
CHAPTER 15



Sprint & Drop Back Pass Plays

Every coach must develop a philosophy as to why they want to run or pass the ball, how often they want to do either one, and select plays that match their players genetics. The Wing-T coach is committed to running the football and therefore should develop a passing philosophy that makes running the ball easier.

- Passing out of multiple formations can disguise your running game.
- Lots of formations leads to confused defenses.
- Passing the ball spreads out the defense and stops them from “crowding the box”
- Threat of 4 verticals forces 4 defensive backs to defend receivers first before helping on the run.

All of these reasons make the job of the offensive line easier in regard to run blocking. The Wing-T philosophy is to create confusion and put players in conflict. This philosophy needs to also happen in your passing attack. Mixing drop back with sprint out and short pass with screens puts a lot of pressure on an opposing defense that only has 3 days to prepare. But just like in the run game, don’t try to do much because you don’t need a lot of pass plays to keep the defense honest.

When a team predominantly throws the ball by dropping back, the defense can regulate its coverage since they only have to mirror the drop-back depth with its own drop-back. Adding sprint-out passing forces the defense to rotate which leaves gaping holes in the coverage zones. Having both sprint-out passing and drop-back passing keeps the defense confused and uncertain as to whether it should rotate or drop back, cover pass or defend the run.

My philosophy of pass protection is to be very aggressive and solid at the guard and center positions. The tackles must keep the outside edges strong. I have a saying about how fast the linemen need to get set on pass protection: “They can’t get set fast enough.” However fast they can get set, it is not fast enough.

All pass plays fall into these basic categories:

Play action: (Belly, Down, and Counter pass)

Quick Pass Game: (70’s): This would be 3-step game if under center.

Sprint-out: (90’s): QB can sprint towards sideline or setup slightly past the offensive tackle.

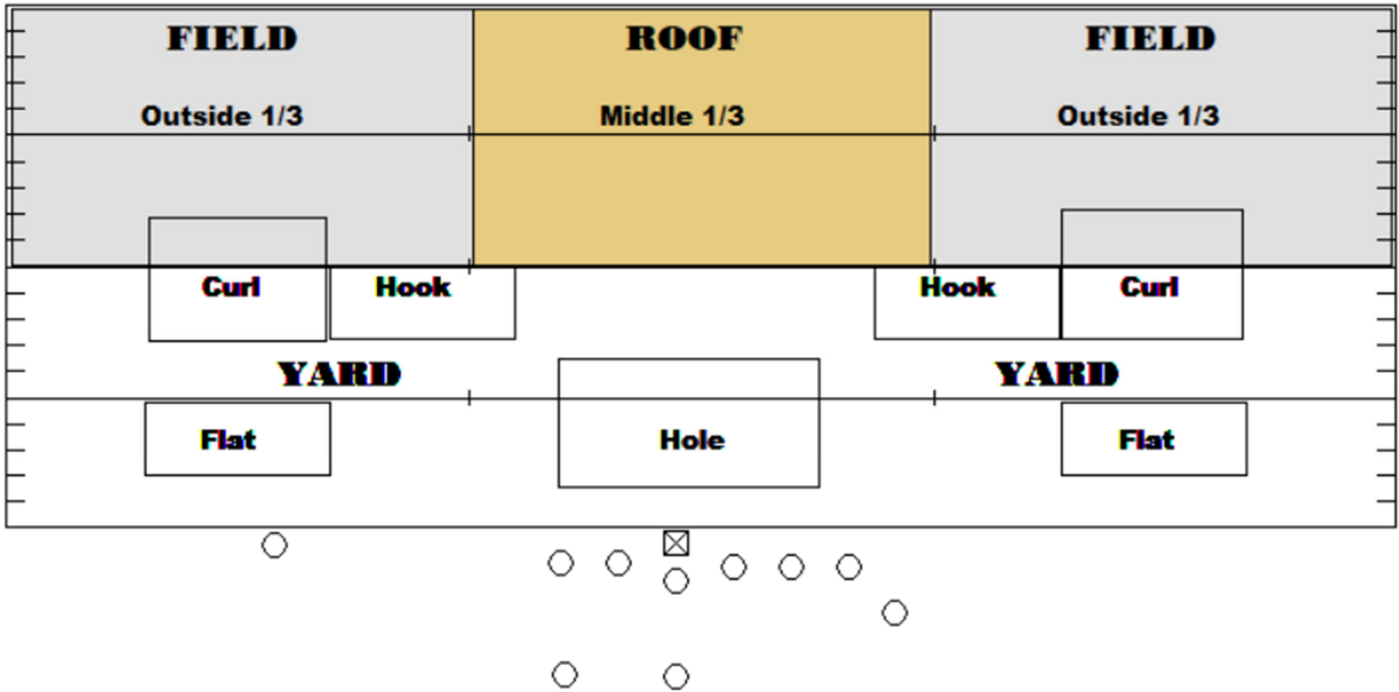
Screen Pass Game: (Called Screens): Two blocking schemes that allow 5 different screens.

