
1st EDITION

Under Center

Wing-T

MANUAL

From Film Room to Game Night

by

Roger Holmes

Expanded from original Herschel Moore System



ABOUT COACH HOLMES

Coach Holmes has been a Head Football Coach for 29 years—the past 19 years at Dublin High School, Georgia. He has won 171 games with 9 Region Championships, 2 State Championships, and 1 State Runnerup with the Fighting Irish. Before coming to Georgia, Coach Holmes had won 73 games in eleven years at Beech High School, Tennessee.

His overall football record as head coach is 244-110-1.

- ◆ STATE COACH OF THE YEAR in both Tennessee (1995) and Georgia (2002, 2006, & 2019)
- ◆ Georgia Athletic Coaches Association COACH-OF-THE-YEAR in 2002, 2005, & 2006 & 2019
- ◆ Georgia Record for most points scored in a regular season in 2005 (549)
- ◆ Georgia Record for points scored in a full season in 2006 (682).
- ◆ 3rd in nation in Team Rushing, falling 70 yards short from the top spot
- ◆ Scored 693 points during the 2019 state championship season.

Holmes also serves as the athletic director which gives him a broader perspective of sports. Coach Holmes has been a National Wing-T Speaker of the Glazier Clinics, speaking at over 20 clinics.



ABOUT THIS BOOK

This manual is a systematic way to teach the Wing T Offense based on the system developed by college coach and Tennessee Hall-of-Famer Herschel Moore. Coach Moore modified the Delaware WingT system to have multiple blocking variations and to take advantage of a defense no matter how they lined up. Moore is also credited for developing the Jet Sweep and making it a staple of high school and college offenses east of the Mississippi River. Holmes understood that Tubby Raymond and Ted Kempinski themselves went to Moore to learn about the Jet and Rocket sweeps.

Most teams run Delaware's Wing-T by the book, with only 3-4 basic series, never jumping into unbalanced formations, and always using the same blocking schemes. Traditional Wing-T teams also do not pass the ball often.

Roger Holmes has expanded Moore's two tight end offense to use more wide receivers and pass the ball more. Holmes also added the midline and the veer and loves using unbalanced formations. Coach Holmes philosophy is to quickly identify whether your QB is a runner or a passer. The Holmes system has the ability to pass the ball more the years you have a QB who can throw, or run an expanded option game the years your QB is a runner.

FOUNDATION & FRAMEWORK

The evolution of the system and friendship of Moore and Holmes start off this section. It is important to learn the roots of any system in order to truly understand the "why" behind the play calls and drills. Holmes then gives you detailed descriptions of the type of player he looks for in each position before going thru all the formations, shifts, & trades that have been the key to Holmes setting multiple Georgia scoring records and having the 3rd leading rushing team in the nation.

RUN GAME

Every traditional Wing-T family is covered in this section: Buck; Belly; Down, Counter & Power. There is also Midline and Veer for the years you have a running QB and the games when there is a D-Lineman you cannot block. The Jet & Rocket section shows how to attack the edges and spread the defense out.



PASS GAME

While I believe that the Wing-T offense is the best high school offense, I also agree with the criticism that it can lack a passing game. But it is not the Wing-T system that lacks a passing attack, it is the coaches that are refusing or not understanding how to pass.

This book has a complete Pass Section showing you how to attack each coverage. Holmes' play action pass game is much more expansive than most Wing-T offenses and his use of 3-step and sprint out only further opens up the running game. His simple pass protection schemes are easy to install in practices that devote the majority of the time to the running game.

- ◆ PASS PROTECTION schemes that require very little practice time;
- ◆ QUICK passing game that gives your athletes the ball in space;
- ◆ SPRINT OUT off Jet motion putting edge defenders in conflict with the QB run threat.

DRILLS & PRACTICE

You can have the most complete, well thought out offensive system that football has ever seen and none of it will matter if YOU CAN'T TEACH IT TO YOUR PLAYERS!!!

