

The Programmable Solutions Company®

Stratix to DDR-I Memory Devices Interface Analysis

High Speed / End Applications Team Tuesday, June 01, 2004

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Stratix to DDR-I Memory Interfaces Analysis

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1 Introduction

This document presents the results of the simulation done for the SSTL-II I/O standard used in Double Data Rate (DDR) memory device interfaces designed by the Altera High Speed I/O / End Applications Team in San Diego. This document also recommends termination schemes based on the review of the simulation results. Agilent ADS is used for simulation and IBIS models of Stratix/Stratix GX devices and Micron DDR memories are used.

1.1 Background

DDR memory has been a very popular memory interface in the industry. Several boards that feature DDR memories are being designed both inside and outside Altera. Since DDR uses both the rising and falling edges of the clock, timing margin is reduced compared to traditional single-edge clocking systems. Thus it is important to have good signal integrity on the board. This, in turn, implies the termination scheme needs to be good to avoid reflections. The JEDEC specification for the SSTL-II standard (used by DDR memory interface) only provides general guidelines which may not always be the best choice to implement in a real system. Hence a need for a document which compares several termination schemes exists. This document aims to fulfill that need.

1.2 <u>Simulation Overview</u>

Simulations are performed using the ADS tool from Agilent. IBIS models are used to model the Stratix device and the Micron DDR memory device. The memory device used is DDR-I x16 SDRAM devices (part number Micron MT46V16M16TG-5B). Simulation frequency is 200 MHz or 400 Mega Transfers per second. Simulation for both write and read cycles are performed for data bits since the bus is bidirectional. For the address bus, simulation for only the write direction is needed since the bus in unidirectional. The data is a point to point interface, while the address is a point to multipoint interface. This is because each address bit is serving more than one memory device.

The total routing length from the FPGA to the memory device is set to 6.0" which is a conservative estimate in the majority of systems.

The placement of parallel termination resistors at the ends of the line can be achieved in two modes: fly-by and non-fly-by. In fly-by mode, the resistor is at the end of the transmission line and the connection to the device pin is made through a short transmission line. In non-fly-by configuration, the transmission line ends at the device pin, and the resistor is placed before the end of the transmission line is reached. For configurations which have parallel resistors at the source/destination pins, fly-by and non-fly-by topologies are achievable while laying out the board.

Figure 1-1 Non Fly-By (top) and Fly-By (bottom) placement of parallel termination resistor. Figure 1-1 shows the fly-by versus non-fly-by placement of parallel resistors. In general fly-by placement is preferred over non-fly-by because the distance from the pin to the resistor is not very

critical for fly-by placement. In the cases that follow, both fly-by and non-fly-by simulations are performed as much as possible.

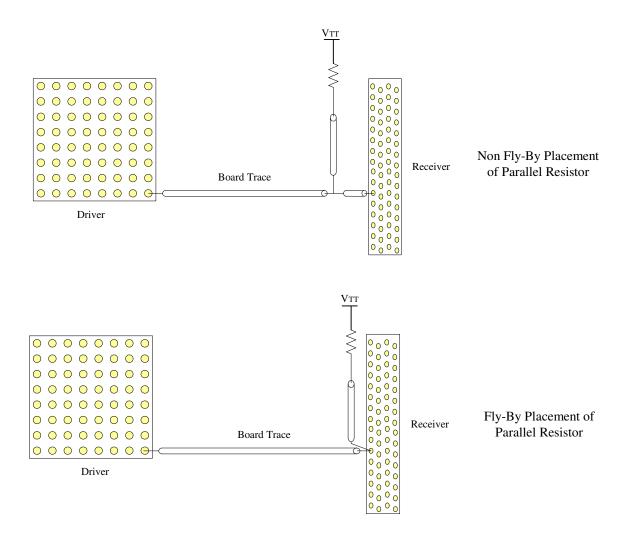


Figure 1-1 Non Fly-By (top) and Fly-By (bottom) placement of parallel termination resistor.

2 <u>Simulation Results</u>

This section presents the results of the simulation for the data, address and clock interfaces using a variety of configurations.

2.1.1 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Termination (Fly-By)

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-1, requires two series resistors and two parallel resistors. The series resistors are needed to match the output impedance of the driver to the transmission line and the parallel resistor is the actual termination of the transmission line. The performance of this topology shows a similar response between the read and the write cycles due to its symmetric construction. The small differences between the read and write cycles are due to the differences in the driver/receiver characteristics models.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-2 Figure 2-3 and Figure 2-4 respectively. Looking at the waveforms, it is clear that the signal integrity is very good, however, the signal suffers from some attenuation due to the series resistors.

The eye closure at the Stratix during the read cycle is about 0.943 and the eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.938. These levels are good for SSTL-II and this scheme would work fine for the read and write cycles.

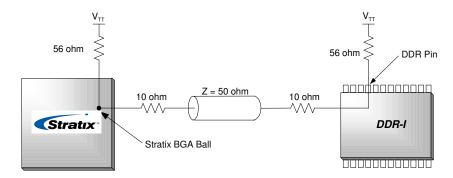


Figure 2-1 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Termination, Fly-By.

In order to understand the eye analysis plots some definition are required.

Eye Amplitude.- The "1" level mean subtracted from the "0" level mean.

Eve Height.- Is the inner bound of the eye.

Eye Closure.- Is the ratio of the Eye Height to the Eye Amplitude.

Eve Closure (dB).- 20log (Eye Closure)

For this case the "1" mean is 1.745V (m2), the "0" mean is 0.655V (m1) and inner bound is 1.021V (m4 - m3), see Figure 2-3.

From the eye analysis we notice that the rise and fall time during the read cycle (~800 pS) are slower than the write cycle (~400pS). Also, the eye closure for both case are in the order of 0.94.

The jitter analysis plots should be read on the left scale the eye amplitude, on the right scale the frequency (number of hits) between the reference levels "A" and "B" for the read cycles, "D" and "E" for the write cycles. The cursors C1, C2, F1 and F2 set the boundaries for the total jitter during the read and write cycles respectively.

From the jitter analysis plots the total jitter during the write cycle is 83.3 pS and the total jitter during the red cycle is 100pS.

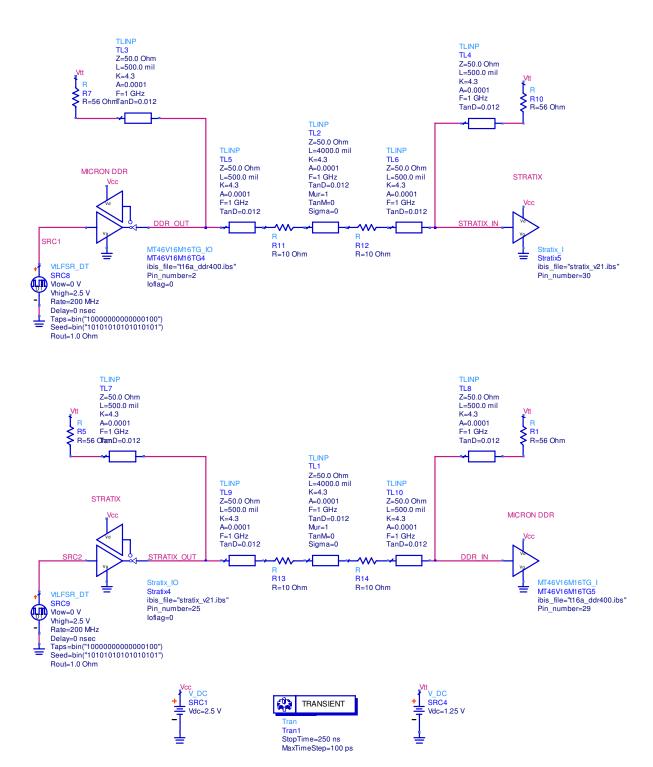


Figure 2-2 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Termination Simulation Setup (Fly-By).