Drop Back Pass Game: (60’s): This would be 5-step game if under center.



ZONES AND ROUTES

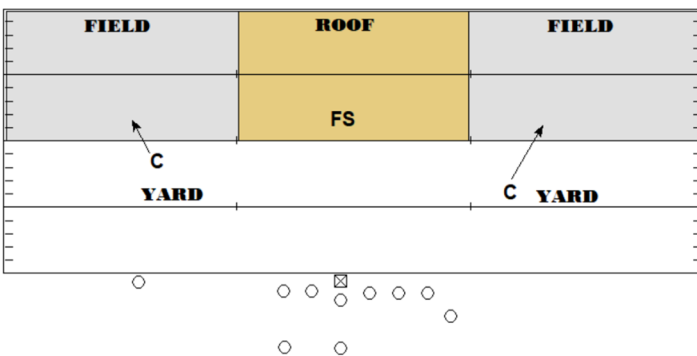
When our QB comes to the line, he tells his teammates how many safeties there are in the snap count. This is how we teach our QB to identify the number of safeties.



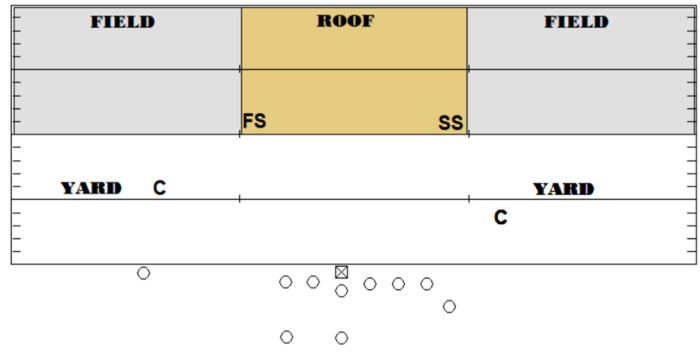
FLAT AREA: From LOS to 10 yards deep. We call that the “YARD”

OUTSIDE THIRD: From 10 yards to the End Zone. Hash to Sideline. We call that “FIELD”

MIDDLE THIRD: From 10 yards to the End Zone. Between the hashes. We call that the “ROOF”



