



Sid Gillman: Father of the Passing Game

Josh Katzowitz

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Sid Gillman, unlike so many of his coaching colleagues, never wrote a book about himself. He never published his own ideas about the game and why he thought passing the ball in an age where most quarterbacks handed off to running backs was the key to his success. In more than four decades of coaching, nobody thought it necessary to tell the definitive Sid Gillman story. Until now.

Gillman was a true innovator. The kind of football genius that goes overlooked by today's average fan, but who will never be forgotten by the coaches he directly – and indirectly – impacted. The modern-day offenses that emphasize spreading the field with receivers, running backs and tight ends? That was Gillman's idea. The idea that the long pass could stretch a defense? That was Gillman's baby as well. What NFL fans watch today in ever-increasing numbers (and the high-flying offenses those fans love) can be directly traced back to the Midwestern coach who was a forerunner to the West Coast offense.

Gillman wasn't a perfect man. He had plenty of warts, and he made plenty of enemies. But he also made a major impact on the game, comparable to how Vince Lombardi, Paul Brown and Woody Hayes left a timeless impression. Josh Katzowitz tells you how Gillman was just as important as any coach who came before him or afterward.

This is not simply a biography of an innovator. It details exactly how and why the NFL football you watch today is the image of what Gillman believed was possible. It's why football luminaries like Al Davis, Bill Walsh and Chuck Noll cite Gillman as one of the most important influences on their careers and lives. It's why if you watched the Green Bay Packers beat the Pittsburgh Steelers in Super Bowl XLV, you could see the scope of Gillman's reach. In order to truly understand the reason why football offenses are so exciting today, learning about Gillman is absolutely essential. Katzowitz takes you on that journey.



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