer Option
Tex Bone: Isos & Counters
Tex Bone: Power Option Pass

Tex Bone: G Load Pass
Tex Bone: Double Pull Power Pro
Tex Bone: Power Read Pro
Tex Bone: Iso Pass
Tex Bone: Perimeter & Wing Blocking
Tex Bone: Offensive Line Blocking
Tex Bone: RB & QB Drills
Tex Bone: Practice Organization
T Tex Bone: Game Planning & Game Day

DEDICATION

As I began this project I prayed to my God that He would bless this work and that it would glorify Him. I continue to dedicate this work to Him by, “Being confident that He who has begun a good work in us will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6). Mahalo ke akua nui loa.

My wife, Marissa, allows me to invest countless hours into my vocation. I will forever be grateful for her love, support and friendship. She is my best friend and this book is dedicated to her. My daughter, Reagan Lililehua, has learned that she must share her Daddy with our ohana at the “football factory”, which is what she calls my work. That ohana is our players and coaches and their families. I appreciate her willingness to share her Daddy and I dedicate this book to her. I hope our time at the beach house and our Friday morning trips for hash browns at Mickey D’s is able to make up for the nights that I’m not home to kiss her goodnight and read her books.

This book is dedicated to my family. My brother, Dr. Ryan Austin, has not only been a supporting older brother, but he was integral in the editing and compilation of this book. He is, after all, the scholar of the family. The man holds five college degrees! He logged many hours in cleaning up the first draft of this book and this work wouldn’t be what it is without him. My parents, Dan and Deb, have always supported me as I searched for my passion – which, outside of my family, is football. They have made a lot of sacrifices on my behalf and this has created a debt that I can never repay. They always encouraged me to pursue a career where my work wouldn’t really be work. My Uncle Bill texts me every day. He has also been a source of support and encouragement for my entire life, as has my Aunt Nancy.

I have been blessed to work with some tremendously talented and dedicated coaches and players. This book is dedicated to them for everything that they have taught me over the first twenty years of my coaching career. I have learned more from Coach Tom Ross, the co-creator of the Tex-Bone system, than any other coach. I am thankful that he granted me permission to take our offensive system and share it with the world. My name is on the book, but this is a team effort. Tom Ross is the only man I know in which about ten different people would all say that he is their best friend. I think that says all that needs to be said about Tom.

Coaches Kenneth Eboh and Bill Kriesel have had enough faith in me to move across the country to coach with me. In Kenneth’s case, he has moved multiple times to multiple states. I will forever be grateful for their friendship and faith in me. I have equal, if not grater, faith in them. Chad Ellis and Nick Mask have joined our band along the way and have become tremendous friends. Thank you both.

It’s a slippery slope to start mentioning players that have had an impact on my life, but I would be remiss not to mention some of the very talented quarterbacks that I have had the privilege of working with. Our time in the meeting room, where things are laid back and we can all be who we are, has produced some of the most cherished moments of my career. Here’s to the quarterbacks that have made my career meaningful because of the relationship they sought to build with me: James McNear, Marcus Lavesseur, Jermar Jackson, CJ Croft, Dexter Britt, Bryan Hicks, and Fred Hover. There are certainly more players that have touched my life, but my space is limited to this page. I hope all of the players that I have coached know that they are special people to me.

In my adolescence I was molded as a football player and young man by two coaches: Tom Gruening and Joe McQuerry. Richard Bright was a teacher that was also very influential. This book is dedicated to these men.

Finally, this book is also dedicated to the memory of my dear friend, Merry Ross. We love and miss you.

Jeremiah 29:11

PREFACE

We were in the third quarter of my first game as a collegiate head coach. I was the head coach at Hanover College and we were playing Centre College; a very good team and a national playoff contender. They were loaded. We were starting eleven true freshmen. The game was going as you would expect.