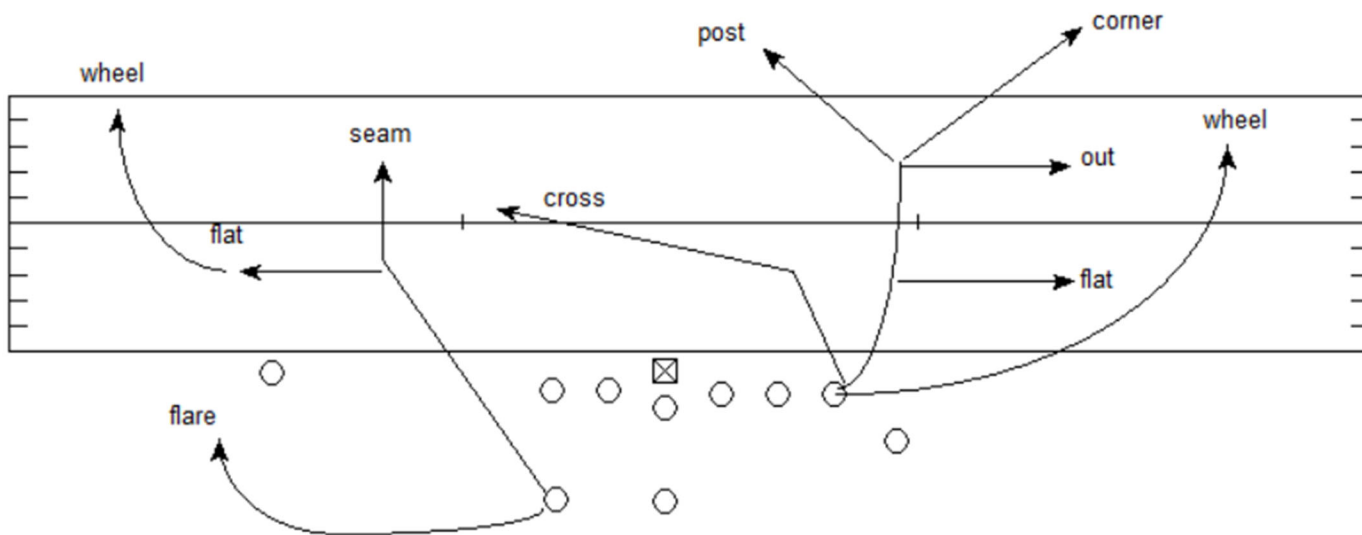
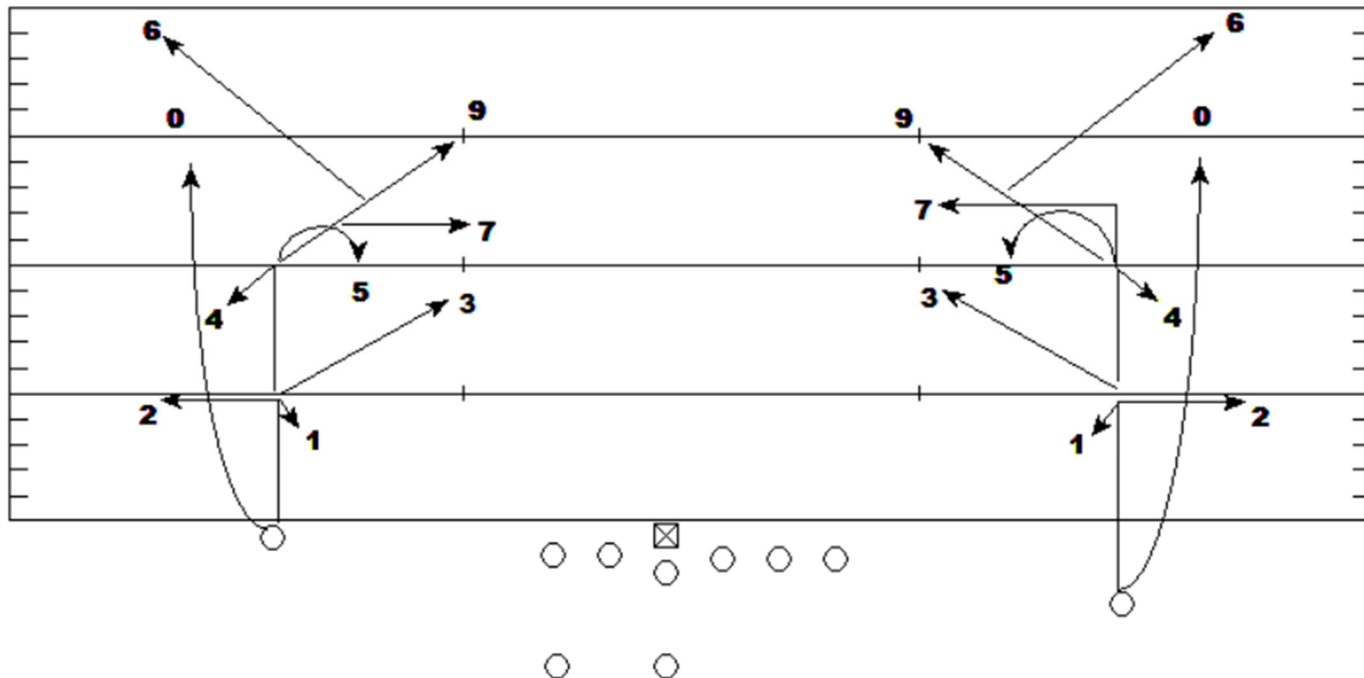
3-DEEP LOOK: 1 on roof. 2 in the Field



2-DEEP LOOK: 2 in the Roof. 2 in the Yard

Another key to coverages is the Corners eyes. If their eyes are on the QB, it is probably a zone coverage. If their eyes are on the receiver then they are probably locked up on that receiver in man.