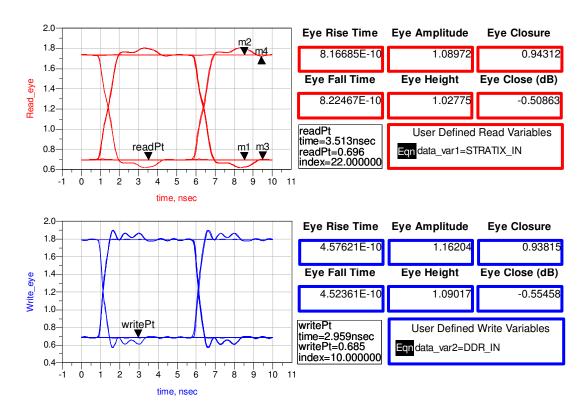
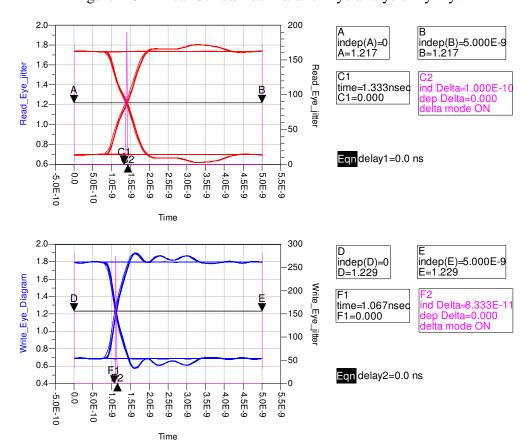


Figure 2-3 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Eye analysis Fly-By.



Stratix to DDR-I Memory Interfaces Analysis

Figure 2-4 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Jitter Analysis Fly-By.

2.1.2 <u>Dual Series/Dual Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)</u>

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-5, requires two series resistors and two parallel resistors.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-6, Figure 2-7 and Figure 2-8 respectively. Looking at the waveforms, it is clear that the signal integrity is good, however, the signal suffers from the effects of a high impedance (open stub) at the DDR-I side during the write cycles and at the Statix side during the read cycle. These open stubs (500 mils in simulation) represent an unterminated system which shows some degree of reflections during each cycle that creates an standing wave. This standing wave could be additive or subtractive depending on the delay and/or location of the discontinuity. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.931 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.841 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during the read and write cycles.

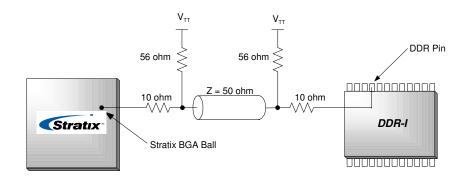


Figure 2-5 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Termination, Non-Fly-By.

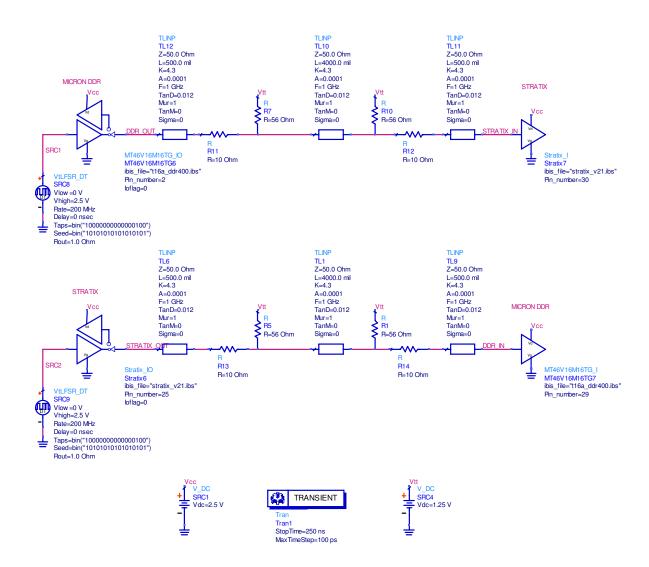


Figure 2-6 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles, Non Fly-By.

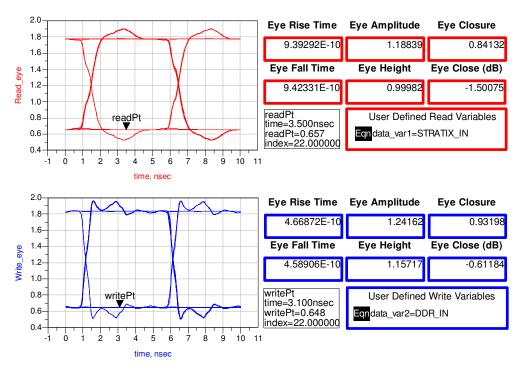


Figure 2-7 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Termination Simulation Eye Analysis, Non Fly-By

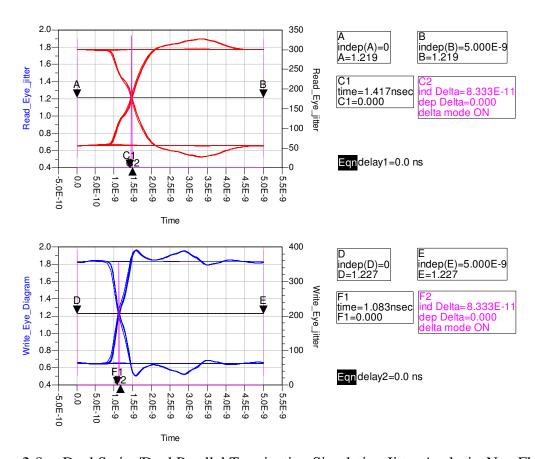


Figure 2-8 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Termination Simulation Jitter Analysis, Non Fly-By

2.1.3 **Dual Parallel Termination (Fly-By)**

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-9, requires two series resistors and two parallel resistors.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-10, Figure 2-11 and Figure 2-12 respectively. Looking at the waveforms, it is clear that the signal integrity is good, however, the signal suffers from the effects of the miss match between the driver device, Stratix or DDR-I, and the transmission line during the read or write cycles. The output impedance of an active device is in the order of 30 ohms that does not match the transmission line impedance of 50 ohms creating an standing wave.

The high impedance shown at the input of an active device makes the Fly-By option well suited for minimum components, good performance topology. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.926 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.909 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during the read and write cycles.

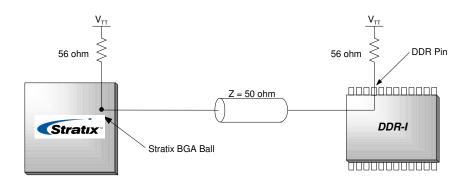


Figure 2-9 Dual Parallel Termination (Fly-By)

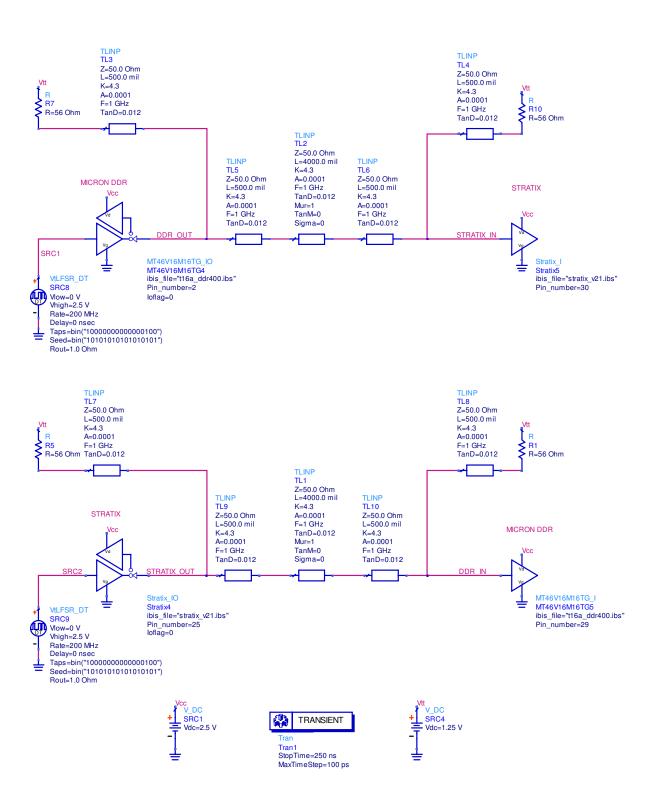


Figure 2-10 Dual Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles, Scheme 1.