Midway through the third quarter we had somehow matriculated the ball down to the Centre three yard line and had first and goal. Our young team responded by snapping the ball over the head of our quarterback making it second and goal from the 18 yard line.

In addition to being the head coach I was also the offensive coordinator. I looked down at my play sheet. Somewhere on this menu of options there must be the perfect call for second and goal from the 18 yard line. Right? There wasn't. I knew there wasn't, but I kept looking anyway.

The play clock was running down and the players were looking to me for the personnel, formation and play call.

At that moment there was a tap on my shoulder. A part-time assistant coach that I had inherited from the previous staff had done the tapping. When I turned to him he said, "Joe, the pizza delivery guy is here and wants to get paid."

That's football. It is so unpredictable that folks that aren't in our world can't even imagine the number of variables that affect victory or defeat. If you try to describe the number of variables that play into the success or failure of a football team most folks will quickly lose interest in the minutia.

This is not a book for those folks that lose interest in details. This is a book for the folks that love the minutia of football. Every now and then there is a team that is so physically dominant that they can roll out the ball and say, "Go get 'em boys!" I've played that team, but God has never called me to coach that team. If you haven't been called to coach that team I pray that this system will help you become a giant killer. In my first twenty years of coaching we have certainly taken down our share of teams that, on paper, we weren't supposed to beat.

It seems to me that when I started coaching 20 years ago our industry was more open to the exchange of information. When I attended clinics in the 90's there were presentations with a lot of game film and playbook diagrams. Now, it seems to me that most clinics are about philosophy or rudimentary schematics because coaches are scared to share their systems for fear of giving their opponents an advantage. Rest assured that I am not worried about that. Besides, in our league we share every game so my opponents know plenty about the Tex-Bone already. The purpose of this book is to place the Tex-Bone offensive system into the collective body of knowledge that is available to all coaches at all levels.

Joe Austin, August, 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Dedication</u>	ii
<u>Preface</u>	iii
<u>Why The Tex-Bone?</u>	v
<u>I. TEX-BONE OVERVIEW</u>	
Ch 1: Philosophy & Structure.....	3
Ch 2: Formation Families & Personnel	15
Ch 3: Tempo, Backfields & Fullbacks.....	21
Ch 4: Numbering System.....	31
<u>II. RUN GAME</u>	
Ch 5: Power Option	39
Ch 6: G Load Option	51
Ch 7: Double Pull Power	59
Ch 8: Speed Option.....	69
Ch 9: Power Read	77
Ch 10: Veer Option.....	87
Ch 11: Isos & Counters.....	99
<u>III. PASS GAME</u>	
Ch 12: Power Option Pass	113
Ch 13: G Load Pass	121
Ch 14: Double Pull Power Pass	129
Ch 15: Power Read Pass	137
Ch 16: Iso Pass.....	145
<u>IV. COACHING THE TEX-BONE</u>	
Ch 17: Wing & Perimeter Blocking.....	153
Ch 18: Offensive Line Blocking Drills.....	161
Ch 19: Running Back, Quarterback & Receiver Drills.....	169
Ch 20: System & Practice Organization	181
Ch 21: Game Plan Considerations & Ready Lists	195
Ch 22: Game Day	205
<u>V. APPENDIX</u>	209

WHY THE TEX-BONE?

The Tex-Bone is triple option for the 21st century. In this book you will learn how implement this new offense with your team. Everything to coach the players is included: playbook diagrams, rules, drills, coaching points, game planning and play calling strategies, etc.

So what is the Tex-Bone system?

The Tex-Bone system is the marriage of traditional triple option and the modern spread into one Texas-sized offense that leaves your opponent scrambling to cover it all.

The Tex-Bone features **two innovative strategies** for modern triple option execution: (1) the Tex-Bone is the first option system to feature the Power Run as the foundational scheme and (2) the Tex-Bone has made every formation imaginable a formation that can be used for executing option.