We do not run all these routes in a season. In fact, some of these routes we have never ran. But we have them in the playbook as a reference because when your offense is truly a “SYSTEM”, you have answers to whatever you need to do.



SPRINT PASS

Our 90 passing game is our sprint out passing game. Sprint out passing forces the defense to defend both the perimeter-run as well as the entire field against a good passing attack. When the QB sprints out, the defense must rotate quickly so that he will not get outside the coverage zones. The secondary rotation often leaves the backside vulnerable to screens and draws.

While having a running QB makes sprint out even more dangerous, all you really need is an athletic QB who can get 5 yards to make the defensive coordinator sweat. Additionally, the QB run threat forces one LineBacker to commit to run and not drop back to a zone. Also, the moving pocket forces the pass rush and coverage to move also.

Sprint out passing lessens the burden on the offensive linemen when it comes to blocking for the pass. The sprinting out foreces the pass rushers to go in one precise direction, and since the blockers know which way the QB is sprinting, then can expect the rushers to charge a specific way. The techniques of pass blocking become greatly simplified, often times the same techniques used in Reach run blocking can also be used in sprint protections.

We like to sprint out vs 8-man fronts that blitz often. Most of the Blitzes will come from the interior and we can handle this much easier with our lack of time to spend on blitz pickup with our indepth running game.

We will almost always go to a SE over unbalanced look (Northern or Southern) to utilize our Sprint Out game.

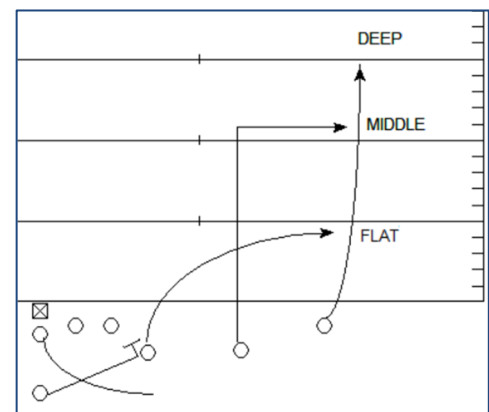
FLOOD

The Flood concept is an attempt to get more receivers in a specific area of the field than the defense has to cover them. We are trying to get a 3 on 2 ratio by getting 3 receivers into 2 zones.

1. The outside receiver runs the deep third or deep half defender out of the play. What cannot happen is we let the outside deep third defender stay in his backpedal because the #1 receiver is not running the route hard enough.
2. The middle or intermediate receiver (#2) finds the “hole” in the coverage at 8 to 12 yards and runs the out pattern.
3. The 3rd receiver (flat receiver) must release quickly to get the width he needs. He wants to be at 4 yards when he reaches the top of his route.

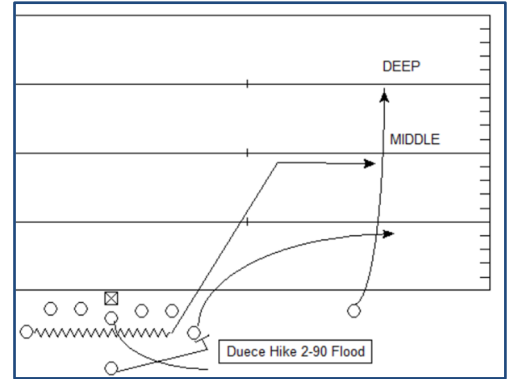
The QB read progression is to look over the top for the deep receiver, then look for the flat defender, and finally look for the Middle Out....since that comes open last.

This is a great route to beat Cover 3 and teams that defend trips with the “Quarter-Quarter-Half concept. We have found the that the middle receiver is always open.