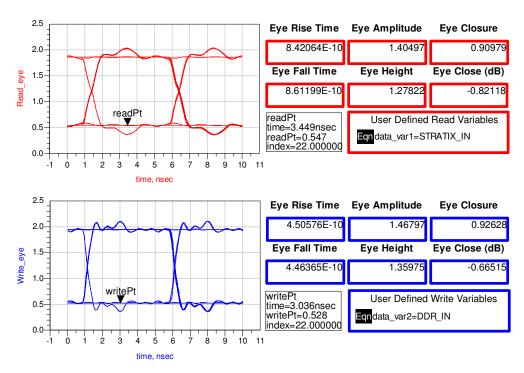


Figure 2-11 Dual Parallel Termination Eye Analysis, Fly-By.

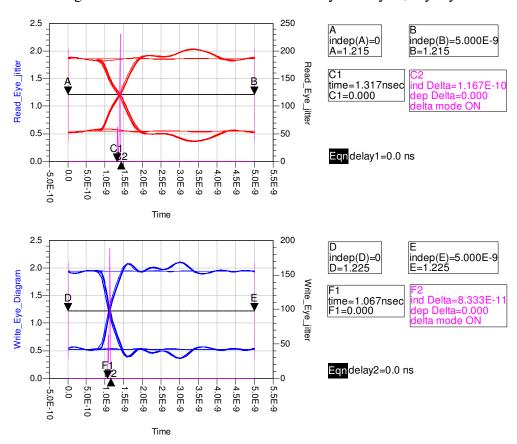


Figure 2-12 Dual Parallel Termination Jitter Analysis, Fly-By

2.1.4 <u>Dual Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)</u>

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-13, requires two series resistors and two parallel resistors.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-14, Figure 2-15 and Figure 2-16 respectively. Looking at the waveforms, it is clear that the signal integrity is good, however, the signal suffers from the effects of the open stub at the end of the transmission line during the read or write cycles. The input impedance of an active device is in the order of few Kohms that does not match the transmission line impedance of 50 ohms creating an standing wave.

The high impedance shown at the input of an active device makes the Fly-By option well suited for minimum components, good performance topology but this approach is an option when the routing in high density areas makes the previews topology difficult to achieve. The most important parameter that have to be considered is the distance from the termination resistor to the input of the device. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.915 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.812 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during the read and write cycles.

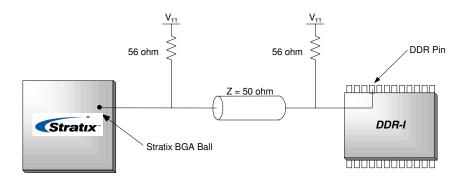


Figure 2-13 Dual Parallel Termination Non Fly-by

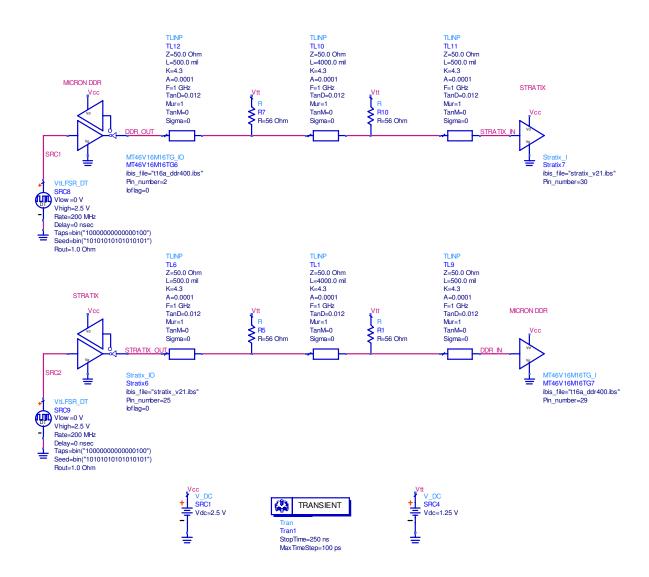


Figure 2-14 Dual Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles, Non Fly-By.

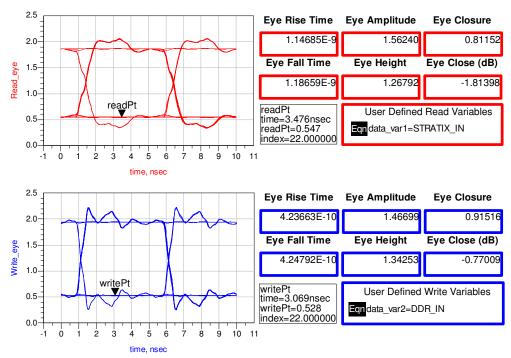


Figure 2-15 Dual Parallel Termination Eye Analysis Results, Non Fly-By

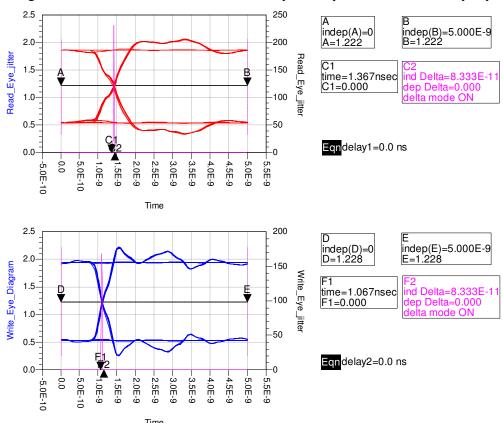


Figure 2-16 Parallel Termination Jitter Analysis Results, Non Fly-By.

2.1.5 Near End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination (Fly-By)

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-17, requires one series resistors and two parallel resistors.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-18, Figure 2-19 and Figure 2-20 respectively. This topology is useful when output drive strength or output impedance of both devices is different. The addition of one resistor makes this topology asymmetrical, so the performance during the read/write cycles will be different. This characteristic can be used to optimized one of the read or write cycles. Looking at the waveforms, it is clear that the signal integrity during the write cycle is better that the read cycle.

The high impedance shown at the input of an active device makes the Fly-By option well suited for minimum components, good performance topology but this approach is an option when the routing in high density areas makes the previews topology difficult to achieve. The most important parameter that have to be considered is the distance from the termination resistor to the input of the device. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.914 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.885 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during the read and write cycles.

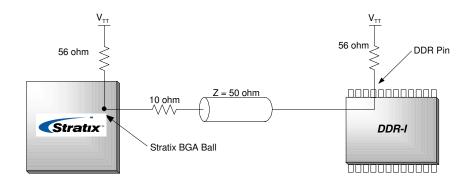


Figure 2-17 Near End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination (Fly-By).