We still run option from the Flexbone, but that is just the tip of the iceberg. When teams run option for the Flexbone formation they are almost certain to face a defense designed specifically to counteract your offense. On the other hand, spread formations offer more predictable alignments. This means that you will likely have a very good idea as to how the defense you are facing will defend you. **This is the advantage of the Tex-Bone!** You can now run triple option with a high degree of certainty as to what you are up against: who will cover the dive, who will cover the quarterback and who will cover the pitch.

In addition to these **game planning and play calling advantages** the Tex-Bone features new advantages for triple option execution. For example, you will no longer need to motion your pitch player pre-snap. This is important because not motioning conceals the direction of your option play.

All of the **Tex-Bone schemes are rule based**, which means your players can be aggressive. In addition, players that are well versed in the Tex-Bone rules will not be thrown by slanting or shifting defenses and **blitz countermeasures are built in** to the schemes. These results can be achieved through what we call our **economy of techniques**. This means that only a hand full of individual skills are needed by each player to be able to execute the entire system.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK

In this book you will learn that this system is adaptable to your players and allows you to play to their strengths. We only ask our players to be in roles that suit their skills, and you can to. In addition, you will learn to choose the elements of the Tex-Bone system that are best for your team on a season to season or week to week basis.

Look at it this way: **the Tex-Bone is a tool box for coaches**. Every week or year you might use a different tool, but the system never changes.

If you have ever wanted a system that is hard to defend, moldable to your players and has all the answer built in the Tex-Bone is for you.

SECTION 1: Tex-Bone Overview

The study of the Tex-Bone system begins with a review of the history of option football. From there we dive into the philosophy and structural components of the system. The formation families, personnel, tempos, backfields actions and number system are all discussed.

SECTION 2: Run Game

Everything you need to master the Tex-Bone run game is contained in Section 2. In-depth explanation of the rules and techniques for each player on the field is outlined for all of the Tex-Bone run schemes:

- Power Option
- G Load Option
- Double Pull Power
- Speed Option
- Veer Option
- Isos & Counters

SECTION 3: Pass Game

The emphasis that opponents of the Tex-Bone must place on stopping the run leads to big plays in the pass game. Each Tex-Bone run has passes that compliment it:

- Power Option Pass
- G Load Pass
- Double Pull Power Pass
- Power Read Pass
- Iso Pass

SECTION 4: Coaching the Tex-Bone

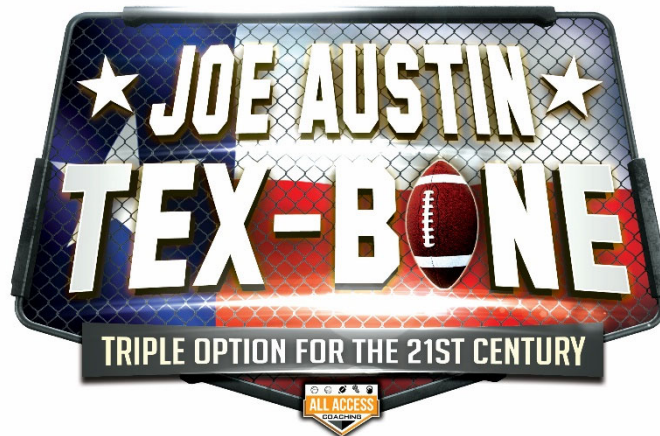
Once you know the schemes, Section 4 outlines drills for each position. Great detail is paid to blocking technique for the perimeter and the offensive line. A systematic way to install triple option is detailed so even the most novice of triple option coaches can get the Tex-Bone up and running in just a few minutes.

The last chapters of the book prepare the offensive coordinator for administering the system and both pre-season and in-season duties are outlined. Finally, tips and strategies for game planning and play calling are discussed, as well as suggestions for organizing your coaching staff during practice and games.