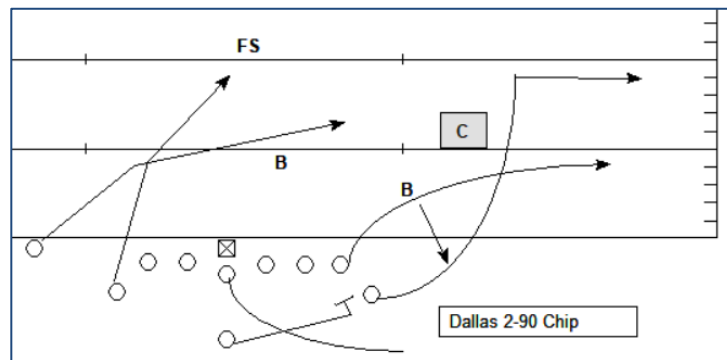
Here is 2-90 Flood in our Duece formation and using speed sweep motion. Remember, any formation starting with the letter “D” means two wings. Since H-I-K-E has four letters, this tells the Halfback to get past the QB before the ball is snapped. If the Z-Back went in motion to the left, we would call that Z-I-N-G motion.

If we tagged this play with “SWITCH”, the motion man would run into the flats and the Z-back would run the 10-yard out.



HIGH LOW

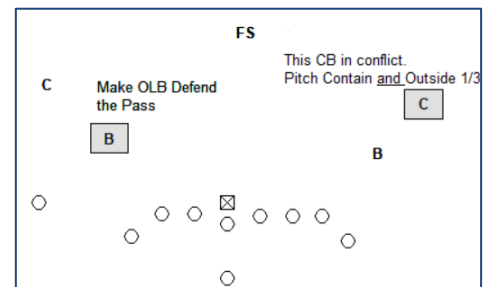
This is the High-Low principle where we have a receiver behind and in front of a defender, putting a vertical stretch on his coverage. In our Sprint Out Vertical concept, we are putting the corner in conflict.



The backside post by the Left Wing holds the safety. The sprint out action by the QB often times forces the Outside Linebacker to come up, ignoring his defensive coaches pleas all week telling him to stay in the flats. This puts the Corner in a bad conflict. Let’s say the OLB is disciplined and goes to the flats like he is supposed to. This means the playside Inside Linebacker has QB. We have our Split End in a “C” (crack) alignment so that he can drag across the field into the area vacated by the Playside ILB, getting almost to the hash when the QB is ready to throw. The Backside ILB is responsible for this crossing route, but his eyes and movement is following the QB, making it impossible to see the crosser coming from his backside.

3-STEP DROPBACK PASS

The 70 passing game is our 3-step passing game and is thrown with timing. When I first became a Head Coach, I determined that we needed to force teams to defend the curl flat area to our split end side. With this understanding we worked very hard at our 3-step game and especially the slant to the split end side. In our system, we run both the Speed Sweep and the inside veer, forcing teams to defend the pitch. The 3-step game gives us answers to aggressive corners who are focused solely on containing the

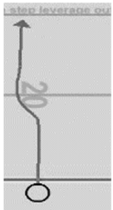


speed sweep and taking away our pitch. The threat of these quick passes creates conflict for the defense and gives us a soft edge to the TE side and as a Wing T team this is what you really want.

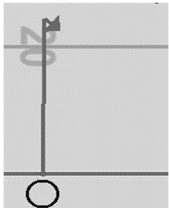
SPLIT END STANCE & ROUTES

We want our SE to always have the same split from the QB for our timing purposes. So if the ball is in the middle of the field we want him aligned at the bottom of the numbers which is 7 yards from the sideline. If the ball is on a hash into the boundary and the SE is to the wide side, we want the SE to be aligned 2 yards outside the far hash. Into the boundary we normally will not throw anything but a Zero or Two route and the SE into the short side will always align at the bottom of the numbers

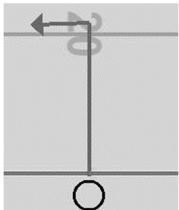
Stance for our SE is his outside foot is always back and we teach all our routes off steps in the 3 step game.



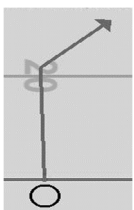
O ROUTE is also called a Fade. We want our receiver to release and work to the outside shoulder of the defender. On the receiver's 4th step we want him to accelerate and work up the bottom of the numbers to allow the Quarterback a place to drop the ball in between the numbers and sideline.



1 ROUTE is also called our Hitch. The wide receiver will step first with his outside foot and when his 5th step hits the ground, he will get his head around and square his shoulders to the Quarterback. When we face a squat corner, we will check the 1 route to a 0 route.