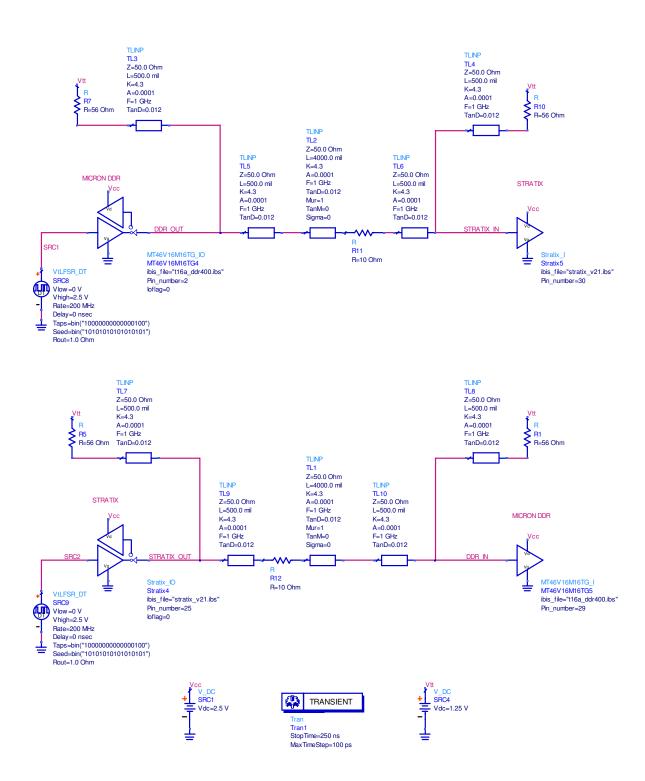


Figure 2-18 Near End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles (Fly-By)

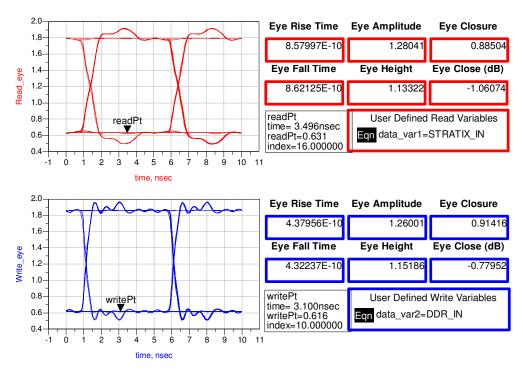


Figure 2-19 Stratix Near End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination Eye Analysis Results

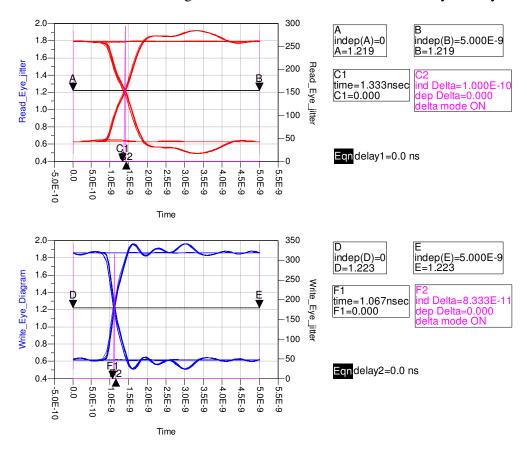


Figure 2-20 Stratix Near End Single Series/Dual Parallel Termination Jitter Analysis Results

2.1.6 Near End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-21, requires one series resistors and two parallel resistors.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-22, Figure 2-23 and respectively. This topology as the previews one are useful when output drive strength or output impedance of both devices is different. The addition of one resistor makes this topology asymmetrical, so the performance during the read/write cycles will be different. This characteristic can be used to optimized one of the read or write cycles. Looking at the waveforms, it is clear that the signal integrity during the write cycle is better that the read cycle.

The high impedance shown at the input of an active device makes the Fly-By option well suited for minimum components and good performance. The approach depicted in Figure 2-21 is an option when the routing in high density areas makes the previews topology difficult to achieve. The most important parameter that have to be considered to minimize undesired standing waves is the distance from the termination resistor to the input of the device. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.918 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.828 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during the read and write cycles.

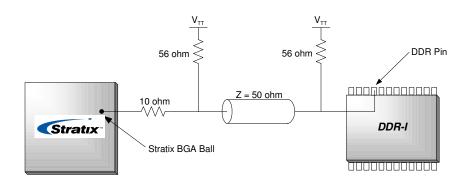
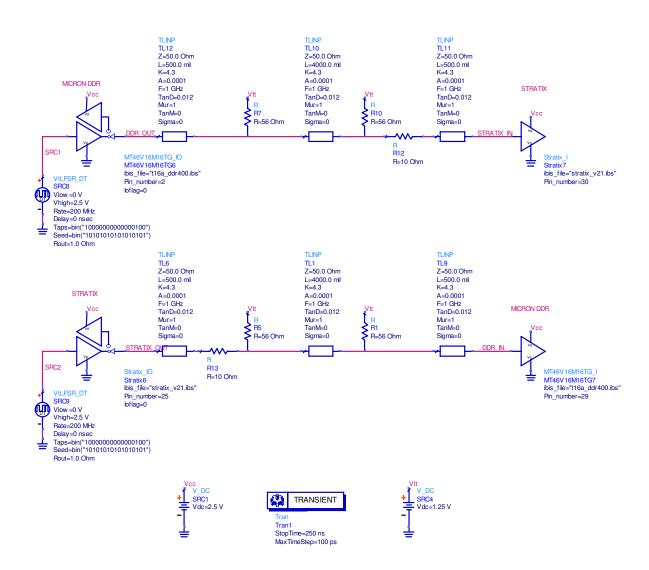


Figure 2-21 Near End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)



 $\label{lem:condition} \begin{tabular}{ll} Figure 2-22 & Near End Single Series/Dual Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles \\ & , (Non-Fly-By) \end{tabular}$

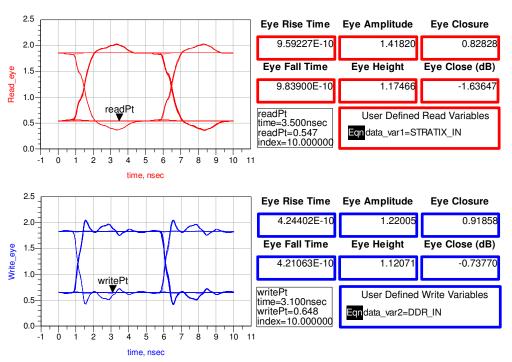


Figure 2-23 Near End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination Eye Analysis Results, Non Fly-By.

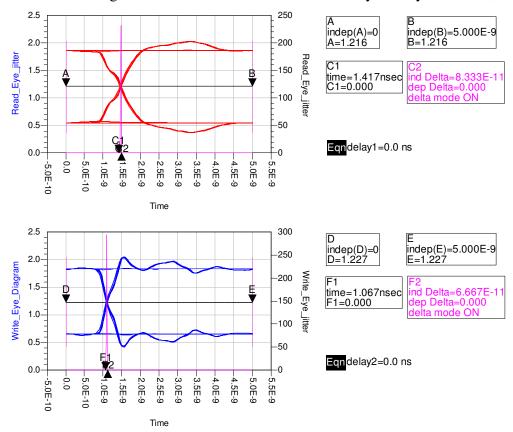


Figure 2-24 Near End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination Jitter Analysis Results, Fly-By.

2.1.7 Far End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination (Fly-By)

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-25, requires one series resistors and two parallel resistors.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-26, Figure 2-27 and Figure 2-28 respectively. This topology is useful when output drive strength or output impedance of both devices is different. The addition of one resistor makes this topology asymmetrical, so the performance during the read/write cycles will be different. This characteristic can be used to optimized one of the read or write cycles. Looking at the waveforms, it is clear that the signal integrity during the read cycle is better that the write cycle.

The high impedance shown at the input of an active device makes the Fly-By option well suited for minimum components and good performance topology. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.895 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.944 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during the read and write cycles.