“The scariest offense is the one that practices 1 play a thousand times instead of practicing 1,000 plays only ONE TIME”

them in, but rep them enough times to be really good at running them. This requires a very organized coaching staff who can “coach on the fly” and run practices at high tempos. It also requires “MASS TEACHING” where players are constantly getting reps and not standing in lines.

GAME PLANNING and SCOUTING

- ◆ Detailed explanations of what to look for when watching opponent's film.
- ◆ Flow charts of “If-Then” statements using plays that are most effective vs defenses.
- ◆ How to call the plays on Friday night so that the defense is in conflict.

Every year the job boards are littered with jobs because head coaches are fired because they couldn't get the players to buy in, but more importantly they couldn't surround themselves with good assistant coaches. Roger Holmes has been doing this for more than 30 years and as AD, has hired and mentored hundreds of coaches in multiple sports.

Learn from Holmes on how to find and train coaches. Holmes shows you how he delegates year-round duties for every coach, including the in-season tasks during weekend film break down to Friday night assignments.



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INTRODUCTION

My time as a Wing-T Coach actually began as a player. The year was 1976, and I was a sophomore starting quarterback at Westmoreland High School in Tennessee. Our team had begun the year losing 2 of our first 3 games. Looking at a 1-2 record, our head coach, Clester Winningham, was looking for an answer. As a current head coach, I know how he felt! Coach Winningham had talks with one of his assistant coaches, Terry Herndon, about what they might do to spice up the offense. Coach Herndon, who eventually became Westmoreland's head coach my junior and senior years, suggested that they go talk with Coach David Martin about learning the Wing-T offense.

The coaches got together and devised a plan to implement the basics of the Wing-T offense during our open date week. We installed the Buck series, the Down series, and a Counter Dive. After installing the Wing-T, our team found new life. We went on to win 17 games in a row. I still remember being told that the film man of our biggest rival made the comment that he shot the worst film he ever had during our game because he "had no idea where the ball was!" This was the ultimate compliment for a Wing-T quarterback.

Over the next 2 years, our team added more wrinkles to our Wing-T offense which would lead to great success. In 1977, our team would reach the state semifinals and multiple players received All-State honors. As the quarterback, I was fortunate to be named the Nashville Banner's Class A Player of the Year. Westmoreland High School still runs the Wing-T to this day, and I think I'm correct in saying that they have only had two seasons below .500 since then.

A future Wing-T coach was being developed.

After leaving Westmoreland, I became a walk-on at Middle Tennessee State University where Coach James "Boots" Donnelly had just taken over as the head coach of a struggling program. With talent below par, Coach Donnelly added some elements of the Wing-T to his offense to hopefully help our team win. I experienced just how well it was working as a defensive back on the scout team. There were many days where I got to spend a full practice setting the edge against our pulling guards as they worked on Buck Sweep pulls. I think it's safe to say my appreciation for having an offensive lineman blocking a DB grew A LOT during this time.

Since I was on the scout team at Middle, I didn't get to dress for games, and I was asked by my old high school head coach, Terry Herndon, to go scout games for him on Friday nights. I enjoyed this experience. It allowed me to deliver my report to him each Saturday, and I was able to share my thoughts with his staff on what I saw. Through this experience, I learned a lot about how to evaluate opponents and what things to look for when scouting them.

After graduating from MTSU, I was given the opportunity to return to Westmoreland High School to begin my coaching career. Being familiar with the Wing-T system in place, I was able to really get my feet on the ground as a coach. We ran Delaware's Wing-T's system by the book, and I learned a great deal about coaching in this offense while back home.



I made the decision to leave Westmoreland for Beech High School in Hendersonville, Tennessee to work for Coach Herschel Moore, a man known around the county as one of the fathers of the Wing-T offense. Coach Moore had modified Delaware's Wing-T system into his own system that would allow the opportunity to have multiple blocking variations for each play in the Wing-T. He had found a way to take advantage of a defense no matter how they lined up. I would work for Coach Moore as his defensive coordinator and his offensive backfield coach for 6 seasons.

