

THE AL-RAID OFFENSE

A Complete Guide on How to Spread and Shred
Defenses in NCAA Football 06



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Table of Contents:

[Disclaimer & Copyright](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Section 1: Philosophy](#)

[Section 2: Quarterback 101](#)

[Section 3: Playbook](#)

[Section 4: Strategy](#)

[Section 5: Recruiting](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[Resources](#)

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Introduction

I have been playing NCAA Football 06 ever since its debut back in the summer of 2005.

Since then, my passion for this game hasn't changed.

Like a fine wine, NCAA Football 06 only gets better with age.

Part of the reason for this lingering passion is my love of learning and studying real life football playbooks and all of their diversities.

I enjoy trying to implement various offense and defensive systems into NCAA 06.

It makes me feel like a real coach with a purpose behind every decision I make.

One of those systems that I hold near and dear to my heart is my version of the Air Raid Offense.

I call it the Al-Raid Offense.

This book focuses on this offense and all of its hidden gems.

Maybe you have always been a Pro Style guy or maybe you just didn't have the know-how to implement a system around throwing the ball all over the field.

It has taken me years to put this offense together into what I believe is the complete guide for executing the offense in NCAA Football 06.

...even Heisman difficulty.

In this book you will find my overall philosophy of the offense which includes why I enjoy this offense so much along with the purpose for wanting to throw the football a lot, but with sophistication.

I go into great detail on how to play quarterback properly since this position is the key that makes everything work.

This book will cover 30 plays that are designed to shred defenses.

Using my progression read system, you will be able to pick apart defenses like never before.

I also cover how to put a game plan together with enough detail so that every time you step on the field, you will be prepared for success.

Also included is a detailed guide on how to recruit to this system and know what type of players you need to thrive in this offense.

There is also a Resources section that will give all the necessary charts and information you need at your disposal.

Finally, the theme of this offense is “repetition”.

The key to this offense is through Practice Mode.

By repeating the same steps and reads over and over again for any given play, your mental muscle memory will take over.

This leads to less thinking and having more fun simply by playing the game.

I will teach you how to practice and how to fall in love with not only Practice Mode, but practicing the same plays over and over again without getting bored.

So let’s have some fun as I teach you one of my favorite offenses to execute...

The Al-Raid Offense!

Section 1:

Philosophy

Philosophy

The original Air Raid Offense dates back to the late 1980s when Hal Mumme and Mike Leach began creating passing concepts that would now be sprinkled across the many playbooks of today.

Mumme and Leach got their base of plays from the LaVell Edwards Offense at BYU when the Cougars were lighting up scoreboards with the likes of Ty Detmer and Jim McMahon in the early 80s.

Mumme and Leach put their own spin on the offense by putting their quarterback in the shotgun, adding more receivers to the field, and maximizing the usefulness of the passing game.

Concepts such as Stick, Smash, Mesh, and Y-Cross are now the foundation of not only offshoots of the system but in other passing philosophies as well.

Unfortunately, these concepts are rarely seen in NCAA Football 06.

That's okay because it is not the concepts themselves that make up the offense, but the style and attitude behind them which is what we are going for.

I wanted to create my own version of the Air Raid but also adhere to the ideas Mumme and Leach used to make the system successful.

I believe I have done that... in spades!

Today, there are several different spins on the Air Raid.

My favorite version is Mike Leach's take on the offense.

Hal Mumme may have been the father of the Air Raid Offense, but Mike Leach is the man who made the offense what it is today.

In his 15+ years of being a college head coach at the highest level, Leach has used the same tenants along the way and his success with the offense has been undeniable.

My version of the Air Raid closely matches Leach's way of thinking.

Even though our offenses are close in spirit, I want to give you my way of throwing the football.

Below are my Five Basics of the Air Raid Offense.

1. Passing, Passing, and More Passing

The overriding philosophy of this offense is for your short passing game to (mostly) substitute for your running game.

We want our skill players to get the ball quickly and to make magic happen after the catch.

This does not mean that I never run the ball.

I just pick my spots and make a defense pay for leaving the running game so wide open.

2. Attack All Areas of the Field

The plays we will be using are designed to attack multiple areas of the field, sometimes at once.

These plays are designed that as long as you make the correct read, the defense will be wrong every time.

I want built-in answers for every play.

Blitz beaters and Cover 0 beaters will be the norm.

And yes, the running game can and will be a major weapon.

3. Formations and Personnel

Like all Air Raid variants, I only use shotgun formations (excluding goal line situations, more on that later).

I like to spread the field with receivers and create space for their skills to come alive.

I want my QB away from the line of scrimmage so he has more time to throw the ball.

And because I want to attack multiple areas of the field at the same time, I like to simplify my personnel groupings.

For this offense, there are only two personnel groupings: 3 and 4-wide personnel.

Mike Leach does not use tight ends with their hand in the dirt and neither do I.

Tight ends are fine to recruit, but they are treated as receivers (and some as extra offensive linemen; refer to the Recruiting section).

All you need in this offense are wide receivers and half-backs who can catch the ball.

“Pitch and catch, pitch and catch, pitch and catch” is the name of the game.

Leach doesn’t even use 5-wide sets.

I rarely use Gun 5-Wide but there is nothing wrong with adding it to your playbook.

To get from one end of the field to the other, I only use four formations

- Gun 2-Back Slot
- Gun Spread
- Gun Trips
- Gun Bunch

Even though Leach likes to use many formations, he really only uses these four.

For this offense, we only need a 1x2, 2x2, 1x3, and a bunch set.

Trust me, there are plenty of plays to go around between those four formations.

This leaves you five slots in your playbook to add your own extra spin to the offense.

4. Concepts

Speaking of plays, the AI-Raid Offense is built around the idea of simplifying an offense.

The real version of this offense only uses a handful of plays.

My offense is no different.

This offense will contain around 30 plays.

BUT...

You will not need all 30 plays for every game you play.

I have played many games where I used the same six plays over and over again.

You will at times be doing the same thing.

This could be due to your current roster limitation.

Or it could be due to the fact that the defense could not stop those six concepts, so why add more?

If a defense can't stop your set of plays, then you punish them for it by running the same thing until they adjust.

5. Repetition and Fun

The secret to this offense is repetition.

By practicing the cadences and progressions, you will be able run this offense in your sleep.

Practice Mode is the Al-Raid's best friend.

This offense is a system of steps.

Using the steps over and over again lead to habits.

Using the same habits over and over again leads to less thinking.

By the time you nail down even the basics of this offense, you won't be thinking...

You'll simply be playing football.

...And having fun doing it!

That is why we still play NCAA Football games.

Because it's fun!

The Air Raid Offense is fun.

My version of the Air Raid is fun.

Throwing the football around the yard is fun.

This is backyard football at its finest.

When you played football in the backyard with your friends, did you line up in the I-Formation and handed the ball off?

NO!

Everyone split out wide and you threw the ball the whole time which is what we are doing here.

So hang on to your hats.

Before you learn the basics of this offense...

I need to teach you how to play quarterback!

Section 2:

Quarterback 101

Quarterback play is everything in this offense.

You need to think like a quarterback.

You need to act like a quarterback.

I think in order for you to truly thrive in this offense, I need to show you how to play quarterback properly in NCAA Football 06.

The cool thing is that what I am about to teach you directly relates to all of my other offenses.

You are the coach when you call the plays.

But you should be in quarterback mode once you break the huddle.

Every play should be treated the same way in terms of the steps you make to have a successful down.

Here are the five steps you should use (in order) to gather the information you need to make successful throws and plays.

Here we go...

Step 1: Read the Right Cornerback for MAN or ZONE Identification

As soon as you break the huddle, look at the right Cornerback's movement.

- If he runs hard to his spot – MAN
- If he faces you and shuffles his feet to his spot – ZONE

I want you to read him instead of the left Cornerback (the defenses #1 Corner) because there are a few plays where the defense is in ZONE but the left CB runs to his spot making it look like they are in Man.

However, he is actually blitzing.

There is not one play in the game where the right CB blitzes on a Zone play so he is your most trusted tell.

Once you get in the habit of reading the right CB, you can start reading both at the same time and you'll know exactly what they are trying to do.

Step 2: Count the Box and Read the Shifts of the Defensive Line and Linebackers

This will help you determine whether to run the ball or not (more on this in the Strategy section).

This will also help you determine where to slowly move in the pocket to avoid pressure.

If the defense shifts left then it is usually best to slowly move to the right side, and vice versa.

If the Line spreads out then it is usually best to move up a little in the pocket.

All of this is situational since we don't know how both lines will react once the ball is snapped but the general idea is simply move away from the most obvious pressure.

I will go over pocket presence later on.

Step 3: Watch for Safety Movement If the Defense Is In Man

If the defense is in Man, sometimes one or both Safeties might have to cover one of your receivers.

If that is the case, you will see the safety run over to cover that receiver.

This will tell you that defense is in Cover 1 or Cover 0.

The defense has made the mistake of giving you this information that you can use against them.

Making a habit of seeing where the Safeties move is invaluable and they must pay for it.

Don't worry about reading the Safeties against Zone, even if one of them blitzes on a Zone play, it takes them a while to get to your QB and by then (especially with this offense) you have the ball out of your hand.

Step 4: Snap the Ball

Step 5: Go Through Your Progressions

This step will be covered in the "Playbook" section.

-

These five simple steps should be ingrained into your memory.

Repetition will lead to your success with this offense so the quicker you can turn these steps into a habit, the better.

Pocket Presence

In all my years of running this offense, I have always been in the top five in the nation in terms of the least sacks given up.

A lot of this has to do with this offense's philosophy of getting the ball out of your QBs hands on a quick and consistent basis.

But if you have played NCAA Football 06 enough, you know how nasty defenses can be in terms of bringing tons of pressure.

Some defense's strategy will be to drop seven or eight defenders and let you pick them apart.

However, most defenses in general are going to do whatever it takes to bury your QB in the ground.

Because of this, it helps to know how to keep your QB alive and healthy throughout the season.