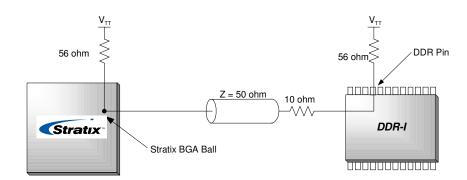


Figure 2-25 Far End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination (Fly-By)

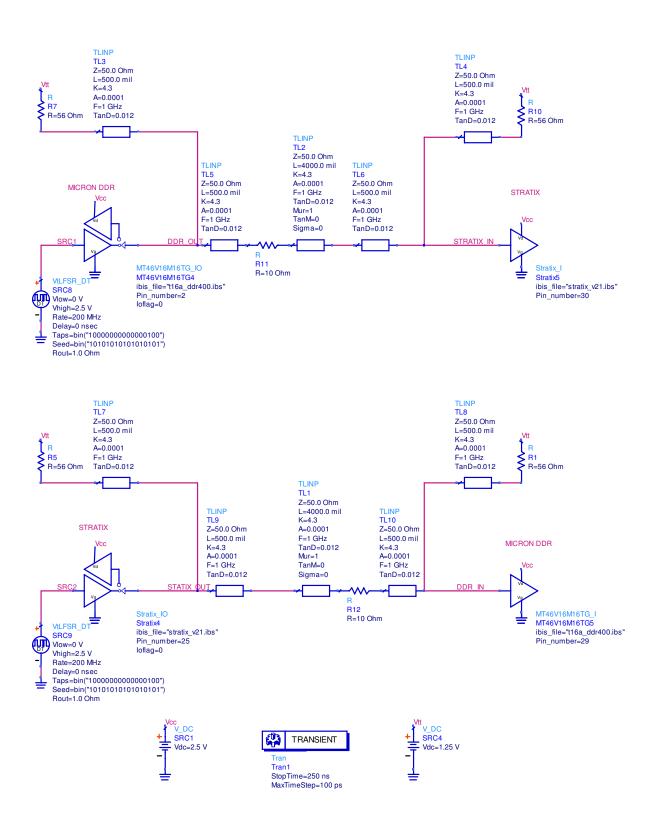


Figure 2-26 Far End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles (Fly-By)

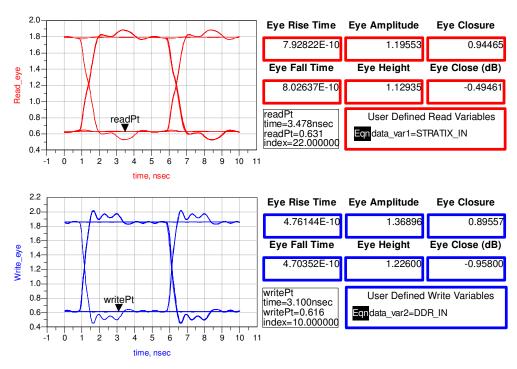


Figure 2-27 Near End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination Eye Analysis Results, Fly-By

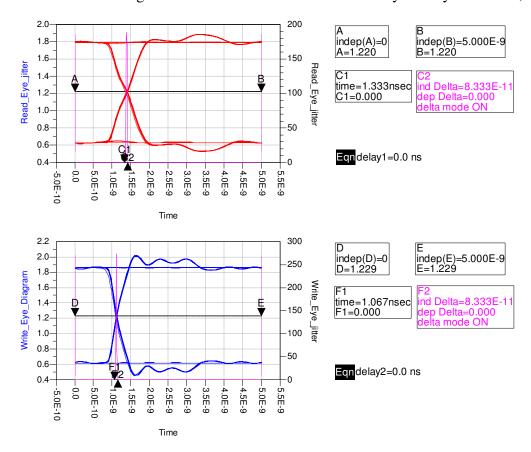


Figure 2-28 Far End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination Jitter Analysis Results, Fly-By

2.1.8 Far End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-29, requires one series resistors and two parallel resistors.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-30, Figure 2-31 and Figure 2-32 respectively. This topology as the previews one are useful when output drive strength or output impedance of both devices is different. The addition of one resistor makes this topology asymmetrical, so the performance during the read/write cycles will be different. This characteristic can be used to optimized one of the read or write cycles. Looking at the waveforms, it is clear that the signal integrity during the write cycle is better than the read cycle. The high impedance shown at the input of an active device makes the Fly-By option well suited for minimum components and good performance. The approach depicted in Figure 2-29 is an option when the routing in high density areas makes the previews topology difficult to achieve. The most important parameter to consider is the distance from the termination resistor to the input of the device in order to minimize undesired standing waves. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.928 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.844 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during the read and write cycles.

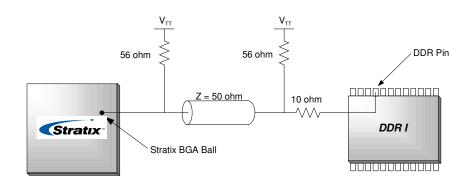


Figure 2-29 Far End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)

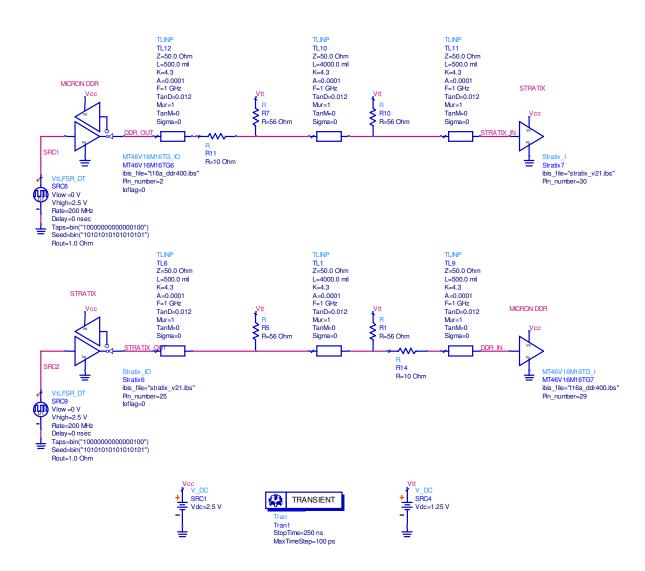


Figure 2-30 Far End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles, Non Fly-By

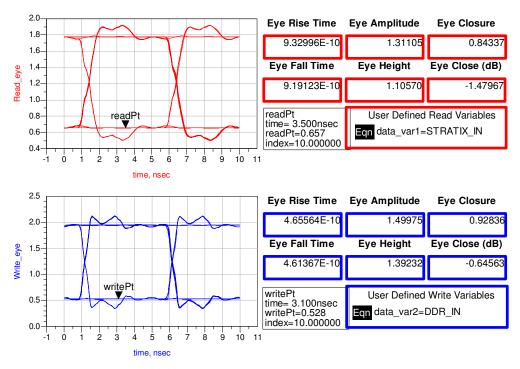


Figure 2-31 Far End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination Eye Analysis Results, Non Fly-By.

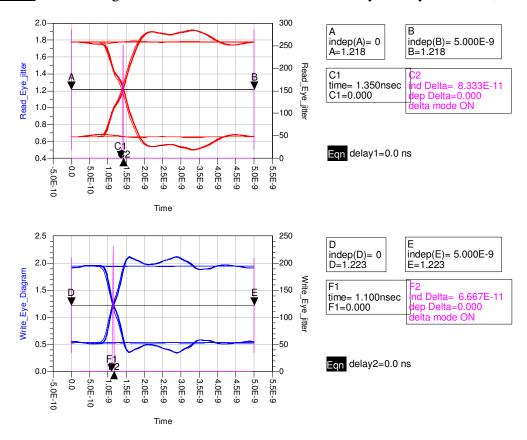


Figure 2-32 Far End Single Series / Dual Parallel Termination Jitter Analysis Results, Non Fly-By

2.1.9 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination, (Fly-By)

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-33, requires one series resistors and one parallel resistors.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-34, Figure 2-35 and Figure 2-36 respectively.