During my time with Coach Moore, we would meet to talk ball every morning at 7 AM. We talked about all types of topics related to schemes used on both the offensive and defensive side of the football. The one conversation that sticks with me to this day was when Coach Moore and I talked about his time running the Split-Back Veer. Coach Moore was giving me all the things he learned about the offense before he dropped a line on me that I never forgot:

“You know Roger..... I was the first coach in Metro-Nashville to run the Split-Back Veer....and I was the first coach to get fired running it too.”

Coach Moore explained to me that, even though the idea of the offense was phenomenal, the offense didn't allow for him to make necessary in-game adjustments in time to take advantage of the opportunities given to him by opposing defenses.

Don't get me wrong, there were things that I wanted to do differently from Coach Moore. I think we all feel that way as an assistant. For example, I wanted to use a split end, and Coach Moore always wanted 2 Tes or an unbalanced set. I would go to Coach with all of the reasons why we could use a split end, and he would say “That'll hurt our counter criss-cross.”

One day I remember going to Coach and telling him that I thought we had too much in the offense, and that I thought we should narrow the playbook. He just smiled, looked at me, and said, “Roger, these plays are like my sons. Which one do you want me to get rid of?”

When Coach Moore resigned from his post as Head Coach, I was fortunate enough to be named as the Head Coach at Beech High School. Coach Moore had planned to leave to take another job, but that job fell through, and I actually brought him back to work as one of my assistants. One lesson I think all prospective head coaches should know is to always hire the highest quality assistants you can even if you don't have “their position” open. Coach Moore's mind was one that I just couldn't let go.

Coach Moore left after that season to become the Offensive Coordinator at Cumberland University and would be named their Head Coach after one season. His offenses were annually ranked at the top of the nation's rushing yardage. Twice his offense would go on to lead the nation in rushing.

One of my best friends, and one of the best coaches I know, is Clint Satterfield from Trousdale County High School in Hartsville, Tennessee. Clint and I made an agreement early in our coaching careers that the coach who got



eliminated from the playoffs first would go to work for the other until they were eliminated. Clint's teams won five state championships during his time as the head coach at Trousdale County. I think you can guess who worked for who more.

Coach Satterfield's teams used many elements of the Wing-T alongside with the inside veer and the midline option. Over time, they would adopt much of our unbalanced formation philosophy, and we would adopt their option philosophy into our identity.

I think the thing I learned the most from my time with Clint came during a year where his team was facing a Split 4 defense in the State Championship game. A lot of the things in our offensive were similar, but the numbering system and the play calls were different. I was working in the press box for Clint, and I wanted to make sure I was doing a good job. In order to properly adapt to his verbiage and system, I drew formation cards for his entire playbook, and I started looking at how they could attack different fronts. I studied each card, and I made a list of which calls I would make if I were facing the front. I put his play call next to each of these plays, and I used these cards to efficiently communicate what I saw to him on game day. To this day, I still use this tactic when doing my own game planning, and it serves as the basis for my "Game Planning in the Wing-T" lecture given around the country each year.

I worked at Beech for 17 years and the last 11 were as the Head Football Coach. We won the first Region Championship in Beech History in the Largest Classification and made it to the State Semi-Finals. The school record was below .500 when I took over and we got it above that mark as I left with a record of 73-49.

In 2002, I left Beech High School to take the head coaching position at Dublin High School in Dublin, GA. I left for 3 main reasons:

- 1) Teaching and coaching salaries are much higher in Georgia than Tennessee
- 2) Georgia had the HOPE scholarship (that both of my children eventually received) whereas Tennessee did not
- 3) You can't get boiled peanuts in Tennessee. (Just Kidding)

Dublin had a long tradition as a good program that had won 3 previous state championships in 1959, 1960, and 1963, but the Dublin I inherited was in disarray. They had just fired the coach who was the winningest in school history after 12 years at the helm, and they hadn't won a playoff game in 6 years. Believe it or not, I wasn't the first replacement they hired. They hired a coach from Florida in the spring. On the 3rd day of Spring Practice, he had 11 players show up. The next morning, he went into the principal's office, laid his keys on the desk, and went back to Florida. Dublin reopened the position, and I applied for the job. I was asked to come for an interview in June.