The first mistake that players make when playing football games is to backpedal their QB as soon as the ball is snapped.

Before you know it your QB is 15 yards behind the line and you are only making things harder for yourself.

Besides a defender coming right through or around the line, you should never have to move more than a yard or two away from your original spot, especially since all of your snaps come from Shotgun.

Watch any college or NFL game, as soon as the ball is snapped, the QB might take one or two steps back.

Then he might take a step or two to the left, right, or wherever to avoid any initial pressure.

Sometimes you will have to run full blast to avoid pressure, but your mentality should always be to stay in the pocket.

By now you know my favorite word is “repetition”.

This offense is all about taking the same steps and making the same reads over and over again.

Once you get very familiar with the plays, you will get to a point where you never even look downfield because you will know and feel the timing so well with your receiver’s routes.

As of today I can run all of these plays without even having to look beyond the line anymore because I know the timing so well that now all I have to do is focus on the pressure.

Sooner or later you will to this point to and when you do, defenses will have even more trouble getting to your QB.

On “Touch”

When it comes to actually throwing the football, ball placement is everything.

More importantly, how hard you throw the ball plays a major role in whether your receivers can catch the ball.

I call this “Touch”.

The amount of touch you put on the ball can make a difference from a 2 yard gain to a 20 yard gain.

There are basically three types of touches in this game:

1. Lob Pass
2. Normal Pass
3. Bullet Pass

Lob passes are used by barely tapping the corresponding button.

I only use lob passes for my deep routes.

Normal and Bullet passes may be somewhat hard to distinguish by with controllers but understand that some routes need a certain touch.

I go into detail the type of touch for each route in the playbook.

Practice Mode

Practice Mode is my best friend in NCAA Football 06 and it should be your best friend too.

By repping the same plays over and over and over and over again, you will become so efficient in this offense that you can almost run plays blindfolded.

In order to master this offense, you have to learn to love Practice Mode.

It also helps to know how to use Practice Mode to your advantage.

In or to have great quarterback play, you need to know how to set up your practices correctly.

Here are some tips that will make your practice sessions go smoother and to be able to learn plays at a much quicker pace.

Tip 1: Only Use the “Normal” Practice Type

On the main menu in Practice Mode you have an option on the type of practice you want with your options being Normal, Offense Only, Kickoff, and Pass Skeleton.

We need our practices to replicate a real game as much as possible.

“Offense Only” is what it says: no defense on the field.

This is the worst practice type because you will gain and learn nothing.

How can you read defenses and how can you learn to handle pressure?

Avoid “Offense Only” at all costs.

“Pass Skeleton” only has linebackers and the secondary on the field.

This will not help you either because you must learn how to deal with pressure at all times.

Don’t worry about not being able to handle pressure and go through your progressions at the same time.

That is what the “Playbook” chapter is for, to help you go through your reads while being able to handle any pressure thrown at you.

Only use “Normal” in Practice Mode so you won’t feel blindsided and scared when you play a real game.

Tip 2: Only Pick “Random Formation” when selecting the Defense

Once you select your play in Practice Mode, you have several options on picking a play for the CPU defense:

1. Random Formation
2. Random All
3. Packages
4. Flip Play

Instead of picking and actual play, I always pick “Random Formation”.

That is because it keeps me on my toes and forces me to go through my pre-snap reads on every play.

Again, this goes back to repetition and by letting the game force you to make your reads even in Practice Mode, you learn more quickly than usual.

I don’t suggest using “Random All” because the defense will through formations at you that they would never use in a real game such as the goal line defense versus your four-wide sets.

“Packages and Flip Play” are useless to you as well since you have no control over these during a real game because the CPU defense makes those decisions.

Tip 3: Always Zoom Out Using the Coach Cam to Read the Cornerbacks

After every play in Practice Mode both the offense and the defense is already set which means there is no huddle.

In order to read if the defense is in Man or Zone, you need to Zoom Out using the Coaches Cam to read what the right Cornerback is doing.

- If the CB slide inward – Zone
- If the CB stands still – Man

Basically, if the CB moves at all then the defense should be in Zone coverage.

You might also see other defenders shuffle around, this means ZONE too.

Again, this gives you more opportunities to get down the first step in your pre-snap read.

Tip 4: Yard Markers

Pick a yard maker where you can quickly count how many yards any given route will be once a receiver catches the ball.

That way you can learn which routes are best for which yardage.

In most cases I always place the ball on the 50 yard line since it is easier for me to count from there.

After enough reps, you will know which routes are good for 5, 10, 15, etc. yards.

This will also help when you get in the red zone and you won't have as much field to work with.

You need seven yards to get a touchdown, go to those plays with routes that will give you that yardage.

Whatever works best for you when it comes to adding up yardage is where you need to practice from the most.

Section 3:

Playbook

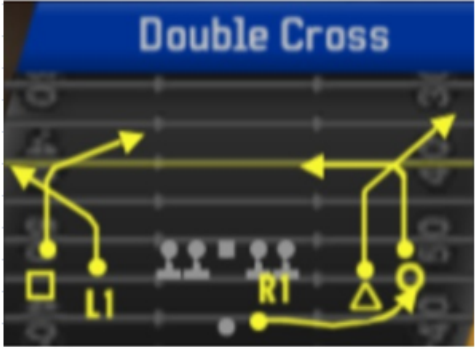
Play Charts

Before we dive in and break down plays and diagrams, you need to learn how to read the play chart.

Each play will have its own chart of exactly what you need to know about for each facet of the play.

It is very simple to learn but let's go over each part of the play chart.

Below is an example of a play chart...

GUN SPREAD - DOUBLE CROSS			
HASH:	RIGHT	ALIGNMENT:	1 3 H 4 2
OVERVIEW This play is designed to get medium to long yardage. However, it is somewhat limited against ZONE. I usually use this for 3rd and long.			
READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	1	N	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	2	N	A defender might still be lingering in the middle so don't be late throwing here
M3	H	N	Could be open if his defender is far away or gets stuck trying to chase him
M4	3	N	Last resort if 1 and 2 are double-teamed
M5			
READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater. If you can, wait until he runs up the sideline before throwing
Z2	1	N	Will be a tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and 3
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

There are several parts of the play chart.

The top half of the play chart is as follows...

PLAY NAME: This is at the top of the play chart.

Some plays have ** symbols before and after the name.

These are the must-have Core plays and these will be explained in the Strategy section.

HASH: This indicates which hash mark you should call the play from.

90% of all plays in any given game are played on either the right or left hash mark and most plays in NCAA Football 06 work best on a certain hash mark.

ALIGNMENT: Since both Playstation 2 and XBOX players will be reading this, I chose not to use the buttons that correspond to the players in the play image due to confusion.

So I decided to use an alignment system that can be easily read by both parties.

This will help when reading the MAN and ZONE read assignments at the bottom of each play chart.

For each formation you will see a series and a letter for each alignment.

Each wide receiver gets a number while running backs will get an “H” or an “F” (halfback, fullback).

The numbers for your wide receivers are in order of the depth chart without using sub packages.

Simply read the alignment left to right and the play image will indicate which player is who.

From the example above, we have a formation alignment of **1 3 H 4 2**.

This means that WR 1 is on the far left, beside him is WR 3, the next player is H which is your main HB, 4 is your inside WR on the right followed by WR 2 on the far right.

Even if you use sub packages, you can still go back to the play chart and determine who is who when studying these plays.

Again, simply read the alignment left to right and the play image will indicate which player is who.

OVERVIEW: This is my personal thoughts on the play in general.

Each play should have enough comments to tell you when and where I like to use each play, especially which plays are best for certain yardages.

PLAY IMAGE: the image of the play for that play chart.

-

The bottom half of each play chart gives you the dirty details about each route and assignment.

This offense is based around progression reads.

This means that if MAN 1 isn't open then you go to #2 and so on and so forth.

There are two big sections at the bottom of the play chart

- MAN Reads
- ZONE Reads

Since our first read is to look to see if the defense is in MAN or ZONE, all you have to do is go to the corresponding section for you progressions.

Under **“READ”** you will see M1, M2, M3... or Z1, Z2, Z3...

Take for instance with our play above, Gun Spread – Double Cross.

You decide to pick this play.

You break the huddle and you read the corners to identify which coverage the defense is in.

If they are in MAN, then you go to the MAN section and follow your progression.

If they are in ZONE, then you go to the ZONE section and follow your progression.

“PLAYER” indicates which player is which read.

“TOUCH” indicates how hard I should throw to that player

- L is Lob pass
- N is Normal pass
- B is a Bullet pass

“COMMENTS” gives you the details you need for each route and what to look for if that player is open.

“R”: an R beside a position means you should “rollout” with the player to get the most out of that route.

-

You will also notice that the run plays in this book do not have progression reads or alignments on their play chart simply because they aren’t needed.

The overview for each run play will tell you what you need to know about those plays.

EXAMPLE

Before you start diving into the playbook, let me walk through with you the play chart just so we are clear on what we are looking for when studying the plays.

Below, we will use Gun Spread – Double Cross as our example.

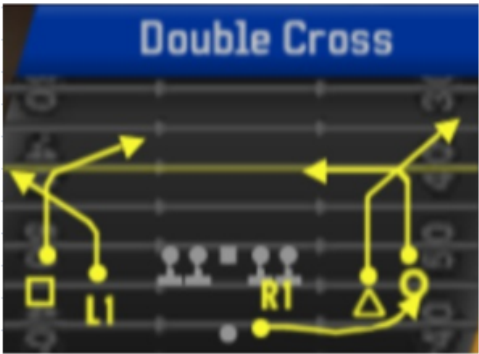
GUN SPREAD - DOUBLE CROSS

HASH: **RIGHT**

ALIGNMENT: **1 3 H 4 2**

OVERVIEW

This play is designed to get medium to long yardage. However, it is somewhat limited against ZONE. I usually use this for 3rd and long.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	1	N	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	2	N	A defender might still be lingering in the middle so don't be late throwing here
M3	H	N	Could be open if his defender is far away or gets stuck trying to chase him
M4	3	N	Last resort if 1 and 2 are double-teamed
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater. If you can, wait until he runs up the sideline before throwing
Z2	1	N	Will be a tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and 3
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

Let's pretend we are in the middle of a live game...