The approach depicted in Figure 2-33 is an option when unidirectional signals, low component count and short distances are the goal. The series resistor should be located close to the driver and the parallel termination close to the destination (receiver). Looking at the waveforms, it is clear that the signal integrity during the write cycle is much better than the read cycle making this configuration especially well suited for write cycles. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.902 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.679 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during for write cycles.

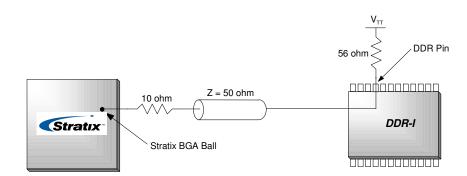


Figure 2-33 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination (Fly-By)

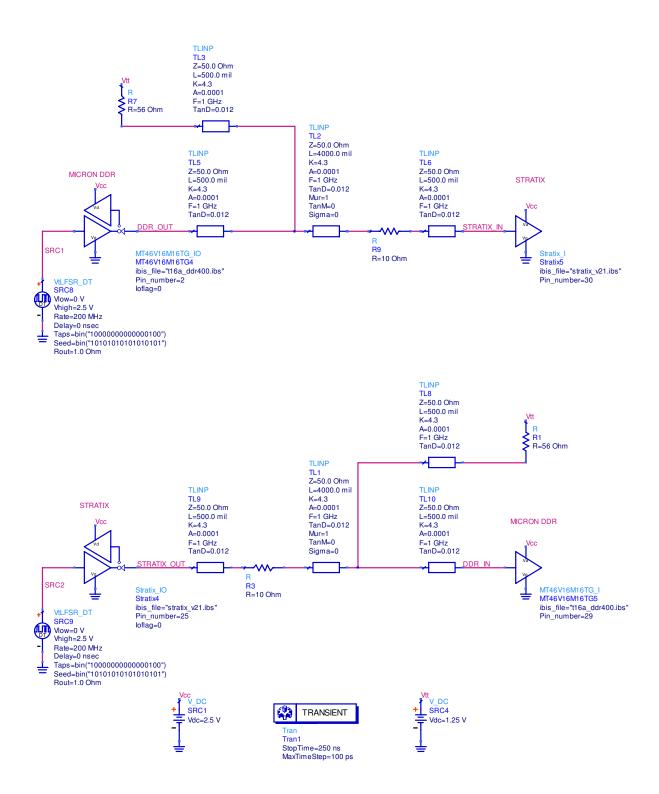


Figure 2-34 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles (Fly-By)

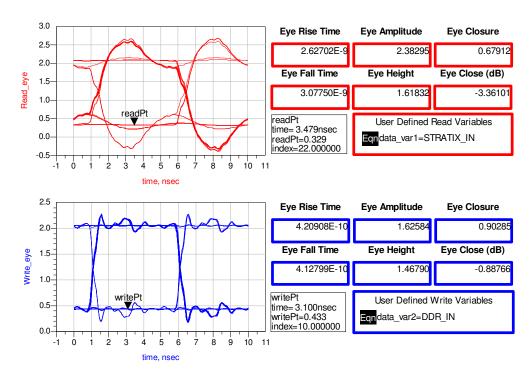


Figure 2-35 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination Eye Analysis Results, Fly-By.

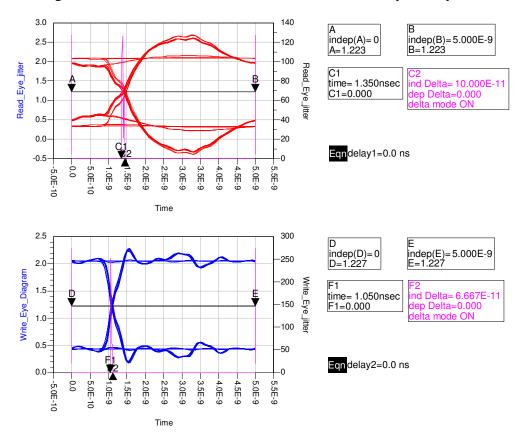


Figure 2-36 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination Jitter Analysis Results, Fly-By

2.1.10 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-37, requires one series resistors and one parallel resistors.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-38, Figure 2-39 and Figure 2-40 respectively.

The approach depicted in Figure 2-37 is an option when unidirectional signals, low component count and short distances are the goal. The series resistor should be located close to the driver and the parallel termination close to the destination (receiver). Looking at the waveforms, it is clear that the signal integrity during the write cycle is much better than the read cycle making this configuration especially well suited for write cycles. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.900 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.666 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during for write cycles.

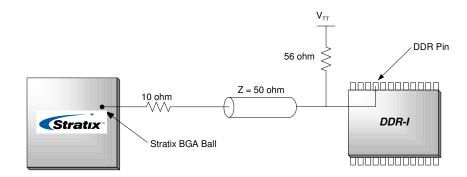


Figure 2-37 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)

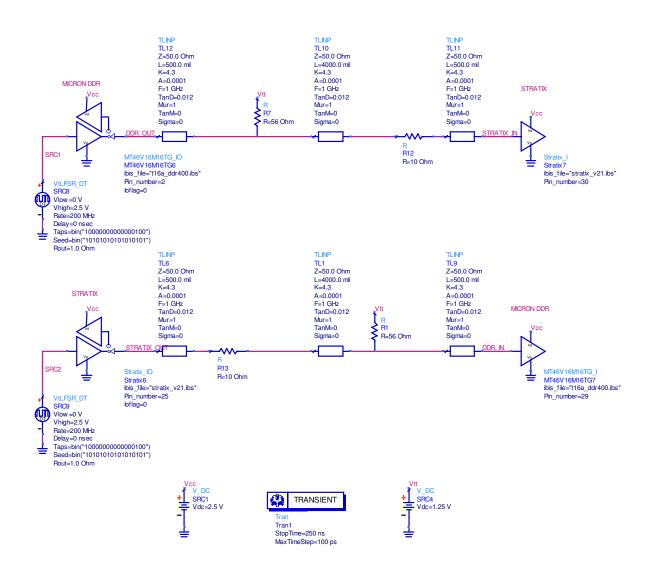


Figure 2-38 Single Near End Series/Far End Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles (Non-Fly-By)

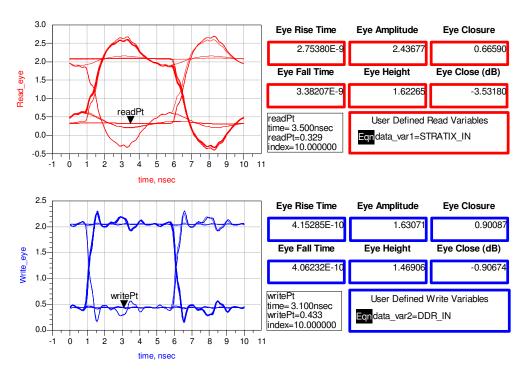


Figure 2-39 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination Eye Analysis Results,

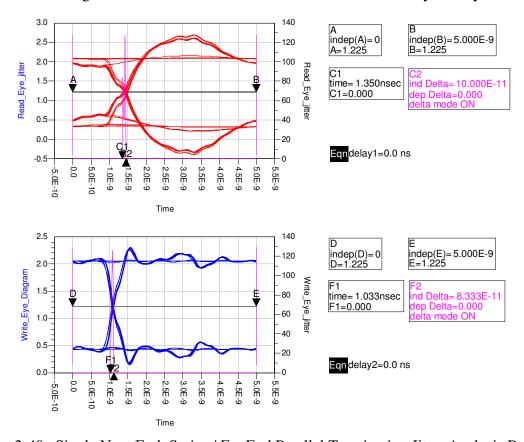


Figure 2-40 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination Jitter Analysis Results.