SECTION ONE

TEX-BONE OVERVIEW

1. Philosophy & Structure
2. Formation Families & Personnel
3. Tempo, Backfields & Fullbacks
4. Numbering System



CH 1: PHILOSOPHY & STRUCTURE

Welcome to the Joe Austin Tex-Bone: Triple Option for the 21st century. The Tex-Bone was developed with Tom Ross, my coaching colleague of more than 15 years.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Before we begin examining the Tex-Bone system it is important to look at the history of triple and double option football. Looking at its history reveals the origins of the Tex-Bone system.

The Split T

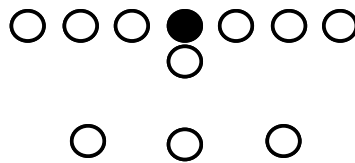


Fig 1

Option football dates back to the days of the Split T Formation (Figure 1) Don Farot used this set for the first time at the University of Missouri in 1941. Farot's development of option football was initially inspired by observations of "2 on 1" fast breaks in basketball. He liked the edge gained by the offensive team in two-on-one situations—especially when the offensive team scored a basket on almost every possession with the one-man advantage. Farot envisioned applying the concept of numerical advantage in basketball to offensive football. The University of Missouri secured the school's first Sugar Bowl invitation by going 8-2 that year using the new "option" offense.

The Wishbone

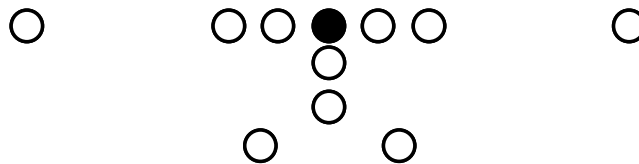


Fig 2

The next major innovation in option football was the Wishbone (Figure 2). The Wishbone was created at the University of Texas by assistant coach Emery Bellard. Putting this new offense into action was a potential saving grace for Coach Daryl Royal whose teams performed markedly better once the Wishbone

was in place. The Texas Wishbone offense culminated with the 1969 national championship. Daryl Royal became a UT icon while his program became one of the best in college football history. The Wishbone illustration shows similarities with the “Split T.” The primary difference is the placement of the three backs in slightly different locations. A second difference from a personnel/formation perspective is the Wishbone features split ends rather than tight ends.

The “I” Formation

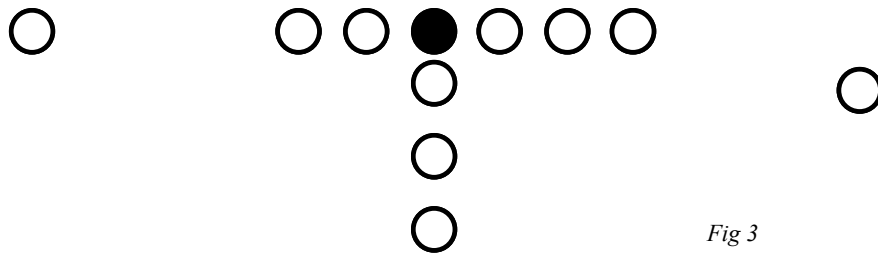


Fig 3

The “I” Formation (Figure 3) became the next prominent version of option football after the Wishbone. University of Nebraska running the “I” under Coach Tom Osborn in the 1980s and 1990s heavily influenced “Tex Bone” co-creator Tom Ross. During Osborne’s tenure the “I” formation offense fueled their triple option to three national championships. Readers who study the Tex-Bone system in this book notice formation sets, play calls, strategies, personnel groupings, and other references that resemble those used at Nebraska under Coach Osborn.