It's the 2nd quarter and it's 3rd and 10.

We are on the right hash mark so we need a "right hash" play for us to convert the 1st down.

We pick Gun Spread – Double Cross because according to the play chart, the play works best on the right hash and it's best used on the 3rd and long.

Once we break the huddle, we immediately look at the far right cornerback to identify coverage.

The right CB is running hard to his spot so we know they are in MAN coverage.

We immediately go to our MAN Read section of the play chart and follow our progression.

*Our first read is **1**, if we see Cover 0 (both safeties come closer to the line) then we can throw it to him but only after his last move.*

We snap the ball.

*Both safeties stay back in coverage so we know **1** will not be open therefore we go to our 2nd read which is **2**.*

***2** is running a Dig route and should get separation but we notice a LB is lingering in the middle of the field.*

*We then go to our 3rd read which is **H**.*

*We notice that his defender is slow to catch up to him so we throw a Normal pass (**N**) to him because a Lob will take too long to reach him and a Bullet pass will be too hard for our player to catch.*

We also realize that our pass protection is breaking so we need to get rid of the ball.

***H** catches the ball and picks up a solid gain, enough to get a first down.*

-

Hopefully this scenario will give you an idea of not only how to read the play charts but to actually apply them during games.

Since repetition is our key to success in this offense, after enough reps in practice with the same play, you should be able to make these reads in your sleep.

Progression Trends - *VERY IMPORTANT*****

When going through the playbook you will notice a couple of trends.

First, almost every single M1 read (first read against MAN) is a Cover 0 beater.

The very first thing we look for against MAN is if both safeties come up.

That means M1 should be open to make a huge play downfield.

Against ZONE, almost every Z1 read is a blitz beater.

Defenses in this game love to bring the heat and being ready to handle any blitz thrown at you will make the difference between wins and losses.

That is why for every play, if you see ZONE coverage, your first read will always be a blitz beater.

If you see the pressure, dump it off to this guy and see what happens.

The reason I don't have a blitz beater against MAN is because if MAN defense is blitzing then that means the defense has only 1 or 0 safeties back there for coverage.

Your M1 Cover 0 read is technically your blitz beater.

-

Because each play in the playbook has your first MAN and ZONE read as "blitz beaters", your second read for MAN and ZONE (M2 and Z2) are your actual go-to-players for that play.

You might go an entire game without ever seeing the defense play Cover 0 or blitz in any way.

So if you want to design your play calling around certain players then pick plays that your go-to guys as your M2 and Z2 reads.

I will go over this in better detail in the Strategy section.

-

And finally, I hardly ever flip plays and you don't have to either but to answer your question...

Yes you can flip these plays and use the same but reverse progressions.

However, by no means do you ever need to flip plays in this offense.

That is why I have alignments in the play charts.

I've thrown hundreds of thousands of yards with this offense without ever having to flip a play, but if you feel compelled to take the offense to that level then go nuts!

-

By now you have good understanding of how to read the playbook.

Have fun reading it and I will see you in the Strategy section!

GUN 2 BACK SLOT - HB CIRCLE

HASH:

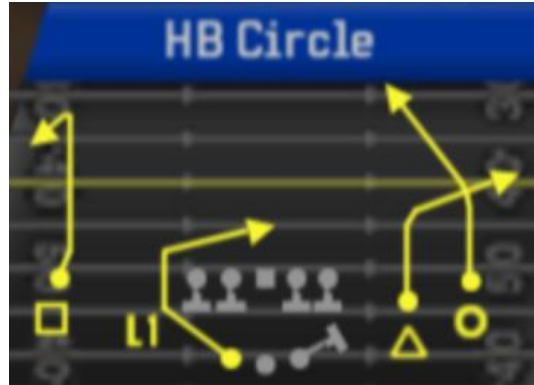
LEFT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H F 3 2

OVERVIEW

Probably my favorite pass play since you have four viable routes regardless of coverage. It attacks all areas of the field. A great play for 3rd and long too.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	2	N	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	1	B	I love this route, impossible to defend against MAN on the short side of the field
M3	H	N	H usually gets good separation here. The LB covering F might be lingering though.
M4	3	N	Last resort if 1 and 2 are double-teamed
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater
Z2	3R	N	Big play route only if the defense is in Cover 2 and there is no blitzing from the right. Wait a second or two before rolling out.
Z3	2	N	Will be a tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and Cover 3
Z4	1	B	Sometimes 1 is open against cover 3
Z5			

GUN 2 BACK SLOT - RB DEEP

HASH:

RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H F 3 2

OVERVIEW

A great play to get a few yards, regardless of coverage. There are only two viable routes per coverage but they are great but safe short routes. Both backs distract the safeties while your receivers do the work. If you want you can hot route both backs to block.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	H-F	B	If you obviously see Cover 0, hot route either H or F to a Go route
M2	1	B	My favorite route. Can get good separation if the throw is good
M3	2	B	Throw must be good or the CB can get in front of it
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	3	B	Blitz beater. Will always be open unless DE spies
Z2	1	B	Will only be open against Cover 3
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - CORNER STRIKE

HASH:

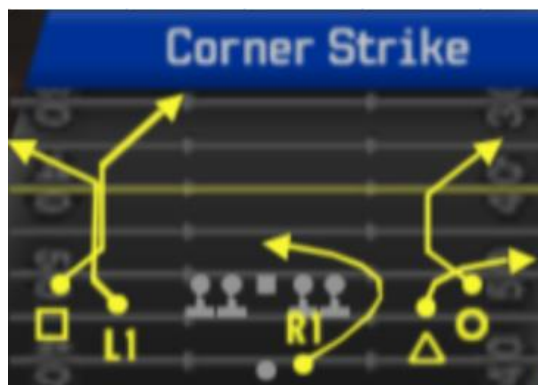
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 3 H 4 2

OVERVIEW

A nice universal play. A great play to get H the ball too. Some accurate throws need to be made but you will have several options against MAN and ZONE.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	1	N	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	H	N	H usually gets good separation here.
M3	2	N	You need some accuracy here but still viable. Otherwise, it can get picked off
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater. If the LBs split, they will leave a huge hole for H to make a big play
Z2	4	B	Blitz beater. Will always be open unless DE spies
Z3	1	N	Will be a tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and Cover 3
Z4			
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - DOUBLE CROSS

HASH:

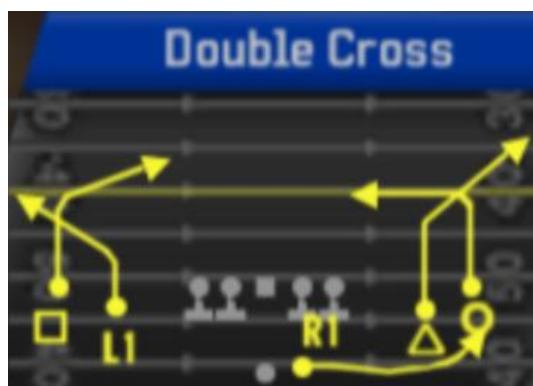
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 3 H 4 2

OVERVIEW

This play is designed to get medium to long yardage. However, it is somewhat limited against ZONE. I usually use this for 3rd and long.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	1	N	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	2	N	A defender might still be lingering in the middle so don't be late throwing here
M3	H	N	Could be open if his defender is far away or gets stuck trying to chase him
M4	3	N	Last resort if 1 and 2 are double-teamed
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater. If you can, wait until he runs up the sideline before throwing
Z2	1	N	Will be a tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and 3
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - HB GO

HASH:

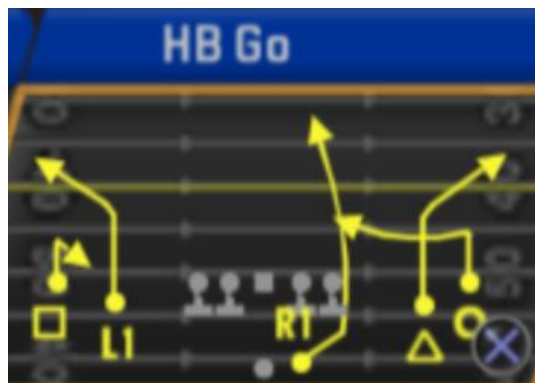
LEFT

ALIGNMENT:

1 3 H 4 2

OVERVIEW

A good left hash play with big play potential. 3 is useless except he can distract the CB leaving 1 open against ZONE.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	H	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	2	N	A little slow developing but he will get separation here
M3	4	N	Good against Cover 1
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	1	B	Blitz Beater but also great against ZONE, period
Z2	4R	N	Big play route only if the defense is in Cover 2 and there is no blitzing from the right. Wait a second or two before rolling out.
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - PA READ

HASH:

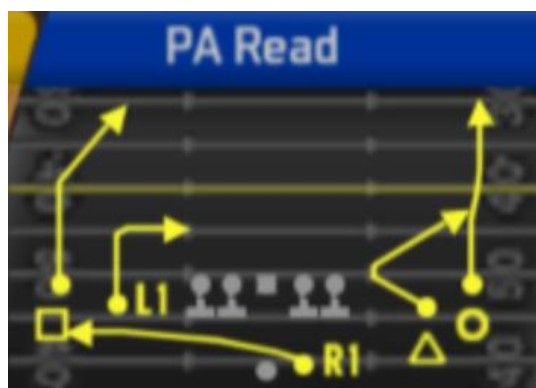
LEFT

ALIGNMENT:

1 3 H 4 2

OVERVIEW

Treat this as one of your basic run plays if the box is favorable. Good against MAN and decent against ZONE. Your only real ZONE reads are all deep balls but if protection is there then big gains can be made.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	2	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	1	N	Another option against Cover 0
M3	3	N	3 can get great separation here. There could be a defender lingering in the middle though
M4	H	B	Might be open by the time you reach this progression
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater
Z2	3	B	Another blitz beater. Can be open if LBs leave a hole in the middle of the field.
Z3	1	N	Due to the play action fake, 1 can be open against Cover 2 and Cover 3
Z4	2	N	It's possible that the SS might bite on the play action fake in Cover 2, leaving 2 wide open
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - WR CURLS

HASH:

LEFT

ALIGNMENT:

1 3 H 4 2

OVERVIEW

A great short yardage play with plenty of option to attack MAN and ZONE. Curl routes are risky (in 06).