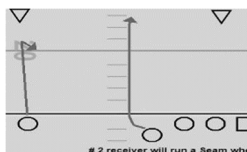


2 ROUTE is also called a Flat. The Split End will again take his first step with his outside foot and on his fourth step he will be on his inside foot. He will break off the inside foot and get his head around immediately. We do not want him to work back downhill.

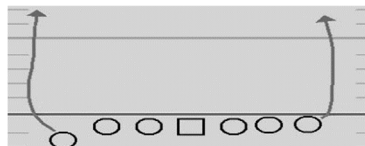


3 ROUTE is also called our Slant: The receiver will break off his 5th step and use a 45-degree angle toward the post. It is important for our timing that he takes all 5 steps. We have found they want to get into a hurry and break on their 3rd step. This makes the QB late and the ball is thrown to far inside.

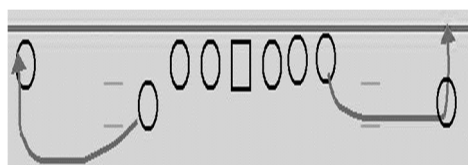




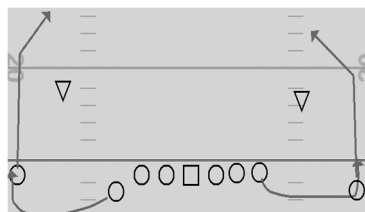
Our # 2 Receiver will normally run the combination route that goes with the outside receiver's route. If the SE or Flanker are running a 0,1,2 route then the number 2 receiver will run our seam route. If the SE or Flanker are running a 3 route, we will run the swing from # 2.



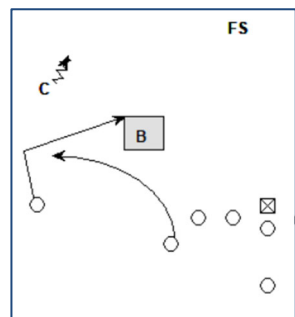
SEAM ROUTE: the # 2 receiver will use an arc release and run up the hash. He needs to get a pre-snap read of the Safety and Linebacker. He needs to be prepared to receive the ball before he reaches a 10-yard depth.



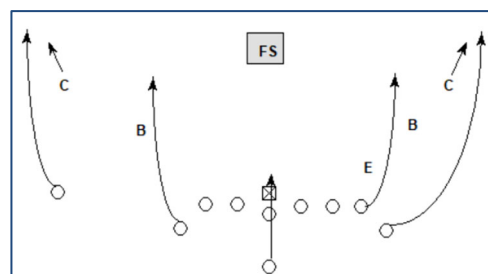
SWING ROUTE: Receiver is taught to lose 2 yards' depth as he runs his swing route. We want him to turn up when he gets to the spot the # 1 receiver is aligned. He should catch the swing at the line of scrimmage headed upfield. This makes sure the ball is thrown in front of the QB and is a much easier ball to catch.



2-73 SWING with a swing by number 2. We sometimes will run a swing with a 0 route if we know the corner is running off with a fade route.



2-73 ARROW puts the OLB in conflict. Usually he runs with the Wing to the flats and the QB has to throw a 90 mph fastball into the hole that develops between the vacating OLB and either the safety or ILB who is coming in that direction. If we run this and the CB jumps the flats so that the OLB can sit on the slant, then we come back with a wheel by the Wing.



VERTICALS puts the Free Safety in conflict, especially when everyone is crowding the box. If the OLB are only 3 yds off the LOS and the safety is sitting at 8 yards, we will run this concept, sometimes with the FB faking midline to freeze the ILB. Basically the TE and the Left Wing widen to the hash marks and run past the OLB. The QB looks at the TE to draw the Free Safety over,

then turns and zips another 90 mph fastball at the Left Wing at around 10-12 yards.

QB TECHNIQUES: We will 3-step drop and want the ball coming out as quickly as possible when the 3 step hits the ground. We will drop into the A Gap to the side throw the ball. Our thoughts are as the QB takes his first step the receiver is taking his first step. Same for second and 3rd step. As the receiver is taking step 4 QB should be releasing the ball. As receiver takes his 5th step he will snap head around and ball should be at least 1/2 way o receiver.