The Flexbone

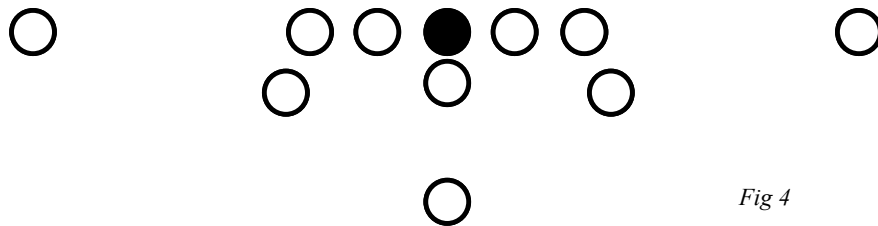


Fig 4

The Flexbone (Figure 4) serves the dual role of both a formation and as an offense when developed in detail. The Flexbone triple option offense is what most people think of when they envision modern option football. It is closely associated with coaches including Navy’s Ken Niumatalolo and Paul Johnson at Georgia Tech as an adaption of the Wishbone offense. Different types of offenses across the country use the Flexbone formation. The formation is easily applied to diverse offensive needs because its not based on the triple option exclusively.

Spread Read Option (Double Option)

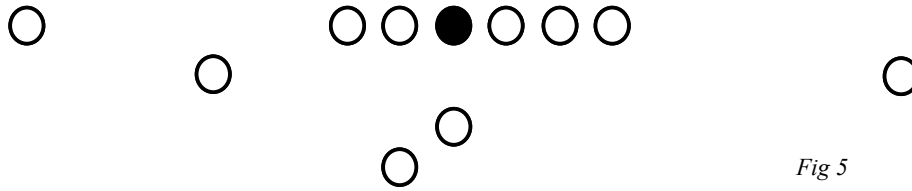


Fig 5

The spread read option (or double option) is equally noteworthy when examining the history of option football. Despite not being a true “triple option” attack, the system led to the creation of defensive schemes that in recent years inform how teams generally combat triple offense plays such as the outside veer. There are many notable coaches that ran spread read option (or zone read as it is popularly labeled). Two of those coaches were Bill Snyder at Kansas State in the 1990s and Urban Meyer at Utah in the early 2000s. Coaches in the years proceeding borrowed heavily from Snyder and Meyer in an attempt to mirror their successes.

It is important to note that the spread read option offense (Figure 5) is really a double option offense where the pitch phase is omitted. In double read option you start with the beginning phase of triple option—the “dive phase.” The pitch phase is then eliminated when the “pitch man” is blocked. Pseudo triple option schemes of the past decade such as run-pass options (popularized as “RPO” on television broadcasts) were developed to reintroduce the pitch phase by creating a downfield pass option. Upon closer examination these spread read option offenses are deeply rooted in triple option football—regardless of what they are called or whether offensive coordinators want to admit it or not.

Spread Veer Triple Option

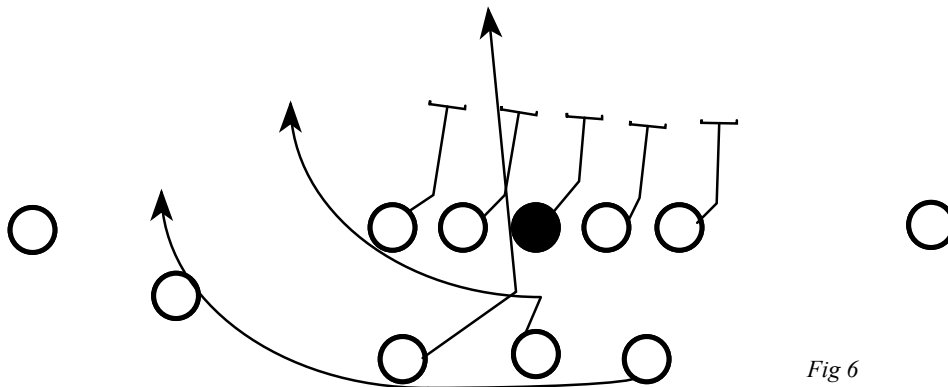


Fig 6

Triple option football is still alive in the college football landscape today—especially in the Service Academies (Army, Navy, and Air Force). Spread veer triple option (Figure 6) is a modern adaptation developed by former West Virginia Head Coach Rich Rodriguez in the 2000s. His primary-run scheme featured a hybrid veer and zone concept ran as a triple option that looked like a traditional outside veer. Rodriguez paired the hybrid with an open split-back spread formation that provided dive and pitch options. WVU also featured elements of modern spread football by operating from an open spread formation.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE TEX-BONE: how the Flexbone and Spread got married