2.1.11 Single Far End Series / Far End Parallel Termination, (Fly-By)

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-41, requires two series resistors and one parallel resistor.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-42, Figure 2-43 and Figure 2-44 respectively.

The approach depicted in Figure 2-41 would work fine for "write" direction only, but overall due to the poor performance of the read direction, this scheme should be avoided. In addition the component count is higher with any improve in performance. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.760 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.928 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during for write cycles but with very limited performance during the read cycles.

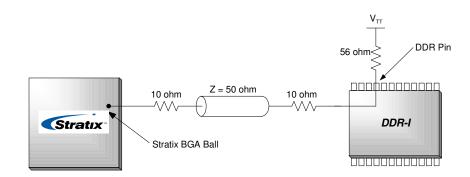


Figure 2-41 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination, (Fly-By)

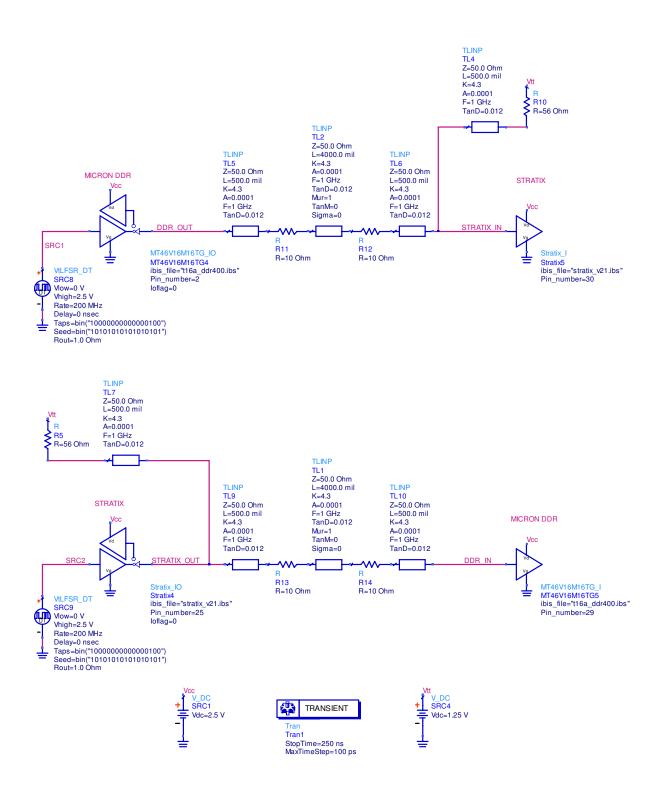


Figure 2-42 Single Near End Series/Far End Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles , (Fly-By)

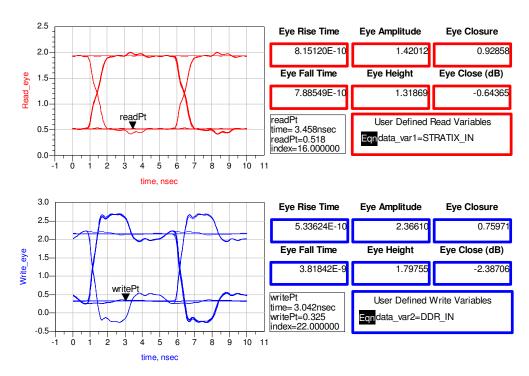


Figure 2-43 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination Eye Analysis Results, Fly-By

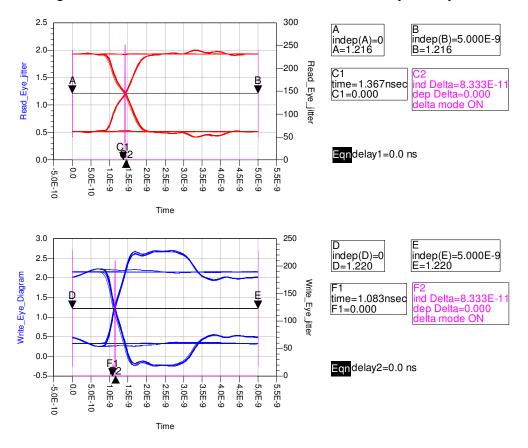


Figure 2-44 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination Jitter Analysis Results, Fly-By

2.1.12 Dual End Series / Near End Parallel Termination, (Non-Fly-By)

This topology, depicted in Figure 2-45, requires two series resistors and one parallel resistor.

The ADS test setup, eye analysis and jitter analysis for the read/write cycles are shown in Figure 2-46, Figure 2-47 and Figure 2-48 respectively.

The approach depicted in Figure 2-45 would work fine for "read" direction only, but overall due to the poor performance of the write direction, this scheme should be avoided. In addition the component count is higher with any improve in performance. The eye closure at the DDR-I during the write cycle is 0.952 and at the Stratix during the read cycle is 0.721 respectively. The performances of this topology will warranties the functionality of the link during for write cycles but with very limited performance during the read cycles.

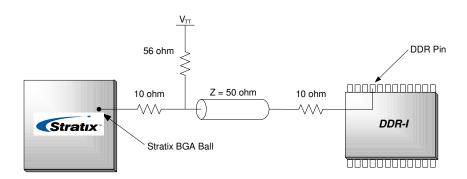


Figure 2-45 Single Far End Series / Far End Parallel Termination, (Non-Fly-By)

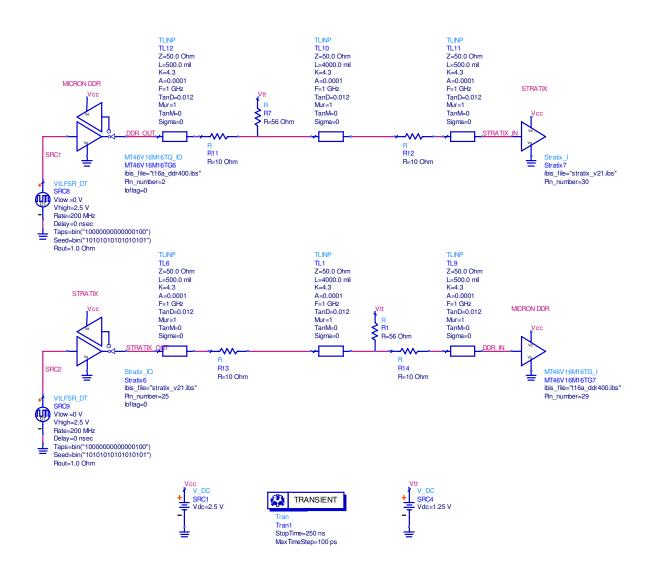


Figure 2-46 Single Near End Series/Far End Parallel Termination Simulation Setup Read/Write Cycles, (Non-Fly-By)

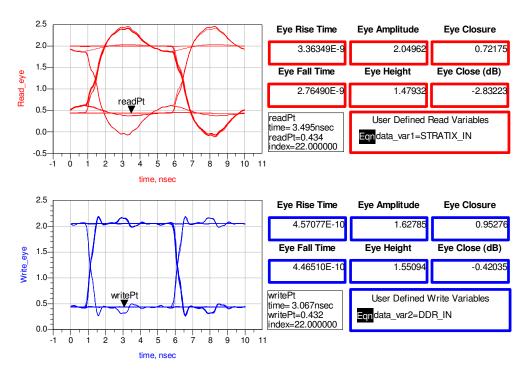


Figure 2-47 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination Eye Analysis Results

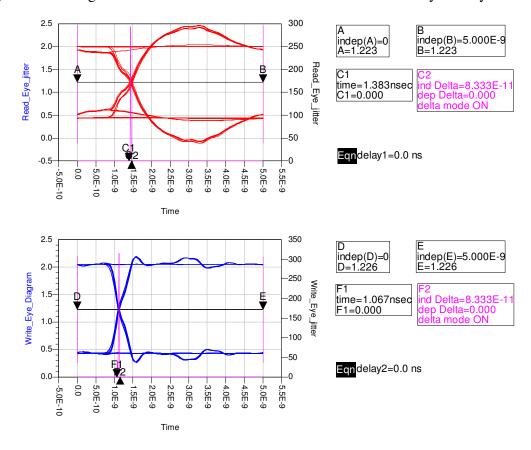


Figure 2-48 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination Jitter Analysis Results

2.1.13 SSTL-II Multi load Address/Clock Interface

The address bus and clocks are often shared among several DDR devices on the board, so it is harder to achieve good signal integrity on the address bus. This section shows a typical address bit routing topology and a proposed termination scheme.