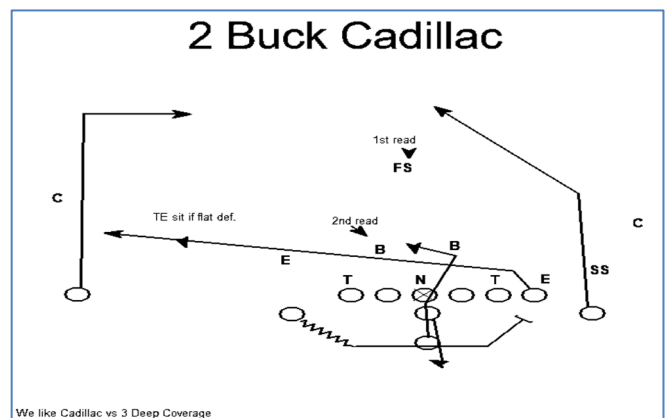
5-STEP DROPBACK PASS

CADILLAC

The next thing I want to get into is something that's not Wing-T, but it has been phenomenal for us. Years ago, we were sitting in a Glazier Clinic down in Florida, or Atlanta, and Florida State was there speaking. They were the Sprint Draw passing team back then and they ran what they call 344 Cadillac. The Cadillac for them was what other people started calling the universal route. It's the shallow cross by the Tight End, deep dig by the Split End with a post down in the middle of the field. I really, really, really loved the concept, but I wanted to find a way to put it into our Wing-T offense, because about every pass that we throw, the Quarterback is always sprinting out. We did not have a straight drop-back pass in our offense, where it was a pocket pass, we were not rolling the secondary. So what we did was we simply came up with the Cadillac out of our Wing-T system and this for us is 60 protection.

Here are your routes, Split End we would like to run a 14-yard dig.

Florida State ran a 16, our receivers are not as fast as Florida State and my Quarterback doesn't have as good of an arm, so we have found that 14 for us is good. The Split End, you always align on the numbers whenever we run the Cadillac. If this ball is completed, it should be completed right on the hash mark.



Tight end you are running a shallow drag. This is the most important thing about this. You must be underneath the Will backer. If you're running deeper than the Will backer, the play will not execute properly. If you'll release, and you're never going to get deeper than five-yards deep, but you must go underneath the Willie. As you start across the field, you need to look and determine, is there a flat defender? If there is a flat defender, squat the route. Your job is to hook up right between the Outside Linebacker and the corner. So, as I'm running my crossing route, I'm not catching the ball in among the linebackers. As I am running back crossing route, if there is no flat defender, keep running. As I am running my crossing route, if the flat defender is squatting, I'm going to go halfway and turn and hook up.

Wingback your job is to run a post right down the middle of the field. My Quarterback is told when I come out of my Bucksweep fake, as I am hand faking, I want my head around right now, eyeing the Free Safety.

Here comes the Bucksweep action, head around, and from here we do not teach a seven-step drop, but we teach three-step drop. So from here, its 1, 2, 3 step drop, which he's taught in his quick passing game. That is going to put him at seven yards deep, right behind the Center. We tell him, as soon as you hand fake, to get your head around to the Free Safety. If the Free Safety is downhill at all, throw the post deep over his head right now.

Everybody because of our run game, they are trying to get these DBs involved in the run game. We believe, even if we missed that post route over the top, as soon as that DB goes to the sideline, the DB coach is going tell him, "Son you



can't let people behind you". Now we put him in conflict. Now he's in his backpedal, he's not getting involved in the run game. That is a shot worth taking to keep that guy out of your run game.

Now, as the Quarterback snaps his head, if the Free Safety starts to backpedal, we now coach our Quarterback to read the Will backer. The Will backer is threatening to get under the dig, you're throwing to the Tight End. If the Willie backer is chasing the Tight End, the window is open to throw the dig, it's pretty simple. Free safety to Will backer.

The one that is always open is the Fullback on the check down. As I step to the blitz, if there is no blitz, I check down over the football six yards deep. That's been a really good play for us, but it is a cover three beater. It is not a great cover two beater. It's for cover three and it gives us a different launch point.

CADILLAC COVER 2 BEATER

That was a great cover three beater, but we need a cover two beater. We still like the Cadillac concept, the 60 protection, and the straight drop back for our Quarterback.