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	4	N	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	H	N	Can be a huge gain if H's defender has a long way to catch him like a FS or a left LB
M3	1	B	I'm not a huge fan of curl routes but they are viable against MAN. Need accuracy here or the CB can intercept it
M4	2	B	No different than 1's route except "cross-field" throws to a curl route is risky unless your QB has the accuracy
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	3	B	Blitz Beater but also great against ZONE, period
Z2	H	N	Another blitz beater. Can be open against Cover 3
Z3	4	N	Will be a very tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and Cover 3
Z4			
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - CROSS POST

HASH:

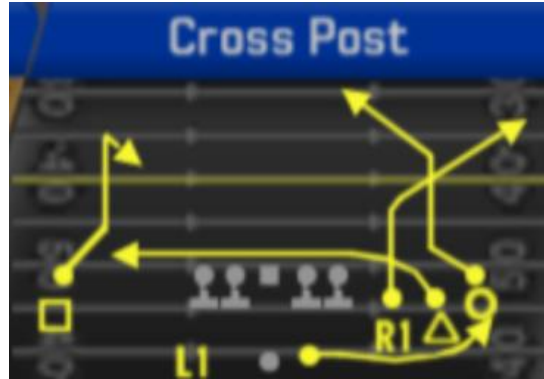
LEFT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 4 2

OVERVIEW

A sister play to "HB Streak" but with different roles for each receiver. Again, 1 is useless but this play still attacks all areas of the field regardless of coverage.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	2	N	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	H	N	If H's defender struggles to reach him then there are big gains to be made here
M3	4	B	4 can get great separation here
M4	3	N	Last resort but good against Cover 1
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	4	B	Blitz beater. Will always be open once 3 is beneath the left CB
Z2	H	N	Another blitz beater. Can be open against Cover 3
Z3	3R	N	Big play route only if the defense is in Cover 2 and there is no blitzing from the right. Wait a second or two before rolling out.
Z4	2	N	Will be a tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and 3
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - HB OUT

HASH:

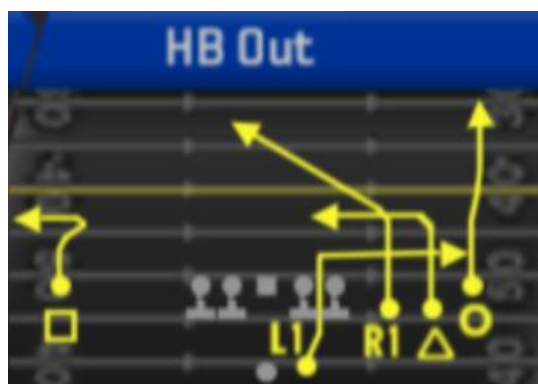
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 4 2

OVERVIEW

Probably my favorite short yardage play. On 3rd and short, H is my go to guy. This play provides other options as well, but I usually reserve this play for short yardage situations.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	2	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	1	B	1 can get great separation here. I've scored many TDs with the Zig route to the strong side
M3	H	B	H can get good separation here
M4	4	N	He can get great separation here. There could be a defender lingering in the middle though
M5	3	N	Last resort and the throw must be accurate

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	B	Blitz beater. Will always be open unless the DE spies
Z2	4	N	Another blitz beater. Might be open via holes in the middle
Z3	3	N	If portection is solid, will be open against Cover 2 and sometimes Cover 3
Z4	1	B	Might be open against Cover 3
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - HB SCREEN

HASH:

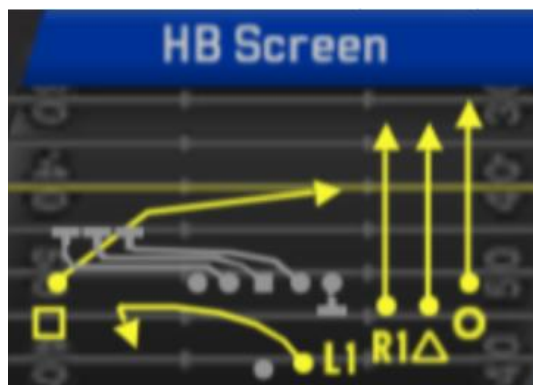
LEFT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 4 2

OVERVIEW

A very effective screen play. 1 going across the middle is your MAN beater and H is great against ZONE. The three Go routes are too close together to throw to without potential problems.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	1	N	Your main MAN route. If LBs are clogging the middle, throw it to H
M2	H	N	Throw to H if his defender get blocked well and the middle is clogged for 1
M3			
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	HB Screens work well against ZONE so no other options are needed
Z2			
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - HB STREAK

HASH:

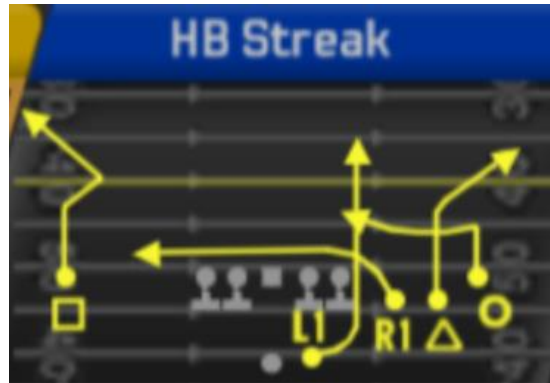
LEFT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 4 2

OVERVIEW

Even though your 1 is useless in this play, it is still a great universal play that attacks multiple areas of the field regardless of coverage.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	H	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	3	B	3 can get great separation here
M3	2	N	This route takes a little while to open up but can get great separation here. If the pressure is low then wait for it
M4	4	N	Last resort but good against Cover 1
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	3	N	Blitz beater. Will always be open once 3 is beneath the left CB
Z2	4R	B	Big play route only if the defense is in Cover 2 and there is no blitzing from the right. Wait a second or two before rolling out.
Z3	2	N	Might be open via holes in the middle due to heavy blitzing but it's still slow developing
Z4			
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - PA READ

HASH:

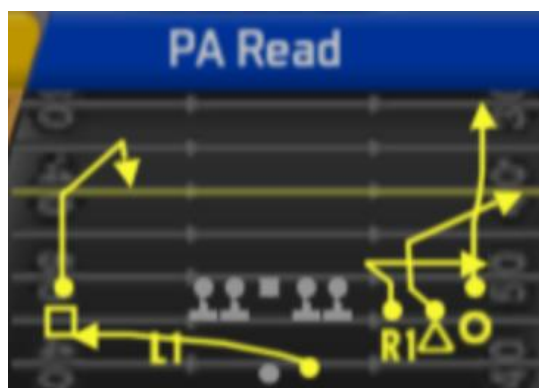
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 4 2

OVERVIEW

Treat this as one of your basic run plays. Great for potential run yardage. If you see MAN coverage and there is no shifting to the left, then hand it to H. Otherwise, just go through your normal progressions.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	2	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	3	B	3 should get good separation here
M3	H	N	H could be wide open if his defender is struggling to catch him
M4	4	N	Might not be open by the time you reach this progression but it's still viable
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	3	N	Blitz beater
Z2	2	B	Will be open between the CB and the SS if you see Cover 2 and have enough time to throw
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - SLOT SCREEN

HASH:

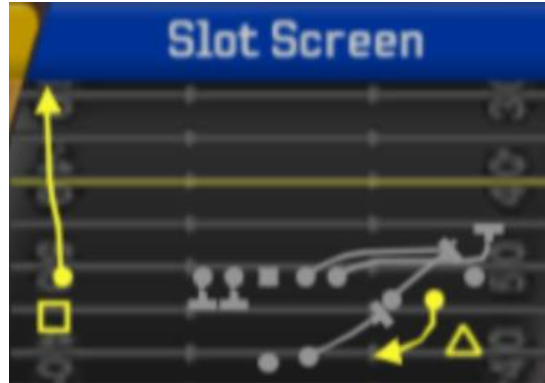
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 4 2

OVERVIEW

A great screen play. Very deadly against ZONE and can also work from the middle of the field.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	1	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	4	B	If you have a lefty QB, his throw will be a tad slower, otherwise get it to 4 as fast as you can
M3			
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	4	B	Works even better against ZONE. If you have a lefty QB, his throw will be a tad slower, otherwise get it to him as fast as you can
Z2			
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN BUNCH - DEEP CROSSUP

HASH:

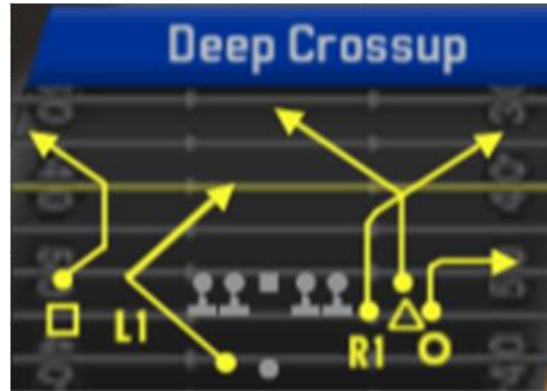
MIDDLE

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 2 4

OVERVIEW

If you ever start a play in the middle of the field then this play is a great option, mainly against ZONE Cover 2. Rolling out with 3 can produce major gains.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	2	L	Throw if Cover 0. Wait until 2 and 3 cross and are far away from each other, otherwise 3's defender might double-team 2.
M2	1	N	Throw if you see Cover 1. 3's route is similar but it will be too crowded to throw it to him.
M3	H	N	H should be open but it still might be a bit crowded due to 2's assignment
M4	4	B	4 should get enough separation here
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater. Either H or 4 should be open
Z2	4	N	Blitz beater. Either 4 or H should be open
Z3	3	N	This is your money route. If there is no heavy blitzing from the right and the D is in Cover 2, then rollout and 3 should be wide open.
Z4			
Z5			