Figure 2-49 shows the block diagram of this address scheme. Figure 2-50 shows the ADS test setup and Figure 2-51 shows the simulated waveform at the DDR memory pins. While there is overshoot and undershoot, the overall eye closure is about 0.503 at the DDR-I device terminals.

Figure 2-52 shows the ADS test setup of this clock scheme. Figure 2-53 shows the simulated waveform at the DDR memory pins. The signal swing is good, and although the rise and fall time are a bit slow due to the additional capacitive load. The overall eye closure is about 0.580 at the DDR-I device terminals that is not bad considering that is point to multi point connection and minimal losses.

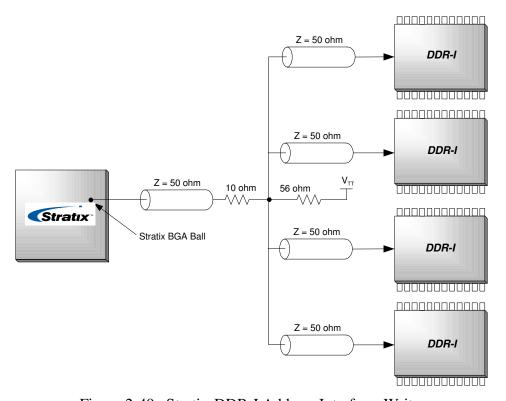


Figure 2-49 Stratix-DDR-I Address Interface, Write.

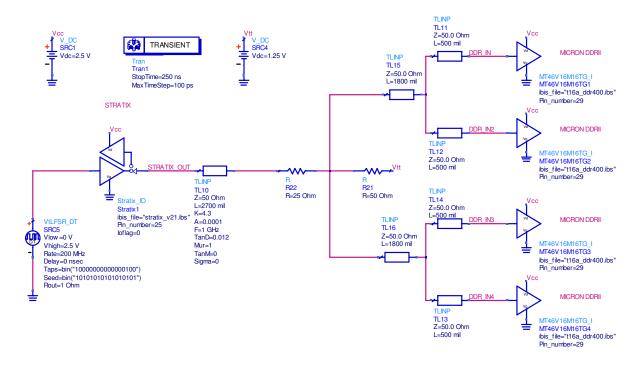


Figure 2-50 Stratix-DDR-I Address Interface, Simulation Setup

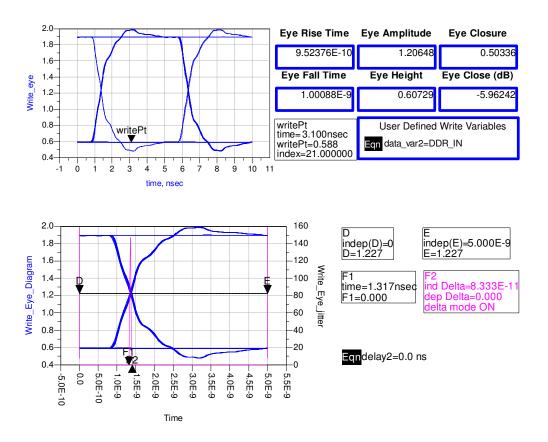


Figure 2-51 Stratix-DDR-I Address Interface, Simulation results.

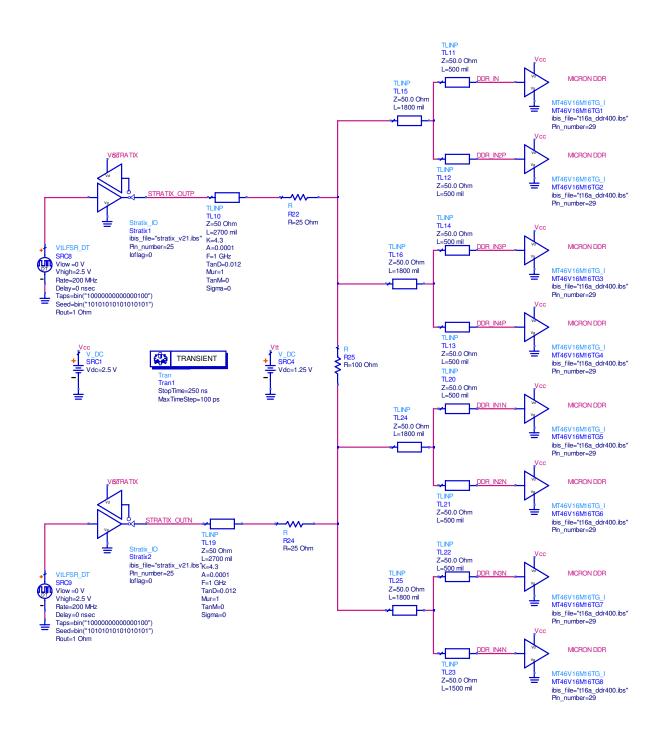


Figure 2-52 Stratix-DDR-I Clocks Interface, Simulation results.

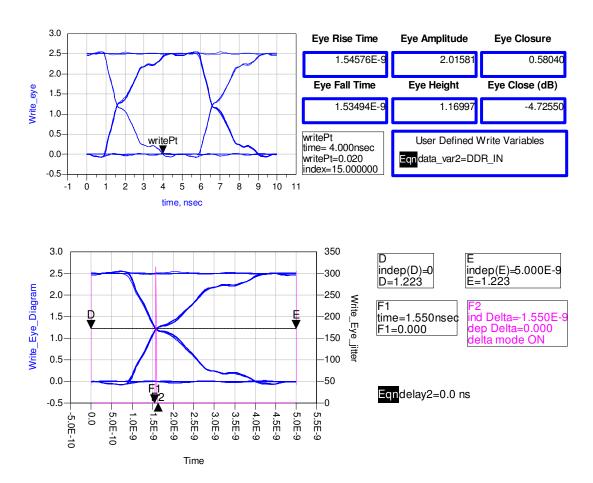


Figure 2-53 Stratix-DDR-I Clocks Interface, Simulation results.

3 **CONCLUSION**

Based on the simulation results, the following schemes show the best performance for Stratix to DDR-I memory device bi-directional buses:

- 2.1.1 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Termination (Fly-By)
- 2.1.2 Dual Series/Dual Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)
- 2.1.3 Dual Parallel Termination (Fly-By)
- 2.1.4 Dual Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)

Based on the simulation results, the following schemes show the best performance for Stratix to DDR-I memory device unidirectional buses:

- 2.1.9 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination, (Fly-By)
- 2.1.10 Single Near End Series / Far End Parallel Termination (Non-Fly-By)

The best scheme based on performance/component ratio appears to be 2.1.5. The Stratix Memory Board 1 (SMB1) uses this topology for bidirectional signaling and for unidirectional signals.

4 **FURTHER WORK**

These simulations should correlate with the measurements and the post-layout simulations.