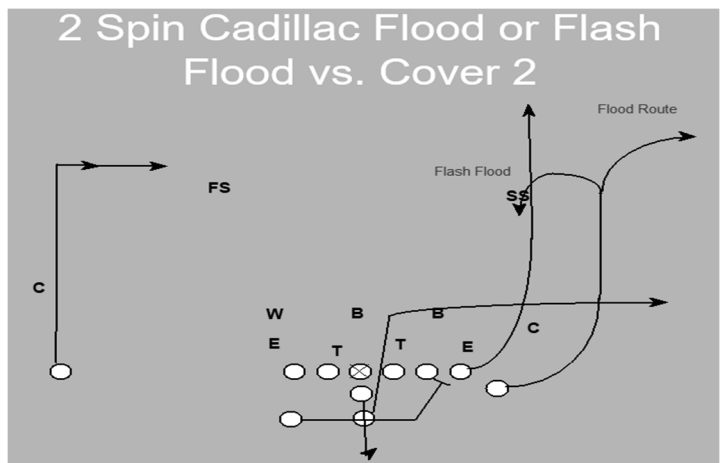
This has been a really, really, really great concept for us versus cover two. So now what we've gotten into is I'll call in a huddle, 2 Buck Cadillac or 2 Spin Cadillac at the line. The Quarterback comes up, and there's a one high safety, its cover three. He says "three" so we run the route I just had up before. The or shallow cross with the deep dig, that's the cover three beater.

If it's cover two, we go to 2 Spin Cadillac Flood. This is the route, 60 protection 2 Spin. All spin means is the Fullback comes to play side, just like he does on the bootleg. It is a cover two route beater.

The Tight End, on the boot we always forced an inside release. Why did you force an inside release? Because you want the 9-technique to close. On the Cadillac Flood, we want you to force an outside release to make the Outside Linebacker widen the player's reach. It might take him a lot longer to get back inside on his pass rush.

The Wingback, this is huge. The Wingback has to arc. He needs to be, when the Tight End is at six yards deep the Wingback needs to be at three. We need this stagger between the Tight End and the Wing. When I get to 14, I'm going to bend it into the boundary and catch the football at 18 yards deep. The Backside Split End, because it's Cadillac, you still run the dig.

This is what we're working off of. We kind of fell into this over the years throwing a lot of 7 on 7s with one of my buddies. They got to playing a bunch of cover two shell against us, and they were able to rob, anytime a Quarterback dropped straight back, man they were squatting that backfield, half field safety, trying to rob our dig. So it forced us into some answers. So, we started coming out and running strong side. So here was the deal. The Fullback's in the flats. We do it with him offset in Pro, and we do it with him in Empty.



So, what you've got is the arc release and the Quarterback now simply has to read the half field safety. He's got number two running vertically right up the hash. What's he going to do? He's going to stay in his backpedal right on the hash. The corner now you got a 14 to 18 bend and the Fullback in the flats at five. So if the half field safety stays on the hash, you high low the corner right here.

So we were wearing my buddy out with this every time he got in cover two. So, then he got smart. Quarterback is reading the corner, the Wingback is keeping outside leverage, and the corner is running with him. Tight End is sitting on the hash, and they are asking their linebacker to play quarters and absorb the Fullback in the flat. So, what we get into is if we know you're playing quarters, now instead of running Flood, we call 2 Spin Cadillac Flash Flood. The Flash means when the Wingback gets to 14, instead of breaking to the flag, where's the quarter's leverage if they're playing quarters? He is outside leverage. Where's the linebacker going? He's chasing the Fullback in the flat. So if we know we're getting quarters coverage, we want to run a Flash Flood when the Wingback hits it at 14, I'm going to be in the back inside to replace the linebacker, that's chasing our Fullback in the flats. These two concepts are easy concepts to add to your Wing-T. It gives you a different launch point.

The flag and out with the seam is a two beater. The deep in by the Wingback is a quarter's beater. The regular Cadillac is a cover three beater. Figure out what teams are playing against and take those concepts into your game. Don't try to do too much. If you're a Wing-T football team, you're not spending hours on protection, you're spending hours on running the football. Don't let people start getting all their secondary involved. There are a lot of big plays in the passing game, and there are a lot of plays to be made.

I hope you got something out of this. I've enjoyed sharing some of our thoughts and ideas. Add the Cadillac to your Wing-T, add the ends cross to your red-zone package, it will pay dividends for you

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