I drove the long trek down to Middle Georgia. I made it to town about 2 hours or so before the interview, and I rode around town to scope out the area. Eventually, I pulled up to a beautiful stadium, The Shamrock Bowl, which was bigger than most I would see in Tennessee.



I hopped out of the car and walked into the stadium to which I found a man, his daughter, and some boys that I assumed were players. The boys were sitting next to a trailer taking a break. The man painting saw my shirt and tie and started to ask a few questions.

“You down here to interview for the job?”

“Yes sir I am.”

“Where ya from?”

“Tennessee.”

“I didn’t know they played football up there. You win any games?”

“Maybe, more than our share.”

“Well, what kinda offense do ya run?”

“Wing-T”

There were no more questions. Just a comment:

“Well then you might as well get in your car and go back north, because you can’t run that down here.”

After that warm welcome to town, I rode around, just checking it out, and I eventually made it over to the board office to interview with the superintendent, Mickey Shuber. I’d been through my fair share of interviews, but this was a first. I’d never been interviewed by the superintendent before. I asked Dr. Shuber, “So, why am I interviewing with you and not the principal?” His reply was the main reason I was sold on the idea that we could eventually be successful in Dublin.

“Well Roger, when we made the change, there were some who were in favor and some who were not. You know, we hired the guy from Florida, and he split after a few weeks.” He took a deep breath, looked me right in the eye, and said, “Coach, if I don’t get it right, it’s not only going to get the new coach fired, but I’m going to be fired right behind him. I’m the one making this choice.”

We talked a little longer and then I asked him, “Who’s that man out there painting the press box?”

“That will be one of your assistant coaches.”

I immediately thought there was no way in hell that was possible. I asked, “Do I have to keep him?”

“No, but you won’t be able to bring anyone else in this year. It’s too late. Everyone’s already signed their contracts.”



I never spoke a word to the Coach about our first encounter until our Saturday morning staff meeting after our quarter-final win versus Cedartown.

“Hey Coach.... You still think we can’t run the Wing-T down here?”

“Ahhhhh hell, I knew that was coming up at some point. I didn’t think we’d run it like you do. I thought we’d run three basic series, and just be vanilla as can be.”

That season, we finished 14-1 with our only loss coming in the state championship game. We never had a full team before August 1st. We installed a completely new offense, defense, and special teams and made it to the State Championship game. To this day, I think this is one of my most impressive coaching jobs.

I think the main reason why we were instantly successful in Georgia goes back to exactly what the coach told me. Every team running the Wing-T in Georgia did it the same way. They ran Delaware’s Wing-T by the book, they ran 3-4 basic series, they never jumped into unbalanced formations, and they always used the same blocking schemes.

We’ve had good fortune since coming to Georgia. We’ve captured two State Championships in 2006 and 2019 and one State Runner-up in 2002. We’ve had 5 state semi-final appearances, and we’ve won 8 region championships.

In 2005, we scored 549 points in 10 games to set the state regular season scoring record. (We only let up 3 points the entire season in the process.) In 2006, we’d go on to break the complete season scoring record by tallying 682 points in 15 games.

This past season, 2019, our team was able to capture Dublin High School’s 5th state championship. In the process, we ran for over 6000 yards and scored 693 points. According to MaxPreps, we finished 3rd in the nation in Team Rushing Yards, falling 70 yards short from the top spot. I’d like to make the note that we were leading 21-0 at the end of the 1st quarter during our season’s first game. This game was eventually stopped due to lightning. Had the game continued, we more than likely would have ended the season at the top spot.