GUN BUNCH - WR OPT HB PASS

HASH:

MIDDLE

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 2 4

OVERVIEW

This is my run audible for Gun Bunch Deep Crossup if I don't want to use the MAN reads. There is a "run" version of this play but I like this one due to defenders following your WRs which is another form of blocking.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1			
M2			
M3			
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1			
Z2			
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

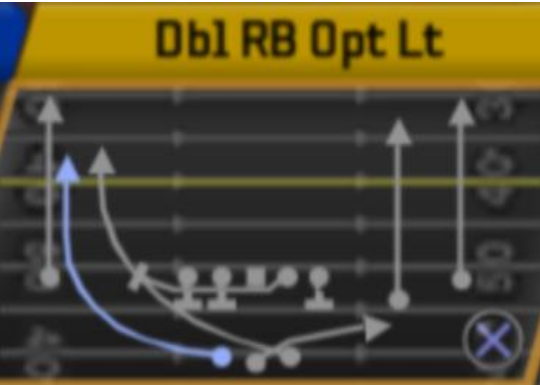
GUN 2 BACK SLOT - DBL RB OPT LT

HASH: **ANY**

ALIGNMENT:

OVERVIEW

Aside from the PA Read, this is the only run play you need from this formation. Flip the run depending on the defensive front shift.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1			
M2			
M3			
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1			
Z2			
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN 2 BACK SLOT - SLOT CORNER

HASH:

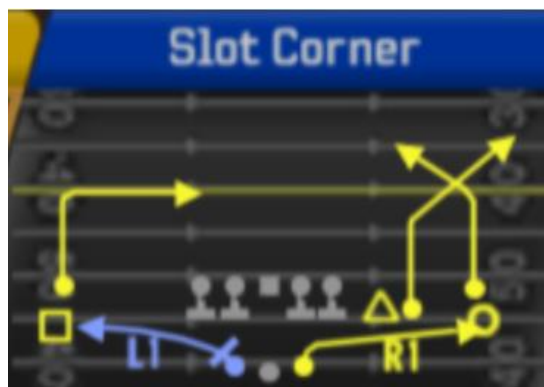
LEFT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H F 3 2

OVERVIEW

A sister play to "HB Circle" though not as potent. It's best to motion H to left, regardless of coverage, to give yourself more options.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	2	N	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	1	N	Motion H to the left slot first so 1 can get open. CB can get in front of this route though
M3	F	N	Can be a big gain if a LB or Safety from the opposite side is covering him
M4	3	N	Last resort if 1 and 2 are double-teamed
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater
Z2	3R	N	Big play route only if the defense is in Cover 2 and there is no blitzing from the right. Wait a second or two before rolling out.
Z3	F	N	Another blitz beater. Could be open against Cover 3
Z4	2	N	Will be a tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and Cover 3
Z5			

GUN 2 BACK SLOT - WR MIDDLE

HASH:

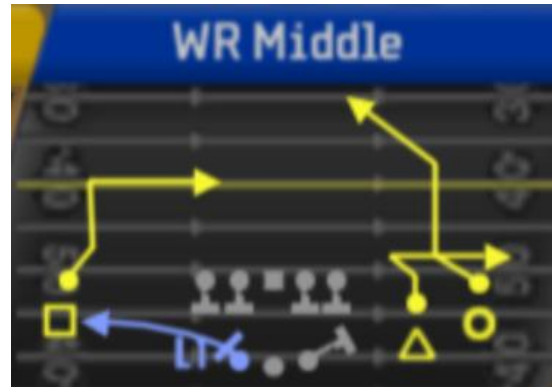
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H F 3 2

OVERVIEW

A nice short to medium range play with some options against MAN and ZONE. You have two blitz beaters against ZONE which is nice.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	2	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	1	N	Might want to motion H to the left first to free up sapce for 1
M3	3	B	3 should get separation but the throw must be quick since he is your 3rd read
M4	H	N	Last resort but still viable
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	3	B	Blitz beater. Will always be open unless DE spies
Z2	H	N	Blitz beater
Z3	2	N	Might be open against Cover 2 and Cover 3 but it will be a very tight window
Z4			
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - DEEP ATTACK

HASH:

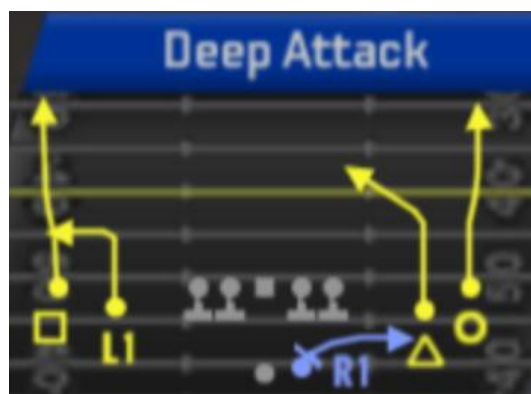
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 3 H 4 2

OVERVIEW

A great MAN play and an decent ZONE play. Best used only as long yardage play, preferably on 3rd down. Protection is key here.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	1	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	2	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing. 1 may be a better option due to more field to work with
M3	3	B	Pressure beater. 3 can get good separation here.
M4	4	N	You need good accuracy to make it work
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater
Z2	4	N	Only vaible against Cover 2 and Cover 3 (barely)
Z3	3	B	Only vaible against Cover 3, but barely
Z4			
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - QB CHOICE

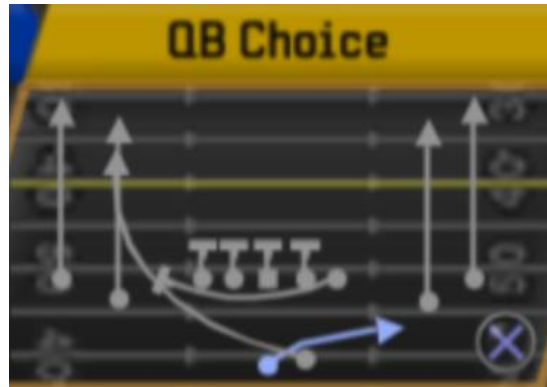
HASH:

ANY

ALIGNMENT:

OVERVIEW

One of your three run plays from this formation. Always hand it off to H since your QB is strictly a pocket passer. Don't abuse the speed button.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1			
M2			
M3			
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1			
Z2			
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - SLOT SEAMS

HASH:

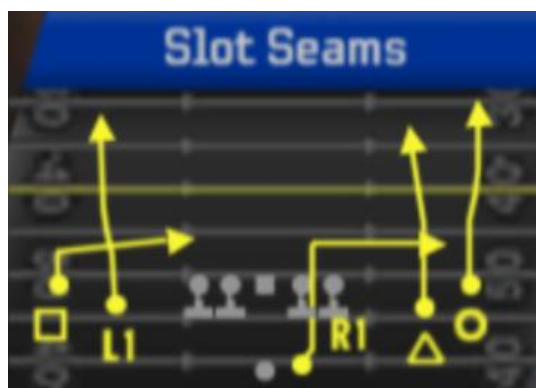
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 3 H 4 2

OVERVIEW

A good play for short yardage with a GO route. The two Go routes on the right are useless except for distraction purposes.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	3	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	1	N	A defender might still be lingering in the middle so don't be late throwing here
M3	H	B	H can get good separation here
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	B	Blitz beater. Will always be open unless DE spies
Z2	1	N	There could be holes due to blitzing
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - SLOT WHEELS

HASH:

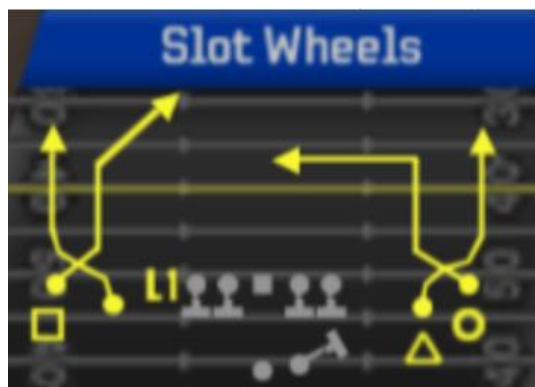
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 3 H 4 2

OVERVIEW

Best used only as long yardage play, preferably on 3rd down. Protection is key here.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	3	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	4	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing. 3 may be a better option due to more field to work with
M3	2	N	Will be open as long as you have time to throw
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	1	N	Will be a tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and 3
Z2	4	N	Can be open against Cover 2 but will be a tight window along the side
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - WEAK OFF TACKLE

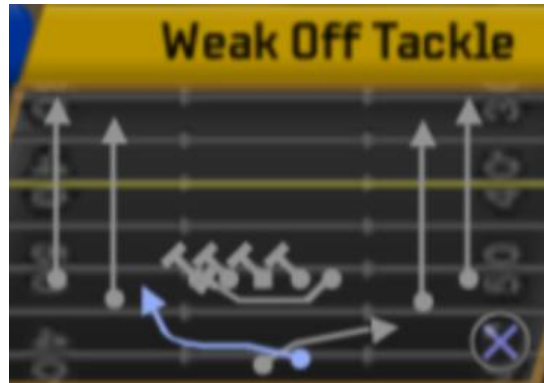
HASH:

ANY

ALIGNMENT:

OVERVIEW

One of your three run plays from this formation. Blocking may be suspect at times but can still be effective. Don't abuse the speed button.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1			
M2			
M3			
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1			
Z2			
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN SPREAD - WR UNDER

HASH:

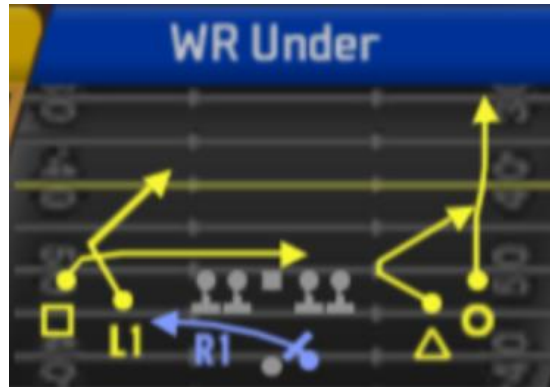
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 3 H 4 2

OVERVIEW

Not my favorite play but is still viable against both coverages. Accuracy is paramount here along with solid protection.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	2	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	3	B	3 can get great separation here. There could be a defender lingering in the middle though
M3	1	B	A great shallow route but the throw must be accurate in order for 1 to get separation
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	1	B	Blitz beater. You need good protection here but look for any holes open up. Otherwise, wait until 1 goes across the field to be open underneath the right CB
Z2	2	N	Might be open against Cover 2, need an accurate throw here though
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - ANGLE

HASH:

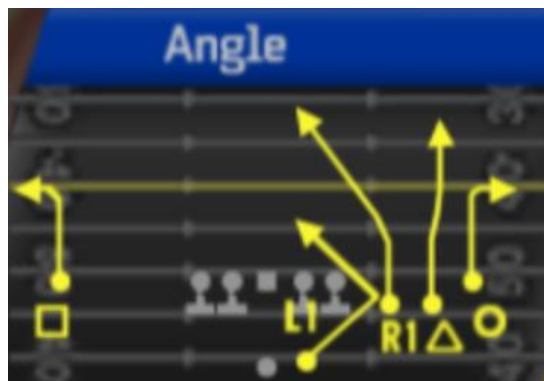
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 4 2

OVERVIEW

I don't use this play much because the conditions have to be right but this play is doable, especially against MAN.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	4	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	3	N	Throw if Cover 0, 4 is usually a better option due to Go routes being better Cover 0 beaters
M3	1	N	
M4	H	N	H can get great separation here
M5	2	B	Might not be open by the time you reach this progression but it's still viable

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater. If the LBs split, they will leave a huge hole for H to make a big play
Z2	3	N	Only open against Cover 2 and possibly Cover 3
Z3	1	B	Might be open against Cover 3
Z4			
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - CORNERS

HASH:

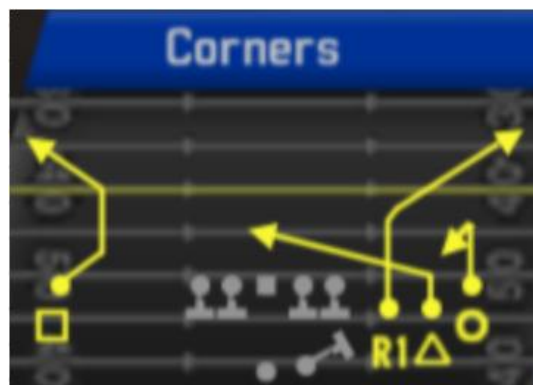
RIGHT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 4 2

OVERVIEW

A somewhat limited play but there is potential here for decent gains.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	1	N	Throw if Cover 0 or Cover 1, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	4	B	4 should get good separation here
M3			
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	2	B	Blitz beater
Z2	4	B	If the LBs split or there is heavy blitzing, they will leave a huge hole for him to make a big play
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - PA INSIDE

HASH:

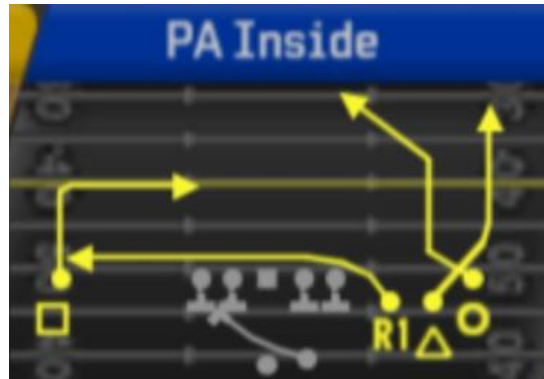
LEFT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 4 2

OVERVIEW

The only true play action play I use due to all routes being deadly. The problem is the you can get sacked easily due to the PA movement. Use it when you can afford to take the risk.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	4	L	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	2	N	Throw if Cover 0, 3 is usually a better option due to Go routes being better Cover 0 beaters
M3	3	B	3 usually gets good separation here
M4	1	N	3 can get open here. There could be a defender lingering in the middle though
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	3	B	Blitz beater. Will always be open once 3 is beneath the left CB
Z2	2	N	Will be a tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and 3
Z3	1	N	Might be open via holes in the middle due to heavy blitzing
Z4			
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - QB CHOICE

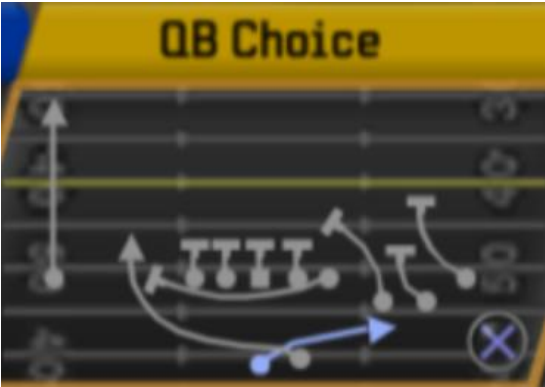
HASH:

ANY

ALIGNMENT:

OVERVIEW

Besides the PA Read, this is the only run play you need from this formation. Always hand it off to H since your QB is strictly a pocket passer. Don't abuse the speed button.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1			
M2			
M3			
M4			
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1			
Z2			
Z3			
Z4			
Z5			

GUN TRIPS - SLOT CROSS

HASH:

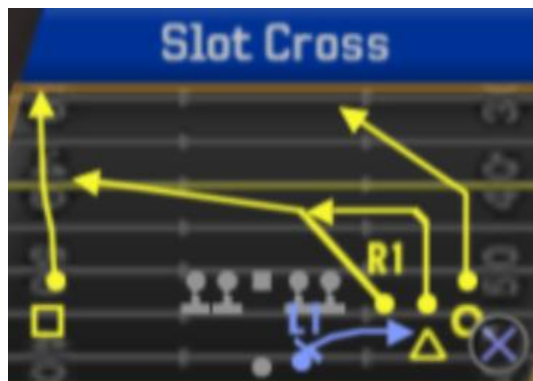
LEFT

ALIGNMENT:

1 H 3 4 2

OVERVIEW

A good long yardage play with decent options against MAN and Zone. You need decent protection though.



READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
M1	2	N	Throw if Cover 0, wait a little bit before throwing
M2	1	L	Throw if Cover 0, 2 may be a better option due to more field to play with
M3	3	N	3 usually gets good separation here
M4	4	B	A good crossing route that should be open due to all the action happening above him and if there is no lingering LB in the middle
M5			

READ	PLAYER	TOUCH	COMMENTS
Z1	H	N	Blitz beater
Z2	3	N	Holes could be open here due to blitzing
Z3	2	B	Will be a tight window but will be open against Cover 2 and 3
Z4			
Z5			

Section 4:

Strategy

By now I'm sure you have scoured through all the plays and have realized how much depth there is to this great game.

But you may also feel very overwhelmed by all of the plays in the playbook.

Let's go over some tidbits that will help you put game plans together so you will feel more confident when you hit field.

The Core Plays

Maybe you are use to calling the same 4 plays for an entire game.

Maybe you have never used a progression system before.

Maybe you never thought of how important hash marks can be in NCAA 06.

Fear not!

I do not expect you to go into every single game with knowing the facets of all 30 plays right out of the gate.

That is why I want you to focus on just a handful of plays.

If you go back to the playbook you will notice that some plays have a star before and after each name.

These plays are the plays that I feel you must have in your pocket and brain at all times.

The foundation of this offense is based off these Core plays.

I highly encourage you to learn and master these plays first before learning the other plays.

There are 15 Core plays.

You should be able to go into any game with these 15 plays and have success.

Once you think you have mastered the Core plays then you should branch out and learn the rest of the plays in the playbook.

In the Resource section in the back of this book, there is a chart detailing every play in the playbook with the Core plays at the top as a quick reference.

Along with the rest of the Resource section, make full use of this chart and let it be your play call guide.

Play Calling

Probably the biggest question a gamer asks himself or someone else is “how do you know which plays to call at the right time?”

Some coaches like to script the first 20 plays of every ball game.

Some coaches call plays to attack one specific defender.

I call plays very similar to how Washington State Coach Mike Leach does it.

I also like to think I game-plan the same way Leach does as well.

By now you have noticed that this entire offense is predicated on what the defense is showing us.

At any given time any one of our players will be open based on the coverage.

Because of this, I never go into a game with the idea of “I’m getting the ball to my #1 receiver no matter what.”

This offense is designed around every skill player getting touches, one way or another.

I never try to force the ball to any one skill player.

The offense is designed to find the open man and nothing else.

Trust me, the ball will find the open man as long as you make the proper reads.

That is why it helps to have good talent at every skill position because you never know who is going to be making a ton of catches that game.

You may go an entire game and your best WR catches two balls.

That’s okay because that means the defense is leaving somebody else open.

That can be the nature of the beast with this offense, especially in the passing game, but at least you will not have the mentality of forcing the ball to a player which often leads to turnovers.

The most important thing when it comes to play calling is to only use the plays you are comfortable with.

Mike Leach does the same thing; he only calls plays his QB feels comfortable with.

We will do the same thing here.

That is why I want you to master those Core plays.

Even if you haven't mastered all 15 plays, you should only call the plays that you feel good using.

Only call plays that you feel comfortable with.

-

The next thing to know about play calling is understanding what to call when you are deep into the game itself.

Like I said before, some coaches like to script the first set of plays and then after that comes when they really start earning their paychecks.

I do not script plays and neither should you.

Instead what I and Mike Leach like to do is something I call "fishing".