Texas is a spread offense state. From high schools to colleges the offenses run wide open and fast. Defenses match the offenses with 4-2-5 cover 4 schemes in an attempt to match field width and deal with RPOs. It's a chess match that fuels some of the best football in the nation. Naturally there are outliers. At Southwestern University a new offense was born, the "Tex-Bone." Develop in tandem with Tom Ross; it is triple option for the 21st century. Our new system combines old-school Flexbone with a modern spread offense into one Texas-sized attack that leaves opponents scrambling to solve both the triple option and the spread at the same time.



Courtesy: Joe Austin

I was raised a spread coach. As an assistant offensive coordinator at Concordia University, St. Paul (MN) I helped shape an offense that finished 7th in the NCAA in total offense and 13th in scoring in 2002. The next year we finished 6th in total offense and 20th in scoring.

I began coordinating offenses at Augsburg College in 2004 before moving to the University of Dubuque in 2005. My year at Augsburg became my first experience working with Tom Ross.

At Dubuque, our offense became tops in the Iowa Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. Our achievements helped revitalize a Spartan program mired in two decades of losing seasons. In my first year (2005) the Spartans finished 20th in the NCAA in passing. By my last year at UD (2007) we placed 27th in the nation in both scoring offense and total offense and 29th in rushing offense. In 2019 our quarterback (Jermar Jackson) is being inducted into the University of Dubuque Athletic Hall of Fame.

In 2008, I became the head coach and offensive coordinator at Hanover College (Indiana). Serving as architects of another rebuild, our staff guided the Panthers to back-to-back second place finishes in the Heartland Intercollegiate Conference. My tenure at Hanover was highlighted by the performance of wide receiver Daniel



Courtesy: Marissa Austin

Passafiume who in 2009 set the all-time, all-divisions NCAA record for catches in a game with 25 against Franklin College. Two of our receivers won NCAA statistical championships for receptions: Tyler Thiems and Passafiume (#1 in the picture below). The Panthers finished 9th in the NCAA in passing offense in 2009. In my fourth year the Panthers finish 3rd in the nation in red zone offensive efficiency, 30th in passing offense and 35th in scoring offense.



Courtesy: Merry Ross

I was given the task of reintroducing football at Southwestern University in 2012. This became my greatest challenge as a coach thus far. Dubuque and Hanover were rebuild jobs—SU was a rebirth. Once a charter member of the Southwest Conference, the school dropped football in 1950 and didn't bring it back to the field until the fall of 2013.



By 2016, we built the top offense in the Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference. The season culminated with a conference championship. I was humbled to receive Coach of the Year honors by my peers.

Tom Ross joined our staff in 2008 at Hanover College as the defensive coordinator. Coach Ross always provided excellent insights on offense at both

Augsburg and Hanover even though his focus was on defense. Tom stayed on the defensive side until 2016 when the time was right for him to move to offense with me.

Tom was head coach of the Stuttgart Scorpions in the first division of the German Football League after our time together at Augsburg and prior to us reuniting at Hanover. Tom's Flexbone attack with the Scorpions was the equivalent of a Panzer tank—running roughshod over the south conference of the GFL and landing them in the German Bowl for the first time in team history. Tom was elected to the Scorpions Hall of Fame in 2016. He remains the most iconic coach in the history of the organization today.

Back to the evolution of the Tex-Bone...

Tom joined me on the offensive side in 2016. The original idea was to add Tom's Flexbone as an auxiliary offense to complement our spread. This hybrid system became the top offense in the SCAC,