Fishing to me means calling play and see how the defense reacts to it and keeping mental note of it.

I like to call all the plays I feel good about throughout the game to get a feel for what the defense likes to do against those plays.

I have no idea what my first play will be called but it doesn't matter.

All I want to do is go fishing for information.

Let's say our first play call is Gun 2 Back Slot – HB Circle.

I notice the defense is in MAN and we are able to make a nice gain.

Maybe a few plays later I run the same play and notice that they play MAN again and we still end up with a nice gain.

If I keep having success with the same play that tells me that the defense is struggling to defend it, therefore I should continue to use that play until they consistently stop it.

That doesn't mean I run that same play over and over again.

It just means mentally know that I can go back to that play whenever I want.

Conversely, I can run a play that that defense is defending really well.

That tells me I need to put that play on the shelf for awhile, maybe even for the rest of the game.

If you pay any attention at all to how defenses react against certain plays, than you can easily see that some plays are going to work well against a certain team for that given day.

To wrap this up...

Go fishing by calling plays and see how defenses react to them and add or discard accordingly.

3rd Down Situations

The Overview for each play chart in the playbook is very important.

Each overview details where and when certain plays work.

On normal 1st and 2nd downs, it doesn't matter as much what you call.

But we all know the money down is 3rd down.

That is why you need to read the overviews because they will tell you when I like to use certain plays, especially on 3rd down situations.

This may seem obvious but when it is 3rd and long, pick a play where most of the routes are going to give you opportunities to convert.

The same goes with 3rd and short.

Pick plays that will give you the yardage you need.

The Play Call Sheet in the Resource section will give you a quick reference to know which plays to call in those situations.

Red Zone Situations

The red zone is from the 20 yard line to the end zone.

Nothing really changes when you call plays when you are that end of the field.

The only difference is that there is not as much room to work with.

Since this is a pass-happy offense, we still want to throw the ball more than run it.

The big thing to know here is to ignore your M1 reads while in the red zone.

That's it.

Remember, the first M1 read for most of our plays is our Cover 0 beater.

The problem is that there is usually (but not always) not enough room for our Cover 0 beater to make a play.

This means that you should go directly to your next read.

Nothing changes with your ZONE reads.

But please, have enough common sense to know that your 15 yard Post route will not be open if you are on the 10 yard line.

Have some field awareness out there.

Call plays with more short routes when you get close to the red zone.

Or dare I say run the ball.

Goal Line Situations

The defense will go to their goal line formation when you reach about the 5 yard line inwards.

Everyone has different ways to score touchdowns on the goal line.

Thankfully, this offense only uses four formations which means you have another five slots in your playbook to fill up with formations of your favorite goal line plays.

I've scored on the goal line with screen plays, power plays, etc.

Because the game forces you to have a minimum of three TEs and one FB, there is no reason why you can't use them.

I normally like to recruit receiving TEs but I can't find one I know there will be plenty of 2 and 3 star monstrous, bulky TEs who would be great road graders.

So don't be afraid to recruit big bad TEs and FBs just for your goal line situations.

I go into greater detail in the Recruiting section about these types of players.

However, my favorite goal line formation is **Ace Big TE WR**.

For whatever reason, the CPU defense does not like to use their goal line formation against this set.

I assume this is a glitch, but the defense always goes to their base defense when I call a play from Ace Big TE WR.

You can run a basic HB Slam and be able to score.

In the end, use some of the reaming formation slots to make your goal line offense more potent.

The Running Game

Ask Mike Leach and he will tell you his best offenses were the ones where he was able to run the ball well and efficiently.

I know this is a pass-happy system, but I can tell you that my best offenses were also the ones where I could run well and efficiently.

Even though the run game is small in this offense, don't be afraid to run the ball.

There are three situations where you need to run the ball.

First is if you continually see a numbers advantage in the box.

The box is simply the imaginary box where your offensive line, your backfield, the defensive line, and their linebackers are positioned when the ball is snapped.

See the image below.



Notice that the offense is in a 4-wide formation (5 linemen + 2 in the backfield = 7, $11 - 7 = 4\text{WR}$).

The defense only has five defenders in the box

The offense has 7 but since we don't use our QB in the running game, the advantage is still 6 to 5.

In situations like this, by all means run the ball!

This offense only uses 4-wide formations and one 3-wide formation.

If you see 5 defenders in the box against a 4-wide set on a consistent basis, think about running the ball.

If you see 6 defenders in the box against Gun 2 Back Slot, on a consistent basis, think about running run the ball.

This is why my favorite run plays in this playbook are the PA Reads because at least you have the option of keeping the ball to throw if you need to.

-

The second situation is when you have a big lead and you want to run the clock out.

You can run the ball more then.

In blowout games, I like to mix it up with my 2nd string offense running the offense normally by throwing a lot and running the ball more than usual.

-

The third situation is when you have such an amazing talent at HB that he practically demands touches.

That is when you should probably run it more.

However, I would still stick with the "Box" rules.

Trust me; he will get plenty of touches in the passing game too.

In fact, my last Heisman winner was a HB in my Al-Raid offense that caught and ran the ball effectively, enough to win the big trophy at least.

Go figure.

Halftime Adjustments

At every halftime, Mike Leach likes to look at one stat more than any other: catches.

He wants to know which who is getting all the catches.

Are the catches spread out?

Is one guy getting all the catches?

Information like this can help you determine what to call plays for in the second half.

Before I said to not worry about who gets touches, but you can push things in a certain direction if need be.

Mike Leach likes to have all five skills positions to touch the ball fairly equally.

I like that as well.

What I will do at halftime is go to the stat sheet and see how many catches everyone is getting.

If I see that my #2 receiver is barely getting touches then I might call more plays for him.

In order to do this, you just need to pick plays for players where they are your M2 or Z2 reads.

Like I mentioned in the Playbook section, your M1 read is your Cover 0 read and your Z1 read is your blitz beater.

However, we can't rely on these guys being open any point in the game.

The defense may never show Cover 0 and may never blitz.

Because of this, your M2 and Z2 are technically your go-to reads for each play.

So if your #2 WR is not getting catches and you want him to get more involved in the offense, pick plays where your M2 or Z2 reads are to him.

This may not guarantee you that he will get the ball on those plays but at least you push things in his direction.

The good thing about all of this is that over the course of an entire season, all five main skill positions will get their share of catches.

So don't feel too obligated to force the ball on a player who is not getting the catches you think he deserves.

Finally, there will be seasons where you simply won't have good talent at all five skill positions. This normally happens at the beginning of a dynasty when you take over a subpar program. If you only have one or two impact receivers and backs, you can use the strategy above to try to give them the ball more than the others.

Reading Defenses

We are more than 60 pages into this book and you may have noticed that I have not mentioned once about the various types of defenses.

From the 4-3, 3-4, 3-3-5, 4-2-5 and Nickel to Dime.

None of these matter with this offense.

It doesn't matter if the defense is in the 4-2-5 or the 4-3, all defenses look the same once the ball is snapped.

A Cover 3 ZONE play from the 3-4 is no different than a Cover 3 ZONE play from the 3-3-5.

I also do not mention Cover 4 ZONE (Quarters) since it is obvious to not throw deep against it.

Simply make the defense pay with more short stuff.

The only thing you need to focus on is the taking the correct pre-snap steps and making the right reads after the snap.

Since you will be using 4-wide sets most of the time, defenses will try to spread out with you anyways.

Just focus on your steps and progressions and leave the rest to the birds.

Sub Packages

The goal with sub packages is the ability to put your five best skill players on the field at all times.

Some seasons your best five may be your four best WRs and your top HB.

You may have a dynamic TE that needs to be on the field; if so then use the TE package.

Do you have two dynamic pass catching HBs?

Use the HB sub package.

You only need to change the sub packages once per game, but they don't stay locked in for the entire season.

You have to change to those needed packages every game.

Audibles

One of the great things about the Al-Raid Offense is the little use for audibles.

This may sound weird but not having to audible every single play like gamers do now is a real breath of fresh air.

I like having Home Field Advantage turned on due to its realism.

That means away games are tougher and audibles are not as effective.

This offense is set up to not have to rely on audibles due to most of the plays already having built-in answers.

However, audibles are available to us so it doesn't hurt to use them to supplement the offense.

You get five slots for audibles.

I simply use run plays and screen plays for these slots.

Mike Leach does something similar in that if he likes the numbers advantage in the box, he will audible to a run play of that chosen formation.

So for simplicity sake, here are the five audibles I use.

1. Gun 2 Back Slot – PA Read
2. Gun Spread – PA Read
3. Gun Trips – PA Read
4. Gun Bunch WR Opt HB Pass
5. Either
 - a. Gun Trips - Slot Screen
 - b. Speed Option play of your choosing

The three PA Read plays are my base run plays.

Gun Bunch WR Opt HB Pass is my favorite audible for Gun Bunch – Deep Crossup

The fifth slot can be wither the best screen play in the game or a speed option play if your QB has some legs and want to take advantage of that fact.

Again, treat your audibles as additions to your offense and not as a foundation.

And don't feel like you have to use these five plays, adjust them to your liking.

Hot Routes

Speaking of Home Field Advantage, hot routes are affected by crowd noise too.

I rarely use hot routes because I don't want to rely on them on away games.

You don't need them with all the built-in answers in your original plays.

I know that gamers of the new generation love to hot route every route on every play nowadays, but we will not do that here.

The only hot routes I use are the Go route and the block route which is only for your running backs.

Most of the plays in this playbook already have deep routes so you will have little use for that hot route.

The block route is great if you feel like you need extra protection.

Basically, don't feel too compelled to use hot routes all the time because you really don't need them.

Section 5:

Recruiting

Recruiting is simple, fun, and rather deep in NCAA Football 06.

I can give you all the schemes in the world but the Jimmy's and Joe's is what can take you over the top in this game.

Recruiting for this type of offense is real simple since you are only looking for one or two things for each position.

You can go back to my website and read the following posts on recruiting in general.

- [Off-Season Recruiting Tips](#)
- [In-Season Recruiting Tips](#)

For the purpose of this book and offense, I want to go over some particulars that will help you maximize your offensive roster.

Below is a chart detailing what you need to look for when recruiting players.

	Priority		
	1st	2nd	3rd
QB	Pass Accuracy	Arm Strength	Height
HB	Hands	40 Time	Awareness
FB	Bench/Squat	Height/Weight	
WR	Hands	Awareness	40 Time
Rec TE	Hands	Awareness	40 Time
Blk TE	Bench/Squat	Height/Weight	
T	Awareness	Height/Weight	Bench/Squat
C & G	Awareness	Bench/Squat	Height/Weight

You will notice that instead of giving you attributes to look for (SPD, THA, THP, etc) that you see in the main rosters, I wanted to give you what you will actually see on the recruiting trail.

You will not see the word "Catch or CTH" during recruiting but will see the word "Hands" instead.

I know you all know what these means but I felt is best to not complicate things more then they need to be.

You need to recruit by priority so make sure you go after guys based on their first priority before going on to the next priority (which is why every 1st priority is in **bold**).

You shouldn't have any issues finding players who are good at least the first two priorities but make sure you nail down guys who are good in their first priority.

By focusing on these priorities, the actual player attributes will take care of themselves.

Here are a few words on each position.

Quarterbacks

Accuracy is the most important thing here since most of your throws will come from ten yards in.

If you can find QBs that can also throw it far then that is icing on the cake.

I also think height is important since you will be throwing lots of balls over your line so having a QB that can throw over the top of players' heads helps a lot.

Halfbacks

Your running backs will be catching a lot of balls in this offense so make sure they have great hands.

Speed is very important to be able to separate himself from his defender.

This is the position that can make or break a season. A dynamic HB that can catch and fly will take your offense to new heights.

Again, I have won the Heisman with a HB in this offense before if that tells you anything.

Fullbacks

The game forces you to have one FB on your offense if you are a spread team.

Because of this, it doesn't hurt to recruit FBs who are big bad blockers for goal-line situations.

The last thing you want is to not recruit a FB and the game puts a walk-on on your team that you cannot cut later, so pick a FB every four years that suits your needs.

Wide Receivers

I don't care which receivers you get, if they can't catch then your offense will suffer.

Get great hands first.

Anything beyond that is gravy.

Receiving Tight Ends

You normally don't think about TEs in an Air Raid Offense but if you come across a TE who has great hands and is fast, then he will be a matchup nightmare for defenses.

Blocking Tight Ends

On the Coaching Options screen in Dynasty Mode you have a choice of pick the type of offense you will use.

Obviously you will choose "Spread Offense" but even then the game forces to have three TEs on the roster at all times.

If you can't find receiving type TEs, go get the biggest strongest TEs you can find to help in goal line situations.

Tight Ends in general will be your last priority in recruiting for this offense but don't recruit them or the game will put terrible walk-ons on your rosters that you can't cut.

So make sure you have the minimum amount on your roster at all times.

Tackles

I believe awareness helps with identifying pressure so anything helps in terms in limiting that pressure.

I also believe height and weight is big here since defensive ends will have a harder time getting around and through your tackles.

Centers and Guards

These guys are not much different than the Tackles. Just make sure they are smart and see if they are strong as well.

In-Season Strategies

This may come as a shock to you but I rarely recruit any offensive players during the season.

When you pick your initial 12 players before each season, you are only given a limited amount of information for each player.

You are only given four pieces of information for each player:

- 40 Time
- Bench Press
- Squat
- Field Awareness

The problem is you do not see three important stats:

- Catch
- Pass Accuracy
- Arm Strength

This entire offense revolves around those three key facets.

Because of this, I rarely recruit QBs, WRs, and Receiving TEs during the season.

Those 12 slots are precious to me and I want to maximize each one.

If I don't initially know how good a player's hands are or how accurate a QB is, I am not going to gamble my 12 slots on those positions that might not have those favorable attributes.

That is why I designate those spots to offensive linemen and the defense.

The only time I will recruit any of those offensive players is if they are in-state kids and/or are 5 star kids in which there is a real strong chance that they will be good in those areas.

I'm not telling how to recruit but I am warning you not to recruit these positions too hard during the season or you might get burned.

Besides, you will be throwing so much that QBs and WRs will be begging to come to your school so there will not be shortage for those positions.

-

One final word on HBs:

The downside to recruiting HBs is since you will be throwing the ball so much, HBs might not be as inclined to come to your school so recruit this position hard during and after each season.

There is not much else to say about recruiting to this offense. As long as you're winning, the players will come but you still have to put in the work.

Conclusion

Everything you need to know about this offense is here to use at your disposal.

I've given you the plays, the steps, and the progressions to make the best decisions possible for success.

I've also given you all the recruiting info you need to recruit the players you need for this offense to soar.

Now it's up to you to put all of this into practice.

I hope I've kept all of this as simple as I can so you can put it to good use.

Things to remember:

- In order for this offense to work, you have to love Practice Mode and enjoy repeating these plays over and over again.
- Nail down the pre-snap steps until you use them like clockwork.
- Use my practice methods for better and quicker learning
- Start by learning the Core plays before learning the rest of the playbook.
- Take one of those Core plays and go into Practice Mode and rep that play against various coverages over and over again until you know your progressions by heart.
- Repeat that process with the remaining plays.
- Understand the primary uses for each play, such as which ones are better in 3rd down situations.
- Learn to read the Box so you can run the ball more efficiently, thus complimenting your passing game.
- Get picky about the players you recruit because you need specific skills in order for this system to work.
- **Above all else, have fun playing NCAA Football 06 again with the Al-Raid Offense!**

I hope this book and this offense brings you as much joy playing NCAA Football 06 as it has given me over the years.

GOOD LUCK AND START THROWING THAT BALL AROUND!!!

Resources

Play Call Cheat Sheet

Let me explain the ins and outs of the Play Call Cheat Sheet.

This handy cheat sheet will be a nice and quick reference to all the plays in the playbook.

The Core plays are on top with the Extra plays below them.

The Hash columns indicate which hash mark you should call the play from; the only choice being left or right but you will also notice a “Middle” and “Any” option.

The Go-To Guy columns are your M2 and Z2 plays that we discussed in the Strategy section.

This will help you when you want to try to give the ball to certain players.

The Best For Yardage columns indicate which plays are best for which amount of yards you are trying to go for.

The plays with “Both” for that column are your universal plays that can attack both short and long yardage.

If you never decide to print any of this book, at least print this page since you will be looking at this frequently while you play.

-

Following the cheat sheet is a summary of the tips, charts, and points that are scattered throughout the book so feel free to print this as well.

Play Call Cheat Sheet

		HASH		GO-TO GUY		BEST FOR (YARDAGE)	
PLAYS		LEFT	RIGHT	MAN	ZONE	SHORT	LONG
CORE PLAYS	GUN 2 BACK SLOT - HB CIRCLE			1	3R	BOTH	
	GUN 2 BACK SLOT - RB DEEP			1	1		
	GUN SPREAD - CORNER STRIKE			H	4	BOTH	
	GUN SPREAD - DOUBLE CROSS			2	1		
	GUN SPREAD - HB GO			2	4R	BOTH	
	GUN SPREAD - PA READ			1	3	BOTH	
	GUN SPREAD - WR CURLS			H	H		
	GUN TRIPS - CROSS POST			H	H	BOTH	
	GUN TRIPS - HB OUT			1	4		
	GUN TRIPS - HB SCREEN			H	H		
	GUN TRIPS - HB STREAK			3	4R	BOTH	
	GUN TRIPS - PA READ			3	2	BOTH	
	GUN TRIPS - SLOT SCREEN			4	4		
	GUN BUNCH - DEEP CROSSUP	MIDDLE		1	4		
	GUN BUNCH - WR OPT HB PASS	MIDDLE				RUN	
EXTRA PLAYS	GUN 2 BACK SLOT - DBL RB OPT LT	ANY				RUN	
	GUN 2 BACK SLOT - PA READ			2	1	BOTH	
	GUN 2 BACK SLOT - SLOT CORNER			1	3R		
	GUN 2 BACK SLOT - WR MIDDLE			1	H	BOTH	
	GUN SPREAD - DEEP ATTACK			2	4		
	GUN SPREAD - QB CHOICE	ANY				RUN	
	GUN SPREAD - SLOT SEAMS			1	1		
	GUN SPREAD - SLOT WHEELS			4	4		
	GUN SPREAD - WEAK OFF TACKLE	ANY				RUN	
	GUN SPREAD - WR UNDER			3	2		
	GUN TRIPS - ANGLE			3	3	BOTH	
	GUN TRIPS - CORNERS			4	4	BOTH	
	GUN TRIPS - PA INSIDE			2	2	BOTH	
	GUN TRIPS - QB CHOICE	ANY				RUN	
	GUN TRIPS - SLOT CROSS			1	3		

Recruiting Priorities

	Priority		
	1st	2nd	3rd
QB	Pass Accuracy	Arm Strength	Height
HB	Hands	40 Time	Awareness
FB	Bench/Squat	Height/Weight	
WR	Hands	Awareness	40 Time
Rec TE	Hands	Awareness	40 Time
Blk TE	Bench/Squat	Height/Weight	
T	Awareness	Height/Weight	Bench/Squat
C & G	Awareness	Bench/Squat	Height/Weight

Five Steps for Better Quarterback Play

Step 1: Read the Right Cornerback for MAN or ZONE Identification

Step 2: Count the Box and Read the Shifts of the D-Line and Linebackers

Step 3: Watch for Safety Movement If the Defense Is In Man

Step 4: Snap the Ball

Step 5: Go Through Your Progressions

My Favorite Audibles (adjust at your leisure)

1. Gun 2 Back Slot – PA Read
2. Gun Spread – PA Read
3. Gun Trips – PA Read
4. Gun Bunch WR Opt HB Pass
5. Either
 - a. Gun Trips - Slot Screen
 - b. Speed Option play of your choosing